At a Glance: Safely distributing unused human food for use as animal food

For more information please see the detailed fact sheet on the following pages.

DO

✔	Distribute food that is **Safe** but will not be distributed for human food use because of supply-chain or food quality issues.
✔	If distributing packaged food, make sure it is **Labeled** with a statement of identity and a list of all ingredients.
✔	**Consider Submitting** a diversion or reconditioning request if food is adulterated and needs to be re-processed to be safe for animals to consume.
✔	**Remove** packaging that makes the food unsafe for animals to consume.
✔	**Hold** the food in a way that keeps it safe before it is distributed for use as animal food.
✔	**Follow** all state and local government regulations for animal food.

DON'T

X	Distribute food that is **Toxic** to animals. Remember that foods that are safe for some species may not be safe for others. If in doubt, find out or don't distribute to animal food.
X	Distribute food that is **Adulterated** or **Contaminated** with food safety hazards such as chemicals, physical hazards, or pathogenic bacteria.
X	Distribute meat products for swine food without following the heating requirements in the Swine Health Protection Act.
X	Distribute **foods with mammalian protein** for ruminant (e.g., cattle, sheep, goats) food.

Questions: Contact CVM at askCVM@fda.hhs.gov

Center for Veterinary Medicine (CVM) Fact Sheet
Safely distributing unused human food for animal food use

WHO/WHAT: If you are a restaurant, restaurant supplier, food warehouse, or grocery store that has unused human food that is not adulterated, don't let it go to waste. You can send that food to animal food use. Restaurant and grocery store waste is commonly used as animal food and is a valuable way to prevent it from going into the landfill.

HOW: You may send it directly to a farmer, or other animal caretaker. You may also send it to another person who either supplies ingredients to animal food manufacturers or who manufactures animal food for pets, livestock, or other animals.

DO: Include food that is safe for human consumption but will not be distributed to humans because of supply-chain or food quality issues. Examples include human food that is stale or past a quality date.

DON'T: Include food with ingredients that are unsafe for the animal that will ultimately be consuming it. For example, the artificial sweetener xylitol is safe for humans but can be toxic to dogs. However, it may be safe for another species, such as swine. Another example is chocolate, which can be toxic to dogs. If you are in doubt, find out by contacting askCVM@fda.hhs.gov, or don't distribute it.

If you want to recondition or divert a human food that is adulterated or contaminated for use as animal food, we recommend that you follow the instructions to submit a diversion or reconditioning request in FDA's Compliance Policy Guide Sec. 675.200: Diversion of Adulterated Food to Acceptable Animal Feed Use.

MEAT PRODUCTS: There are special considerations for food containing meat, depending on the species of animals that will be eating the food. Specifically, there are several animal diseases that can be spread by uncooked, or improperly cooked, meat products. Food that contains meat ingredients might still be used, or sent to be further processed, for example by a renderer, but they must be used carefully.

- Swine - the Swine Health Protection Act (SHPA) as administered by the United States Department of Agriculture applies to food containing meat products that will be fed to swine. For more information on requirements for feeding food waste to swine in your state, please call 1-866-536-7593.
- Ruminants such as cattle, sheep, and goats – you must follow FDA's requirements that prohibit the use of most mammalian protein in food for ruminant animals (21 CFR 589.2000).

PACKAGING: Packaged food may need to be removed by you or the person(s) the food is being distributed to because packaging materials may be a physical food safety hazard for the animal consuming the food.

LABELING: Packaged food must bear a statement of identity and a list of ingredients. Animal food DOES NOT have to meet the Food Allergen Labeling and Consumer Protection Act (FALCPA) requirements.

HOLDING: Hold the food in a way that keeps it safe before it is distributed to animals. For example, don't put it in a bin that people may mistakenly throw trash or chemicals into.

NON-FEDERAL FOOD SAFETY REQUIREMENTS: Your state government may also regulate animal food. The Association of American Feed Control Officials has a link to state animal food requirements at https://www.aafco.org/Regulatory.

QUESTIONS: Contact CVM at askCVM@fda.hhs.gov

FURTHER INFORMATION: This is a brief summary of how to send human food to animal food use. More guidance can be found on our website at: https://www.fda.gov/animal-veterinary/products/animal-food-feeds.