

Donating to Your Local Food Shelf

During COVID-19: FAQs

Food banks around the state are keeping up with growing need and are sending out more food than ever. People rely on food shelves, and food shelves rely on community donations to continue to serve people who need it most. Please consider making a monetary donation or donating non-perishable and household goods to your local food shelf to help keep shelves stocked!

Q: Is it safe to accept donations of packaged/fresh items?

A: Yes, it is safe to accept donations! The virus is respiratory-spread, and according to the WHO unless the item has been sneezed or coughed on risk of transmission is very low. The FDA is reporting that there is currently no evidence of food or food packaging being associated with transmission of COVID-19.

Q: How do I safely bring donations to my food shelf?

A: Call your local food shelf ahead of time to confirm their hours for accepting donations. Please only donate if you and members of your household are in good health, and follow hand washing best practices before gathering up your items to donate. You may also consider making a financial contribution to your local food shelf.

Q: Do I need to wash or sanitize produce? What about disinfecting cans or boxes?

A: At this time, it is recommended that you follow normal produce washing recommendations. Only wash produce with food-safe products. UMN School of Public Health professor Craig Hedber says that "there is no identified need to try to decontaminate individual items...Good food handling practices and food safety measures needed to prevent foodborne disease transmission should be sufficient to eliminate any concern about coronaviruses."

See more here:

<https://www.fda.gov/food/buy-store-serve-safe-food/selecting-and-serving-produce-safely>

<https://www.fda.gov/food/food-safety-during-emergencies/food-safety-and-coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19>

