

Use of Donated Foods in Alaska Child Nutrition Programs



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The Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), The Department of Fish and Game (F&G), and The Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) have worked together to ensure donated foods can be used in the Child Nutrition Programs. USDA and the State of Alaska encourage the use of traditional foods in the Alaska Child Nutrition Programs.

DEC has very good information on their website that outlines the allowable foods and food safety requirements. F&G has provided information (see below) regarding donated foods. DEED provides information to the Child Nutrition Programs operating a USDA nutrition programs.

INFORMATION FROM DEC:

<https://dec.alaska.gov/eh/fss/food/retail/traditional-foods/#donating>

A screenshot of the DEC website. The top navigation bar includes "THE GREAT STATE of ALASKA", "E'tla, s'coy (Doogh Qinaq) 'Hello, my grandchild'", "myAlaska", "Departments", and "State Employees". Below this is a dark blue header for the "Division of Environmental Health FOOD SAFETY & SANITATION PROGRAM" with a search bar. A menu bar contains "HOME", "OPEN AN ESTABLISHMENT", "INSPECTIONS", "COMPLAINTS", "FOOD WORKERS", "FORMS", and "RESOURCES". A breadcrumb trail reads "You Are Here: DEC / EH / FSS / Food / Retail / Traditional Foods".



You can donate hunted and gathered food to food service programs, senior meals, food banks, schools, hospitals, etc.

Meats: whole, quartered, or roasts

Fish: gutted and gilled, with or without heads

Plants: whole, fresh, or frozen

The Alaska Food Code allows the donation of traditional wild game meat, seafood, plants, and other food to a food service of an institution or a nonprofit program with the exception of certain foods that are prohibited because of significant health hazards.

For more information contact your local [Environmental Health Officer](#).

Donating Alaskan Foods to Food Service Programs

The short answer to the question "Can we serve traditional foods in food service programs?" is "Yes!" However, there are still guidelines that must be followed in order to comply with regulations.

There has been much confusion about the ability to serve traditional Alaskan foods in food service programs. For the purpose of this guide, a food service program is defined as an institution or nonprofit program that provides meals. Examples include licensed residential child care facilities, food banks and pantries, school lunch programs, and senior meal programs. Meals served at hospitals, clinics, and long-term care facilities also fall within the definition of food service programs.

Foods that are prepared and served by these programs are subject to local, state, and federal guidelines. These guidelines can be very confusing. This document will lead you through the regulations that govern Alaska's traditional foods and offer you a condensed, easily understood version of the regulations. Once you understand the regulations you will be able to serve the needs of your clients and safely provide local, healthy foods.

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INFORMATION FROM F&G

- **Donated Fish**

Sport caught, personal use caught, and subsistence caught fish may not be bought, sold, traded or bartered. Donating fish that is caught on any of these permits is allowable as long as the person donating the fish is not receiving any compensation for those fish. The receiving party could not sell, trade or barter those fish (for example, selling meals created from these fish).

Commercial caught fish may be used in reimbursable meals.

- **Donated Meal/Wild Game**

If the meat is harvested legally and with a valid hunting license and permit, the meat can be donated to anyone. However, no one can ever charge for the meat. Meaning, if the organization or school were to use the meat in their lunches or at a dinner, they could not charge the participants for the meat/meal.

Information from the Department of Education and Early Development:

- **CACFP and SFSP:** Since these programs do not charge for meals using donated fish or meat **is allowable** for use in the reimbursable meal.
- **NSLP:**
 - If the school district charges for meals (for the reduced price or paid students) the donated meat, or fish from sport, personal use or subsistence permits **are not allowable** for use in the reimbursable meal.
 - If the school district does not charge for meals (all students receive free meals) the donated meat or fish from all sources, **are allowable** for use in the reimbursable meal.
 - **REMINDER:** Even if all student meals are free, donated meat or fish may not be included in any a la carte, adult, or other meal or entrée that would be offered for sale.