

	<b>TECHNICAL NOTE No. 01/2014</b>	
	<b>Donations of Foodstuffs</b>	<b>Ref. No. 1/4187/14/SC</b>

As is well-known, the fundamental aim of European food safety legislation is the achievement of a high level of protection for human life and health. Hence, in spite of the charitable context in which donations of foodstuffs are made, the safeguarding of the interests of their beneficiaries cannot be neglected. These beneficiaries often belong to high-risk groups which require particular care especially regarding the possibility of contracting infections and food poisoning, such as older people, children, and chronically sick people with depressed immune systems.

It is therefore fundamental that the receiving agencies for donated products establish appropriate procedures for the reception, classification, packaging and preservation of the foods received before forwarding them to their final destinations. These procedures could even appear in Good Practice Guides adapted for the purpose.

Minimum rules of hygiene should thus be respected, whether for the staff handling the foodstuffs or the facilities and equipment in which they are handled, namely:

- The transportation of foodstuffs must be carried out with due care for hygiene, respecting the appropriate storage temperatures for the products, in order to avoid their contamination or damage;
- Vehicles for transporting foodstuffs must be kept in a good state of repair and must be clean and disinfected with a frequency in accordance with their use;
- Non-perishable foods must be stored in cool, dry places, free from odours and away from direct sunlight;
- Perishable foods which need to be stored at low temperatures must be stored in refrigeration or frozen storage chambers, ensuring maintenance of the cold chain and correct stowage of foodstuffs;
- Traceability of products should be maintained, particularly in respect of the origins and the quantity of products donated - the receiving agency must maintain an up-to-date register of donations;

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- Appropriate management of stocks should be carried out, so that the first products to be stored are also the first to be consumed, on the *first in, first out* (FIFO) principle;
- Agencies should ensure that all products stored are identified, either by their name and date of reception or by their expiry date, in the case of labelled products;
- In the case of direct donation of foods by licensed established food sector companies, these should ensure that they satisfy the hygiene requirements established in Regulation 852/2004 of 29 April and the specific provisions of Regulation 853/2004.

In order to harmonise the applicable rules and criteria with the special situation of charitable institutions and activities, any questions arising in this area should be directed to the Department of Food Risks and Laboratories located at First Floor, Building F, No. 22 Estrada Paço do Lumiar, 1649-038 Lisbon, by email to the email address: [laboratoriosasae@asae.pt](mailto:laboratoriosasae@asae.pt) or by telephone to the telephone number: +351 217108400.

Lisbon, 17.09.2014

Inspector-General

Pedro Portugal Gaspar

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