



FOOD BANK
OF NORTHEAST GEORGIA

Food Safety Training

2025-2026



Food Safety

This training is required annually for all Members of the Food Bank of Northeast Georgia. While this training discusses common food safety practices, **this does not provide ServSafe Manager Certification**, as is required for On-Premises Meals.

All Shoppers and those involved in handling food within your organization must be familiar with this training and general food safety practices.

PRACTICE GOOD PERSONAL HYGIENE

Wash your hands frequently

(ServSafe Food Handler Guide, p.2.1-2.6)

Wear food-safe attire when appropriate

(ServSafe Food Handler Guide, p.2.8)

Know when NOT to handle food

(ServSafe Food Handler Guide, p.2.9)

It is necessary, for everyone's safety, that good personal hygiene be maintained.

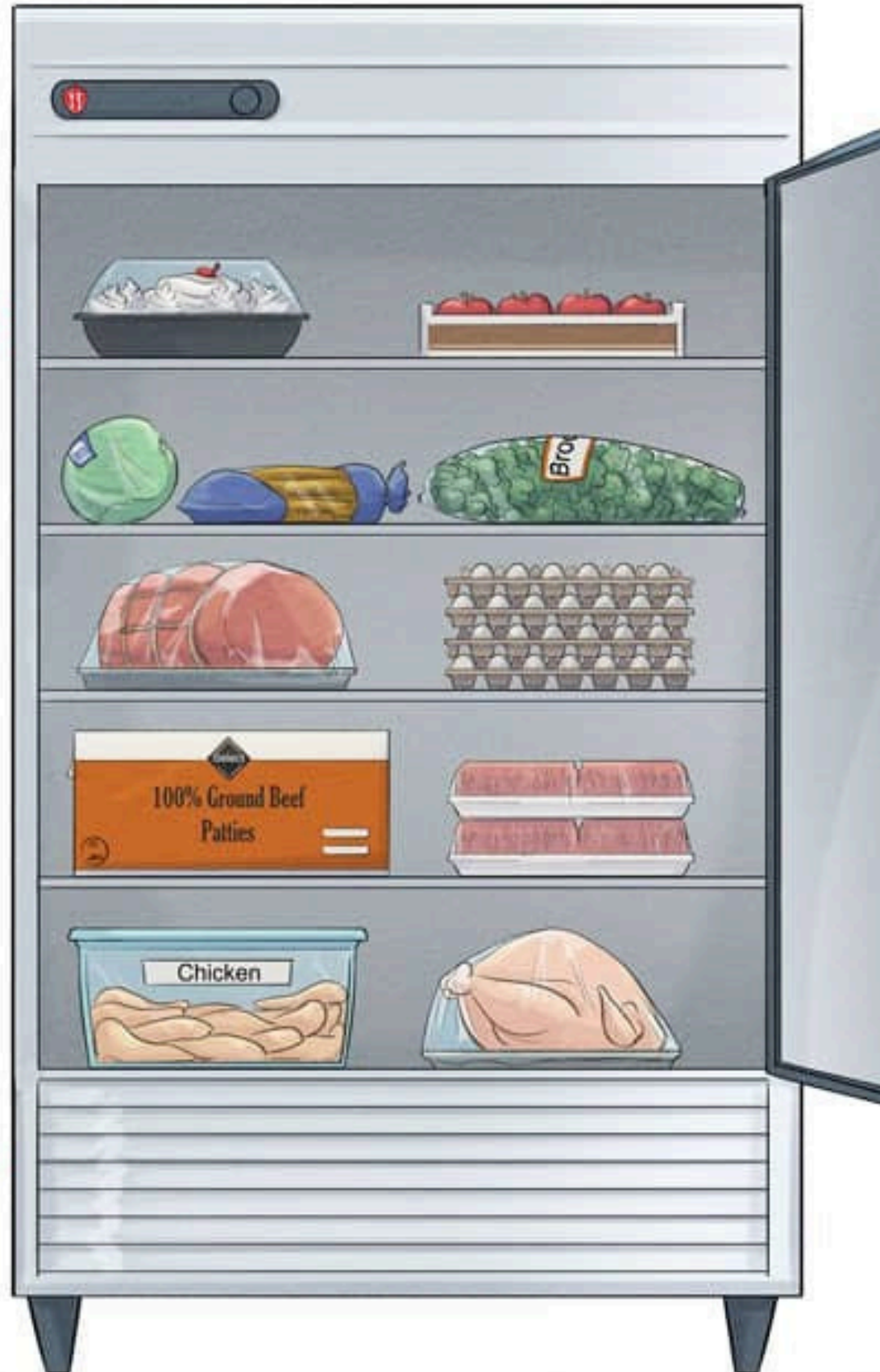


PROPER FOOD STORAGE



Refrigerator Storage Chart

Always store ready-to-eat foods on the top shelf! Arrange other shelves by cooking temperature (highest cooking temperature on the bottom).



Prevent cross-contamination:

(ServSafe Food Handler Guide, p.1.5)

- Cross-contamination is when biological, chemical, and/or physical contaminants are transferred to a substance, object, or food
- All contaminants have the potential to cause illness or injury

Store foods properly:

(top to bottom):

- Dairy products, cooked food/meats, and ready-to-eat foods
- Fresh produce
- Whole red meat (pork and beef) and seafood
- Ground or processed red meats, and fish
- Whole and ground poultry

PROPER FOOD STORAGE

Your storage should be clean, organized, and secure:

(ServSafe Food Handler Guide, p. 3.5)

- **Storage must be locked and kept secure**
 - Only those involved in managing food distributions should be allowed access to your food storage
- **Regularly monitor storage and units for signs of pests, mold, and mildew**
- **Refrigerator and freezer units should be cleaned at least every 3-6 months**
- **Store all items 6 inches from the ground and ceiling and 1 inch from walls**
- **Store food separate and at least 4 feet from non-food items, cleaning supplies, and chemicals**
 - Non-food items should not be stored on the same shelving unit as food

PROPER FOOD STORAGE

Foods must be stored at safe temperatures:

- Refrigerator and Freezer units must be held at proper temperatures.
 - Refrigerated foods/units should be held between 36-40°F
 - Frozen foods/units should be held at 0°F or lower
 - Use a **Weekly Temperature Log** to record the temperature of the room at least once a week

Use the FIFO method when storing food:

- FIFO (First-In-First-Out) is an inventory organizational method when the oldest received items are the first distributed.
 - The only time FIFO may not apply is when some items are about to expire and should be distributed as soon as possible



PROPER FOOD STORAGE

Store and label all program food (Non-USDA/USDA/GNAP/F2K) separately:

- **Store in a way that anyone without knowledge can walk in and know exactly what food they are looking at**
 - Any signage counts as long as it shows the program name and matches the program food
 - Use separators as needed if you are limited on shelving space

PROPER FOOD STORAGE

Adherence to all food safety standards is crucial for Direct Distribution (including On Premises and Mobile Pantries):

- **Distribute ALL cold and frozen food within 4 hours of reception and ALL shelf-stable foods before the end of the day**
- **Transport, stage, and hold food at the appropriate temperatures**
- **Excess food may only be stored at a site pre-approved by the Food Bank OR donated to another Member's Food Pantry that has approved storage for the food provided**
 - A Member cannot donate USDA or GNAP foods to a Member who is not participating in the program. Additionally, Members who do not have refrigeration/freezer units cannot take food that requires refrigeration/freezing.

PROPER FOOD STORAGE

Pest prevention:

- **Remove as much cardboard as possible**
 - Loose bulk items or items that cannot stack, such as bags of dry beans or rice, should be stored in bins with lids
- **Self-administered pest control treatment is required monthly OR**
- **Professional pest control treatment is required quarterly**
 - All treatment must be recorded using a [Pest Control Log](#) or by providing invoices as proof

In the event of an infestation:

- **Discard any damaged products immediately**
- **Clean all areas you can determine may have been contaminated**
- **Re-examine your facility for holes, cracks, or pests in or around your food**
- **Apply pest control as needed**
- **If the situation is serious, you should contact BOTH a professional AND your Food Access Coordinator**

PROPER FOOD STORAGE

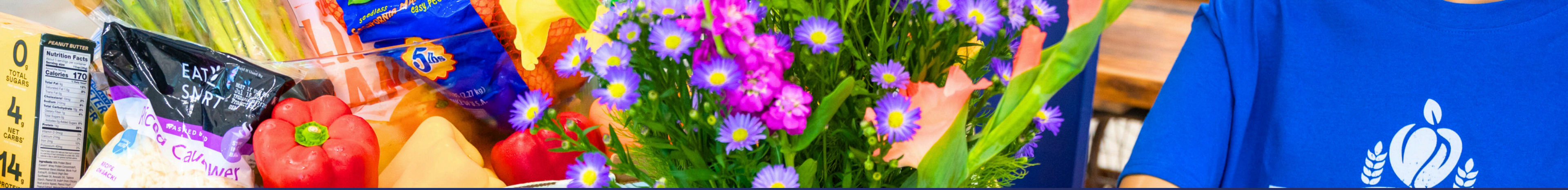
Deny pests food, water, and hiding or nesting places:

- **Cleaning up food spills immediately and eliminate any standing water**
- **Store mops and brooms off the floor**
- **Maintain clean personal storage areas (i.e. lockers) and designate areas away from food storage for eating, tobacco usage, etc.**
- **Cover all indoor and outdoor garbage containers**
 - **Dispose of any garbage and recyclables quickly**

Prevent pests from entering your facility:

- **Have functional seals on all doors, windows, and vents**
- **Seal any pipe holes through walls and cracks in the floors and walls**
- **Examine all incoming food, supplies, and/or other materials to avoid pests**

(ServSafe Food Handler's Guide, p. 5.9)



Understanding Food Product Dating

Many expired foods are safe for consumption. It is your responsibility to know what is and is not safe to provide to our Neighbors.

DOWNLOAD OUR [FOODKEEPER APP!](#)



WHEN IN DOUBT, THROW IT OUT

(ServSafe Food Handler's Guide, p. 3.6-3.7)

BEST IF USED BY/BEFORE

Date indicates when a product will have the best flavor or quality. It is not a purchase or safety date.

SELL-BY

Date tells the store how long to display the product for sale for inventory management. It is not a safety date.

USE-BY/EXP. DATE

The last date recommended for the use of the product while at peak quality. It is not a safety date except when used on infant formula.

FREEZE BY

Date indicates when a product should be frozen to maintain peak quality. It is not a purchase or safety date.

USE-BY INFANT FORMULA

Consumption by this date ensures the formula contains the correct amount of each nutrient as described on the label. **DISCARD UPON EXPIRATION.**

MONITORING YOUR FOOD

Monitoring refrigerated and frozen foods:

- Record temperatures weekly
- Look for obvious signs of aging
- Although safe to consume, avoid freezer burn by storing foods at proper temperatures, including during transportation, and distributing within 60 days

Know when foods are NOT safe to distribute:

- If a food does not have: (1) a label naming the product or food, (2) nutrition content label, and (3) an ingredient list
- If any cans have: swollen ends, leaks, broken lids, rust that cannot be wiped off, major or sharp dents on the sides or seals
- Cold or frozen foods that have been without refrigeration for 4 or more hours.
 - OR if the foods have been found out of their proper temperature range for 4 or more hours
- If any items show damage from pests

MONITORING YOUR FOOD



SERVSAFE MANAGER (OP)

- Members who would like to provide On Premises Meals are required to have their ServSafe Manager certificate. **This is NOT the equivalent of the Food Handler Guide.**
- Members can become certified through local classes or in-depth studying of a ServSafe Manager book followed by a graded exam. The Food Bank currently offers classes quarterly to Members. To learn more, contact your Food Access Coordinator.
- Members may not provide On Premises Meals without valid certification.



CONGRATULATIONS!

**YOU HAVE COMPLETED THE
FOOD SAFETY TRAINING**

**Record your completed trainings in your
organization's Volunteer Log and provide a
copy to your Food Access Coordinator**