



*How You Can Help*  
**A Donation Guide for the Food Industry**

# *What You* **Can Donate**

We can accept non-perishable, perishable, frozen and prepared food donations in quantities ranging from a grocery bag full to several pallets or even a truck load. We are committed to providing safe food for our member food banks and the clients they serve.

And don't discount product you might think is unmarketable! We are able to accept and distribute the following food items:

## **Incorrectly-labeled cans or packages**

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

## **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.

## **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, squash that is too big, apples that are the wrong colour or products that do not meet desired specifications. These are examples of food that we can pick up in your bins, repack in containers appropriate for member agencies, distribute accordingly and then return your bins or boxes to you.

## **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) are deemed food safe and can be distributed to member agencies given their packaging and labels are intact, and the product has been previously stored properly. Note: Baby food formula and nutritional supplements have expiry dates and cannot be distributed after the respective expiry dates.

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.

## **Culling**

In the case of fruit and vegetables, there may not be a best before date, but there might be some spoilage apparent. We can cull the donation, repack the unspoiled items, and distribute them.

## **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, Valentine's Day in March, or back to school in October, all of these seasonal 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.

## **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 for you. 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 co-ordinate 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.



## *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 to food bank clients 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 labeling, 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 refrigerated boxes.

**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 networks. This course is nationally sanctioned by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency and Food Banks Canada.

## *The Benefits* **of Donating**

### **Help Hungry 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. Your donation will touch many Nova Scotians in lots of different ways.

### **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. This will also help generate an increased sense of pride among your employees.

### **Promote Environmental Best Practices and Save Money**

Donating unmarketable products that are still wholesome and nutritious will divert waste from our landfills. Waste disposal costs can also be avoided or significantly reduced by donating this much-needed food to Feed Nova Scotia.

### **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.

## How We *Recognize You*

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 will celebrate your gift. Depending on the donation, it might be a plaque to hang in your office, a feature in our donor newsletter or the addition of your logo on our website.

## *About* **Feed Nova Scotia**

Feed Nova Scotia is the provincial member of Food Banks Canada, a national charitable organization that represents the Canadian food banking community. Our mission is to feed Nova Scotians in need and reduce that need.

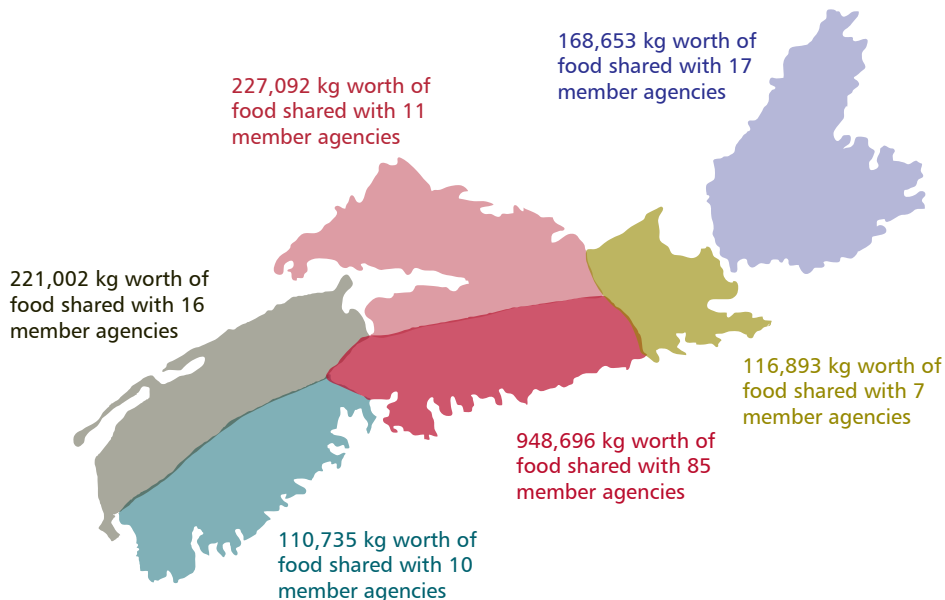
To achieve this, we distribute over 2 million kilograms of donated food to our member network of 146 food banks and meal programs across the province. But our role also extends beyond food. We support our members as they build capacity to serve their communities, and we help raise awareness of the challenges hunger and poverty create each day for thousands of Nova Scotians.



## Food Distribution: *Fair and Efficient*

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, however, sometimes the amount of product that is sent to certain food banks has to be modified, based on their capacity to store fresh and frozen foods. 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 is 5,000 pounds of cranberries or 10 pallets of dry goods, we distribute the donations to our member agencies in a timely manner to ensure hungry families across the province will benefit from your generous donation.

The map below shows the amount of food Feed Nova Scotia distributed to member agencies in each of our six regions across the province last year.



## *Why We* **Rely on You**

Approximately 98 per cent of the food we distribute comes to us through donations. Hungry Nova Scotians rely on us and we rely on the generosity of the community to help support them.

Food is not a fixed bill that must be paid by a certain time, so unfortunately when families are struggling to get by, that budget is often the first to get cut. And studies have shown that families with poor access to nutritious food are more vulnerable to chronic illness, stress and depression, and a child's chance for success is greatly decreased.

Providing support for the thousands of Nova Scotians who count on us each month is a large task, and one we certainly could not accomplish without the help of the community.

## *Upholding* **the Code of Ethics**

As a member of Food Banks Canada, we strictly follow the Ethical Food Banking Code which states that Feed Nova Scotia and its member agencies will:

1. Provide food and other assistance to those needing help regardless of race, national or ethnic origin, citizenship, colour, religion, sex, sexual orientation, income source, age or mental or physical ability.
2. Treat all those who access services with the utmost dignity and respect.
3. Implement best practices in the proper and safe storage and handling of food.
4. Respect the privacy of those served, and will maintain the confidentiality of personal information.
5. Not require payment of any kind for donated food or consumer products, at any time from those assisted by their respective programs.
6. Acquire and share food in a spirit of cooperation with other food banks and food programs.
7. Strive to make the public aware of the existence of hunger, and of the factors that contribute to it.
8. Recognize that food banks are not a viable long-term response to hunger, and devote part of their activities to reducing the need for food assistance.
9. Represent accurately, honestly and completely their respective mission and activities to the larger community.

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