



## DISTRIBUTION SITE

### FOOD SAFETY FACT SHEET

Congratulations on your participation in the Waste Hunger, Not Food Kern County (WHNF) program. We are excited for your organization to start this journey and help us achieve our goal of feeding those in need. To get you started, we have developed this food safety fact sheet to help you safely serve the community the rescued food. Should you have any questions regarding any of the product you receive that is not covered in this document, please contact an Environmental Health Specialist at 661-862-8740.

#### EQUIPMENT

WHNF accepts a variety of foods, all of which can be received by your site if you have the right equipment. In order to accept cold foods, facilities should have at minimum a **refrigerator/freezer** to ensure the temperature of the food can be maintained. The unit(s) should be large enough to hold all cold foods received, whether they be refrigerated or frozen. Stand-alone refrigerator or freezer units are acceptable.

Facilities which choose to accept only shelf stable, prepackaged foods (such as bottled beverages, cereals and canned foods) **must provide their own containers/boxes to accept the food** and should have a **clean and secure area** to store the foods. The area shall be large enough to store all items delivered with no overflow into unsecured areas. If possible, the foods should be elevated 6 inches off of the floor.

If the distribution site intends to serve the food, the facility shall be equipped with either an operable stove, oven or microwave capable of reheating any cold food to 165° F.

In addition, all facilities shall be equipped with a **hand wash sink** supplied with soap and single use paper towels or a hand dryer. The sink shall provide warm water and be accessible at all times to any staff/volunteers handling food.

#### FOOD SAFETY

Staff/volunteers at the distribution site should be vigilant during deliveries. Donations sites shall only distribute wholesome, untampered food to recipients. WHNF staff conduct visual assessments and temperature checks of donated foods upon pick up. Temperatures are logged again during drop off. Distribution site staff/volunteers should **inspect the delivery** for the following signs which indicate unsafe food: decay/rot, broken or torn packaging, out of temperature foods, dents on canned goods along the seams, bulging cans, gnaw marks, evidence of vermin. If the delivery is found to be unsafe, the site should ask WHNF staff to weigh the product, document it and dispose of the food accordingly (either compost or garbage bin).

## **DISTRIBUTION**

Each staff person/volunteer who prepares food items for distribution shall conduct a visual assessment of the food. If any food is found to be unsafe during this time, the steps as listed in the "FOOD SAFETY" section shall be followed.

Once accepted, the following food types shall be **distributed to recipients within 3 days**, unless otherwise specified:

- Precut, packaged produce, unless an expiration date is indicated (i.e. carrot sticks, sliced apples)
- Prepackaged frozen foods, unless commercially processed (examples?)
- Cold held prepared food items (i.e. cartons of milk, yogurt)

Commercially prepackaged potentially hazardous food items continuously held at temperature shall be used by the expiration date indicated on their packaging. Examples of this type of food include milk, sandwiches and salads.

Shelf stable, prepackaged foods, such as chips and cookies, can be held for distribution until the expiration date is reached.

Whole, uncut produce can be held for distribution until the quality dictates.

Should the facility choose to reheat any of the prepared or prepackaged cold foods for distribution to recipients, staff/volunteers shall ensure that the food has reached an internal temperature of 165° F. Reheating can be achieved with an oven, stove or microwave. In no case shall a distribution site hold hot food for longer than 1 hour.

## **CLEANING**

Distribution site shall provide regular cleaning of any food storage or food preparation/serving areas. As needed, storage racks, bins or other items used to store food, shall be **cleaned and sanitized** using an appropriate chlorine concentration. Facilities shall inspect their food storage areas on a daily basis for cleanliness, presence of vermin, or any other condition which could render food unsafe. This includes a check of all refrigeration or freezer units to ensure that they are capable of holding food at 41° F or below. If any condition is found to render the food storage/preparation area unsafe, the distribution site shall cease accepting donated food and discard any potentially unsafe food. Once the unsafe conditions have been corrected, the facility may resume accepting donations.