



Is This Food Safe To Eat?

95% of our food comes directly from manufacturers, distributors, wholesalers, grocery retailers, and farm co-ops.

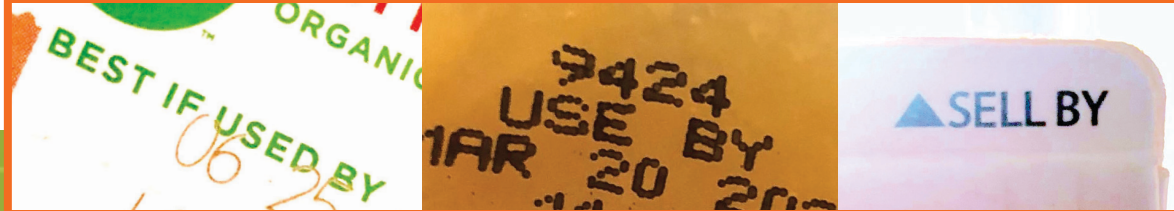
Through these partnerships, we are able to provide a variety of **fresh** produce, fresh or **frozen** meat, dairy and other perishables, as well as many **shelf-stable** pantry items, prepared meals, beverages, and paper products.

The signs of spoilage are different for different types of produce. These signs include wilted leaves and softness in crunchy fruits & vegetables. Products that are wilted or soft are still safe to eat.

Leaking juices, bad smells, and discoloration are signs that produce is no longer fresh. Mold or fungus can also be found on old produce. **Do not** eat anything with mold, fungus or off-odors and throw them out right away so they don't contaminate other produce.

www.ACFB.org

What's the difference?



BEST BY

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

USE BY

This date is the last date recommended for the use of the product while at peak quality. It is not a safety date except for when used on infant formula.

SELL BY

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

Are Dates for Safety or Quality?

Manufacturers provide dating to help consumers and retailers decide when food is of best quality. **Except for infant formula**, dates are not an indicator of the product's safety.

Can food be donated after the date passes?

Yes. The quality may decline after the date passes, but the food should still be safe as long as it does not show signs of spoilage.

What about frozen foods?

Freezing food is a great way to keep food safe for longer periods of time, if kept at 0°F. Foods that are left in the freezer too long will start to lose their freshness, but are still safe to eat. Freezer burn can start to occur after 3 months, but does not make the foods unsafe to eat. To avoid freezer burn and enjoy foods at their best, it is recommended to eat within 1 year.

Dry/Shelf Stable Foods:

Dates on foods refer to quality, not safety. Canned goods will last for years, as long as the can itself is in good condition (no rust, swelling or large dents). Packaged foods (cereal, pasta, crackers) can become stale past the 'best by' date, but will still be safe to eat.

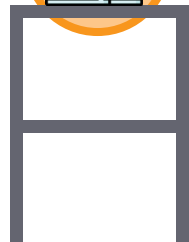
Sources:

USDA - <https://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/food-safety-education/get-answers/food-safety-fact-sheets/food-labeling/food-product-dating/food-product-dating>

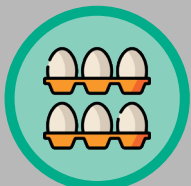
FoodSafety.gov - <https://www.foodsafety.gov/keep/foodkeeperapp/index.html>

Temperature Guide

Shelf-Stable
Store at
50-70°F



Frozen
Store at or
below 0°F



Refrigerated
Store at or
below 40°F

Food Safety Questions?

Call the USDA Meat & Poultry Hotline at
1-888-674-6854 from 10AM - 4PM EST
Mon. - Fri.

E-mail questions to: MPHotline@usda.gov

“Ask USDA,” a phone and live chat service.
Available via phone and live chat 8AM - 8PM EST
Mon. - Fri. at (833)-ONE-USDA and
Ask.USDA.gov.

When In Doubt, Throw It Out!

Cans that are swollen,
bulging, or have significant
dents, especially in the
seam

Rust that cannot be
wiped off

Discoloration, mold, texture
changes, or foul odors

Holes, torn packages,
broken seals, signs of
leaking or pests

Produce with severe decay
or skin not intact

Homemade containers,
missing, or unreadable
labels

How long past a Best By/Use By/Sell By date can a product be eaten?



Baked Goods | 3 Days
Includes Bread



Baking | 1 Year



Canned Fruits | 1-2 Years
Includes Tomatoes



**Canned Vegetables,
Meats, & Soup | 2-3 Years**



**Cereals & Breakfast
Items | 1 Year**



Condiments | 1 Year
Excludes Mayonnaise



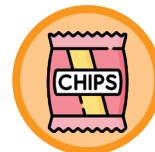
**Dried Beans, Rice,
& Pasta | 2 Years**



[Shelf-Stable] Milk | 1 Year
Includes Condensed,
Evaporated, & Powdered



Peanut Butter | 18 Months



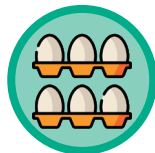
Snacks | 6 Months
Includes Crackers, Chips,
Popcorn, & Granola Bars



Cheese | 6 Months



Dairy Foods | 2 Weeks
Includes Yogurt
& Sour Cream



Eggs | 1 Month



[Fresh] Milk | 1 Week
Includes Dairy, Soy,
& Almond



**Plant-Based
Proteins | 10 Days**
Includes Tofu & Soy Patties



Frozen Fruit | 1 Year



Scan this QR code or visit,
bit.ly/ACFBfoodsafety
for more nutritional resources.



Frozen Vegetables | 1 Year



Frozen Meat | 1 Year
Includes
Prepared Meals



**Baby Products |
No Grace Period**
Baby Food & Formula