



The Impact of Date Labeling on Food Waste, Food Recovery and Donation

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With support from



About the Food Law and Policy Clinic

- Provide **legal and policy advice** to nonprofits, government agencies, entrepreneurs, and other organizations on a range of food policy questions
- **Educate students** about the role of law and policy in the food system
- **Build** the field of Food Law and Policy





Webinar Goals

Today's web conference is the last of a three-session series focused on topics in law and policy related to food recovery and food donation.

Goals:

- **Learn about best practices from around the world** regarding date labeling standards and the impacts on food donation;
- **Discuss policy considerations and challenges** to encourage the adoption of standard date labeling terms and policies;
- **Inform** the development of an **issue brief** highlighting global best practices regarding date labels.



WHAT'S THE ISSUE?

An estimated **1.3 billion tons of food** is lost or wasted globally and more than **820 million people** suffer from hunger.



A CRITICAL SOLUTION

Law and policy reform can **remove barriers** to safe food donation, and **incentivize** the beneficial use of food

We Teamed Up with the Global Food Banking Network (GFN)



TO IDENTIFY AND ANALYZE

Laws related to food donations and the most common legal barriers across countries.

TO RECOMMEND POLICY CHANGE

For stronger, more sustainable food donation operations.

TO CREATE A PLATFORM FOR GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT

Through an online, interactive tool that allows for comparison between countries, and through events and dialogues across countries.

Deliverables: Online library & Web atlas

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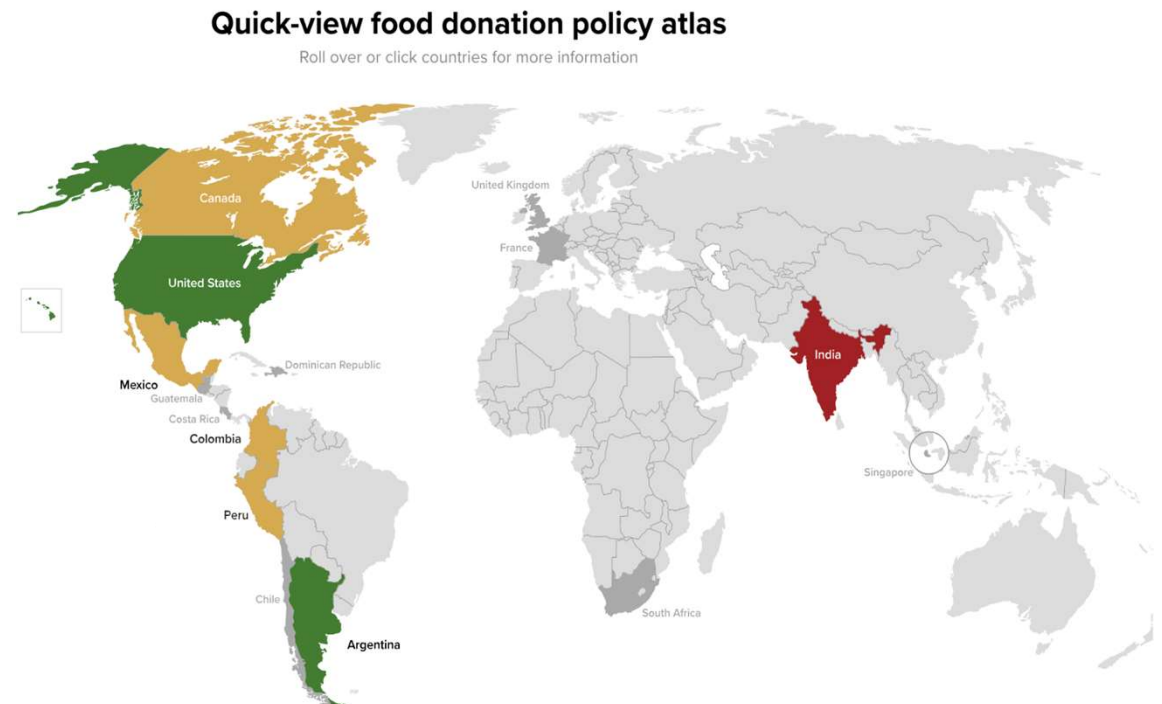
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Legal Issues



Food Safety



Date Labeling



Liability



Tax Incentives
& Barriers



Requirements
& Penalties



Govt. Grants
& Incentives

Date Labeling

Policy Area

Food safety for donations

Date labeling

Liability protection for food donations

Tax incentives

Tax barriers

Donation requirements or food waste penalties

Gov't grants and incentives

Roll over or click countries for more information



Date labeling

Date labels affixed to food products are a major driver of food waste and an obstacle to food donation. Most food donors and food recovery organizations are appropriately cautious about donating food that may no longer be safe, but it is not always clear whether the date label accompanied by language such as "sell by," "expires on," or "best by" relates to food safety. In fact, date labels are generally intended to reflect freshness or quality rather than food safety for the vast majority of foods.

Date Labeling

- **No policy:** No mandatory policy requiring standard date label language or clarifying that most labels are for quality.
- **Weak policy:** Mandatory policy standardizes date labels for certain foods, and one or both of the following apply:
 - No clear differentiation between quality-based vs. safety-based labels.
 - No clear permission to donate food after the quality-based date.
- **Strong policy:** Mandatory standard date labeling policy that features both of the following:
 - Clear differentiation between quality-based v. safety-based labels.
 - Clear permission to donate after the quality-based date.



Key Issues in Date Labeling

- Date label law does not distinguish between **quality-based and safety-based** label terms
- Lack of clarity as to **which label** to use on which products
- Date label law does not state **whether food can be donated past a quality date**
- Food donors, consumers, and health officials continue to mistakenly **interpret all date labels as indicators of safety**, causing food waste and hindering donation



Today's Discussion

- Discuss **best practices, challenges** and **policy opportunities** regarding date labeling policies
- Inform the **development of an issue brief** highlighting global best practices on date labeling laws and policies
- Begin a **dialogue between government officials**, including both speakers and attendees

Turning to our Session



- **Moderated discussion** with speakers
- **Questions** from the chat box
- **Open floor** discussion amongst all speakers and attendees



Thank You!!

- Upcoming webinars (fall 2021-dates T.B.D.) – tax incentives and tax barriers, food safety for donations
- With questions, other ideas, and suggestions on this session and the series, email **Esther Akwii** at **eakwii@law.harvard.edu**



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<https://atlas.foodbanking.org/>

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