

## Donated Food Checklist

Both SAFETY (whether a food is free of disease-causing bacteria and their toxins) and QUALITY (whether a food looks and smells acceptable to eat) should be kept in mind when examining donated food.

***Beware of these signs that food may be UNSAFE to eat.***

### **Foods Stored at Room Temperature**

#### **Cans**

- Too crushed to stack on shelves or open with a manual can opener
- Crushed immediately under the double (end) seam
- Moderate/severe dents at the juncture of side and double (end) seam
- Rust pits severe enough to pierce the can
- Swollen or bulging ends
- Holes, fractures, or punctures
- Evidence of leakage
- Signs of spoilage (spurting; unusual odor or appearance) when opened
- Baby food or formula past the expiration date
- Missing label

#### **Glass Jars**

- Home-canned instead of commercially canned
- Raised, crooked, or loosened lid
- Damaged tamper-resistant seal
- Cracks or chips
- Signs of spoilage (discolored food; cloudy liquid)
- Dirt under the rim
- Baby food past the expiration date

#### **Paperboard Cartons**

- Torn or missing inner packaging in cartons that are slit or opened
- Evidence of insects
- Baby food past the expiration date

#### **Plastic Containers**

- Damaged tamper-resistant seal
- Signs of spoilage (mold, off odor)
- Baby food past the expiration date

### **Foods Stored in the Refrigerator**

- Lukewarm food (above 40° Refrigerator temperature)
- Signs of spoilage (unusual odor or appearance, molds)
- Unsuitable containers (and/or covers) that allow food to be contaminated
- Uncertain handling "history" (questionable reputation of food source)

\_\_\_ Damaged tamper-resistant seals if commercially packaged

**Foods Stored in the Freezer**

\_\_\_ Evidence of thawing (ice on the food or leaking)

(Note: See *Perishable Food Decision Table* [page 65] to decide what to do with these foods.)

\_\_\_ Unsuitable packaging that allows food to be contaminated

**IF IN DOUBT, THROW IT OUT!**

Don't rely on look or smell. Foods that cause food poisoning may look fine and smell acceptable.

Never taste suspicious foods!

\* Adapted from Carolyn Raab, Extension Food and Nutrition Specialist, Oregon State University Extension Service.

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