

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE (SOP)

Distribution of Donated Packaged Food Items – Near Best Before / Expiry Stock

Organization: Ekta Foundation

Program Type: Food Donation & Distribution Support Program

Distribution Channels: Schools, Local NGOs, Community Institutions & Identified Beneficiaries

Food Category: Donated Packaged / Ready-to-Consume Food Items

1. Purpose

The purpose of this SOP is to establish a safe, transparent and accountable system for receiving, assessing, storing and distributing packaged food items donated by corporate organizations to Ekta Foundation, particularly where the donated food has a limited remaining shelf life.

The SOP ensures that donated food is distributed before the applicable Best Before date, subject to satisfactory quality and packaging condition, and that food which is expired, unsafe, damaged or otherwise unsuitable for consumption is not distributed.

2. Background

Corporate organizations may donate packaged food items such as:

- Biscuits
- Packaged snacks
- Cereals
- Ready-to-eat food
- Packaged bakery products
- Nutrition bars
- Packaged dry food
- Other commercially packed food products

In some cases, donated food may have a short remaining shelf life because it is close to its Best Before date.

Ekta Foundation shall therefore follow a controlled Rapid Distribution Mechanism to ensure that suitable food reaches beneficiaries in a timely manner while maintaining food safety and traceability.



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3. Objectives

The objectives of this SOP are:

- 1.To ensure safe utilization of donated packaged food.
- 2.To prevent distribution of expired or unsafe food.
- 3.To establish a rapid distribution process for short-shelf-life donations.
- 4.To ensure proper inspection at the time of receipt.
- 5.To maintain complete stock and distribution records.
- 6.To ensure traceability from donor to final beneficiary.
- 7.To provide transparency to corporate donors.
- 8.To minimize food wastage while protecting beneficiary safety.
- 9.To establish clear rejection and disposal procedures for unsuitable food.

4. Scope

This SOP applies to all donated packaged food items received by Ekta Foundation from:

- Corporate organizations
- CSR partners
- Manufacturers
- Distributors
- Institutional donors
- Other approved donors

It applies to all Ekta Foundation personnel, volunteers, schools, NGOs and other distribution partners involved in the handling and distribution of such food.

5. Important Principle – Food Safety First

Near Best Before does not automatically mean unsafe.

However, Ekta Foundation shall not distribute any food item merely because it has been donated.

Every consignment must first undergo:

Receipt → Inspection → Date Verification → Quality Assessment → Approval → Rapid Distribution

Mandatory Rule

Expired food shall NOT be distributed.

Food showing signs of spoilage, contamination, damaged packaging, leakage, swelling, infestation or any other safety concern shall also NOT be distributed, irrespective of its printed date.

Where applicable, the distinction between Best Before and Expiry/Use By shall be respected in accordance with the applicable food-safety requirements and product labeling.



6. Donor Requirements

At the time of donation, the corporate donor should provide, wherever available:

- Donor/company name
- Product name
- Product category
- Number of packets/cartons
- Batch/Lot number
- Manufacturing date
- Best Before / Expiry / Use By date
- Product description
- Invoice/delivery challan/donation letter
- Storage requirements
- Any special handling instructions

The donor shall preferably inform Ekta Foundation in advance where the product has a short remaining shelf life.

7. Receipt of Donated Food

Upon receipt, the designated Ekta Foundation representative shall conduct an initial inspection.

The following shall be checked:

- Quantity received
- Product name
- Brand/manufacturer
- Batch/Lot number
- Manufacturing date
- Best Before date
- Expiry/Use By date, where applicable
- Packaging condition
- Seal condition
- Visible contamination
- Leakage
- Swelling/bulging
- Pest/insect infestation
- Moisture damage
- Odour or other abnormal signs, where relevant
- Storage/transport condition

The receiving person shall record the details in the Donated Food Receipt Register.



8. Near Best Before Assessment

The Program/Operations Team shall categorize the donated stock according to the remaining shelf life.

Category A – Normal Shelf Life

Food having adequate remaining shelf life for normal distribution planning.

Action:

Store and distribute through the normal distribution cycle.

Category B – Short Shelf Life

Food having limited remaining shelf life and requiring priority distribution.

Action:

Mark as **PRIORITY DISTRIBUTION** and prepare a rapid distribution plan.

Category C – Very Short Shelf Life

Food approaching its Best Before date and requiring immediate distribution, subject to satisfactory safety and quality checks.

Action:

Distribute on priority basis through pre-approved schools/NGOs/community partners.

Category D – Expired / Unsafe

Food that is expired or otherwise unsafe/unfit for consumption.

Action:

DO NOT DISTRIBUTE. Segregate, record and dispose of appropriately.



9. Rapid Distribution Mechanism

For short-shelf-life food donations, Ekta Foundation shall activate a **Rapid Distribution Mechanism**.

Step 1 – Immediate Stock Assessment

Within a reasonable period after receipt, the Program Team shall determine:

·Total quantity

- Number of beneficiaries
- Remaining shelf life
- Required distribution locations
- Distribution capacity

Step 2 – Identify Distribution Partners

Suitable schools, NGOs or community organizations shall be selected based on:

- Number of beneficiaries
- Accessibility
- Distribution capacity
- Existing relationship with Ekta Foundation
- Ability to distribute within the required timeframe

Step 3 – Allocation

The stock shall be allocated based on the number of beneficiaries and available shelf life.

Step 4 – Dispatch

Stock shall be dispatched with proper documentation.

Step 5 – Distribution

The partner shall distribute the food promptly among the identified beneficiaries.

Step 6 – Closure

The partner shall submit:

- Distribution confirmation
- Beneficiary count
- Quantity distributed
- Balance stock
- Photographs, where appropriate
- Any issue/incident report



10. FEFO Principle

Ekta Foundation shall follow the principle of:

FEFO – First Expiry/Best Before, First Out

Food having the earliest applicable date shall be distributed first.

Example:

Product	Best Before	Priority
Batch A	30 Aug 2026	1st
Batch B	15 Sep 2026	2nd
Batch C	30 Oct 2026	3rd

This system shall help minimize food wastage.

11. Storage Procedure

Until distribution, donated food shall be stored according to the product's stated storage requirements.

- General requirements:
- Store in a clean and dry area.
- Protect from direct sunlight.
- Protect from moisture.
- Keep away from chemicals and cleaning materials.
- Keep away from pests and rodents.
- Avoid direct contact with the floor.
- Maintain appropriate ventilation.
- Follow any temperature requirements mentioned on the product label.

Near-expiry stock shall be clearly identified and physically segregated or marked for priority distribution.



12. Transportation

During transportation:

- Food shall be protected from contamination.
- Cartons shall be handled carefully.
- Vehicle/transport area should be clean and suitable for food transportation.
- Food shall not be transported together with chemicals or hazardous materials.
- The quantity dispatched shall match the dispatch document.
- The receiving partner shall acknowledge receipt.

13. Distribution Through Schools

Where food is distributed through schools:

1. Ekta Foundation shall communicate the approved quantity.
2. School coordinator shall receive and verify the stock.
3. Product dates and packaging shall be checked.
4. Food shall be distributed among identified children.
5. Distribution details shall be recorded.
6. School shall provide signed acknowledgement.
7. Photographic documentation may be maintained as per applicable consent and child-safeguarding requirements.

14. Distribution Through Local NGOs

For NGO-led distribution:

1. NGO shall be an approved/verified partner.
2. Beneficiary details shall be shared as required.
3. NGO shall nominate a responsible coordinator.
4. Food shall be received against a delivery challan.
5. NGO shall conduct distribution within the approved timeframe.
6. Distribution records shall be maintained.
7. NGO shall submit a utilization/distribution report to Ekta Foundation.

15. Beneficiary Selection

Priority may be given to:

- Children
- School-going children
- Children supported by NGOs
- Children from economically vulnerable communities
- Children attending community programs
- Other beneficiaries approved under the specific donor/program guidelines

Beneficiary selection shall be non-discriminatory and based on transparent program criteria.



16. Quantity Distribution

The quantity per beneficiary shall be determined based on:

- Donor instructions
- Product type
- Quantity available
- Number of beneficiaries
- Program objective
- Remaining shelf life
- Applicable food-safety considerations

No partner shall independently divert or redistribute the stock outside the approved program without authorization from Ekta Foundation.

17. Food Quality Check Before Distribution

Immediately before distribution, the responsible coordinator shall check:

- Packet is sealed.
- Packaging is intact.
- No leakage.
- No swelling/bulging.
- No visible contamination.
- No insect infestation.
- No abnormal appearance.
- Applicable Best Before/Expiry/Use By date has not passed.
- Storage conditions have been maintained.

If any concern is identified, the packet shall be removed from the distribution stock immediately.

18. Expired / Unsafe Food Management

Expired or unsafe food shall never be distributed.

Such food shall:

1. Be separated from usable stock.
2. Be marked "NOT FOR DISTRIBUTION."
3. Be recorded in the stock register.
4. Be photographed/documentated where required.
5. Be reported to the Program/Operations Team.
6. Be disposed of through an appropriate method consistent with applicable requirements.

The quantity disposed of shall be recorded to ensure complete stock reconciliation.

19. Stock Register

Date	Donor	Product	Batch No.	Qty Received	Best Before/Expiry	Qty Distributed	Balance	Remarks

20. Distribution Register

S. No.	Date	School/ NGO	Location	Beneficiaries	Qty Distributed	Batch No.	Coordinator	Remarks

21. Donor Traceability

Every donated food consignment should be traceable through the following chain:

Corporate Donor



Donation Receipt



Product & Batch Verification



Ekta Foundation Stock Register



School / NGO Partner



Beneficiary Distribution



Distribution Record



Donor/Program Report

This ensures that the donor can be informed about how and where the donated food was utilized.



22. Documentation for Corporate Donor

After completion of distribution, Ekta Foundation may provide the donor with:

- Donation acknowledgement
- Quantity received
- Quantity distributed
- Number of beneficiaries
- Distribution locations
- Batch/date information
- Photographs, where appropriate
- Distribution summary
- Utilization certificate/confirmation
- Impact summary

The reporting format may be customized according to the donor's CSR requirements.

23. Monitoring & Verification

Ekta Foundation may conduct:

- Physical verification
- Stock verification
- Partner verification
- Beneficiary verification
- Telephone verification
- Photograph verification
- Random distribution checks

The objective shall be to ensure:

Right Food + Right Beneficiary + Right Quantity + Right Time

24. Incident Reporting

Any of the following shall be immediately reported:

- Expired stock received
- Damaged packaging
- Suspected contamination
- Food quality complaint
- Wrong product received
- Quantity mismatch
- Storage failure
- Transportation issue
- Beneficiary complaint
- Any suspected misuse/diversion of donated stock

An Incident Report shall be prepared wherever required.



25. Food Safety Complaint

If any beneficiary reports an adverse reaction or suspected food-related illness after consumption:

1. Distribution of the concerned batch shall be immediately stopped.
2. Remaining stock of the same batch shall be isolated.
3. The matter shall be escalated to the designated Ekta Foundation authority.
4. Relevant details shall be documented.
5. The donor/supplier shall be informed where appropriate.
6. Further action shall be taken in accordance with applicable food-safety requirements.

26. Child Protection & Dignity

During distribution:

- Children shall be treated with dignity and respect.
- There shall be no discrimination.
- Distribution shall be orderly and safe.
- Children shall not be forced to participate in photographs.
- Personal information shall be protected.
- Photographs/videos shall be collected only in accordance with applicable consent, safeguarding and donor requirements.

27. Key Control Measures

The following controls are mandatory:

- No expired food distribution.
- No distribution of visibly unsafe/damaged food.
- Near Best Before stock receives priority distribution.
- FEFO principle shall be followed.
- Every consignment shall have a batch/date record.
- Every dispatch shall be documented.
- Every distribution shall be reconciled.
- Balance stock shall be physically verified.
- Food safety complaints shall be immediately escalated.
- Donor reporting shall be supported by documentary evidence.



28. Roles & Responsibility Matrix

Activity	Ekta Foundation	School/NGO	Donor
Donation coordination	✓		✓
Product information	✓		✓
Receipt & inspection	✓	✓	
Stock recording	✓	✓	
Storage	✓	✓	
Distribution planning	✓	✓	
Beneficiary identification	✓	✓	
Distribution	Monitoring	✓	
Documentation	✓	✓	
Monitoring	✓	✓	
Donor reporting	✓	Support	✓

29. Annexure – Donated Food Receipt & Inspection Form

Donor Name: _____

Product Name: _____

Brand: _____

Batch/Lot No.: _____

Manufacturing Date: _____

Best Before Date: _____

Expiry/Use By Date: _____

Quantity Received: _____

Date of Receipt: _____

Inspection

☐ Packaging intact

☐ No leakage

☐ No swelling/bulging

☐ No visible contamination

☐ No pest infestation

☐ Date verified

☐ Storage requirement verified

☐ Quantity verified

☐ Approved for distribution

☐ Kept on hold for further assessment

☐ Rejected / Not for distribution

Remarks: _____

Checked By: _____

Designation: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

30. Annexure – Distribution & Utilization Certificate

Program: Donated Packaged Food Distribution Program

This is to certify that _____ quantity of packaged food received from _____ (Donor) through Ekta Foundation was distributed among _____ beneficiaries at _____ (Location/School/NGO) on _____ (Date).

Quantity Received: _____

Quantity Distributed: _____

Balance: _____

Batch No.: _____

Best Before/Expiry Date: _____

We confirm that the food items were distributed to the identified beneficiaries in accordance with the program guidelines.

Name of School/NGO: _____

Authorized Person: _____

Designation: _____

Signature: _____

Official Stamp: _____

Date: _____



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31. Process Flow

Corporate Donor Provides Packaged Food
↓
Ekta Foundation Receives Donation
↓
Quantity + Batch + Date + Packaging Inspection
↓
Food Safety/Quality Assessment
↓
Accept / Hold / Reject
↓
Stock Entry
↓
Near-Best-Before Stock Marked for Priority Distribution
↓
FIFO-Based Allocation
↓
School / Local NGO Distribution

↓
Distribution & Photographic Documentation
↓
Stock Reconciliation
↓
Partner Utilization Certificate
↓
Monitoring & Donor Impact Report



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