

# *Feeding opportunity*

A donation guide for the food industry



## About Feed Nova Scotia

Feed Nova Scotia is a provincial, non-profit organization and a member of Food Banks Canada. Our mission is to increase food security through food distribution, education, and collaboration.

To achieve this, each year we distribute approximately 2 million kilograms of donated food to our member network of 145 food banks and meal programs across the province. We also support our members as they build capacity to serve their communities, and we help raise awareness of the challenges hunger and poverty create each day.

## Why we rely on you

Providing support for the thousands of Nova Scotians who count on us each month is a big job, and we couldn't do it without the generosity of the community.

Because it's not fixed, the food budget is often the first thing to go for Nova Scotians struggling with food insecurity. And studies have shown that poor access to nutritious food can increase chronic illness, stress and depression, and inhibit a child's chance for success.

Your gift will help us ensure everyone has food in their time of need. It will help open doors to opportunity.



## What you can donate

We can accept non-perishable, perishable, frozen and prepared food donations in quantities ranging from a pallet to a truck load.

### Dented cans

If dents are minor, soft and are not in a critical location on the can, such as the seams, we can sort through and salvage the cans that are safe to distribute.

### Incorrectly-labelled cans or packages

If a list of ingredients and a proper description of food can be provided, we can relabel the items and distribute them to member agencies.

### Underweight packages

If food products weigh less than their declared weight, we can still distribute them. In this case we would include this information alongside the respective product.

### Oversized, undersized, or second-grade fruits and vegetables

Perhaps you have carrots that are too small, apples that are the wrong colour, or products that do not meet desired specifications. We can pick up and distribute these items. For fruits and vegetables, if there is spoilage apparent, we will cull the donation, repack unspoiled items and distribute them.

### Close-coded products that are still consumable

Non-perishable products that are close to or have passed their best before dates (six months or less) can be distributed given their packaging and labels are intact, and the product has been previously stored properly. Note: Baby food, infant formula, and nutritional supplements have expiry dates and cannot be distributed after they've passed.

Perishable products, such as milk, yogurt and cheese, that are close coded (only a week or so left on their best before dates) can also be accepted. We are able to receive these items one day and distribute them the very next. The packaging must be intact and the product must be stored at the proper temperature prior to being picked up or delivered to Feed Nova Scotia.

### Prepared foods

Prepared foods from restaurants, hotels, hospitals and commissaries that have been properly cooled and packaged can be picked up and distributed to shelters and soup kitchens on the same day.

### Seasonal products that have not yet been sold

Whether it's Christmas in January or Valentine's Day in March, all of these food items that have not found a home in their traditional season can be donated to Feed Nova Scotia. We will distribute the items immediately to our agencies.

### Damaged master cartons or shippers

Items in master cartons or shippers that have been damaged from warehousing or shipping can also be donated. We will sort the donation and rescue food items that can be saved and then distribute them to our member agencies.

### Household and hygiene items

Cleaning products, pet food, personal care, and hygiene items are highly sought after items. We can accept these items that are unmarketable due to returns, overstock, or rebranding.



## Ensuring food safety

Food safety is top priority for Feed Nova Scotia and our member agencies. Donors can be assured that all necessary precautions are taken to ensure donated food is distributed in good form and is safe to consume. We follow a strict set of food safety rules and regulations. Some of these include:

**Inspection of food:** Food is checked for proper packaging and labelling, code dates, and cleanliness during the sorting and repacking process.

**Storage of food:** We store food in its proper environment (dry storage, coolers or freezers) upon receiving donations, throughout the sorting and re-packing process, and while we're out on the road making deliveries, as our trucks all have refrigeration.

**Volunteer and staff training to handle food:** We train our staff, volunteers, and those at our member agencies with a safe food handling training course developed specifically for the food bank network. This course is nationally sanctioned by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency and Food Banks Canada.



## Putting the process in motion

We understand the time-consuming demands of business, so we work hard to ensure that making a food donation to Feed Nova Scotia is as convenient as possible. We are well equipped with a fleet of vehicles with refrigeration capacity to pick up and distribute food across the province, and a dedicated staff and volunteer team that coordinates the logistics involved.

If you have a donation, here's what to do:

1. Call us at 902-457-1900.
2. Tell us you have a product donation.
3. Indicate whether you are going to deliver it or if you'd like us to pick it up.

You will be directed to someone who will ask a few questions about your donation to help us plan a time for the delivery or pickup. If it's a pickup, we will need some information to ensure we send the correct size truck.



## How we distribute your donation

Feed Nova Scotia distributes food to our member food banks using a fair share approach. For non-perishable items, the amount of food distributed with each member agency's order is proportionate to the number of people they serve. For instance, if five percent of the province's hunger population is accessing food support from a particular food bank, then that food bank gets five percent of the total food donations we receive throughout the year.

When distributing perishable food we apply the same approach, but also take into account the individual capacity of agencies to receive and store these items.

We also rescue qualified prepared food and distribute it the same day to shelters and soup kitchens in the Halifax Regional Municipality.

Some businesses and organizations are surprised to hear that we receive large food donations; however this is something we do every day—and we do it efficiently. Whether it's 5,000 kilograms of cranberries or 10 pallets of dry goods, we distribute the donations to our member agencies in a timely manner to ensure Nova Scotians across the province will benefit from your generous donation.



## The benefits of donating

### Help increase food insecurity for Nova Scotians

The biggest impact of your donation will be the difference it makes in the lives of Nova Scotians struggling with hunger. For some it will be the relief of knowing there is something for dinner. For others it will mean something to pack in their children's lunch boxes. For others it will mean a fresh start and a new sense of hope.

### Demonstrate social responsibility

Align your business with one of Nova Scotia's most well-respected charities and show your organization's philanthropic values and commitment to the community.

### Promote environmental best practices

Donating unmarketable products that are still wholesome and nutritious will divert waste from our landfills.

### Save money and space

Donating unmarketable food to Feed Nova Scotia will move product from your warehouse to ours, freeing up space on your warehouse floor. By letting us take on the task of sorting and repacking food, you will also reduce your labour costs.

## Recognizing your impact

We are pleased to acknowledge every gift we receive, and as a donor, we want you to feel proud of the contribution your company has made. There are many different ways we can celebrate the impact of your gift, and we would love to explore options with you.



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