

# Donations Policy



**Cats' Cupboard: K-State Food Pantry** is committed to maintaining the highest level of food safety as set forth by the Kansas Department of Agriculture Food Safety and Lodging. Donated items are distributed at no cost to individuals in need within the K-State community.

Cats' Cupboard accepts donations of food, hygiene items and kitchen supplies from individuals, food banks, businesses/ departments/organizations, and [Flint Hills Food Recovery](#).

Individuals, food banks, businesses/departments/organizations CAN donate:

- Fresh, uncut produce
- Non-perishable/shelf-stable food
- Baked goods and pastries produced in a commercial facility
- New/gently used kitchen supplies
- Hygiene/beauty supplies
- Cash or gift cards

Cats' Cupboard cannot accept refrigerated products (including prepared foods, eggs and dairy) or frozen products (including meat) from individuals or non-licensed vendors.

Businesses/departments/organizations who are not licensed food establishments may donate refrigerated products or frozen products on a case-by-case basis. Reach out to Cats' Cupboard professional staff to discuss your donation (785-532-0366).

Licensed/regulated food service providers (restaurants, grocers, bakeries, etc.) are encouraged to donate through [Flint Hills Food Recovery](#).

KSU Foundation Gift In-Kind Form is available upon request. You may wish to consult your tax advisor concerning the deductible portion of contributions made through KSU Foundation.



### **Cats' Cupboard CANNOT accept:**

- Cooked food/meals (food that has been heated/reheated) donated by an individual or non-licensed establishment
- Severely dented cans
- Rusted cans/containers
- Food previously served to the public (self-service, buffet, etc.)
- Foods not prepared in a licensed, commercial kitchen
- Foods that are open, have a broken seal, or show signs of tampering
- Partial containers of hygiene/beauty products and supplies
  - Exceptions: individually wrapped items (e.g. pads and tampons), unused toilet paper or paper towels
- Foods held at improper temperatures
- Foods past expiration (does not include Best by/Sell by, etc.)
- Clothing/shoes
- Medicine of any kind
- Alcoholic beverages, foods containing alcohol or items promoting alcohol consumption or items promoting use

Cats' Cupboard may accept products past date as long as other requirements are met.

### **THREE THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT FOOD DATE LABELING**

There are a variety of phrases used on food date labels in the U.S. to describe quality dates such as “Best if Used By/Before”, “Sell-By”, “Use-By”, and “Freeze-By”. This can be confusing and may result in discarding perfectly wholesome food, which is costly to consumers and harms the environment.

Here are three things you need to know about date labeling to avoid throwing away food that is still safe to consume:

- 1** Except for infant formula, food date labels are not indicators of food safety and are not required by Federal law. Manufacturers provide dating to help consumers and retailers decide when food is of peak quality.
- 2** Becoming more commonly used is the USDA-recommended “Best if Used By” label to signal when the product is at its best flavor or quality.
- 3** If the food date label passes during home storage, the food product (except for infant formula) should still be safe and wholesome if handled properly until the time spoilage is evident. Spoiled foods will develop an off-odor, flavor, or texture due to naturally occurring spoilage bacteria. If a food has developed such spoilage characteristics, it should not be eaten.