The Food Keeper

A Consumer Guide to Food Quality and Safe Handling

(developed by the FOOD MARKETING INSTITUTE with
CORNELL UNIVERSITY COOPERATIVE EXTENSION)

Today, we have many choices of fresh, frozen, canned, and prepared foods. Our stores are required to maintain quality assurance and sanitation standards to make sure we receive wholesome and safe food products.

After we select our food items, it is up to us to take care of them properly. "THE FOOD KEEPER" contains food safety and storage advice that will help us maintain the freshness, quality, and safety of foods we purchase.

Storage times listed in the recommended charts are intended as guidelines and not as "set" rules. Especially in warmer climates like Hawaii, some foods may spoil quicker. Remember to buy foods in reasonable quantities and rotate the products in your pantry, refrigerator and freezer. IF YOU HAVE ANY DOUBT ABOUT A FOOD ITEM, THROW IT OUT!

FILLING THE CART

- Shop for shelf-stable items such as canned and dry goods first.
- Buy refrigerated, frozen foods and hot deli items last -- right before checking out.
- Do not choose meat, fish, poultry or dairy products that feel warm to the touch or have a damaged or torn package. Place leaking or wet packages in plastic bags.
- Choose only pasteurized dairy products.
- Choose only refrigerated eggs and make sure they are not cracked or dirty.
- Check "sell-by" and "use-by" dates on packages.
- Buy intact cans that are not bulging, leaking or dented on the seam or rim.

Revised 9/14
Many cases of food poisoning occur each year due to improper handling of foods in the home. Once you purchase food, go directly home. If this is not possible, keep a cooler with coolants in the car to transport cold, perishable items. Once you arrive home, immediately put cold perishables into the refrigerator or freezer.

Hot perishable foods picked up from the deli department need to be kept warm and consumed within two hours. If you purchase hot deli foods to eat at a later time, place the food in small portions in shallow containers and refrigerate or freeze as soon as possible. Perishable foods should be kept at room temperature no longer than two hours.

Bacteria multiply rapidly at temperatures between 40°F and 140°F. Unfortunately, the harmful bacteria that cause most cases of food poisoning cannot be seen, smelled, or tasted. Therefore it’s important to:

- Keep COLD FOODS COLD (40°F or below) and HOT FOODS HOT (above 140°F) and follow these other rules for handling food safely:
  - Keep EVERYTHING clean—hands, utensils, counter, cutting boards and sinks.
  - Always WASH HANDS thoroughly in hot soapy water before preparing foods, and after handling raw meat, poultry or seafood.
  - Do not let RAW JUICES from meat, poultry or seafood touch ready-to-eat foods in the refrigerator or during food preparation.

We keep food in the refrigerator to preserve its freshness and keep it safe. Cold temperatures keep food fresh and inhibit the growth of most bacteria.

However, food spoiling microorganisms can still grow and multiply slowly over time, so there is a limit to the length of time various food will stay fresh in the refrigerator. Eventually, food will begin to look and, or smell bad, at which point, it should be thrown out. Use the following temperature and storage tips to help keep perishable foods safe. Refer to the accompanying chart on the enclosed insert for refrigerator storage times.

**Temperature Tips**

Set the refrigerator to maintain a temperature of 40°F or below. Keep a refrigerator thermometer in the unit or check the temperature periodically. Do not overload the refrigerator. Air must circulate freely to cool all foods evenly.

**Storage Tips**

- Leave meat and poultry products in the store wrap before using, since repeated handling can introduce bacteria into the product or spread bacteria around the kitchen.
- Store opened food in foil, plastic wrap, leakproof plastic bags or airtight containers to keep food from spilling or drying out.
- Place meat, poultry, and seafood in the coldest part of the refrigerator. Store eggs in their original carton on a shelf, and not on the door.
- Defrost frozen meats or marinate meats in the refrigerator on the bottom shelf where they will remain temperature-safe -- never on the kitchen counter.
- Clean the refrigerator regularly to remove spoiled foods so that bacteria cannot be passed to other foods.


**FREEZING FOOD**

Because food frozen at peak quality will taste better than foods frozen near the end of their useful life, quickly freeze items you do not plan to use in the next day or two.

**Packaging Tips**

Proper packaging helps to maintain quality and prevent "freezer burn." It is safe to freeze foods in their supermarket wrappings. Many supermarket wrappings are air permeable. For longer storage, wrap packages with airtight heavy-duty foil, plastic wrap, freezer paper, or place packages inside a plastic bag. Date packages and use them within a month or two, using the oldest items first.

**Freezer Burn Tips**

If frozen food gets "freezer burn," it is still safe to eat; it is merely dry in spots. Cut freezer-burned portions away either before or after cooking the food.

**Defrosting Tips**

Freezing to 0°F inactivates but does NOT destroy microbes - bacteria, yeasts, and molds - present in food. Once food is thawed, these microbes can again become active, multiplying under the right conditions to levels that can lead to foodborne illness.

Never defrost foods outdoors, or on the kitchen counter. These methods encourage growth of harmful bacteria that may be present.

There are three safe ways to defrost food:

1. In the refrigerator
2. In cold water
3. In the microwave.

Food thawed in the refrigerator is safe to refreeze without cooking. It is important to plan ahead because food may take several hours to thaw in the refrigerator.

**PANTRY STORAGE**

Shelf-stable foods such as canned goods, cereal, baking mixes, pasta, dry beans, mustard, ketchup and peanut butter can be kept unopened safely at room temperature. However, be sure to read package labels. Some items must be refrigerated after opening.

To keep these foods at their best quality, store in clean, dry, cool (below 85°F) cabinets away from the stove or the refrigerator's exhaust. Extremely hot (over 100°F) and cold temperatures are harmful to canned goods.

**Never use food from:**

1. Cans that are leaking, bulging, badly dented, or with a foul odor
2. Jars that are cracked or that have loose or bulging lids
3. Any container that spurts liquids when you open it.

NEVER TASTE such foods. Throw out any food you suspect is spoiled. WHEN IN DOUBT, THROW IT OUT. In general, most canned foods have a long "shelf life," and when properly stored, they are safe to eat for several years:

- **Low-acid canned goods:** 2 to 5 years (canned meat and poultry, stews, soups [except tomato soup], pasta products, potatoes, corn, carrots, spinach, beans, beets, peas and pumpkin).

- **High-acid canned goods:** 12 to 18 months (tomato products, fruits, sauerkraut and foods in vinegar-based sauces or dressings).

- Some canned hams are shelf-stable. Never store ham or any foods labeled "keep refrigerated" in the pantry. Such foods must be stored in the refrigerator.
DATES are printed on many food products. After the date expires, must you discard that food? In most cases, no. A calendar date may be stamped on a product's package to help the store determine how long to display the product for sale. It is not a safety date.

Product dating is not required by federal regulations, although dating of some foods is required by more than 20 states. Calendar dates are found primarily on perishable foods such as dairy products, eggs, meat and poultry. Coded dates might appear on shelf stable products such as cans and boxes of food.

There are several types of dates:

- **"Sell-by" date** – tells the store how long to display the products for sale. You should buy the product before the date expires.
- **"Best if Used By (or Before)"** – recommended for best flavor or quality. It is not a purchase or safety date.
- **"Use-by"** – the last date recommended for use of the products while at peak quality. The date has been determined by the manufacturer of the product.
- **"Closed or Coded Dates"** – packing numbers for use by the manufacturer in tracking their products. This enables manufacturers to rotate their stock as well as locate their products in the event of a recall.

If a product does not have a date on it, write the purchase date on it before you refrigerate or freeze it. While food product dating can help us determine how long a product will be at peak quality, all foods should still be handled, stored, and prepared safely to help prevent incidences of foodborne illness.

### BABY FOOD

Do not buy or use infant formula and baby food past its "use-by" date. Federal regulations require a date on those products.

### EXPIRED DATES

As long as products are wholesome, a retailer may legally sell fresh or processed meat and poultry products beyond the expiration date on the package.
The storage times listed below are intended as guidelines and not definite rules. Especially in warmer climates like Hawaii, foods may spoil faster. Buy in reasonable amounts and **WHEN IN DOUBT ABOUT A FOOD, THROW IT OUT!!!**

### Shelf Stable Foods

Before opening, shelf stable foods should be safe unless the can or packaging has been damaged. After opening, store products in tightly closed containers. The storage of many shelf stable items at room temperature is a quality issue - unless the product is contaminated (bugs in flour, for example). Some foods must be refrigerated after opening, such as tuna or chili. Check the following storage chart.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shelf Stable Foods</th>
<th>Unopened in Pantry</th>
<th>In Refrigerator After Opened</th>
<th>In Pantry After Opened</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BABY FOOD, JARS, OR CANS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fruits &amp; vegetables</td>
<td>Use-by date</td>
<td>2-3 days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meats &amp; eggs</td>
<td>Use-by date</td>
<td>1 day</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cereal, dry mixes</td>
<td>Use-by date</td>
<td></td>
<td>2 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formula</td>
<td>Use-by date</td>
<td>1-2 days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bacon Bits, Imitation</td>
<td>4 months</td>
<td>refer to jar</td>
<td>4 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BAKING INGREDIENTS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baking Powder</td>
<td>6 months</td>
<td></td>
<td>3 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baking Soda</td>
<td>18 months</td>
<td></td>
<td>6 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biscuit or Pancake Mix</td>
<td>15 months</td>
<td></td>
<td>Pkg use-by date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cake, Brownie and Bread mixes</td>
<td>12-18 months</td>
<td></td>
<td>Pkg use-by date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chocolate, unsweetened and semi-sweet, solid</td>
<td>18-24 months</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chocolate Syrup</td>
<td>2 years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cocoa and Cocoa Mixes</td>
<td>Indefinitely</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cornmeal, regular degerminated</td>
<td>6-12 months</td>
<td>12 months</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stone ground or blue</td>
<td>1 month</td>
<td>2-3 months</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cornstarch</td>
<td>18 months</td>
<td></td>
<td>18 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flour, white</td>
<td>6-12 months</td>
<td></td>
<td>6-8 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flour, Whole Wheat</td>
<td>1 month</td>
<td>6-8 months</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frosting, canned</td>
<td>10 months</td>
<td>1 week</td>
<td>3 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frosting Mixes</td>
<td>12 months</td>
<td></td>
<td>3 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beans, dried</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canned Goods, Low Acid</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(such as meat, poultry, fish, gravy, stew, soups, beans, carrots, corn, pasta, peas, potatoes, spinach)</td>
<td>2-5 years</td>
<td>3-4 days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canned Goods, High Acid</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(such as juices, fruit, pickles, sauerkraut, tomato soup, and foods in vinegar-based sauce)</td>
<td>12-18 months</td>
<td>5-7 days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cereal, Ready-to Eat</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cereal, cook before eating (oatmeal, etc.)</td>
<td>6-12 months</td>
<td>12 months</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Revised: 9/14
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shelf Stable Foods</th>
<th>Unopened in Pantry</th>
<th>In Refrigerator After Opened</th>
<th>In Pantry After Opened</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COFFEE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole Beans, non-vacuum bag</td>
<td>1-3 weeks</td>
<td>For all types:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ground, in cans</td>
<td>2 years</td>
<td>3-4 months frozen</td>
<td>1 week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instant, jars and tins</td>
<td>12 months</td>
<td>2 weeks refrigerated</td>
<td>1 week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONDIMENTS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbeque sauce, bottled</td>
<td>12 months</td>
<td>4 months</td>
<td>1 month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catsup, tomato; cocktail sauce or chili sauce</td>
<td>12 months</td>
<td>6 months</td>
<td>1 month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chutney</td>
<td>12 months</td>
<td>1-2 months</td>
<td>1 month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horseradish, in jar</td>
<td>12 months</td>
<td>3-4 months</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mayonnaise, commercial</td>
<td>2-3 months</td>
<td>2 months</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mustard</td>
<td>12 months</td>
<td>12 months</td>
<td>1 month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olives, black and green</td>
<td>12-18 months</td>
<td>2 weeks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pickles</td>
<td>12 months</td>
<td>1-2 weeks</td>
<td>1 month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salad Dressings, commercial, bottled</td>
<td>10-12 months</td>
<td>3 months</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salsa, picante and taco sauces</td>
<td>12 months</td>
<td>1 month</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cookies, packaged</td>
<td>2 months</td>
<td>8-12 months</td>
<td>4 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crackers</td>
<td>8 months</td>
<td>freeze or refrigerate</td>
<td>1 month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diet Powder Mixes</td>
<td>6 months</td>
<td>3-4 months</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extracts, vanilla, lemon, etc.</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fruits, dried</td>
<td>6 months</td>
<td>6 months</td>
<td>1 month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garlic: chopped, commercial jars</td>
<td>18 months</td>
<td>Refrigerate; use by date on jar</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gelatin: flavored</td>
<td>18 months</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unflavored</td>
<td>8 months</td>
<td>Use all or reseal for 3-4 months</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gravy: jars and cans</td>
<td>2-5 years</td>
<td>1-2 days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dry gravy mixes</td>
<td>2 years</td>
<td>1-2 days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herbs, dried</td>
<td>1-2 years</td>
<td>Use entire can Mix entire packet</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honey</td>
<td>12 months</td>
<td>Store in cool, dark place, 1 year</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jams, Jellies, Preserves</td>
<td>12 months</td>
<td>6 months</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juice, boxes</td>
<td>4-6 months</td>
<td>8-12 days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lentils, dried</td>
<td>12 months</td>
<td>12 months</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maple Syrup, pure genuine</td>
<td>12 months</td>
<td>12 months</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marshmallows, Marshmallow Creme</td>
<td>2-4 months</td>
<td>1 month</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milk, canned evaporated</td>
<td>12 months</td>
<td>4-5 days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Molasses</td>
<td>12 months</td>
<td>6 months</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mushrooms, dried</td>
<td>6 months</td>
<td>3 months</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oils: olive or vegetable</td>
<td>6 months</td>
<td>4 months</td>
<td>1-3 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>walnut, macadamia, other nut oils</td>
<td>6 months</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vegetable oil sprays</td>
<td>2 years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nuts, jars or cans</td>
<td>12 months</td>
<td>Refrigerate 4-6 months Freeze 9-12 months</td>
<td>1 month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelf Stable Foods</td>
<td>Unopened in Pantry</td>
<td>In Refrigerator After Opened</td>
<td>In Pantry After Opened</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pasta: dry, made without eggs</td>
<td>2 years</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dry egg noodles</td>
<td>2 years</td>
<td></td>
<td>1-2 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peanut Butter, commercial</td>
<td>6-9 months</td>
<td></td>
<td>2-3 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peas, dried split</td>
<td>12 months</td>
<td></td>
<td>12 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pectin</td>
<td>Use by pkg date</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Popcorn: dry kernals in jar</td>
<td>2 years</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Commercially popped in bags</td>
<td>2-3 months</td>
<td></td>
<td>1-2 days popped</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Microwave packets</td>
<td>1 year</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potato Chips</td>
<td>2 months</td>
<td></td>
<td>1-2 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potatoes, instant</td>
<td>6-12 months</td>
<td></td>
<td>6-12 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pudding Mixes</td>
<td>1 year</td>
<td></td>
<td>3-4 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rice, white or wild</td>
<td>2 years</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>brown</td>
<td>1 year</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>flavored or herb mixes</td>
<td>6 months</td>
<td></td>
<td>Use all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sauce mixes: non-dairy (spaghetti, taco, etc.)</td>
<td>2 years</td>
<td></td>
<td>Use all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cream sauces with milk solids</td>
<td>1 year</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shortening, solid</td>
<td>8 months</td>
<td></td>
<td>3 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soda, such as carbonated cola drinks, mixers:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diet sodas, bottles or cans</td>
<td>3 mos after date</td>
<td></td>
<td>2-3 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular sodas, bottles</td>
<td>3 mos after date</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular sodas, cans</td>
<td>9 mos after date</td>
<td></td>
<td>2 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soup mixes, dry boullion</td>
<td>1 year</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spices: whole</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• ground</td>
<td>2-4 years</td>
<td></td>
<td>Included in total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Paprika, Red Pepper, Chili Powder</td>
<td>2-3 years</td>
<td></td>
<td>Included in total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugar: Brown</td>
<td>4 months</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sugar never spoils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Granulated</td>
<td>2 years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Confectioners</td>
<td>18 months</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sugar Substitutes</td>
<td>2 years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syrup, Pancake</td>
<td>1 year</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maple &amp; other flavors</td>
<td>1 year</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tapioca</td>
<td>1 year</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tea: Bags</td>
<td>18 months</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Loose</td>
<td>2 year</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Instant</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td></td>
<td>6-12 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toaster Pastries: fruit-filled</td>
<td>6 months</td>
<td></td>
<td>Keep foil packets sealed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Non-fruit fillings</td>
<td>9 months</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tomatoes: Sun Dried, packed in oil</td>
<td>12 months</td>
<td></td>
<td>3-6 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• packed in cellophane</td>
<td>9 months</td>
<td></td>
<td>3-6 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vinegar</td>
<td>2 years</td>
<td></td>
<td>12 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yeast, dry, packets and jar</td>
<td>Use by date</td>
<td>Refrigerate open jars</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water, bottled</td>
<td>1-2 years</td>
<td></td>
<td>3 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worcestershire Sauce</td>
<td>1 year</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 year</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Foods Purchased Refrigerated

Refrigerate foods to maintain quality as well as to keep them safe. Some bacteria grow and multiply - although very slowly - at refrigerator temperatures. There is a time limit that various foods will stay fresh and safe in a refrigerator. Food kept continuously frozen at 0°F will always be safe but the quality suffers with lengthy freezer storage.

NOTE: Storage times are from date of purchase unless specified on chart. It is not important if a date expires after food is frozen.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product</th>
<th>Refrigerated</th>
<th>Frozen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>BEVERAGES, FRUIT</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juice in cartons, fruit drinks, punch</td>
<td>3 weeks, unopened;</td>
<td>8-12 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7-10 days open</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CONDIMENTS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refrigerated pesto, salsa</td>
<td>Date on carton;</td>
<td>1-2 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 days after opening</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sour cream-based dip</td>
<td>2 weeks</td>
<td>Does not freeze well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DAIRY PRODUCTS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butter</td>
<td>1-3 months</td>
<td>6-9 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buttermilk</td>
<td>7-14 days</td>
<td>3 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheese, Hard (such as Cheddar, Swiss, block Parmesan)</td>
<td>6 mos unopened;</td>
<td>6 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3-4 weeks opened</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheese, Parmesan, shredded</td>
<td>1 month opened</td>
<td>3-4 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheese, Soft (such as Brie, Bel Paese)</td>
<td>1 week</td>
<td>6 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cottage Cheese, Ricotta</td>
<td>1 week</td>
<td>Does not freeze well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cream Cheese</td>
<td>2 weeks</td>
<td>Does not freeze well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cream, Whipping, ultrapasteurized</td>
<td>1 month</td>
<td>Do not freeze</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whipped, sweetened</td>
<td>1 day</td>
<td>1-2 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aerosol can, real whipped cream</td>
<td>3-4 weeks</td>
<td>Do not freeze</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aerosol can, non-dairy topping</td>
<td>3 months</td>
<td>4 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cream, Half and Half</td>
<td>3-4 days</td>
<td>Manufacturer says &quot;Do not freeze&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egg substitutes, liquid</td>
<td>10 days</td>
<td>6 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unopened</td>
<td>3 days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>opened</td>
<td>3-5 days</td>
<td>Do not freeze</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egg nog, Commercial</td>
<td>3-5 weeks</td>
<td>1 year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eggs, in shell</td>
<td>2-4 days</td>
<td>Does not freeze well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raw whites</td>
<td>2-4 days</td>
<td>Does not freeze well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raw yolks</td>
<td>1 week</td>
<td>3 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hard Cooked</td>
<td>6 months</td>
<td>Do not freeze</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Margarine</td>
<td>1 week</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milk</td>
<td>Package date; 2 days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pudding</td>
<td>after opening</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sour Cream</td>
<td>7-21 days</td>
<td>Does not freeze well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yogurt</td>
<td>7-14 days</td>
<td>1-2 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DELI FOODS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrees, cold or hot</td>
<td>3-4 days</td>
<td>2-3 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Store-sliced lunch meats</td>
<td>3-5 days</td>
<td>1-2 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salads</td>
<td>3-5 days</td>
<td>Do not freeze</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product</td>
<td>Refrigerated</td>
<td>Frozen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DOUGH</strong></td>
<td>Use-by date</td>
<td>Do not freeze</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tube cans of biscuits, rolls, pizza dough, etc.</td>
<td>Use-by date</td>
<td>2 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ready-to-bake pie crust</td>
<td>Use-by date, unopened or opened</td>
<td>2 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cookie dough</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FISH</strong></td>
<td>1-2 days</td>
<td>6-8 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lean fish (cod, flounder, haddock, sole, etc.)</td>
<td>1-2 days</td>
<td>4 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fatty fish (bluefish, mackerel, salmon, tuna, etc.)</td>
<td>1-4 weeks unopened; 2 days after opening</td>
<td>Do not freeze</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caviar, non-pasteurized (fresh)</td>
<td>3-4 days</td>
<td>1-2 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooked fish</td>
<td>14 days or date on vacuum pkg</td>
<td>2 months in vacuum pkg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smoked fish</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SHELLFISH</strong></td>
<td>1-2 days</td>
<td>3-6 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shrimp, scallops, crayfish, squid</td>
<td>1-2 days</td>
<td>3-4 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shucked clams, mussels and oysters</td>
<td>1-2 days</td>
<td>2-3 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Live clams, mussels crab, lobster and oysters</td>
<td>3-4 days</td>
<td>3 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooked shellfish</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MEAT, FRESH</strong></td>
<td>3-5 days</td>
<td>4-12 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beef, Lamb, Pork, or Veal chops, steaks, roasts</td>
<td>1-2 days</td>
<td>3-4 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ground Meat</td>
<td>1-2 days</td>
<td>3-4 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variety meats (liver, tongue, chitterlings, etc.)</td>
<td>3-4 days</td>
<td>2-3 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooked meats (after home cooking)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MEAT, SMOKED OR PROCESSED</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bacon</td>
<td>7 days</td>
<td>1 month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corned beef, in pouch with pickling juices</td>
<td>5-7 days</td>
<td>1 month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ham, canned (&quot;keep refrigerated&quot; label)</td>
<td>6-9 months</td>
<td>Not in can</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ham, fully cooked, whole</td>
<td>7 days</td>
<td>1-2 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ham, fully cooked, slices or half</td>
<td>3-4 days</td>
<td>1-2 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ham, cook before eating</td>
<td>7 days</td>
<td>1-2 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hot dogs, sealed in package</td>
<td>2 weeks</td>
<td>1-2 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hot dogs, after opening</td>
<td>1 week</td>
<td>1-2 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunch meats, sealed in package</td>
<td>2 weeks</td>
<td>1-2 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunch meats, after opening</td>
<td>3-5 days</td>
<td>1-2 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sausage, raw, bulk type</td>
<td>1-2 days</td>
<td>1-2 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sausage, smoked links, patties</td>
<td>7 days</td>
<td>1-2 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sausage, hard, dry (pepperoni), sliced</td>
<td>2-3 weeks</td>
<td>1-2 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PASTA, FRESH</strong></td>
<td>1-2 days or use-by date on package</td>
<td>2 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>POULTRY, FRESH</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicken or Turkey, whole</td>
<td>1-2 days</td>
<td>12 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicken or Turkey, parts</td>
<td>1-2 days</td>
<td>9 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duckling or Goose, whole</td>
<td>1-2 days</td>
<td>6 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giblets</td>
<td>1-2 days</td>
<td>3-4 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product</td>
<td>Refrigerated</td>
<td>Frozen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POULTRY, COOKED, or PROCESSED</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicken nuggets, patties</td>
<td>1-2 days</td>
<td>1-3 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooked poultry dishes</td>
<td>3-4 days</td>
<td>4-6 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fried chicken</td>
<td>3-4 days</td>
<td>4 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ground turkey or chicken</td>
<td>1-2 days</td>
<td>3-4 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunch meats, sealed in package</td>
<td>2 weeks</td>
<td>1-2 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunch meats, after opening</td>
<td>3-5 days</td>
<td>1-2 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pieces covered with broth or gravy</td>
<td>1-2 days</td>
<td>6 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rotisserie chicken</td>
<td>3-4 days</td>
<td>4 months</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Foods Purchased Frozen

When shopping, place frozen foods in the cart last, immediately before checking out. Take the foods directly home and place in freezer. For storage of meat and poultry purchased frozen, see refrigerated foods chart.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frozen Item</th>
<th>In Refrigerator After Thawing</th>
<th>Freezer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bagels</td>
<td>1-2 weeks</td>
<td>2 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bread Dough, commercial</td>
<td>After baking, 4-7 days</td>
<td>Use-by date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burritos, sandwiches</td>
<td>3-4 days</td>
<td>2 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egg Substitutes</td>
<td>Date on carton</td>
<td>12 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fish, Breaded</td>
<td>Do not defrost;</td>
<td>3-6 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>cook frozen</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fish, Raw</td>
<td>1-2 days</td>
<td>6 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fruits such as berries, melons</td>
<td>4-5 days</td>
<td>4-6 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guacamole</td>
<td>3-4 days</td>
<td>3-4 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ice Cream</td>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>2-4 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juice Concentrates</td>
<td>7-10 days</td>
<td>6-12 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lobster Tails</td>
<td>2 days</td>
<td>3 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pancakes, Waffles</td>
<td>3-4 days</td>
<td>2 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sausages, uncooked</td>
<td>1-2 days</td>
<td>1-2 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>precooked</td>
<td>7 days</td>
<td>1-2 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sherbet, sorbet</td>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>2-4 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shrimp, shellfish</td>
<td>1-2 days</td>
<td>12 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topping, Whipped</td>
<td>2 weeks</td>
<td>6 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV Dinners, Entrees, Breakfast</td>
<td>Do not defrost;</td>
<td>3 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>cook frozen</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vegetables</td>
<td>3-4 days</td>
<td>8 months</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Fresh Produce**

Raw fruits are safe at room temperature. However, after they ripen they will mold and rot quickly. For best quality, store ripe fruit in the refrigerator or prepare and freeze.

Some dense raw vegetables, such as potatoes and onions, can be stored at cool room temperatures. Refrigerate other raw vegetables for optimum quality and to prevent rotting. After cooking, all vegetables must be refrigerated or frozen within two hours.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fruits</th>
<th>Shelf</th>
<th>Refrigerator</th>
<th>Freezer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apples</td>
<td>1-2 days</td>
<td>3 weeks</td>
<td>Cooked, 8 mos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apricots</td>
<td>Until ripe</td>
<td>2-3 days</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avocados</td>
<td>Until ripe</td>
<td>3-4 days</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bananas</td>
<td>Until ripe</td>
<td>2 days, skin will blacken</td>
<td>Whole peeled, 1 month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berries and Cherries</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>1-2 days</td>
<td>4 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citrus Fruit</td>
<td>10 days</td>
<td>1-2 weeks</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coconuts, fresh</td>
<td>1 week</td>
<td>2-3 weeks</td>
<td>Shredded, 6 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grapes</td>
<td>1 day</td>
<td>1 week</td>
<td>Whole, 1 month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiwi Fruit</td>
<td>Until ripe</td>
<td>3-4 days</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melons</td>
<td>1-2 days</td>
<td>3-4 days</td>
<td>Balls, 1 month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Papaya, Mango</td>
<td>3-5 days</td>
<td>1 week</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peaches, Nectarines</td>
<td>Until ripe</td>
<td>3-4 days</td>
<td>Sliced, lemon juice sugar, 2 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pears, Plums</td>
<td>3-5 days</td>
<td>3-4 days</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vegetables</th>
<th>Shelf</th>
<th>Raw, Refrigerated</th>
<th>Blanched or Cooked, Frozen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Artichokes, whole</td>
<td>1-2 days</td>
<td>1-2 weeks</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asparagus</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>3-4 days</td>
<td>8 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beans, Green or Wax</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>3-4 days</td>
<td>8 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beets</td>
<td>1 day</td>
<td>7-10 days</td>
<td>6-8 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cabbage</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>1-2 weeks</td>
<td>10-12 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carrots, Parsnips</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>3 weeks</td>
<td>10-12 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celery</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>1-2 weeks</td>
<td>10-12 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cucumbers</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>4-5 days</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eggplant</td>
<td>1 day</td>
<td>3-4 days</td>
<td>6-8 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garlic</td>
<td>1 month</td>
<td>1-2 weeks</td>
<td>1 month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ginger Root</td>
<td>1-2 days</td>
<td>1-2 weeks</td>
<td>1 month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greens</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>1-2 days</td>
<td>10-12 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herbs, Fresh</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>7-10 days</td>
<td>1-2 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leeks</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>1-2 weeks</td>
<td>10-12 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lettuce, Iceburg</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>1-2 weeks</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lettuce, Leaf</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>3-7 days</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mushrooms</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>2-3 days</td>
<td>10-12 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Okra</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>2-3 days</td>
<td>10-12 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onions: dry</td>
<td>2-3 weeks</td>
<td>2 months</td>
<td>10-12 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring or Green</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>1-2 weeks</td>
<td>10-12 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peppers: Bell or Chili</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>4-5 days</td>
<td>6-8 months</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Bakery Items

Bakery items containing custards, meat or vegetables, and frostings made of cream cheese, whipped cream or eggs must be kept refrigerated. Bread products not containing these ingredients are safe if kept at room temperature, but eventually they will mold and become unsafe to eat.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bakery Items</th>
<th>Shelf</th>
<th>Refrigerator</th>
<th>Freezer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bread, commercial</td>
<td>2-4 days</td>
<td>7-14 days</td>
<td>3 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bread, flat (tortillas, pita)</td>
<td>2-4 days</td>
<td>4-7 days</td>
<td>4 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cakes, Angel Food*</td>
<td>1-2 days</td>
<td>7 days</td>
<td>2 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chiffon, Sponge</td>
<td>1-2 days</td>
<td>7 days</td>
<td>2 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chocolate</td>
<td>1-2 days</td>
<td>7 days</td>
<td>4 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fruit Cake</td>
<td>1 month</td>
<td>6 months</td>
<td>12 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Made from Mix</td>
<td>3-4 days</td>
<td>7 days</td>
<td>4 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pound Cake</td>
<td>3-4 days</td>
<td>7 days</td>
<td>6 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheesecake</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>7 days</td>
<td>2-3 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cookies, bakery or homemade</td>
<td>2-3 weeks</td>
<td>2 months</td>
<td>8-12 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croissants, butter</td>
<td>1 day</td>
<td>7 days</td>
<td>2 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doughnuts, glazed or cake dairy cream-filled</td>
<td>1-2 days</td>
<td>7 days</td>
<td>1 month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eclairs, dairy cream-filled</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>3-4 days</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muffins</td>
<td>1-2 days</td>
<td>7 days</td>
<td>2 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastries, Danish</td>
<td>1-2 days</td>
<td>7 days</td>
<td>2 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pies: Cream</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>3-4 days</td>
<td>8 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Chiffon</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>1-2 days</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Fruit</td>
<td>1-2 days</td>
<td>7 days</td>
<td>8 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Mincemeat</td>
<td>2 hours</td>
<td>7 days</td>
<td>8 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Pecan</td>
<td>2 hours</td>
<td>3-4 days</td>
<td>1-2 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Pumpkin</td>
<td>2 hours</td>
<td>3-4 days</td>
<td>1-2 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiche</td>
<td>2 hours</td>
<td>3-4 days</td>
<td>2 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rolls: yeast, baked, yeast, partially baked filled, meat</td>
<td>3-4 days</td>
<td>7 days</td>
<td>2 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• vegetables</td>
<td>2 hours</td>
<td>3-4 days</td>
<td>2 months</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Refrigerate any cake with frosting made of cream cheese, butter cream, whipped cream or eggs.