



Retail Donations Manual

SECTION A: Agency Partner Certification

This section relates to Article 9 of the Enabled Donor Pick-up Agreement. Feeding America West Michigan will follow the following procedures when certifying an agency partner for the enabled donor pickup program.

1. Feeding America West Michigan (Food Bank) will schedule a meeting with the agency coordinator and any personnel who will be handling products associated with the retail donation program. They will come to an agreement about whether the agency partner has the need and the capacity to participate in the program.
2. The agency partner will ensure that their personnel handling products have local food handler certification. The Food Bank will verify and keep records to this effect.
3. The Food Bank will review the donation handling and storage guidelines with the agency partner.
4. The Food Bank will review reporting procedures with the agency partner.
5. The agency partner will secure thermal bags or blankets, coolers, scales, thermometers, and other food safety and transportation tools if the Food Bank cannot supply mandatory equipment.
6. The Food Bank will assign retail stores to the agency partner and provide relevant store contact information, timetable for pickups, and communication templates.
7. As needed, the Food Bank will meet the agency partner at each store on their first scheduled pickup to introduce store personnel and identify pickup locations.
8. The agency partner should begin reporting food received as soon as pickups begin. If agencies have issues with the schedule of pickups, the food received, or the reporting process, they should communicate with the Food Bank immediately.
9. The agency partner must distribute this food to neighbors in need like any other donated food. No food may be shared with other agencies without Food Bank prior approval and a signed Sub-distribution Agreement.
10. Within the first 60 days, the agency partner will communicate with the Food Bank the program results. The Food Bank may contact the store to verify the program's standing.

Breach of Contract

After the signing of the Enabled Donor Pick-up Agreement, the party who fails to fulfill their obligations or fails to show willingness to fulfill their obligations to the Food Bank or the retail partner will be liable for breach of agreement. This requirement includes failure to show up for scheduled pickups without communication to retail partner, failure to accurately report pounds to the Food Bank, and failure to communicate changes in pickup schedule to the Food Bank.

The agency partner will be notified with a warning prior to any termination of retail partnerships by a Food Bank representative. The agency partner will be given the opportunity to mend any issues or feedback from the warning. If no improvement or effort for improvement has been shown within 30 days, the retail partnership is subject to termination.

SECTION B: Transportation and Storage Devices

This section relates to Article 4 of the Enabled Donor Pick-up Agreement. An agency partner picking up refrigerated and/or frozen items such as meat, produce, dairy, and deli is required to use approved transportation devices while transporting perishable products. It must adhere to the donation handling and storage guidelines set by the Food Bank without exceptions.

Transporting and Storing Food Safely

To ensure food safety, the agency partner will adhere to temperature handling guidelines by taking and documenting sample temperatures for TCS foods (Refrigerated - Temperature Controlled for Safety) and frozen foods at the time of pick-up and again at the delivery site. Frozen food must be frozen solid at time of pick-up and kept frozen during transport as noted above. Refrigerated and frozen foods should be placed in appropriate storage units immediately after weighing and receiving (if not before).

Food can be easily contaminated and exposed to pathogens if it is not transported or stored correctly. It can also become unsafe if it is allowed to stay in the temperature danger zone. This issue can be prevented by following food safety rules.

Approved transportation devices:

- Product transportation exceeding 30 minutes - an **active** temperature control device must be used. Active is defined as equipment that actively maintains a set temperature, controlled by a thermostat (i.e., refrigerated truck).
- Product transportation within 30 minutes - a **passive** device must be used. A passive device is defined as a device that insulates products from rapid temperature change such as a thermal blanket or cooler.

General Storage Guidelines:

- Store refrigerated food at 41° or lower (this includes cut produce)
- Keep frozen food at 0° or lower (food should remain frozen solid)
- Store food only in designated food storage areas
- Store food at least 6 inches off the ground and away from walls
- Store ready-to-eat food above raw meat, seafood, and poultry
- Store food only in containers made for food
- Cover or wrap food before storing it

SECTION C: Donation Handling and Storage Guidelines

Sorting Food

Agencies must sort and organize donated products into the following categories. Sorting through the products is necessary to inspect and evaluate the products to ensure that it is fit for human consumption, that they meet food safety standards, and that they are acceptable for distribution. Non-acceptable product conditions are outlined in the labeling and food safety sections below.

The donated products will be sorted into the following categories as closely as possible:

- Bread/Baked Goods
- Assorted Refrigerated Goods
- Assorted Grocery Foods
- Assorted Grocery Non-Foods
- Assorted Frozen
- Assorted Meat Products
- Assorted Produce

Products will always remain at least 6” above the ground during food sorting.

Labeling

Agencies should remove any unacceptable food items from other consumable food items in an isolated and identified area. Disposal of unacceptable food and non-food items consists of designated trash and compost containers for discarded products that are removed promptly after sorting.

The U.S. Fair Packaging and Labeling Act prohibits the distribution of any food item (except fresh fruit and vegetables) without a label. Labels shall contain:

1. Common name of the product (for example, apple sauce).
2. Name and address of manufacturer, packer, or distributor.
3. Quantity of the contents (for example, 10 oz.).
4. Common name of each ingredient (for example, salt or sugar).

Products with torn labels are acceptable when all the above information is legible and complete. Many people are on restricted or specialized diets, while others may be allergic to individual foods. The ingredients list helps them avoid products which may cause allergic reactions, or which are life-threatening.

Food Safety

Meat, Poultry, Fish

Condition

- Products should be in original packaging
- Food grade packaging in direct contact with food
- Securely closed and separated by food (e.g., beef, pork, poultry) to avoid cross contamination
- Labeled and dated as appropriate
- Frozen solid at 0°F or below
- Frozen on or before the “Sell by” or “use by”

Handling and Storage

- Products should be frozen on or before the expiration date
- Products should be stored at 0°F or colder while awaiting pickup
- Frozen products can be kept up to 3 months after receipt
- If product is not frozen, freeze immediately, can keep up to 3 months after receipt
- Chemicals should never be stored over food or next to food

Non-Acceptable Conditions

- Food kept in the danger zone more than two hours
- Any product that is not frozen or has thawed out
- Non-food-grade packaging in direct contact with food
- Damaged or compromised packaging resulting in discoloration of products
- Defrosted products or products with severe freezer burn

Dairy Products/Deli

Condition

- Products should be in original packaging
- Food grade packaging in direct contact with food
- No more than 1 day past “Sell by” and “use by” dates

Handling and Storage

- Refrigerated products should be stored between 34-41°F while awaiting pickup
- If frozen, products should be stored at 0°F or colder while awaiting pickup
- If frozen, product can be kept a maximum of 3 months
- Store allergens (egg, fish, milk, soy milk) separate from each other and away from other products
- Chemicals should never be stored over food or next to food

Non-Acceptable Conditions

- Damaged or compromised packaging resulting in the loss of sanitary barrier protection

Fresh Produce

Condition

- Products should be in original packaging and bags or food grade packaging (produce boxes) for all repacked products
- Chopped produce should be securely closed in food grade packaging with each vegetable or fruit packaged separately

Handling and Storage

- Store in a cool, dry, clean area
- Stored at room temperature or chilled (depending on produce)

Non-Acceptable Conditions

- Signs of decay

Baked Goods

Condition

- Fresh, day-old bread, bagels, and other bakery items
- Food grade packaging in direct contact with food, securely closed
- Bread products separately packaged from other baked goods

Handling and Storage

- Store in a cool, dry, clean area
- Bakery products should be frozen if not to be used within 48 hours
- Chemicals should never be stored over food or next to food

Non-Acceptable Conditions

- Mold, damaged or compromised packaging resulting in loss of sanitary barrier protection
- Products not in food grade packaging

Prepackaged Foods-Non-Perishable (Canned Goods)

Condition

- Fully intact original cans with labels that are legible and must show as a minimum:
 - what the product is
 - ingredients
 - net weight
 - distributor

Handling and Storage

- Cool, dry clean area
- Chemicals should never be stored over food or next to food

Non-Acceptable Conditions

- Opened, punctured, bulging or serious can damage, including evidence of leakage
- Home canned products
- Unlabeled
- Cannot read the label
- Very rusty, rust cannot be wiped off

Prepackaged Foods-Non-Perishable (Glass Jars & Plastic Bottles)

Condition

- Fully intact original cans with labels that are legible and must show as a minimum:
 - what the product is
 - ingredients
 - net weight distributor

Handling and Storage

- Cool, dry clean area
- Chemicals should never be stored over food or next to food

Non-Acceptable Conditions

- Opened, punctured, or bulging jar top
- Glass that is broken or chipped
- Unlabeled
- Cannot read the label
- Container is leaking
- Tamperproof seal is broken
- Not in original container

Prepackaged Foods-Non-Perishable (Boxes or Bags)

Condition

- Original boxes or cases
- Labels that must show as a minimum:
 - what the product is
 - ingredients
 - net weight
 - distributor

Handling and Storage

- Cool, dry clean area
- Chemicals should never be stored over food or next to food

Non-Acceptable Conditions

- Opened, punctured, or damaged packaging resulting in the loss of the sanitary barrier protection
- Unlabeled
- Cannot read the label
- If double packaged – inner package is damaged, wet, or stained
- Not in original package
- Product appearance is not good

Prepackaged Non-Foods

Condition

- Fully intact original container with labels that are legible and show as a minimum
 - what the product is
 - Ingredients
 - net weight
 - distributor

Handling and Storage

- Cool, dry clean area
- Store chemicals away from food products

Non-Acceptable Conditions

- Glass that is broken or chipped
- Note: non-food items must be boxed separately from edible products

Repacking Food

Repacking food standard operating procedures can be found on the Food Bank's website under Agency Partner Documents. The link is also available [here](#).

Allergens

The Fair Packaging and Labeling Act (FPLA) spells out the necessary labeling requirements for most foods. Some people are allergic to certain food ingredients, called allergens. For this reason, all foods containing more than one ingredient either must be properly labeled on the package or come with a list of ingredients clearly listing the allergens contained within the product.

People who are allergic to these food ingredients will have major reactions to eating them; this reaction can lead to death. There are 8 major allergens listed by the FDA:

1. Wheat
2. Soy
3. Eggs
4. Dairy (Milk and milk containing products)
5. Peanuts
6. Tree Nuts (Almonds, Walnuts, Pecans, Coconut, etc.)
7. Fish
8. Shellfish (Shrimp, Lobster, Crab)
9. Sesame

These products need to be stored separately, when not frozen, from other products. You cannot accept any products that are not clearly labeled as to their contents unless the donor can provide you with a list of ingredients or an allergen statement.

Expiration Language

Foods generally have dates on them that are based on quality. Accepting these foods after these dates is acceptable as the foods are still safe to eat.

These dates are:

- *“Sell by”* which is a date defined by the manufacturer or retailer as the last date on which their temperature sensitive foods should be sold. The store must sell these foods before the code date listed. Stores often donate these foods when they are close to date. If the food has been handled properly, it is still safe to eat and the quality is good.
- *“Use by”* which is a date that has a similar definition for temperature sensitive products but is also used on shelf stable products as a quality measurement. This date is the manufacturer's recommendation for how long the food will be at

peak quality. The food is still safe after the quality date, but it slowly begins to lose nutrients and the quality diminishes.

- “*Best by*” which is a date generally used on shelf stable products and is based on quality not food safety.
- “*Expiration*” which is a date defined by the manufacturer or retailer and may be based on quality not food safety. Do not distribute after the date unless products are frozen before the expiration date.

Freezing foods allows you to keep the donations beyond their “*Sell by*,” “*Use by*” and “*Best by*” dates.

SECTION D: Retail Donation Pickup Guidelines

Equipment Needs

Each agency partner **must** be equipped with the following for successful retail donation pickups:

1. Vehicle
2. Tubs, boxes, other food storage containers for transport
3. Scale
4. Thermometers
5. A temperature control-device
 - a. Approved active devices include active temperature controlled (refrigerated) vehicles, and active temperature-controlled coolers and freezers that can maintain the prescribed temperatures contained in Sections B and C.
 - b. Approved passive devices include thermal blankets/bags and commercial grade ice chests/coolers.

How to Report

After picking up retail donations, weigh and categorize the donations and make note of these details for each store that you picked up from. The donation categories found in Section C and are as follows:

- Bread/Baked Goods (such as bread goods, including bread, cakes, donuts, etc.)
- Assorted Refrigerated Goods (such as condiments, dairy, etc.)
- Assorted Grocery Foods (canned or dry foods)
- Assorted Grocery Non-Foods (such as paper products or other non-food products)
- Assorted Frozen (such as prepared frozen meals, frozen vegetables, etc.)
- Assorted Meat Products (any meats, including frozen meats)

- Assorted Produce (such as fresh fruits and vegetables)

Categorize the donations as close as possible to these categories.

Once the donations have been weighed, you can enter this information into Primarius Web Window (PWW).

1. Log into PWW using your Agency Reference ID number, Username and Password
2. Click on “Agency Pickup” tab. This button should be to the right of the “Home” tab
3. On the bottom right side of the screen, click the button “Add New Receipt”
4. Click the drop-down menu for “Donor:” to and select which store you are reporting
5. Select the date donations were picked up on the “Pickup Date” calendar
6. Enter the donation pounds for each category
 - a. If no retail donations were picked up, fill categories with 0’s and leave a comment in the box for the reason no donations were picked up
7. Click “Process Receipt” to complete the pounds report

Why We Report

As stated in the contract, the responsibility of reporting donation pounds falls on the agency partner that picks up the donations. While this may seem like a lopsided relationship, it is, in a certain perspective, balanced in that retailer stores help Feeding America partners with donations, it is then up to the agency partner to help the retail store by giving them credit for their help.

Reporting is positive for a couple of reasons. One, the store can get full credit for their donations. Also, we can more accurately track how much food is going into food assistance programs tied to data we use for community needs assessments, grant reports, and additional food support.

Feeding America National (FANO) cannot tell the complete story to the donors (retailers) when pounds are not reported. Network data can tell a powerful story not only for FANO tracking, trending, purchasing planning and forecasting purposes, but also to our retail partners.

FANO compiles the data submitted to generate reports which the retail donors use to:

- Capture category data (donations by department) regularly to monitor store participation, especially with departments such as meat/protein. Donors like Costco, Target and Walmart take a close view of category data.
- Monitor performance by District or Region

- Measure not only donation program success but also how they are tracking against sustainability goals.
- Gain federal tax credits.

Information About Scales

Because the task reporting donated pounds falls on the agency partner, it is important to have the tools needed to properly gather that information. Agencies should use a scale to determine how many pounds of food were donated from the retailer. Scales can vary in size and their weight capacity. We have seen agencies use bathroom scales, food scales, and postal scales.

Below are some provided options for scales:

- Galaxy RS220LB 220 lb. Low-Profile Digital Receiving Scale with Remote Display
 - This scale costs around \$60 and has a max capacity of 220 lbs.
- Taylor TR250 250 lb. Mechanical Receiving Scale – Briefcase
 - This scale costs around \$80 and has a max capacity of 250 lbs.
- AvaWeigh RSB250T 250 lb. Digital Receiving Scale with Built-in Handle and Treaded Platter
 - This scale costs around \$90 and has a max capacity of 250 lbs.
- AvaWeigh RS400T 400 lb. Digital Treading Receiving Scale with Remote Display
 - This scale costs around \$95 and has a max capacity of 400 lbs.
- Taylor TE400 400 lb. Digital Receiving Scale with Remote Display
 - This scale costs around \$125 and has a max capacity of 400 lbs.
- AvaWeigh RS400 400 lb. Digital Receiving scale with Remote Display
 - This scale costs around \$120 and has a max capacity of 400 lbs.

All these options can be found and purchased on webstaurantstore.com, some may also be found on Amazon or other online retailers.

FAQs

Q: What if my store is missing on PWW?

A: If the store is missing from Donor drop down menu, this means the store has not been linked to your Primarius profile. To solve this, contact the Food Bank and let us know that you are picking up from that location.

Q: I cannot report my pounds because the date is too far back, what do I do?

A: Our system does not allow reporting to be done two months prior to today's date. Contact the Retail Partnerships Specialist with your information.

Q: What do I do if I have a problem with the store?

A: Any store feedback regarding donations, the store, or the pickups themselves should be brought to the attention of the Food Bank's Retail Partnerships Specialist.

Q: What can I expect to receive from stores?

A: Donations will vary from store to store as well as pickup-to-pickup.

Q: How often should I report our retail donations?

A: Agencies should report retail donations weekly at minimum. Ideally, reports would be done within 48 hours of picking up the donations.

Q: I made an error entering my pounds but discovered it after I hit "Process Receipt." What should I do?

A: Please call or email our Retail Partnerships Specialist ASAP

Q: I entered in the same donation poundage twice. What should I do?

A: Please call or email our Retail Partnerships Specialist ASAP.

Q: Can I share my retail donations with other agencies?

A: Donated products may not be transferred from the intended program to another person, program, or agency partner without the Food Bank's approval. Sharing donations with other agencies is not allowed unless your agency has signed the Sub-Distribution Agreement.