

BAKERY ITEMS & BREAD

Breads, Pastries, Cream Pies

Safe to eat:

- Fresh: consume on or before the date on the package
- Frozen

How to store:

- Cool, dry area or freezer
- Cream pies must be kept refrigerated or frozen
- Keep frozen bakery items frozen until consumed

FRESH PRODUCE

Whole, Cut or Packaged

Safe to eat:

- Ripe, edible and non-moldy produce
- Packaged produce that has been refrigerated
- Produce that has been washed
- Cut melons: consume on or before the date on the package
- Caution: melons, sprouts and mushrooms are potentially hazardous foods

How to store:

- If packaged or cut -refrigerate at 40° F or below

PREPARED FOODS

Safe to eat:

- **Deli-prepared, packaged by the store:** (pasta, salad, rice, sandwiches, soup, refrigerated dressings)
 - Consume within 48 hours past the date on the package
- **Pre-packaged prepared foods, packaged by the manufacturer:** (entrees, starches, side veggies, refrigerated dressings)
 - Fresh: consume within 14 days past the date on the package
 - Frozen: consume within one year past the date on the package if frozen within 3 days past the date on the package
 - Items containing dairy: consume within 7 days past the date on the package

How to store:

- Refrigerate at 40° F or below

When in doubt-throw it out

When in doubt-throw it out

DO NOT EAT

- Food that is stale or with insects or mold
- Food in damaged or compromised packaging
- Food not packaged in food-grade packaging
- Food in open, punctured, bulging or seriously damaged cans including those that are leaking, have side seam dents, and/or are rusted
- home-jarred food products
- Food in broken/chipped glass containers
- Food in a jar that is leaking, open, or seal has been broken ("button" indicator is popped up, etc.)
- Food that is discolored or has an off-odor
- Product that has been thawed and re-frozen
- Label must list: what the product is, ingredients, weight and distributor

This brochure does not include all donated food you may receive

*This brochure outlines the amount of time past the date on the package that food should be safe and wholesome to eat as considered by Food Lifeline's Food Safety Committee. These recommendations assume that all product has been handled properly. Please use your best judgment, and **when in doubt-throw it out.***

If you have questions or wish to obtain additional information on potentially hazardous foods and safe food handling, please contact an Agency Relations staff member.

FOOD LIFELINE

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RECOMMENDED CONSUMPTION GUIDELINES



FOOD 
LIFELINE

A Member of
FEEDING AMERICA

DAIRY
 Milk, Yogurt, Sour Cream, and Cottage Cheese,
 Cheese, Eggs

Safe to eat:
 Liquid dairy and Solid dairy:

- Half & Half, milk, egg nog, whipping cream: 10 days past the date on the package
- Soft Cheese, yogurt, sour cream and cottage cheese: 14 days past the date on the package
- Butter and Hard Cheese: Fresh: consume within 3 months past the date on the package
- Eggs in Shell: one month past the date on the package
- Eggs Hard Cooked: consume on or before the date on the package
- Pasteurized Eggs or substitute: Fresh: consume within 10 days past the date on the package
- Frozen: consume up to one year past the date on the package
- Shelf Stable Milk: Consume within 12 months past the date on the package
- Refrigerate at 40° F or below Dairy products like cheese can be frozen on or before the date on the package to extend the life of the product
- If frozen, consume pasteurized eggs or egg substitutes immediately after thawing.

How to store:
 Refrigerate at 40° F or below
 Shelf Stable items:
 consume up to 12 months past the date on the package

Safe to eat:
 Pasteurized
 Consume up to 3 weeks past the date on the package

How to store:
 Refrigerate at 40° F or below
 Avoid consuming product in swollen or bulging containers
 When in doubt-throw it out

When in doubt-throw it out

MEAT
 Processed, Packaged, Frozen and Fresh

Safe to eat:
 Fresh: consume on or before the date on the package

- Defrost frozen meat in a refrigerator or microwave. If defrosted in a microwave, cook immediately.
 - Cook and consume meat as soon as possible after defrosting.
- How to store:**
 Refrigerated at 40° F or below up to the date on the package
 Frozen at 0° F or below on or before the date on the package
- DO NOT EAT**
 Meat with severe freezer burn
 Discolored meat
 Meat not frozen on or before the date on the package.

ALTERNATIVE DAIRY & MEAT PRODUCTS
 Refrigerated Soy, Tofu, Shelf-stable Non-Dairy Beverages (Rice milk, soy milk, etc.)

Safe to eat:
 Refrigerated non-dairy:
 Liquid products (rice milk, soy milk): consume up to 10 days past the date on the package
 Solid non-dairy items (soy cheese, soy yogurt): consume up to 14 days past the date on the package
 Refrigerated non-dairy spreads (margarine):
 Fresh: consume within 6 months past the date on the package
 Frozen at 0° F or below on or before the date on the package

How to store:
 Shelf Stable items:
 consume up to 12 months past the date on the package
 Meat substitutes: (tofu, tempoh, Seitan, ect) Fresh: consume on or before the date on the package
 Frozen: Consume within 12 months past the date on the package if **frozen** on or before the date on the package

When in doubt-throw it out

DRY & CANNED FOODS
 Dressing/Mayonnaise, Dried Beans/Pasta, Cereal/Crackers, Prepackaged Foods (Non-Perishable), Shelf-Stable, Jarred Foods, etc.

Safe to eat:
 Dried beans/pasta: may be consumed indefinitely

- Dressing/ mayonnaise: consume up to one year past the date on the package
- Cereal, crackers, and prepackaged (non-perishable) foods: consume up to 12 months past the date on the package
- Shelf-Stable Jarred foods: consume up to 24 months past the date on the package
- Exception: baby food needs to be consumed on or before the date on the package
- Canned foods: may be consumed indefinitely.
- Exception: highly acidic items (tomatoes, pineapple) should be consumed within 12 to 18 months past the date on the package

How to store:
 Store in well-ventilated and climate controlled area

When in doubt-throw it out