

POULTRY



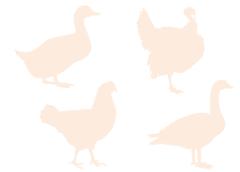
The general rule is that all animal products – meat, poultry, eggs, etc. – donated to an Emergency Food Organization (EFO) must meet the same standards as animal products sold in a retail store. There are a few exceptions to this rule for some lower risk foods. Donors and EFOs can take steps to help assure that a well-intended contribution can be safely delivered to people in need. This guide addresses donations for poultry: chicken, duck, geese, turkey and any other domesticated bird.

The USDA regulates poultry producers that process more than 20,000 birds a year. Under a food processor license, WSDA regulates poultry producers that process less than 20,000 birds a year. If labeling and transportation / storage practices are followed, an EFO can accept all poultry processed in a USDA-regulated facility or food processor that WSDA has licensed to process poultry. A poultry producer that processes less than a 1,000 birds a year under a special state license cannot donate birds because the special permit requires the sales to the ultimate consumer at the producer's farm.

To the right, you will see a step-by-step guide for donating poultry to an EFO. Please work with your Food Safety Contact at each step to ensure safe and wholesome donation.

For farmers looking to donate and who do not have access to

POULTRY Donations Guide



Rancher/Farmer

Poultry must be processed at a USDA-regulated facility or the facility of a food processor licensed to process poultry. Farmers wanting to donate poultry to an EFO but lack access to a USDA-regulated facility may be able to make arrangements with a food processor licensed by WSDA to process poultry. Contact the WSDA Food Safety Program at foodsafety@agr.wa.gov or (360) 902-1876 for more information.

Retail/Labeling

Donated poultry must be labeled. WSDA has limited labeling requirements which, at a minimum, must include: Product name; processor name; processor's address; any and all allergen information; and the statement: Exempt - P.L. 90-492.

USDA inspected product labeling will include:

This product was prepared from inspected and passed poultry. Some food products may contain bacteria that could cause illness if the product is mishandled or cooked improperly.

Handling

For your protection, follow these safe handling instructions:

- Keep refrigerated or frozen.
- Thaw in refrigerator or microwave.
- Keep raw poultry separate from other foods.
- Wash working surfaces (including cutting boards), utensils and hands after touching raw poultry.
- Cook thoroughly.
- Keep hot foods hot.
- Refrigerate leftovers immediately or discard.



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**FOOD
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a **USDA** inspected facility, they may work with their **WSDA Food Safety Program** contact to learn more about the requirements and facilities that have a **WSDA** exemption for donation to an **EFO**.

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DOH: Department of Health

EFO: Emergency Food Organization (food banks, food pantries, meal programs)

USDA: U.S. Department of Agriculture

WSDA: WA Department of Agriculture

Poultry: Living animal

Meat: Slaughtered animal



Washington
State Department of
Agriculture

**Food Safety and
Consumer Services Division**

Food Assistance

PO Box 42560

1111 Washington St SE

Olympia, WA 98504

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Do you need this publication in an alternate format?

Please call the **WSDA Receptionist** at 360-902-1976 or TTY 800-833-6388.

Transportation/Storage

Meat must be transported in a frozen or chilled container at a temperature of 35°F or lower. All meat must remain refrigerated or frozen. Refrigerated meat should be distributed or used within 3-5 days, frozen meat may be kept in the freezer between 4-12 months.

Private Citizen

An **EFO** must not accept meat from a private citizen because the **EFO** cannot sufficiently verify proper handling of this high-risk food (even if the donor is known to the **EFO** as a decent and reliable person).

A Note About the Good Samaritan Donation Act

RCW 69.80.031 offers food donors protection from criminal and civil liability. The act, however, is not a “get-out-of-jail-free” card relieving donors and **EFOs** of the duty of acting responsibly. The act requires that the donated food be “apparently wholesome.” Animal products can look just fine but still carry *E. coli*, salmonella or other disease. Therefore, verifying whether animal products are, in fact, “apparently wholesome” requires knowing whether the food has been handled in accordance with suitable food safety standards.