



SAFELY DONATE YOUR BACKYARD CITRUS TO FOOD BANKS IN NEED OF FRESH PRODUCE

With rising food costs, food banks are struggling to meet demand, particularly for nutritious, fresh produce such as citrus, and while donations from backyard citrus trees provide a unique solution, residents are being encouraged to follow guidelines to ensure they're not donating produce that may spread harmful pests or diseases that can threaten your community's backyard fruit.

The Citrus Pest and Disease Prevention Program, administered by the California Department of Food and Agriculture, developed the following steps on how to safely donate fruit to help limit the movement of the dangerous pest called the Asian citrus psyllid (ACP), which can spread the deadly citrus tree disease, Huanglongbing (HLB), and other pests and diseases.

Find an Organization: There has been an increased demand for food assistance recently. Local charities and food banks most desire fresh produce during the cooler months, and your citrus can help. Reach out to your local church to find out if they are accepting food donations or visit the California Association of Food Banks' [website](#) and enter your zip code. It will provide a list of groups that will accept fruit donations. Food Forward also has [a list](#) of gleaning organizations in many areas of California. Gleaners can collect the fruit you don't need and will donate it to hunger relief efforts in the area.

Check Local Quarantines: HLB has been found in Los Angeles, Orange, San Bernardino, San Diego, Riverside and Ventura counties. Detections in the area have established quarantine zones that prohibit the movement of citrus, but donations can still be made if fruit is properly washed, and leaves and stems have been removed. In other areas of California, specifically in Contra Costa, Los Angeles, Riverside, Sacramento, San Bernardino, Santa Clara and Ventura counties, various [invasive fruit fly \(IFF\) detections](#) have established IFF quarantine areas that restrict any movement of fruit off the property where it's grown, and **no produce should be donated from these areas**. Click below to see active quarantine maps:

[HLB quarantine map](#) (click box titled, "Effective HLB Quarantine Boundary")

- Includes areas of Los Angeles, Orange, San Bernardino, San Diego, Riverside and Ventura counties.

[Invasive Fruit Fly quarantine maps](#)

- Includes areas of Contra Costa, Los Angeles, Riverside, Sacramento, San Bernardino, Santa Clara and Ventura counties.

Prepare the Fruit: If your property isn't in an active fruit fly quarantine, donated fruit should be washed thoroughly and free of leaves/stems before removing it from the property. More tips are in our fruit donation best practices [infographic](#). Now is an important time to come together as a community. Whether enjoying your backyard citrus at home or sharing fruit as a kind gift, we all must work together to protect our citrus, while also supporting our neighbors during times of need.

By following the steps above, Californians can safely donate fresh citrus from their backyards to local charities and community organizations in need of these items. For more information, visit californiacitrusthreat.org.

Sources:

San Diego Union-Tribune: [Hunger grows: As more San Diegans struggled to eat, donations to food nonprofits fell](#)