



## **SURPLUS FOOD AND NON-FOOD DONATIONS GUIDE**

### **Introduction**

One third of all the food produced in South Africa is lost or wasted before it even reaches our plates, while more than 30 million people are food insecure or at risk each day.

FoodForward SA's vision is "a South Africa without hunger." To achieve this vision, we work with food supply chain partners such as farmers, manufacturers, retailers, restaurants etc. to recover good quality, edible surplus food for redistribution to a network of thousands of verified non-profit beneficiary organisations (BOs) that provide vital services in under-served communities and collectively feed thousands of vulnerable people daily.

The aim of our cost-effective model is to provide a B2B solution to food value chain partners, so that their food loss and waste is reduced, along with the high costs and the negative impact on the environment and climate, while helping to address food insecurity and malnutrition at scale.

### **Why Donate Surplus Food**

1. To reduce your impact on the environment and mitigate climate change
2. To improve your ESG profile.
3. To reduce the cost of reverse logistics
4. To attract and retain dedicated employees by supporting social causes.
5. To offset costs of food donors by them receiving tax incentives for donating food, reduce their waste costs, and improve your bottom line.
6. To be a good corporate citizen and do the right thing.

### **Purpose of this Guide**

"Donation of food that is fit for human consumption is the next best thing to do if this food cannot be sold." (Consumer Goods Council of South Africa). The purpose of this guide is to make donating good food that cannot be sold, simple and clear. It outlines the products that can be donated to FoodForward SA, as well as the procedure for sorting, dispatching and collection of goods.

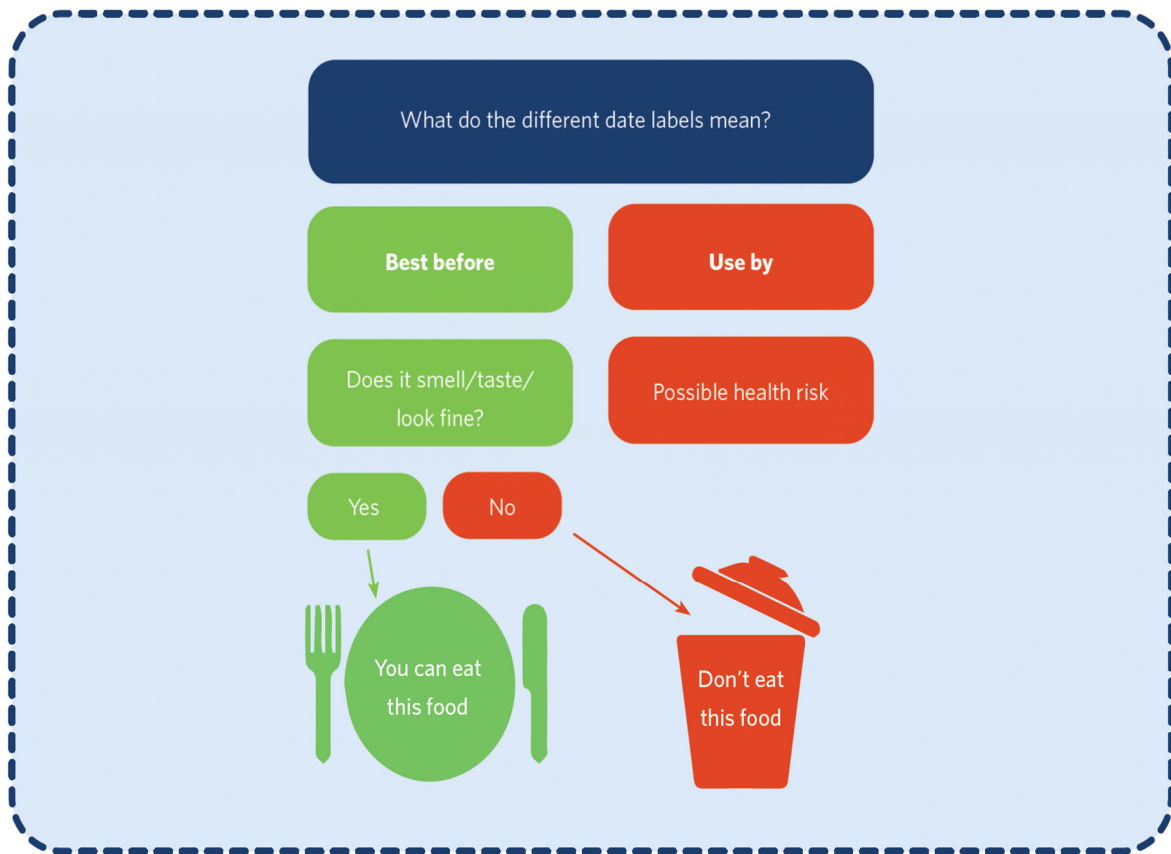
## Which Products can be Donated?

There are three types of dates that may appear on pre-packaged foods:

1. The one date relates to when food should no longer be consumed, known as the “**use by**” date, and may not be donated. This is also known as the expiry date of the product.
2. The second date is one that is commonly used on pre-packaged foods in South Africa. This is known as the “**best before**” date. This date indicates that the food may not be at the same quality that it was when it was first checked for shelf life, but that it may still be donated, provided that packaging still has integrity, and the contents are still satisfactory.
3. The third date that can be found on packaging is the “**sell by**” date, which is used by retailers to manage stock on their shelves.

An easy way to understand the difference between the various dates is shown below. The food is often okay to eat after the best before date. Store the food according to the instructions on the packaging.





4. Products that can't be used in in-store service departments for reworking but are still fit for human consumption and have not expired yet.
5. Low-risk food items can be donated if not yet expired.
6. Canned items can be donated provided that there is no oxidation of the can, gassing (bloated / swollen can), colour or smell changes. There should be no denting at the seams of cans or any pin holes or tampering with the top of the can.
7. Dry goods / grocery products can be donated if there are no visual signs of mould, rodent damage, bad smells, broken packages and not contaminated; examples: sugar, pasta, flour, sunflower oil, biscuits, long life milk, maize, snacks, chips, beverages, etc. Please refer to the information below for a more extensive list of long shelf life products and what to look out for.
8. Bakery & confectionary products packaged in food safe clear bags with no visual defects, contamination or mould growth or bad smells, and not expired yet.
9. No cream cakes or pies may be donated unless they have been stored at the correct temperature and are safely packaged.
10. Products packaged appropriately and delivered with all packaging intact.
11. Always ask: Will you eat the product that you want to donate? If NO, then do not donate it.

## **Packaging of Products**

Products that are to be donated should be carefully packed and set aside on specific pallets designated for FoodForward SA. If bulk goods have various dates, these dates should be reflected on the pallet sheet, along with the type of goods, for example Perishable Food, Non-perishable Food or Non-food groceries.

## **Product Specific Guidelines**

### **Canned Goods**

1. May **not** be donated past their 'use by' or 'expiry' date.
2. May be donated up to 7 days past the 'best before' date.
3. May be donated up to 7 days past their 'sell by' date.
4. Canned items can be donated provided that there is no oxidation of the can, gassing ( bloated / swollen can), colour or smell changes. There should be no denting at the seams of cans, leakage or any pin holes, or tampering with the top of the can.

### **Boxed Dry Goods**

1. May not be donated past the 'use by' or 'expiry' date.
2. May be donated up to 7 days past the 'best before' date.
3. Do not donate if: inner packaging is split open, packaging is damp or stained, signs of pests.

### **Packaged Dry Goods (Not boxed)**

1. May not be donated past the 'use by' or 'expiry' date.
2. May be donated up to 7 days past the 'best before' date.
3. May be donated up to 7 days past their 'sell by' date.
4. Do not donate if packaging is opened, damp or stained or there are signs of pests or packaging and contents are compromised in any way.

### **Packaged Wet Goods (UHT Milk; Juices; Sauces etc.) and Fresh Produce**

1. May not be donated past the 'use by' or 'expiry' date.
2. May be donated up to 7 days past the 'best before' date.
3. May be donated up to 7 days past their 'sell by' date.

### **Personal Care Products**

1. May **not** be donated past the 'use by' or 'expiry' date.
2. May be donated up to 7 days past the 'best before' date.
3. May be donated up to 7 days past their 'sell by' date.
4. Items such as toilet rolls, tampons, sanitary pads, and nappies that have open packaging may be donated.

5. All personal care items can be donated except for the following:
  - Leaking liquid-based products such as shampoo, roll on deodorants and moisturisers.
  - Aerosol sprays that do not have a spray nozzle.
  - Any product that is not usable anymore.

### **General Household Products**

1. Household products may **not** be donated past the 'use by' or 'expiry' date.
2. Products that have a seal or foil covering that is removed may not be donated.
3. All household products can be donated except for pest control products and the following:
  - Leaking liquid-based products such as bleach, Handy Andy, and any other liquid cleaners and detergents.
  - Aerosol sprays that do not have a spray nozzle.
  - Any product that is not usable anymore.
4. Washing Powder from open packaging can be decanted into boxes with a plastic liner inserted to prevent leakage. The boxed washing powder can then be donated.

### **PRODUCTS THAT MAY NOT BE DONATED**

- Food products that are not suitable for human consumption or past their 'use by' or 'expiry' date .
- Products that are decayed / rotten and not fit for consumption.
- Products that have been recalled or declared unfit for human consumption.
- Foods in bulging, rusty, leaking or severely dented cans, or compromised packaging.
- Open or torn containers where food is exposed to potential contamination.
- Any food showing signs of spoilage or decay (such as mould or a bad odour or unnatural colouring).
- Foods that have been contaminated by insects, rodents or chemicals.
- Always ask: Will you eat the product that you want to donate? If NO then DO NOT donate it.
- In addition to the above, please note below the specific list of goods that may not be donated.

### **Products that are not accepted by FoodForward SA**

The following goods will not be accepted as donations:

1. Baby formula and foods for infants and young children (0-36 months)
2. Pet food and pet products
3. Alcohol and Beer / Alcoholic and Beer Products
4. Tobacco and Tobacco products
5. Toys
6. Weapons
7. Hazardous chemicals

8. Medication (Scripted or non-scripted)
9. Electrical goods
10. Clothing
11. Shoes
12. Stationery or books
13. Gardening products
14. Pesticides
15. Furniture
16. Kitchenware
17. Ornaments or decorative items
18. Fireworks
19. Car care products
20. Fresh Shellfish and seafood
21. Sushi
22. Fresh Meat and/or poultry
23. Unpackaged Prepared food
24. Unpackaged Buffet food
25. Unlabelled food
26. Animal feed and animal care products
27. Expired food and non-food groceries that do not meet the requirements listed in this guide

### **Checklist for First Time Donations**

1. Assign a designated person or persons in your company to liaise with FFSA.
2. Ask for a face-to-face meeting with someone from FFSA.
3. Make sure you have reviewed and signed the FFSA Food Donations Agreement.
4. Determine which products in your inventory are suitable for regular donation.
5. Check if they can collect the food.
6. Discuss suitable pick-up times.
7. Check if the products require refrigeration.
8. Provide proper source documentation of products.
9. Ask for a tax receipt for your donation.
10. When you have some time, you and your staff can volunteer at FFSA.

### **References:**

South African Food Loss and Waste Initiative Food Donation Best Practice Guidelines, December 2023