



## SAFE PRODUCE DONATION GUIDELINES

Food banks and pantries welcome donations of safe, high quality fresh produce.

Those who donate food to food banks and pantries are protected by the Bill Emerson Good Samaritan Food Donation Act that was signed into law in 1996 by President Bill Clinton. This federal act protects those who donate produce from their garden, and those who donate grocery products, to nonprofit organizations for distribution to people in need, from criminal and civil liability. Under the terms of this bill, donors are protected if the products were donated in good faith but later caused harm to the recipient. It also standardizes donor liability exposure and sets a floor of gross negligence or intentional misconduct for people who donate grocery products.

If you are one of the generous gardeners who wish to donate, please read these nine tips to help you provide high-quality produce to food banks and pantries.

1. Please see Food Bank Directory for information and location about Yakima County Food banks which is available on the Yakima Master Gardener Foundation Website.
2. Always handle fresh fruits and vegetables safely to minimize the risk of foodborne illness. For example, don't harvest when you are sick and always wash your hands before harvesting.
3. Offer only high quality, freshly picked fruits and vegetables.
4. Do not donate fruits and vegetables that are overripe, have mold, bruising, spoilage or insect damage.
5. If you use pesticides in your garden, always read and follow the label instructions.
6. Harvest produce early in the morning.
7. Wipe as much mud and dirt as possible off the produce, but do not rinse the produce. Rinsing the produce takes off some of the natural protective coating and will cause the produce to spoil sooner than if it is not rinsed.
8. Do not mix different kinds of produce. For example, don't put cucumbers in the same clean food-grade container (bag) as green beans.
9. Please remember to tell the food bank volunteers that your donation is to be listed as Plant a Row rather than under your name.

If you will be donating produce this year from your garden, thank you for providing safe, nutritious food to those who might otherwise go without.

