

USDA Encourages Food Industry Organizations to Donate with the Good Samaritan Act

WASHINGTON, Dec. 10, 2019 – During the holiday season, many businesses and organizations generously donate food to charities and food banks. USDA offers a new resource to help organizations know they are covered under the Good Samaritan Food Donation Act.

The Bill Emerson Good Samaritan Food Donation Act of 1996 was created to encourage food and grocery donations to nonprofit organizations for distribution to needy individuals. The Act protects both food donors and recipient nonprofits organizations from civil and criminal liability around food donations. Still, some businesses and organizations may be hesitant to donate because they are unaware or unsure of the liability protection provided by the Act. USDA presents new Frequently Asked Questions ([LINK](#)) to address these points.

USDA’s FAQ explains what can be donated, who can receive donations, and state and federal liability protections. It also notes that the Good Samaritan Act covers many food industry categories, such as:

- Caterers
- Farmers and gleaners
- Food banks
- Food trucks
- Food manufacturers
- Food service organizations
- Restaurants
- Retail grocers
- School food authorities and higher education institutions

Organizations can use this information to join the business and organizations that already donate under the Good Samaritan Act:

- MGM Resorts International has food donation programs at nine of its resorts, through which prepared and unprepared food is donated to feed hungry people. Since 2016, the program has donated more than 750,000 meals and seeks to donate 5 million by 2025.
- Ahold Delhaize USA’s Food Lion donated 500 million meals through its “Food Lion Feeds” program. Food Lion made a new commitment to donate one billion more meals by the end of 2025 to neighbors in need.
- Compass Group delivers food, hospitality, and support services. In 2017, they established global day of action, an online waste-tracking tool, and “food waste champion” employee training. To date, Compass Group has donated 920,000 meals to local food banks.

These organizations are among the U.S. Food Loss and Waste 2030 Champions, businesses and organizations have made a public commitment to reducing food loss and waste in their U.S. operations by 50 percent by the year 2030.

Read the [full Good Samaritan Food Donation Act FAQ](#) and learn more about [USDA resources on reducing food loss and waste](#).

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