

Partner Agency Etiquette Tips for Soliciting Grocery Store Donors

It never hurts to ask! Solicit donations from local grocers to increase your food supply.

Understand and honor donors' needs to establish and maintain successful relationships.

- Keep in mind the donors' realities – time, budget, and staff constraints.
- Honor their restrictions for product donation.
- Respect their need for timely product pick-up.
- Use reliable transportation and pick up by appointment.
- Use their food only for the care of the ill, needy or infants.
- Adhere to CAFB's standards for storage.

Act professional, knowledgeable, self-motivated and skilled when soliciting donations.

- Be believable, customer-oriented and business-like in manner and appearance.
- Take time to gain knowledge of the food industry, nonprofit organizations and local business atmospheres.
- Contact food industry representatives on a regular basis.
- Maintain accurate records of soliciting efforts, food obtained and possible resources.
- Provide quality customer service to all donors.
- Seek new and creative ways to increase donations and improve donor relationships.

Make the right contacts.

- Use the Yellow Pages and local newspaper ads to determine potential donors in your service area, such as:
 - Local food manufacturers/processors
 - Wholesale distributors
 - Grocery chain stores
 - Growers
 - Caterers and restaurants
 - Local food packagers
 - Bakeries
 - Dairies
 - Local food sales people
 - Food drives
- Use personal contacts (yours and your team's) to your advantage without harassing them.
- If you don't have a referral, begin with the person with the most authority (owner, president, CEO, COO).
- Make friends with all contacts you make within the organization.
- Write a brief letter to your potential donor contact, including information about your agency and your request.
- Follow up your letter with phone call after one week.
Remember: (1) Identify yourself and mention that you are following up on a letter and (2) Ask for an appointment to discuss further.

Know the benefits of donating.

- The donor may receive tax advantages.
- The donor is protected from liability (Good Samaritan Law).
- The company frees up expensive warehouse space and saves dump fees and transportation to dump.
- The integrity of donor's product is protected by rigorous guidelines for food handling and storage.
- Donations are a highly visible sign of good corporate community citizenship and often boost morale among the donor's employees.

Thank them.

- Send a thank you letter to your donor and thank you notes to those who helped secure the donations.
- Continue to be on time, organized and sincere as you receive regular donations.