



NTFB Partner Agency Food Quality Criteria 101

Owner: Community Partner Relations

The North Texas Food Bank (NTFB) Partner Agency Food Quality Criteria 101 covers the organizations operational standard of the acceptance, rejection, and disposal of food by partner agencies based on the quality measures outlined within this document.

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1.0 **Revision History** *(Internal Use Only)*

Revision	Change Description/History	Date	DRR #
A	New Document	04/27/2021	226

NTFB maintains an updated version of this document via the NTFB Agency Zone Partner Portal and via it's internal Integrated Management System (IMS).

2.0 Purpose

The purpose of this document is to outline and establish the required standard by which the North Texas Food Bank and Partner Agency accepts, rejects, keeps, or scraps food. Examples of acceptable and un-acceptable product are outlined within this document.

Acceptable product will be either be:

- Accepted into inventory upon receipt (from Canned Food Drive donations, Deliveries (Procurement), NTFB or Retail Direct pick-up)
- Cleared to stay in inventory if inspected after the receipt date upon routine inspection

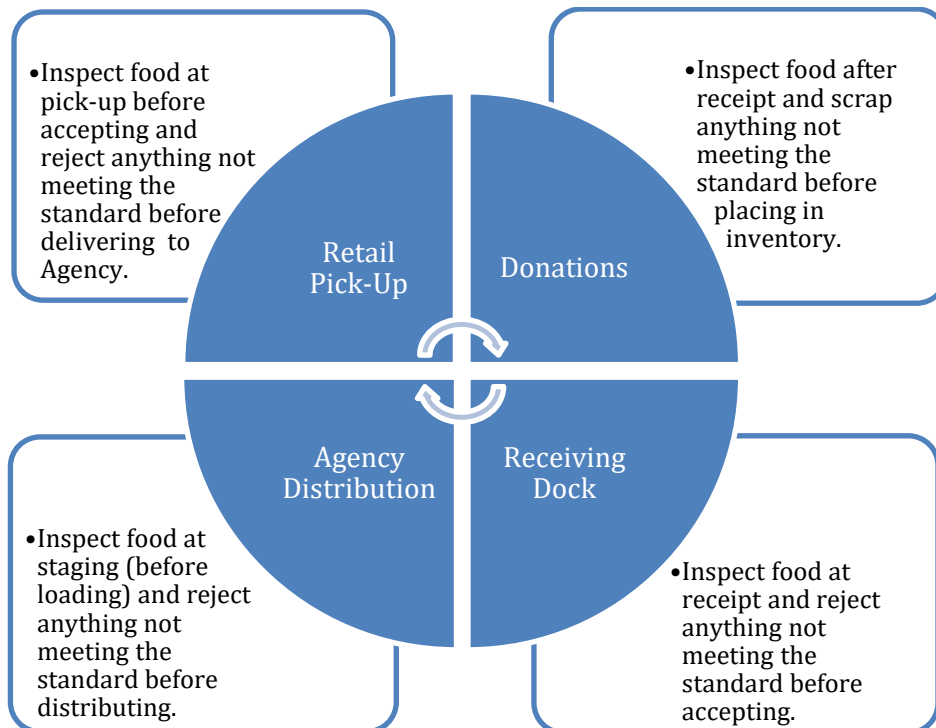
Un-acceptable product will either be:

- Identified for composting if it is past the date of use
 - Only applicable for fresh fruits and vegetables
- Deemed for trash if it does not meet composting identification

3.0 Scope

Recommended that Partner Agencies to adhere to the standard outlined in this document.

4.0 Food Quality Standard Overview



Inspection of the food supply should happen before food is accepted (or received), before it is distributed, and routinely throughout the food storage process. The critical points for inspection are outlined below:

- Canned Food Drive Donation Door

- Retail Pick-up
- Receiving Dock
- Staging and Distribution

4.1 Manufacturer's Packaging

All packaged foods (excluding fresh produce) must have intact manufacturer's packaging and labeling in order to be accepted into inventory.

- In-tact packaging and labeling requires that brand name, product description, expiration best-by/use/expiration date, all ingredients and components of the nutrition facts label and allergen information are visible and legible, and that no holes, cracks, or tears exist in the packaging. Examples below in Section 7.0.
- Volunteers that are sorting donated foods or retail pick-up product must be instructed to toss any item where the manufacturers label is not intact or cannot be repaired.
- Torn manufacturer labels are only permitted if they can be repaired to be completely legible and intact.

4.2 Expired Foods

Expired foods will not be accepted unless they meet the Feeding America or USDA out-of-date food distribution guidelines. See [Section 9.0](#) on page 31.



4.3 Contaminated Foods

Contaminated foods can be accepted or rejected based on what is outlined below. Any acceptable levels of contamination will also be outlined below as applicable.

4.3.1 Biological Contaminants

Biological contaminants exist in the form of bacteria, viruses, parasites, and fungi. In the agency setting you will primarily be concerned about biological contaminants in the form of **bacteria** and **fungi (mold and yeast)**. See below for descriptions and examples of each.

BIOLOGICAL CONTAMINANTS			
TYPE	CHARACTERISTICS	EXAMPLE	DETERMINATION
Bacteria	Invisible to the human eye	Evidence of bacteria in food: air inside of a refrigerated chicken package	Reject
Mold	Visible to the human eye	Typical for cheese and bread products	Reject
	Patches of orange, green, black, brown, pink or purple discoloration with a fuzzy appearance		
Yeast	Visible to the human eye	Typical for fruit, milk, butter, margarine, and yogurt	Reject
	Oval patches of white, thready discoloration		

4.3.2 Chemical Contaminants

Chemical contaminants exist in the form of **cleaners, sanitizers, polishes, machine lubricants, and pesticides. Deodorizers, first-aid products, and health and beauty products** are also potential chemical contaminants. See below for ways to mitigate a potential chemical contamination of the food supply.

CHEMICAL CONTAMINANTS		
CONTROL MEASURES	REQUIREMENTS	GUIDANCE
Storage	Store all chemicals away from prep areas, sorting areas, food storage areas and food contact areas.	Never store chemicals above food or food contact surfaces.
Purchase	All chemicals must be purchased from approved, reputable suppliers.	Use chemicals for their intended use and follow the manufacturer's directions.
	All chemicals must be approved for use in a foodservice operation.	Follow manufacturer's directions and regulatory requirements for throwing out chemicals.
<i>Determination: Any food with evidence of liquid or chemical contamination must be rejected or scrapped.</i>		



4.3.3 Physical Contaminants

Physical contaminants exist in the form of **objects that physically get into food** and **natural objects that are left in food**. In the agency setting you will primarily be concerned about physical objects. See below for examples.

PHYSICAL CONTAMINANTS	
TYPE	DETERMINATION
Nail (metal) or Metal shavings	Reject
Wood chippings	Reject
Fingernail	Reject
Staple	Reject
Bandage	Reject
Glass	Reject
Jewelry	Reject
Dirt	Accept- <u>only</u> if contained on fresh produce or within food that will be washed before use Reject- in all other instances

Note: *If any of the above physical contaminants are on the outside of boxes, check to ensure that they are not in contact with any ready to eat foods (produce, lunch meat, bagged spinach, etc.) or inside the packaging of any foods (meat, rice, pasta, etc.) before accepting the product.*



4.3.4 Pest and Pest By-Product




The presence of any pests or their by-product (excrement, larvae, pupa, body castings) in any capacity should be taken as a serious risk to our food supply.

See below for guidance on how to identify and handle any potential pest threats to your food supply.



PEST INFESTATIONS			
LOCATION	ASSOCIATED AREAS	EXAMPLE	DETERMINATION
Receiving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donations • Retail Pick-Up • NTFB Warehouse 	Presence of insects, rodent excrement, moths, or larvae in load	Reject entire load <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notify CPR Team
Inventory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal Warehouse Racks or Shelving 	Evidence of live or dead insects, larvae, pupa, or rodent excrement	Immediately notify CPR for awareness purposes

4.3.5 Pest and Pest By-Product continued...

See below for guidance on how to identify any potential pest threats to your food supply.

EXAMPLES OF PEST AND PEST BY-PRODUCT			
TYPE	BY-PRODUCT	EXAMPLE	DETERMINATION
Weevils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult Weevils • Eggs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Laid inside the grain kernel 	 	Trash- all infested, bagged product immediately Notify CPR Team <i>immediately</i> if product was received from the NTFB Warehouse or from a Retail Direct vendor. Provide pictures and item numbers as evidence.
Indian Meal Moths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult Moths • Larvae (Maggots) • Pupa/Chrysalis • Eggs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Laid inside the bag or grains/beans 		Trash- all infested, bagged product immediately Notify CPR Team <i>immediately</i> if product was received from the NTFB Warehouse or from a Retail Direct vendor. Provide







	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Laid with in the flaps or rims of cardboard boxes/gaylords 		<i>pictures and item numbers as evidence.</i>
Rodents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adult rodents (rats, mice, etc.) Holes in the corners and bottoms of boxes Rodent droppings 	See <i>Rodent By-product</i> (left)	Trash <i>Notify CPR Team <u>immediately</u> if product was received from the NTFB Warehouse or from a Retail Direct vendor. Provide pictures and item numbers as evidence.</i>
Avian	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adults birds Bird droppings Feathers 		Glean & Repackage- any boxes with avian excrement Trash- any food with holes or tears in packaging from these lots <i>Notify CPR Team <u>immediately</u> if product was received from the NTFB Warehouse or from a Retail Direct vendor. Provide pictures and item numbers as evidence.</i>



5.0 Fresh Produce

See below for standards on whether to accept, reject, scrap, or keep produce. Pictures represent the common types of produce.

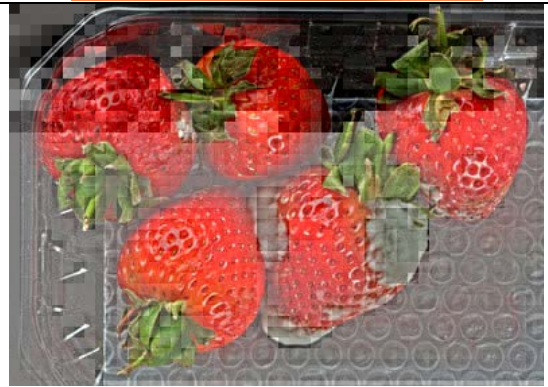
PRODUCE: SPOILAGE AND ROTTEN GUIDANCE		
	ACCEPT/KEEP	REJECT/SCRAP
Apples (Pears)	  	



Bananas





Berries



Glean



		 <p>Trash</p>
<p>Cabbage</p>		



Carrots



Reject- any slimy bags of carrots

Cauliflower



Citrus
(Oranges,
Lemons,
Limes)



Cucumber



Leafy Greens
(Greens, Lettuce, Spinach)

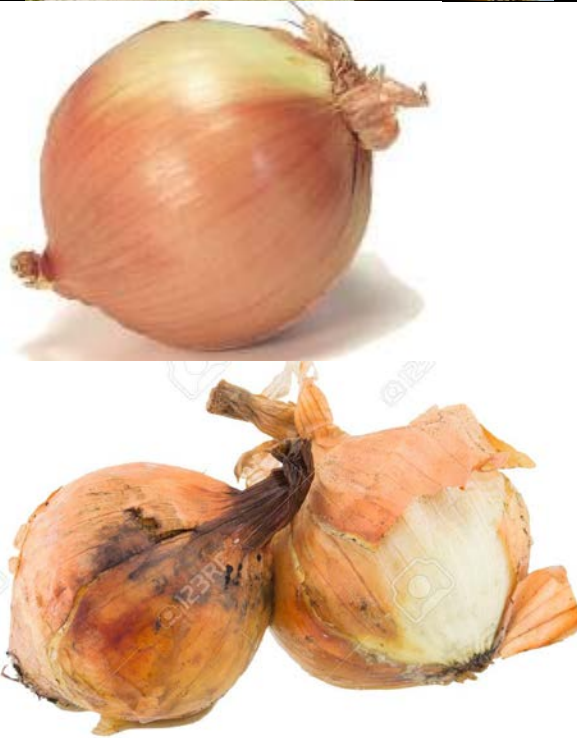


Melon





Onion



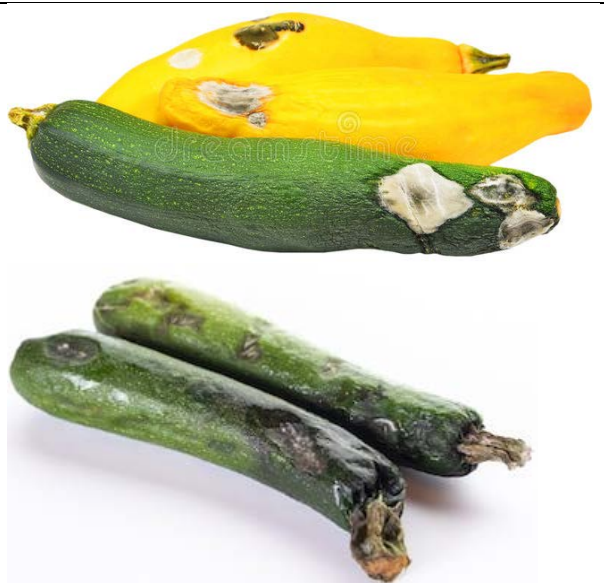
Only keep if not mushy or soft



Potato



Squash
(Yellow,
Spaghetti,
Zucchini)



Tomato


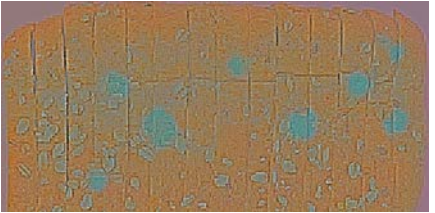



Note: This list does not contain all possible scenarios, when in doubt please reach out to a member of Quality Control to provide a final determination.




6.0 Refrigerated Product (Perishable)

See below for standards on whether to accept, reject, scrap, or keep perishable foods. Pictures represent the common types of biological contaminants associated with perishable foods sourced.

PERISHABLE/REFRIGERATED PRODUCT SPOILAGE GUIDANCE		
	ACCEPT/KEEP	REJECT/SCRAP
Butter	Butter that is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within the Best-By date • No more than 7 days past the Best-By date 	Butter that is <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7 days past the Best-By date and contains no mold • No more than 7 days past the Best-By date, but that we are unable to distribute with a QC safety label
Bread	Bread that is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within date • Out of date only if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refrigerated or frozen upon delivery • and has no mold or spores (see right) • Monitor closely and store refrigerated for no more than 1 week or store frozen for no more than 3 months 	 
Cheese	Block (sealed): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safely store for 6 months (refrigerated/frozen) if no mold present 	



	<p>Sliced (sealed) & Shredded:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safely store for 1 month (refrigerated) if no mold present • Safely store for 3-4 months (frozen) is no mold present 	
Eggs	<p>Eggs that are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within the Best-By date • No more than 7 days past the Best-By date and that we can distribute within that window with a QC safety label 	<p>Eggs that are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7 days past the Best-By date • No more than 7 days past the Best-By date, but that we are unable to distribute quickly with a QC safety label
Milk (Fresh)	<p>Milk that is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within the Best-By date • No more than 7 days past the Best-By date and that we can distribute within that window with the <i>Milk Handout</i> 	<p>Milk that is</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7 days past the Best-By date • No more than 7 days past the Best-By date, but that we are unable to distribute quickly with the <i>Milk Handout</i>
Milk (UHT-Ultra High Temp)	<p>Safely store for 1 month past the Best-By date</p>	<p>Anything that is more than 1 month past the Best-By date</p>
Yogurt (and Sour Cream)	<p>Yogurt that is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within the Best-By date • No more than 7 days past the Best-By date and that we can distribute within that window with a <i>Milk Handout</i> or QC safety label 	<p>Yogurt that is</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7 days past the Best-By date • No more than 7 days past the Best-By date, but that we are unable to distribute with the <i>Milk Handout</i> or <i>QC safety label</i>






7.0 Shelf-Stable Product (Canned and Dry Goods)

See below for standards on whether to accept, reject, scrap, or keep canned foods and dry goods.

7.1 Canned Goods

Pictures represent the common types of irregularities found in canned goods.

CANNED GOODS GUIDANCE		
	ACCEPT/KEEP	REJECT/SCRAP
Dents		
Creases	<p>None- reject any can with a crease or with a point at the corner of any dent</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reject all cans where metal is touching metal 	



Seems (top and bottom)

None- reject:

- All cans where the seem is split or broken
- All cans where the seem is bent or squished

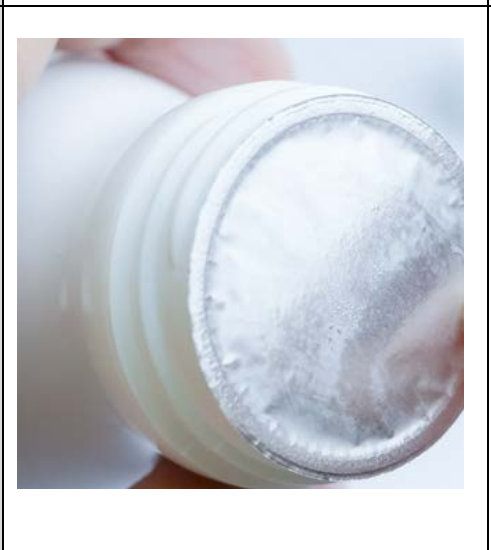


Swollen/Bulging

None- reject all swollen or bulging cans



Holes/Leaking/Broken Seal



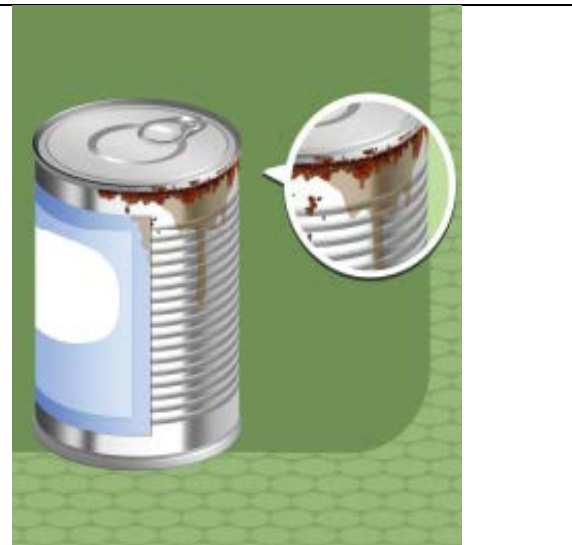
Reject all food:

- With holes in the container or packaging
- That are leaking
- With broken or punctured seals

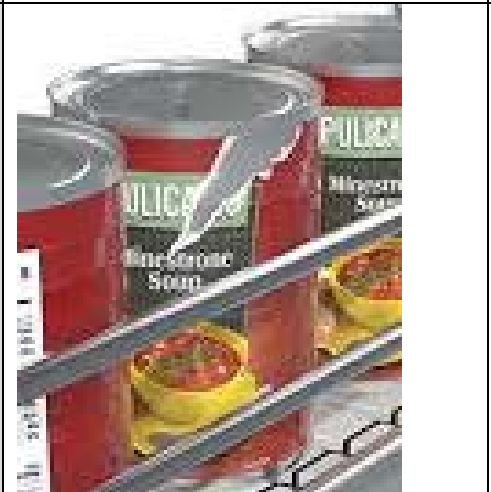


Rust

None- reject all cans and products with rust



Label (Torn or Missing Labels)










The following items must be visible and legible:

- Brand Name
- Common Name
- Content Size (ounces)
- Nutrition Facts label
- Ingredients list
- Allergen info



7.2 Dry Goods

Pictures below represent the common types of package irregularities found in dry goods sourced.

DRY GOODS GUIDANCE		
	ACCEPT/KEEP	REJECT/SCRAP
Leaks/Spills/Stains	None- reject all foods with spills or leaks on the packaging or boxes	Reject all foods with spills or leaks on the packaging or boxes.
Holes	None- reject all foods with holes in the packaging	Reject all foods with holes in the packaging.
Tears (in packaging or label or Missing Labels)	 <p>The following items must be visible and legible:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brand Name • Common Name • Content Size (ounces) • Nutrition Facts label • Ingredients list • Allergen info 	   
Dirty	Reject- any bagged or boxed product with dirt on the packaging	Reject any bagged or boxed product with dirt on the packaging.



No Use-by or Expiration Date	Reject all foods without a visible: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use-by date• Expiration date• Best-By date	Reject all foods without a visible: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use-by date• Expiration date• Best-By date
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8.0 Additional Guidance

- Reject all food that is **moldy, abnormal in color**, or containing **an abnormal, spoiled, or unpleasant odor**.

- Reject all deliveries and pick-ups that show signs of time and temperature abuse and do not meet either the
 - ***Produce Storage/Transport Guidelines*** (from the FA Produce Handling Toolkit) reference on *page 28* or the
 - ***ServSafe Temperature for Food Deliveries Receiving Criteria*** referenced on *page 29*.



PRODUCE STORAGE/TRANSPORT GUIDELINES

PRODUCT	STORAGE TEMP (°F)	ETHYLENE SENSITIVE	ETHYLENE PRODUCER	ODOR SENSITIVE	ODOR PRODUCER	SUSCEPTIBLE TO FREEZING
<i>Apples</i>	32-34	N	Y	Y	N	Y
<i>Bananas</i>	56-58; to ripen 60-65	Y	N	N	N	Y
<i>Beans, Snap/Green</i>	40-45	N	N	N	N	Y
<i>Beans, Lima</i>	37-41	Y	N	N	N	Y
<i>Berries, Blackberries</i>	32-34	N	N	N	N	Y
<i>Berries, Blueberries</i>	32-34	N	N	N	N	Y
<i>Berries, Strawberries</i>	32-34	N	N	N	N	Y
<i>Broccoli</i>	32	Y	N	N	N	Y
<i>Cabbage</i>	32	Y	N	Y	N	N
<i>Cantaloupe</i>	36-41	N	Y	N	N	Y
<i>Carrots</i>	33-35	Y	N	Y	N	N
<i>Cauliflower</i>	32	Y	N	N	N	N
<i>Celery</i>	32-36	N	N	Y	N	N
<i>Corn</i>	34-38	N	N	Y	N	N
<i>Cucumbers</i>	45-50	Y	N	N	N	Y
<i>Mixed Fruit, Fresh Cut</i>	33-41	N	N	N	N	Y
<i>Grapes</i>	30-32	N	N	Y	Y	Y
<i>Grapefruit</i>	CA and AZ: 50-55; FL and TX: 50-60	Y	N	N	N	N
<i>Honeydew</i>	45-50	N	N	N	Y	Y
<i>Lemons</i>	45-48	Y	N	N	N	Y



PRODUCE STORAGE/TRANSPORT GUIDELINES CONTINUED

PRODUCT	STORAGE TEMP (°F)	ETHYLENE SENSITIVE	ETHYLENE PRODUCER	ODOR SENSITIVE	ODOR PRODUCER	SUSCEPTIBLE TO FREEZING
Lettuce Whole	34-36	Y	N	N	N	Y
Lettuce Leaf	34-36	N	N	N	N	N
Nectarines	32-36; to ripen 51-77	Y	Y	N	N	N
Okra	43-45	Y	N	N	N	Y
Onions, Bulb	40-60	Y	N	Y	Y	Y
Onions, Green	32	N	N	N	Y	N
Onions, Sweet	45-55	N	N	Y	Y	Y
Oranges	FL: 32-34; CA: 45-48; AZ & TX: 32-48	N	N	N	Y	Y
Peaches	In-transit: 32-34; Receiving 57-77	Y	Y	N	N	Y
Pears	32; To ripen 60-70	N	Y	Y	Y	Y

*Adapted from the Feeding America Produce Handling Toolkit **Produce Storage/Transport Guidelines***

Ethylene sensitive products should NOT be stored or transported with ethylene-producers. Similarly, odor sensitive products should NOT be stored or transported with odor producers

Data from **The Guide: Produce Availability & Merchandising Guide**



SERVSAFE TEMPERATURE FOR FOOD DELIVERIES RECEIVING CRITERIA	
FOOD	RECEIVING CRITERIA
Fresh Produce or Fish	Receive at 41 degrees Fahrenheit or lower
Fresh Shellfish (oysters, scallops, etc.)	Receive at 45 degrees Fahrenheit or lower
Milk	Receive at 45 degrees Fahrenheit or lower
Shell Eggs	Receive at an air temperature of 45 degrees Fahrenheit or lower
Frozen Food	<p>Must be frozen solid when received</p> <p>Reject:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>anything</u> that contains fluid or water stains on the case or packaging • <u>anything</u> that has air in the packaging • <u>anything</u> with ice crystals or frozen liquids on the food or packaging

*Adapted from the National Restaurants Association ServSafe Managers Food Handler 7th Edition **Temperatures for Food Deliveries Table 5.1***



9.0 Out-of-Date Food Product Distribution Guidelines

GUIDELINES FOR STORAGE TIMES AT FOOD BANKS	
FOOD TYPE	STORAGE TIME RECOMMENDATIONS (FROM DATE OF RECEIPT)
Frozen prepared food	3 months
Non-frozen prepared food	3 days (<i>maximum</i>)
Fresh Produce	Whole- 7 days Cut/Prepared- 48 hours
Frozen meat	3 months
Shell eggs (raw)	7 days
Dairy	7 days (<i>if no unpleasant/foul odor</i>)
Baked goods	3-5 days (<i>if no mold present</i>)
Pre-packaged foods- non-perishable	6 months (<i>Caution with grains, flours, pastas if not held refrigerated due to possible insect infestation</i>)
<p><i>Note: The above guidelines are applicable for foods that are received at the proper temperature. Any foods not being the proper Temperatures for Food Deliveries in Section 8 <u>must</u> be rejected.</i></p>	

*Adapted from the Feeding America Retail and Foodservice Food Safety Guidelines version 26
Guidelines for Storage Times at Food Bank/Agency table*

