

Food Safety Tips

Your health is important to us!



"use by"

The last date recommended for the use of the product while at peak quality. **It is not a safety date.**

"sell by"

Tells the store how long to display the product for sale for inventory management. **It is not a safety date.**



Indicates when a product will be of best flavor or quality. **It is not a purchase or safety date.**

Indicates that it is **not safe for distribution or consumption** (such as medicines, baby food, and baby formula)



"best if used by"

"expires"



- Food manufacturers use different date codes to ensure that consumers receive their product at peak quality. Once a product is past code date, many manufacturers donate it to food banks. Food Bank staff monitors this food to ensure that the quality remains good.
- Many canned and boxed products are safe to eat long after the date on the container, and the shelf life of refrigerated and frozen foods can be extended if they are handled properly. Once a perishable item is frozen, it doesn't matter if the date expires - foods kept frozen **continuously** are safe indefinitely, though the quality slowly deteriorates over time.

Expiration Date Grace Periods

USDA suggests these grace periods following a product's "use by" or "best by" dates.



Baked Goods

3 Months if frozen
includes bread



Baking

1 Year



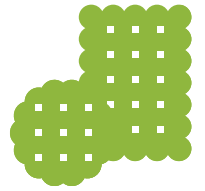
Canned Items

5 Years
non-perishable foods



Cereals & Breakfast Items

1 Year



Healthy Snacks

1 Year
crackers, nuts, granola bars, etc.



Condiments

1 Year



Dried Beans, Rice, & Pasta

3 Years



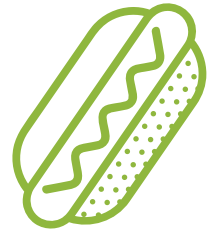
Drinks (not water)

6 Months
includes powdered drinks



Frozen Products

1 Year
includes meat



Processed Refrigerated Food

1 Month



Milk

3 Months if frozen



Snacks

6 Months
potato chips, popcorn, etc.



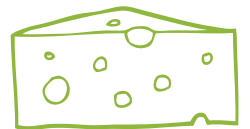
Peanut Butters

2 Years



Soup

2 Years
broths, bullion cubes, ramen



Refrigerated Dairy

2 wks - 3mo if frozen
yogurt, sour cream, cheese



Water

2 Years



Medical Products

No Grace Period



Baby Products

No Grace Period