



# Food “Best-By” & Thawing Guide



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# Contents

<b>Food Shelf Life Laws</b> .....	2
Meaning of Labeling.....	3
<b>How to Safely Thaw Meat</b> .....	4
<b>How to Safely Thaw Whole Turkey</b> .....	5
<b>How to Safely Thaw Seafood</b> .....	7
<b>What is Freezer Burn?</b> .....	8
Tips to Avoid Freezer Burn.....	9
Color Changes in Frozen Foods.....	9
<b>Microwave Ovens and Food Safety</b> .....	10
<b>How Long Do Meat &amp; Fish Last?</b>	
Bacon.....	14
Beef .....	15
Canned Meat .....	16
Deli Meat.....	17
Ham.....	18
Hamburgers .....	19
Pork .....	20
Poultry .....	21
Fish.....	22
Salmon.....	23
Shrimp.....	24
<b>How Long Do Dairy Products Last?</b>	
Butter .....	25
Hard Cheese.....	26
Soft Cheese .....	27
Eggs .....	28
Milk.....	29
Almond Milk.....	30
Dating Infant Formula .....	31
Sour Cream .....	32
Yogurt.....	33
Pudding.....	34

# Contents

## How Long Do Vegetables Last?

Canned Vegetables .....	35
Frozen Vegetables.....	36
Tomato Sauce.....	37

## How Long Do Fresh Fruits Last?..... 38

## How Long Do Grains Last?

Bread .....	40
Cereal.....	41
Oatmeal.....	42
Rice.....	43
Pasta.....	44
Pizza.....	45
Tortillas .....	46

## How Long Does Protein Last?

Peanut Butter.....	47
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## How Long Do Legumes Last?

Beans.....	48
Peas .....	49

## How Long Do Beverages Last?

Coffee .....	50
Tea .....	51
Sports Drinks.....	52
Water .....	53

## How Long Do Condiments Last?

Mayonnaise.....	54
Salad Dressing .....	55
Oils.....	56

### Sources:

[www.fsis.usda.gov](http://www.fsis.usda.gov)  
[www.foodsafety.gov](http://www.foodsafety.gov)  
[www.usda.gov](http://www.usda.gov)

# Food Shelf Life Laws

When you purchase food items at your local grocery store, you may notice a printed **sell-by date**, **use-by date** or **best-before date** on the packaging and wonder what that date really means. Here at Island Harvest, we are doing our best to make sure that you are fully informed about the **true shelf life** of the most commonly-purchased food items. As we have learned, **most food is still edible after the printed expiration dates have passed**.



When reviewing the printed date on the food item in question, you may find it interesting to learn the following facts associated with the shelf life of foods:

- **Food CAN be sold after a date expires** – Stores are not legally required to remove food from the shelf once the expiration date has passed. The expiration dates are strictly advisory in nature, and are left entirely to the discretion of that food manufacturer, thus not truly indicative of an items true shelf life.
- **Food dates are NOT required by law** – With the exception of infant formula and baby food, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) does not require food companies to place dates on their food products. The only requirement is that the food is wholesome and fit for consumption.
- **Food dating laws vary by state** – States have varying food dating laws. For example, many states require that milk and other perishables be sold before the expiration date, while others do not.

The shelf life of food is how long it may be stored (exist on a shelf) before the quality deteriorates. Shelf life is used in reference to these common codes: **Use-by Date**, **Sell-by Date**, and **Best-Before Date**. A foods' shelf life depends on which code is used and the type of product in question.

**Please see the specific page for your food product to determine the proper shelf life, because the shelf life is different for each particular item.**



# Meaning of Labeling

Sell-by labeling tells the store how long to display the product for sale. You should buy the product before the date expires. This is basically a guide for the retailer, so the store knows when to pull the item from the shelf. The issue is quality of the item (freshness, taste, and consistency) rather than whether it is on the verge of spoiling.

- **BEST USED BY or USED BEFORE date** – This refers strictly to product quality, not safety. This date is recommended for best flavor or quality. It is not a purchase or safety date. Sour cream, for instance, is already sour, but can have a zippier, fresh taste when freshly packaged.

## “Guaranteed fresh” date

This usually refers to bakery items. They will still be edible after the date, but will not be at peak freshness.

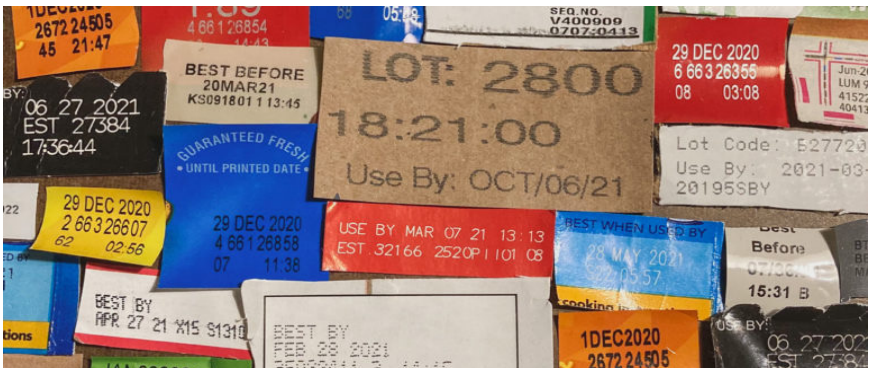
## “Use-by” date

This is the last date recommended for the use of the product while at peak quality. The date has been determined by the manufacturer of the product.

## “Pack” date

You will find this one on canned or packaged goods, as a rule, but it’s tricky. In fact, it may be in code. It can be month-day-year-MMDDYY. Or the manufacturer could revert to the Julian calendar. January would then be 001-0031 and December 334-365.

\*Julian Dates: Starting with January 1 as 001 and ending with December 31 as 365, these numbers represent the consecutive days of the year.



# How To Safely Thaw Meat

## **Method 1: Defrost Overnight for Next-Day Use**

The best way to thaw meat safely is to plan ahead. Defrost overnight, wrapped securely, in a rimmed glass dish in the refrigerator - any liquid seepage will be contained and reduce contamination of surrounding fridge food and surfaces. Keep the meat cold until you are ready to cook all of it. **Exception: a whole frozen chicken or turkey needs 24 hours per 4-5 pounds of weight to defrost completely.**



## **Method 2: Cold-Water Thawing for Same-Day Use**

To thaw any meat for same-day-use, place securely-wrapped meat in the sink or large bowl filled with COLD water. ***Properly-sealed meat packaging prevents bacteria from forming and protects against water seepage.*** Change the water every 30 minutes as meat continues to thaw. A 1-pound package of meat should thaw in an hour or less. 3- to 4-pound packages may take 2+ hours to thaw completely.



### **○ IMPORTANT:**

- ~ ***Never keep meat at room temperature for more than two hours.***
- ~ ***Never re-freeze thawed meats, unless put in a stock or soup.***
- ~ ***Thoroughly wash any dishes and surfaces touched by raw meat, and wipe up any liquid seepage with a disinfectant wipe.***
- ~ ***Wash your hands thoroughly after handling raw meat.***

# How To Safely Thaw Whole Turkey

TURKEY SIZE	In Refrigerator (24 hr per 4-5 lbs.)	In Cold Water (approx 30 min per lb.)
4 to 12 pounds	1 to 3 days	2 to 6 hours
12 to 16 pounds	3 to 4 days	6 to 8 hours
16 to 20 pounds	4 to 5 days	8 to 10 hours
20 to 24 pounds	5 to 6 days	10 to 12 hours

While frozen, a whole turkey is storage-safe indefinitely. As soon as it starts to thaw, however, bacteria present before freezing will begin to grow again. The following three methods are, in order, the safest and most efficient ways to prepare a whole turkey for cooking.

## **Method 1: Refrigerator Thawing (recommended)**

The USDA recommends thawing your whole frozen turkey in the refrigerator. This is safest, because the turkey will thaw at a consistent, safe temperature. This method takes some time, so allow one day for each 4-5 pounds of weight. If your turkey weighs 16 pounds, it will take about four days to thaw. Once thawed, the turkey is safe for another two days, so start thawing six days before (the Friday before) Thanksgiving.

***The next two thawing methods (cold water and microwave) must be done immediately before you start cooking the turkey, so you'll need to wait until Thanksgiving morning.***

## **Method 2: Cold-Water Thawing**

Leave the turkey in its original wrapping and submerge it in a sink or bucket full of COLD water - the water must be cold so the turkey stays at a safe temperature. Empty out/refill the water every 30 minutes as the turkey continues to thaw. Allow 30 minutes of defrosting time per pound, so a 16 pound turkey will take 8 hours to thaw using this method. You should plan to start defrosting around 4 a.m. if you want to eat mid/late afternoon. Once the turkey has thawed, cook it immediately.

# How To Safely Thaw Whole Turkey

## ***Method 3:* Microwave Thawing**

Before you commit to thawing your turkey in the microwave, check your owner's manual for the max-size turkey that will fit in your microwave, the minutes-per-pound and the power level to use when thawing a turkey. Remove ALL outside wrapping and place the turkey on a microwave-safe dish to catch any juices that may leak. Use the defrost function based on weight. As a general rule, allow 6 minutes per pound when thawing a turkey in the microwave. If you do not have an auto-rotating turntable in your microwave, be sure to rotate it several times, and even flip it, during the thawing process.

If the turkey starts to actually cook instead of just defrost, let it rest for 5 minutes or so before you resume thawing. Partway through thawing you may wish to cover the tips of the wings and drumsticks with a small piece of butcher paper or parchment to shield them from the microwaves and keep them from cooking. Once the turkey has sufficiently thawed, you should cook it immediately.

# How To Safely Thaw Seafood

## **Method 1: Refrigerator Thawing (recommended)**

Remove frozen fish from its' packaging and place on a rimmed plate, then cover tightly with plastic wrap. Thaw overnight, approx. 12 hours.

*The next two thawing methods (cold water and microwave) can be used **ONLY** if you are cooking your fish immediately after thawing.*

## **Method 2: Cold Water Thawing**

Fill a large bowl with ice and cold water. Fully submerge packaged fish for at least 1-2 hours. Once thawed, remove fish from it's packaging, rinse with cold water and pat dry. Cook immediately as desired.

## **Method 3: Microwave Thawing**

Remove frozen fish from its' packaging and place on a rimmed plate. Using the 'Defrost' setting, microwave in 1-minute intervals, flipping the fish after each, for approx. 10 minutes. Cook immediately as desired.

*You may also cook frozen fish **WITHOUT THAWING**.* Rinse bare fillet with cold water and pat dry. Three fast and easy ways to cook frozen fish are steaming, baking and grilling.

### **IMPORTANT:**

- ~ ***Never re-freeze thawed fish unless put in a stock or soup.***
- ~ ***Thoroughly wash any dishes and surfaces touched by raw fish.***
- ~ ***Wash your hands thoroughly after handling raw fish.***

## **How to package fish for freezing**

Fish that is packaged correctly can last up to 8 months frozen. Air trapped in packaging causes the development of freezer burn. To protect your fish, wrap it tightly in freezer paper or place in a thicker-plastic freezer-safe bag. If using a freezer bag, squeeze as much excess air out of the bag as possible before closing and storing.

# What is Freezer Burn?

Freezer burn looks like dry, leathery, and sometimes pale patches in various areas of frozen foods. On bread and buns, it looks more like dry, hard sections, usually more on the outer edges. Freezer burn does not make frozen foods unsafe to eat. However, it does make them unpleasant or difficult to eat as food quality has severely deteriorated.

There's also often an unpleasant freezer odor that accompanies freezer burn. You can often trim off freezer burn to save a good portion of the meat, but when freezer burn is extensive, discarding may be your



only choice. There is no harm leaving the freezer burn areas on foods during cooking, but those areas are more difficult to remove later and will affect overall taste and texture.

## ○ Why does freezer burn occur? –

Freezer burn occurs as the result of inadequate protective wrapping and air being trapped within, robbing food of moisture and creating the dry hard areas. Even if air trapped inside has been removed, freezer burn can occur due to an inadequate seal. With bread and rolls, their thin, loose shelf packaging is inadequate for freezing and allows condensation, which leaves parts of the bread soggy as well as hard and crusty.

The longer the foods are stored in the freezer, the worse freezer burn can get, and some foods are affected sooner than others. To avoid freezer burn, foods should be wrapped properly with as much air as possible removed from the bag or container. In addition, freezer foods should be consumed as soon as possible.

## Tips To Avoid Freezer Burn

- Remove as much air as possible from the freezer bag or container. A vacuum sealing system is the best, but any method that draws out air will provide at least some protection from freezer burn.
- Use ONLY bags, wrapping and containers designed for freezing food and that are deemed food safe (not all plastics are). Avoid freezing with flimsy store bagging such as bread packaging. Plastic food wrap alone does not provide any protection.
- When using butcher-style wrapping paper, the waxed side should be on the inside. Also, put the wrapped food into a zippered freezer bag for greater protection.
- Double- or triple-wrap pre-packaged food items.
- Always label freezer foods clearly with the date you packaged them, so you can use them within the recommended freezer lifetime.
- Rotate freezer foods to use the oldest first.

## Color Changes in Frozen Foods



Color changes can occur in frozen foods over time, due to exposure to air, freezer burn or abnormally long storage time. The bright red color of ground or cut beef as purchased usually turns dark or pale brown depending on variety. Freezing doesn't usually cause color changes in poultry, but the bones and meat near them may

become darker. Bone darkening results when pigment seeps through the porous bones of young poultry into the surrounding tissues when the poultry meat is frozen and thawed.

The dulling of color in frozen vegetables and cooked foods is usually the result of excessive drying due to improper packaging or abnormally long storage time.



# Microwave Ovens and Food Safety



The microwave oven is one of the great inventions of the 20th century; over 90% of homes in America have one. Microwave ovens play an important role at mealtime, but special care must be taken when thawing, cooking or reheating meat, poultry, fish, and eggs to ensure they are prepared safely. Microwave ovens can cook unevenly and leave 'cold spots' where harmful bacteria can form. For this reason, it is important to use a food thermometer and test food in several places to be sure it has reached the recommended safe temperature to destroy bacteria and other pathogens that could cause foodborne illness.

- **How do microwaves cook food?** – The magnetron inside the oven converts ordinary electric power from a wall socket into very short radio waves (around 4 inches from crest to crest). They are transmitted by the oven's magnetron at a frequency of about 2450 megahertz. At that frequency, power is readily absorbed by water, fats and sugars, resulting in very fast vibration and high temperatures that cook the food.
- **What are power levels?** – On high power, the food is subjected to the highest amount of microwave energy because the magnetron produces microwaves at full capacity. To produce a power level less than high (100%), the magnetron cycles off and on. For example, medium power (50%) means that the oven produces microwaves 50% of the time and is off 50% of the time.

# Microwave Ovens and Food Safety

Foods best to cook on high power are basically tender foods and those with a high moisture content such as ground beef, poultry, vegetables and fruits. Eggs, cheese and solid meat can toughen when microwaved on high. They are best cooked on reduced power. Large cuts of meat should be cooked on medium power (50%) for longer periods. This allows heat to reach the center without overcooking outer areas.

- **Do microwaves cook food from the inside out?** – No. Microwaves penetrate the food to a depth of 1 to 1½ inches. In thicker pieces of food, the microwaves don't reach the center. That area would cook by conduction of heat from the outer areas of the food into the middle.

Inside a microwave oven the air is at room temperature so the temperature of the food surface is cooler than food in a conventional oven where the food is heated by hot air. Therefore, food cooked in a microwave oven doesn't normally become brown and crispy.

- **Do microwaves cook food safely?** – Bacteria will be destroyed during microwave cooking just as in other types of ovens, so food is safe cooked in a microwave oven. However, the food may cook less evenly than in a conventional oven. Microwave cooking can be uneven just as with frying and grilling. For that reason, it is important to use a food thermometer and test food in several places to be sure it has reached the recommended temperature to destroy bacteria and other pathogens that could cause foodborne illness.

To promote uniform cooking, arrange food items evenly in a covered dish and add some liquid if needed. Where possible, debone large pieces of meat; bone can shield meat from thorough cooking.

Cover the dish with a lid or plastic wrap. Allow enough space between the food and the top of the dish so that plastic wrap does not touch the food. Loosen the lid or wrap to allow steam to vent. The moist heat that is created will help destroy harmful bacteria and ensure uniform cooking. Cooking bags also provide safe, even cooking.

Stir, rotate, or turn foods upside down (where possible) midway through the microwaving time to even the cooking and eliminate cold spots where harmful bacteria can survive. Even if the microwave oven has a turntable, it's still helpful to stir and turn food top-to-bottom.

# Microwave Ovens and Food Safety

Follow cooking instructions on product label (or recipe instructions). If a range of time is given, start with the fewest minutes recommended. Add cooking time if necessary, to reach a safe internal temperature.

Observe the 'standing time.' Cooking continues and is completed during standing time. Most importantly, follow the manufacturer's instructions.

- **What are the USDA-recommended temperatures for safely microwaving food?** – Place the thermometer in the thickest area of the meat or poultry – not near fat or bone – and check the temperature in the innermost part of the thigh and wing and the thickest part of the breast of whole poultry. Cooking times may vary because ovens vary in power and efficiency
  - ~ Cook ground meats to 160°F, as measured with a food thermometer.
  - ~ Cook all raw beef, pork, lamb and veal steaks, chops, and roasts to a minimum internal temperature of 145°F as measured with a food thermometer before removing meat from the heat source. For safety and quality, allow meat to rest for at least three minutes before carving or consuming. Depending on preferred 'done-ness', you may choose to cook meat to higher temperatures.
  - ~ Cook all poultry to a safe minimum internal temperature of 165°F as measured with a food thermometer.
  - ~ Eggs and casseroles containing eggs, minimum 160°F.
  - ~ Fish should be cooked to a minimum internal temperature of 145°F.
  - ~ After removing any food from the microwave, always allow it to rest for at least three minutes before consuming. This completes the cooking process. Always check the internal temperature with a food thermometer before consuming.
- **Is it safe to microwave food until only partially done?** – Never partially cook food and store it for later use because any bacteria present wouldn't have been destroyed. When partially cooking food in the microwave oven to finish cooking on the grill or in a conventional oven, it is important to transfer the microwaved food to the other heat source immediately.

# Microwave Ovens and Food Safety

**Is it safe to cook stuffed poultry in the microwave?** – Cooking whole, stuffed poultry in a microwave oven is not recommended. Because food cooks so quickly in a microwave oven, the stuffing might not have enough time to reach the temperature needed to destroy any harmful bacteria.

**What is the best way to thaw frozen food in the microwave?** – Remove food from its packaging before defrosting. Do not use foam trays and plastic wraps because they are not heat stable at high temperatures. Melting or warping from the heat of the food may cause harmful chemicals to migrate into it.

Select the “defrost” setting or 30% power. During microwave defrosting, rotate and turn food upside down where possible. For individual pieces such as chicken parts, break them apart when possible, rotate and turn upside down several times during defrosting. When thawing ground meats, scrape the thawed portion off as it softens; remove it from the oven. Continue to microwave defrost the remaining portion.

Cook meat, poultry, egg casseroles, and fish immediately after defrosting in the microwave oven because some areas of the frozen food may begin to cook during the defrosting time. Do not hold partially cooked food to use later.



# How Long Does Bacon Last?

The shelf life of bacon depends on a variety of factors, such as the sell-by date, the preparation method and how the meat was stored. Like ham, it is a salt-cured meat.



When properly stored, the shelf-life of bacon past its sell by date is approximately:

<b>UNOPENED</b>	<b>Refrigerator</b>	<b>Freezer</b>
	<b>Past Printed Date</b>	<b>Past Printed Date</b>
Packaged bacon lasts for	7 Days	1 Month
Bacon bits (crumbled) last	6 Months	6 Months
<b>OPENED</b>	<b>Refrigerator</b>	<b>Freezer</b>
Fresh bacon lasts for	1 Week	6 Months
Cooked bacon lasts for	7-10 Days	6 Months
Bacon bits (crumbled) last	6 Weeks	6 Months

# How Long Does Beef Last?



The shelf life of beef depends on a variety of factors, such as the sell-by date, how the meat was cut and prepared, and how the beef was stored.

When properly stored, the shelf-life of beef past its sell by date is approximately:

<b>UNCOOKED</b>	<b>Refrigerator</b>	<b>Freezer</b>
	<b>Past Printed Date</b>	<b>Past Printed Date</b>
Fresh beef lasts for	1-2 Days	6-8 Months
Ground beef lasts for	1-2 Days	6-8 Months
Corned beef lasts for	1-2 Weeks	6-8 Months
Steak lasts for	1-2 Days	6-8 Months
<b>COOKED</b>	<b>Refrigerator</b>	<b>Freezer</b>
Beef or steak lasts for	7 Days	6-8 Months
Ground beef lasts for	7 Days	6-8 Months
Canned beef lasts for	7-10 Days	-
Corned beef lasts for	7-10 Days	-

# How Long Does Canned Meat Last?

Canned meats can last for years beyond their “best-by” dates. The shelf life of canned meat depends on a variety of factors, such as the best-before date, the preparation method and how the canned meats are stored. Since fresh meats have rather short shelf lives, canned meats like spam and chicken prove practical to have on hand and available at any time. Canned meats include canned chicken, canned tuna, deviled ham, corned beef and spam.



UNOPENED	Pantry
	Past Printed Date
Canned chicken lasts for	2-5 Years
Canned tuna lasts for	2-5 Years
Canned corn beef lasts for	2-5 Years
Deviled ham lasts for	2-5 Years
Canned ham last for	2-5 Years
Canned clams last for	2-5 Years
AFTER OPENING	Refrigerator
Canned chicken lasts for	5-7 Days
Canned tuna lasts for	5-7 Days
Canned corn beef lasts for	7-10 Days
Deviled ham lasts for	7-10 Days
Canned ham last for	7-10 Days
Canned clams last for	5-7 Days



# How Long Does Deli Meat Last?

Deli meat, or lunch meat, is a term used for a meat that has been cooked, cured, or smoked and then packaged.

The meat from the deli section of the grocery comes in aseptic packaging which further preserves the shelf life of the meat, but once it is sliced the shelf life shrinks. The shelf life of deli meat depends on a variety of factors, such as the sell-by date, the type of meat, the preparation method and how the deli meat was stored. Deli meats are also known as cold cuts, sandwich meats, cooked meats, sliced meats and cold meats.



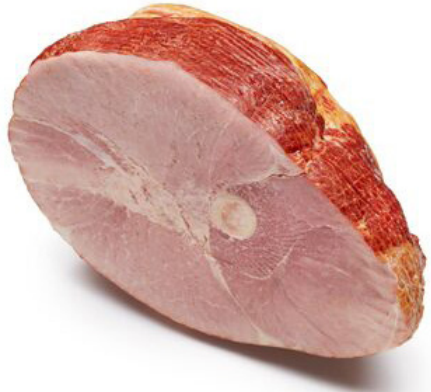
When properly stored, the shelf-life of deli meats past its sell by date is approximately:

<b>UNOPENED</b>	<b>Refrigerator</b>	<b>Freezer</b>
	<b>Past Printed Date</b>	<b>Past Printed Date</b>
Fresh sliced deli meats last	5-6 Days	-
Pre-packaged deli meats last for	7-10 Days	6-8 Months
Bologna lasts for	1-2 Weeks	2-3 Months
Salami (hard) lasts for	3-4 Weeks	2-3 Months
<b>OPENED</b>	<b>Refrigerator</b>	<b>Freezer</b>
Fresh sliced deli meats last	5-6 Days	-
Packaged lunch meat lasts	7-10 Days	-
Bologna lasts for	1-2 Weeks	1-2 Months
Salami (hard) lasts for	2-3 Weeks	2-3 Months
Pepperoni lasts for	2-3 Weeks	6-8 Months

# How Long Does Ham Last?

Ham lasts for 1–2 weeks beyond their labeled date, considering all the following variables. The shelf life of ham depends on a variety of factors, such as the sell-by date, the preparation method and how it was stored.

Like bacon, ham is a cured meat prepared from the hind thighs of a hog. The rear of the hog is thick and flavorful. It is the curing process that makes a ham, and it is fully cooked.



When properly stored, the shelf-life of cooked ham past its sell by date is approximately:

<b>UNOPENED</b>	<b>Refrigerator</b>	<b>Freezer</b>
	<b>Past Printed Date</b>	<b>Past Printed Date</b>
Ham lasts for	1–2 Weeks	6–8 Months
<b>OPENED</b>	<b>Refrigerator</b>	<b>Freezer</b>
Ham lasts for	7–10 Days	6–8 Months

# How Long Do Hamburgers Last?



The shelf life of hamburgers depends on a variety of factors, such as the sell-by date, the preparation method and how the hamburger was stored. When the ground beef is formed into round or square patties, they become hamburgers.

When properly stored, the shelf-life of hamburger meat past its sell by date is approximately:

<b>UNCOOKED</b>	<b>Refrigerator</b>	<b>Freezer</b>
	<b>Past Printed Date</b>	<b>Past Printed Date</b>
Fresh ground hamburger lasts for	1-2 Days	6-8 Months
Fresh ground turkey lasts for	1 Day	6-8 Months
<b>COOKED</b>	<b>Refrigerator</b>	<b>Freezer</b>
Hamburgers last for	5-6 Days	4-6 Months

# How Long Does Pork Last?

The shelf life of pork depends on a variety of factors, such as the sell-by date, the preparation method and how the pork was stored. Pork is often considered “the other white meat”, but it is really a pinkish color after being cut from the pig and packaged.



When properly stored, the shelf-life of fresh pork past its sell by date is approximately:

<b>UNCOOKED</b>	<b>Refrigerator</b>	<b>Freezer</b>
	<b>Past Printed Date</b>	<b>Past Printed Date</b>
Fresh pork chops last for	1-2 Days	6-8 Months
Fresh ground pork lasts for	1-2 Days	6-8 Months
Fresh pork shoulder lasts for	1-2 Days	6-8 Months
Fresh pork loin lasts for	1-2 Days	6-8 Months
Fresh pork sausage last for	3-4 Days	6-8 Months
<b>COOKED</b>	<b>Refrigerator</b>	<b>Freezer</b>
Cooked ground pork/ pork chops/shoulder/loin/ sausage lasts for	7 Days	6-8 Months

# How Long Does Poultry Last?



The term fresh on a poultry label refers to a raw product that has never been stored at temperatures lower than 26°F. Raw poultry held at 0°F or lower must be labeled frozen or “previously frozen”. However, no specific labeling is required for raw poultry stored at temperatures between 0–25°F. But remember that most proteins, usually have a sell-by date and not a use-by date or expiration date. Because of this distinction, you may safely use it for a short period after the sell-by date has lapsed.

<b>UNOPENED</b>	<b>Refrigerator</b>	<b>Freezer</b>
	<b>Past Printed Date</b>	<b>Past Printed Date</b>
Fresh chicken lasts for	1-2 Days	1 Year
Cooked chicken lasts for	7 Days	1 Year
Roasted chicken lasts for	7 Days	6-8 Months
<b>OPENED</b>	<b>Refrigerator</b>	<b>Freezer</b>
Canned chicken lasts for	--	7 Days

# How Long Does Fish Last?

The shelf life of fish depends on a variety of factors, such as the sell-by date the preparation method and how the fish was stored. Because of its abundance, proven health benefits and concentration of protein, fish is a great main dish choice.



	Pantry	Fridge	Freezer
	Past Printed Date	Past Printed Date	Past Printed Date
Cooked Fish lasts	--	5-6 Days	6-9 Months
Catfish lasts	--	1-2 Days	6-9 Months
Cod lasts	--	1-2 Days	6-9 Months
Halibut lasts	--	1-2 Days	6-9 Months
Ono lasts	--	1-2 Days	6-9 Months
Salmon lasts	--	1-2 Days	6-9 Months
Smoked Salmon lasts	1-2 Weeks	5-7 Days	3-6 Months
Sardines last	2-5 Years	5-7 Days	--
Tilapia lasts	--	1-2 Days	6-9 Months
Canned Tuna lasts	2-5 Years	5-7 Days	--

# How Long Does Salmon Last?



The shelf life of salmon depends on a variety of factors, such as the sell-by date, the preparation method and how the salmon was stored. Salmon contains omega-3 fatty acids (also known as good cholesterol) which are proven to lower the risk of heart disease, and also help with numerous other health problems.

	<b>Pantry</b>	<b>Fridge</b>	<b>Freezer</b>
	<b>Past Printed Date</b>	<b>Past Printed Date</b>	<b>Past Printed Date</b>
Fresh Salmon lasts	--	1-2 Days	6-9 Months
Smoked Salmon lasts	1-2 Weeks	5-7 Days	3-6 Months
Canned Salmon lasts	6-8 Months	6-8 Months	9-12 Months
Cooked Salmon lasts	--	5-6 Days	6-9 Months
Frozen Salmon lasts	--	4-5 Days	6-9 Months



# How Long Does Shrimp Last?

The shelf life of shrimp depends on a variety of factors, such as the sell-by date, the preparation method and how they were stored. Shrimp are full of protein, low in calories, easy to cook and so versatile in recipes that they are even delicious all by themselves served hot or cold.



	Pantry	Fridge	Freezer
	Past Printed Date	Past Printed Date	Past Printed Date
Fresh shrimp (shelled) lasts for	--	1-2 Days	6-9 Months
Fresh shrimp (shell on) lasts for	--	2-3 Days	9-12 Months
Cooked shrimp lasts for	--	3-4 Days	6-9 Months
Frozen shrimp lasts for	--	4-5 Days	9-12 Months
Canned shrimp lasts for	6-8 Months	36 Days-8 Months	9-12 Months (removed from can)

# How Long Does Butter Last?



The shelf life of butter depends on a variety of factors, such as type (salted or unsalted), how it is packaged, its best-by date and how it is stored. Butter is a dairy product made by churning fresh cream or milk until it reaches a solid form.

When properly stored at or below 40° F, the shelf life of butter beyond it's best-before date is approximately:

<b>UNOPENED</b>	<b>Refrigerator</b>	<b>Freezer</b>
	<b>Past Printed Date</b>	<b>Past Printed Date</b>
Butter lasts for	1 Month	6-9 Months
Butter with oil lasts for	2 Months	6-9 Months
<b>OPENED</b>	<b>Refrigerator</b>	<b>Freezer</b>
Butter lasts for	2 Weeks	6-9 Months
Butter with oil lasts for	2-3 Weeks	6-9 Months

# How Long Does Hard Cheese Last?

Hard cheese will last the longest, but semi-hard cheeses will also last beyond their “best-by” date for the times listed in the table below. Cheese consists of the proteins and fat from milk and is produced throughout the world in hundreds of flavors, textures, and forms. Common hard cheeses include Parmesan, Romano, Asiago, and Pecorino cheese.

Hard cheese shelf life is influenced by a variety of factors including the type of cheese, the processing method, packaging date, its exposure to heat, how it’s stored and the best-by date or sell-by date.



<b>UNOPENED</b>	<b>Refrigerator</b>	<b>Freezer</b>
	<b>Past Printed Date</b>	<b>Past Printed Date</b>
Hard Cheese (parmesan, asiago, romano) lasts for	2-4 Months	6-8 Months
Semi-Hard Cheese chunk (cheddar, swiss) lasts for	1-2 Months	6-8 Months
Shredded hard cheese lasts	1-2 Months	6-8 Months
Sliced Semi-Hard Cheese (deli cheese) lasts for	1 Month	6-8 Months
<b>OPENED</b>	<b>Refrigerator</b>	<b>Freezer</b>
Hard Cheese chunk lasts	3-6 Weeks	6-8 Months
Semi-Hard Cheese chunk lasts	3-6 Weeks	6-8 Months
Shredded Hard Cheese lasts	3-4 Weeks	6-8 Months
Sliced Semi-Hard Cheese lasts	2 Weeks	6-8 Months

# How Long Does Soft Cheese Last?



Soft cheeses will last about 1–2 weeks beyond their printed dates, specific cheeses are outlined in the following table. Common soft cheeses include Mozzarella, Havarti and Monterey Jack. Semi-soft cheeses include Brie, Feta, Ricotta and Cream cheese.

However, it is important to note that soft cheese does not last as long as hard cheese. The shelf life of soft cheese is influenced by a variety of factors such as the type of cheese, the processing and packaging method, its exposure to heat, packaging date and how the cheese is stored.

UNOPENED	Refrigerator	Freezer
	Past Printed Date	Past Printed Date
Brie cheese lasts for	1 Week	--
Feta cheese lasts for	1 Week	--
Gorgonzola cheese lasts for	1-2 Weeks	--
Havarti cheese lasts for	1-2 Weeks	6 Months
Monterey Jack cheese lasts for	1-2 Weeks	6 Months
Muenster cheese lasts for	1-2 Weeks	--
Mozzarella cheese lasts for	1-2 Weeks	6 Months

# How Long Do Eggs Last?

Fresh eggs will last for at least 66 days from the date they are placed into a carton. This is 3–4 week beyond the “best-by” date normally stamped on the carton. The most accurate date for freshness with eggs is placed on the carton by the manufacturer called the “pack date”. This date specifies the Julian date (numerical day of the year) on which the eggs were packaged.



	Refrigerator
	Past Sell-By Date
Fresh, in-shell eggs are good for	3-4 Weeks
Egg substitutes are good for	3-4 Days
Egg whites (in carton) are good for	2-4 Days
Egg yolks are good for	1-2 Days

## Julian Dates

Starting with January 1 as 001 and ending with December 31 as 365, these numbers represent the consecutive days of the year. This number system is sometimes used on egg cartons to denote the day the eggs are packed. You can store fresh, in-shell eggs in their cartons in the refrigerator with insignificant quality loss for four to five weeks beyond this date. Egg cartons from plants producing U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)-graded eggs must display a Julian date: the date the eggs were packed. Although not required, egg cartons may also carry an expiration (sell-by) date and/or a best-by (use-by) date.

# How Long Does Milk Last?



Milk lasts for 7 days beyond its “best-by” date if properly stored described below. It comes in a variety of types (whole milk, reduced fat, skim, non-fat and lactose-free) and can be processed into other dairy products such as yogurt, butter and cheese.

From the full taste and high cream content of whole milk to the skim and non-fat versions, shelf life of milk is influenced by a variety of factors including its processing method and carton date, exposure to light and heat, and how it is stored.

When properly stored at or below 40°F, containers of milk last past the date printed on the carton approximately:

UNOPENED	Refrigerator	Freezer
	Past Printed Date	
Whole milk lasts	5-7 Days	1 Year
Reduced Fat milk lasts	1 Week	1 Year
Skim milk lasts	1 Week	1 Year
Non-fat milk lasts	7-10 Days	1 Year
Lactose-free milk lasts	7-10 Days	1 Year
<b>ALL OPENED MILK CONTAINERS LAST</b>	<b>3-4 DAYS</b>	<b>6 WEEKS</b>

# How Long Does Almond Milk Last?

Milk alternatives, depending upon their packaging, can last up to a month beyond the date printed on the package. Once opened, milk alternatives will stay fresh for a week.

The shelf life of most milk alternatives depends on a variety of factors, such as the substitute used in place of milk, its exposure to light and heat, its packaging and how they are stored.



When properly stored at or below 40°F, containers of milk alternatives (soy milk, rice milk, almond milk, hemp milk) last past the date printed on the carton approximately:

<b>UNOPENED</b>	<b>Refrigerator</b>	
<b>NOT REFRIGERATED</b>	<b>Past Printed Date</b>	
Almond milk lasts	1 Month	--
Coconut milk lasts	1 Month	--
Rice milk lasts	1 Month	--
Soy milk lasts	1 Month	--
<b>UNOPENED</b>	<b>Refrigerator</b>	<b>Freezer</b>
<b>REFRIGERATED</b>	<b>Past Printed Date</b>	
Almond milk lasts	7-10 Days	1 Year
Coconut milk lasts	7-10 Days	6-8 Months
Hemp milk lasts	7-10 Days	6-8 Months
Rice milk lasts	7-10 Days	1 Year
Soy milk lasts	7-10 Days	1 Year
<b>ALL OPENED MILK ALTERNATIVES LAST</b>	<b>7-10 DAYS</b>	<b>6 Months</b>



# Dating Infant Formula

Federal regulations require a “Use-By” date on the product label of any infant formula under inspection of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (USFDA). Consumption by this date ensures the formula contains not less than the quantity of each nutrient as described on the label. Formula must maintain acceptable quality to pass through a standard bottle nipple.



The “Use-By” date is selected by the manufacturer, packer or distributor of the product on the basis of product analysis throughout its shelf life, tests, or other information. It is also based on the conditions of handling, storage, preparation, and use printed on the label. ***Do not buy or use any baby formula after its “Use- By” date.***

# How Long Does Sour Cream Last?

Sour cream lasts for 1-2 weeks beyond the date printed on the container if unopened, about a week beyond if opened close to the date. The shelf life of sour cream is influenced by a variety of factors, such as the type of cream, the processing method, packaging date, its exposure to heat and how it is stored.



When properly stored at or below 40°F, sour cream will last past the date printed on the container approximately:

<b>UNOPENED</b>	<b>Refrigerator</b>
	<b>Past Sell-By Date</b>
Sour cream lasts for	1-2 Weeks
Reduced-fat sour cream lasts for	1-2 Weeks
Sour cream dips last for	2 Weeks
<b>OPENED</b>	<b>Refrigerator</b>
All opened sour creams and sour cream-based dips last for	7-10 Days

*While not preferred, you may freeze containered sour cream for 6-9 months.*

# How Long Does Yogurt Last?

Yogurt can last 1–3 weeks beyond its “best-by” date stamped on the carton. The shelf life of yogurt and its ultimate expiration date depends on a variety of factors, such as its sell-by date, its preparation method, its exposure to heat and how it is stored.



When properly stored at or below 40°F, containers of yogurt last past the date printed on the carton approximately:

<b>UNOPENED</b>	<b>Refrigerator</b>	<b>Freezer</b>
	<b>Past Printed Date</b>	<b>Past Printed Date</b>
Yogurt lasts	2-3 Weeks	1-2 Months
Yogurt with fruit lasts	7-10 Days	1-2 Months
Greek yogurt lasts	1-2 Weeks	1-2 Months
Reduced-fat yogurt lasts	1-2 Weeks	1-2 Months
Drinkable yogurt lasts	7-10 Days	1-2 Months
Frozen yogurt lasts	--	2-3 Months
<b>ALL OPENED YOGURT CONTAINERS LAST</b>	<b>1 WEEK</b>	<b>1 MONTH</b>

# How Long Does Pudding Last?

Pudding prepared from a dry mix can last for 1 week in the refrigerator. Unprepared, packaged dry pudding will last for months beyond its "best-by" date if properly stored. The shelf life of pudding can vary due to the type (cook & serve or instant), packaging, storage method, as well as the thickening agent used.



UNOPENED	Pantry	Refrigerator
	Past Printed Date	Past Printed Date
Chocolate pudding (prepackaged) lasts	3-4 Weeks	3-4 Weeks
Vanilla pudding (prepackaged) lasts	3-4 Weeks	3-4 Weeks
Dry pudding mix lasts	4-5 Weeks	--
OPENED	Pantry	Refrigerator
Pudding prepared from dry mix lasts	1 Day	5-7 Days
Homemade (non-mix) pudding lasts	1 Day	5-7 Days

# How Long Do Canned Vegetables Last?

Canned vegetables may last for up to 2 years beyond the date stamped on the can. The shelf life of canned vegetables depends on a variety of factors, such as the best-before date, preparation methods and how the canned vegetables are stored.

Because of the high heat process and added salt used to can vegetables, they have an extended shelf life but also lose some nutrient value.



<b>UNOPENED</b>	<b>Pantry</b>
	<b>Past Sell-By Date</b>
Canned mixed vegetable last for	1-2 Years
Canned corn lasts for	1-2 Years
Canned soups last for	1-2 Years
<b>OPENED</b>	<b>Refrigerator</b>
Canned mixed vegetable last for	7-10 Days
Canned corn lasts for	7-10 Days
Canned soups last for	7 Days

# How Long Do Frozen Vegetables Last?

Canned vegetables may last for up to 2 years beyond the date stamped on the can. The shelf life of canned vegetables depends on a variety of factors, such as the best-before date, preparation methods and how the canned vegetables are stored.

Because of the high heat process and added salt used to can vegetables, they have an extended shelf life but also lose some nutrient value.



UNOPENED / OPENED	Freezer
	Past Sell-By Date
All frozen vegetables last for	8-10 Months

# How Long Does Pasta Sauce Last?

Pasta sauce or tomato sauce shelf life depends on a variety of factors including the best-by date, the preparation method and the way it is stored. Pasta sauce is most often tomato based and can be used for many dishes besides spaghetti. Once pasta sauce is opened – from a jar, can, dry-mix package, or home-made - it should be refrigerator-stored and used within 5-10 days, depending on the brand of sauce. Be sure to cook your sauce if it has been opened and stored in the fridge for longer than 4-5 days, and dispose of the sauce if it has been stored more than 9-10 days, or there any signs of mold formation.



When properly stored, the shelf life of pasta sauce is approximately:

<b>UNOPENED</b>	<b>Pantry UNOPENED</b>	<b>Refrigerator OPENED</b>
	<b>Past Printed Date</b>	<b>After Opening</b>
Tomato-based pasta sauce lasts	1 Year	5-10 Days
Cream-based pasta sauce lasts	6-8 Months	7 Days
Oil-based pasta sauce lasts	1 Year	2 Weeks
Cheese-based pasta sauce lasts	6-12 Months	3 Days
Dry mix pasta sauce lasts	6-12 Months	7-10 Days prepared

# How Long Does Fresh Fruit Last?



Fruits provide protein, carbohydrates, vitamins, minerals and fiber all wrapped up into neat little packages. Fruits and vegetables will slowly lose anti-oxidants as they age beyond their peak, so for optimal nutrition they should be eaten at their peak of freshness. If handled and stored properly, fresh fruits can remain safe to consume for extended periods of time beyond their peak freshness.

<b>APPLES</b>	<b>On Counter</b>	<b>Refrigerator</b>	<b>Freezer</b>
Fresh whole apples last	2-4 Weeks	1-2 Months	--
Packaged cut apples last	--	3-5 Days	--
Applesauce (jar/cup) lasts	1-2 Months	1-2 Weeks	--
Apple pie lasts	1-2 Days	4-5 Days	--

<b>AVOCADOS</b>	<b>On Counter</b>	<b>Refrigerator</b>	<b>Freezer</b>
Fresh whole avocados last	3-4 Days	7-10 Days	--
Guacamole (homemade) lasts	3-4 Hours	1-2 Days	--



<b>BANANAS</b>	<b>On Counter</b>	<b>Refrigerator</b>	<b>Freezer</b>
Fresh bananas last	2-7 Days	2-9 Days	2-3 Months

<b>BLUEBERRIES</b>	<b>On Counter</b>	<b>Refrigerator</b>	<b>Freezer</b>
Fresh whole blueberries last	2-3 Days	5-10 Days	6-8 Months

<b>GRAPES</b>	<b>On Counter</b>	<b>Refrigerator</b>	<b>Freezer</b>
Fresh bunched grapes last	3-5 Days	5-10 Days	3-5 Months

<b>ORANGES</b>	<b>On Counter</b>	<b>Refrigerator</b>	<b>Freezer</b>
Fresh whole oranges last	2-3 Weeks	1-2 Months	--
Cut/sectioned oranges last	Same day	1-2 Days	--

<b>STRAWBERRIES</b>	<b>On Counter</b>	<b>Refrigerator</b>	<b>Freezer</b>
Fresh whole strawberries last	1-2 Days	5-7 Days	6-8 Months
Cut strawberries last	Same Day	1-3 Days	3-4 Months

<b>TOMATOES</b>	<b>On Counter</b>	<b>Refrigerator</b>	<b>Freezer</b>
Fresh whole tomatoes last	1 Week	2 Weeks	--
Canned tomatoes last	12-18 Months	7 Days	--

<b>WATERMELON</b>	<b>On Counter</b>	<b>Refrigerator</b>	<b>Freezer</b>
Fresh whole watermelon lasts	7-10 Days	2-3 Weeks	--
Sliced watermelon lasts	Same day	3-5 Days	--

# How Long Does Bread Last?

Preservatives play a large part in how long bread lasts, ranging from a few days to several weeks or more. The shelf life of bread depends on a variety of factors such as the type of bread, the packaging method, the best-by date and how the bread was/is stored.



<b>UNOPENED / OPENED</b>	<b>Pantry</b>	<b>Refrigerator</b>	<b>Freezer</b>
	<b>Past Printed Date</b>	<b>Past Printed Date</b>	<b>Past Printed Date</b>
Bakery bread lasts	2-3 Days	Not recommended	6 Months
Packaged bread (soft) lasts	5-7 Days	Not recommended	6 Months
Bakery bagels last	2-3 Days	Not recommended	6 Months
Packaged bagels last	5-7 Days	Not recommended	6 Months
Frozen bread dough lasts	1 Day	2-3 Days	1 Year
Refrigerated bread dough (crescent rolls, biscuits, cinnamon rolls) lasts	2 Hours	1-2 Weeks	Not recommended
Cooked french toast lasts	2 Hours	5-7 Days	6-8 Months
Breadcrumbs last	5-6 Months	Not recommended	6-8 Months
Bread croutons last	5-6 Months	Not recommended	Not recommended

# How Long Does Cereal Last?

Because of its relatively low cost, ease of use and high calorie density, cereal is one of the most popular grains for a quick breakfast or a late night snack. Cereal can be processed from almost any type of grain. The shelf life of cereal depends on a variety of factors such as the best before date, the preparation method and how and where the product is stored.



<b>UNOPENED/DRY</b>	<b>Pantry</b>	<b>Refrigerator</b>
	<b>Past Printed Date</b>	<b>Past Printed Date</b>
Cheerios® lasts	6-8 Months	--
Shredded wheat lasts	6-8 Months	--
Most boxed cereals last	6-8 Months	--
<b>OPENED</b>	<b>Pantry</b>	<b>Refrigerator</b>
Most boxed cereals last	4-6 Months	--
Cooked cereal (farina) lasts	--	4-5 Days

# How Long Does Oatmeal Last?

Oatmeal is the most popular hot breakfast cereal, but it can also be used in many other recipes. It is both high in fiber and low in fat which makes it a great nutritional choice. Oatmeal is usually prepared on the stove, with milk, sugar or fruit added to taste. The actual shelf life of oatmeal is quite long, however it varies with variety, packaging and storage method.



DRY UNOPENED or OPENED	Pantry	Refrigerator
	Past Printed Date	Past Printed Date
Instant oatmeal packets (plain) last	1-2 Years	--
Instant oatmeal packets (flavored) last	6-9 Months	--
1-minute oatmeal (uncooked) lasts	2-3 Years	--
5-minute oatmeal (uncooked) lasts	2-3 Years	--
Steel-cut/Irish oatmeal lasts	1-2 Years	--

# How Long Does Rice Last?

Because of its relatively low cost, ease of use and high calorie density, cereal is one of the most popular grains for a quick breakfast or a late night snack. Cereal can be processed from almost any type of grain. The shelf life of cereal depends on a variety of factors such as the best before date, the preparation method and how and where the product is stored.



<b>RAW/UNCOOKED</b>	<b>Pantry</b>	<b>Refrigerator</b>	<b>Freezer</b>
	<b>Past Printed Date</b>	<b>Past Printed Date</b>	<b>Past Printed Date</b>
White rice lasts	4-5 Years	--	--
Oxygen-free white rice lasts	25-30 Years	--	30 Years
Brown rice lasts	6-8 Months	8-12 Months	--
Wild/long-grain rice lasts	6-8 Months	--	--
Minute Rice (package) lasts	4-5 Years	--	--
<b>COOKED</b>	<b>Pantry</b>	<b>Refrigerator</b>	<b>Freezer</b>
White rice lasts	--	5-7 Days	6-8 Months
Brown rice lasts	--	4-5 Days	6-8 Months



# How Long Does Pizza Last?

Leftover pizza lasts for 5 days in the refrigerator. Frozen pizza last for about a year, or 6 months past its best-by date, in the freezer. The shelf life of pizza depends on a variety of factors, including preparation method, the sell-by date and how the pizza is stored.



	<b>Counter</b>	<b>Refrigerator</b>	<b>Freezer</b>
	<b>Past Printed Date</b>	<b>Past Printed Date</b>	<b>Past Printed Date</b>
Frozen/boxed pizza lasts	1 Day	3-5 Days	4-6 Months
Fresh-made pizza lasts	--	3-5 Days	4-6 Months

# How Long Do Tortillas Last?

Tortillas generally last for a week after their best-by date on the counter and about a month if placed in the refrigerator. The shelf life of tortillas depends not only on the best-by date but also what type they are, how they are processed and how they are stored.



UNOPENED	Pantry	Refrigerator
	Past Printed Date	Past Printed Date
Four tortillas last	1 Week	3-4 Weeks
Corn Tortillas last	7-10 Days	6-8 Weeks
Whole Wheat tortillas last	1 Week	3-4 Weeks
Spinach tortillas lasts	1 Week	3-4 Weeks
Homemade flour/corn tortillas last	2-3 Days	5-7 Days



# How Long Does Peanut Butter Last?

The shelf life of peanut butter depends on a variety of factors, such as the best before date, the preparation method and how it was stored. Fresh peanut butter is made of peanuts, that's it! But manufacturers will add oil, salt, sugar and/or other preservatives to their jars. Peanut butter is naturally high in fat which raises the "good" cholesterol levels, just beware of any added trans fats on the nutrition label of your specific brand.



<b>UNOPENED</b>	<b>Pantry</b>	<b>Refrigerator</b>
	<b>Past Printed Date</b>	<b>Past Printed Date</b>
Smooth peanut butter lasts	1 Year	1 Year
Crunchy peanut butter lasts	1 Year	1 Year
Natural peanut butter lasts	3 Months	3-6 Months
Homemade peanut butter lasts	3 Months	6 Months
<b>OPENED</b>	<b>Pantry</b>	<b>Refrigerator</b>
Smooth peanut butter lasts	3-4 Months	6-8 Months
Crunchy peanut butter lasts	2-3 Months	6-8 Months
Natural peanut butter lasts	3 Months	6 Months
Homemade peanut butter lasts	--	6 Months

# How Long Do Beans Last?

Dried beans last indefinitely, canned beans last for years and fresh beans last about a week. The shelf life of beans depends on the type bean, the sell-by date, preparation method and how the beans are stored. Beans are classified as legumes—not technically a vegetable. They are considered seeds, although sometimes, as in green beans, the whole pod can be eaten. Because of their low fat, low cholesterol and easy storage—balanced with high protein, fiber, vitamins and versatility—beans are a great addition to any meal.



UNOPENED	Pantry	Refrigerator	Freezer
	Past Printed Date	Past Printed Date	Past Printed Date
Dry beans last	Indefinite	--	--
Dry lentils last	Indefinite	--	--
Canned beans last	1 Year	--	--
Fresh green beans last	1-2 Days	7-10 Days	Cook first
OPENED	Pantry	Refrigerator	Freezer
Cooked beans last	--	5 Days	1 Year
Canned beans last	--	5 Days	3-5 Months
Bean sprouts last	1 Day	3-4 Days	2-3 Weeks
Hummus lasts	--	7-10 Days	--

# How Long Do Peas Last?

Fresh peas can last up to 7 days in the fridge, but there are lots of variables that need further explanation. The shelf life of peas, since there is usually no sell-by date, depends on preparation method and how the peas are stored. Like beans, peas are classified as legumes—not really a vegetable but usually considered one for cooking purposes. Peas are technically the seeds which grow inside the pea pod. Because they are low in fat and cholesterol and high in protein, fiber, vitamins and starch, they are easy to incorporate into many different recipes.



UNOPENED	Pantry	Refrigerator	Freezer
	Past Printed Date	Past Printed Date	Past Printed Date
Fresh pea pods last	2-3 Days	3-5 Days	1 Year (blanche/shelled)
Fresh snap peas last	2-3 Days	--	1 Year (blanched)
Dry split peas (reg. package) last	4-5 Years	--	--
Dry split peas (packaged w/O <sup>2</sup> absorbers ) last	Indefinite	--	--
Canned peas last	1 Year	--	--
Dry lentils last	Indefinite	--	--
OPENED	Pantry	Refrigerator	Freezer
Canned peas (uncooked) last	--	5 Days (out of can)	--
Canned peas (cooked) last	--	5 Days	1 Year
Chickpeas (uncooked) last	--	4-5 Days	--

# How Long Does Coffee Last?

Coffee is a beverage that can be served hot or cold and provide the body with nourishment and hydration, replacing many of the fluids that we lose each day. Most coffee drinks contain caffeine, but also come in decaffeinated varieties. Coffee drinks are safe to consume only for a certain period of time once prepared.



<b>UNOPENED/SEALED</b>	<b>Pantry</b>	<b>Freezer</b>
	<b>Past Printed Date</b>	<b>Past Printed Date</b>
Ground coffee lasts	3-5 Months	1-2 Years
Whole-bean coffee lasts	6-9 Months	2-3 Years
Instant (freeze-dried) coffee lasts	2-20 Years	Indefinite
<b>OPENED</b>	<b>Pantry</b>	<b>Freezer</b>
Ground coffee lasts	3-5 Months	3-5 Months
Whole-bean coffee lasts	6 Months	2 Years
Instant (freeze-dried) coffee lasts	2-20 Years	Indefinite

# How Long Does Tea Last?

Unopened, packaged tea can last a year beyond any best-by date stamped on the package. Tea will eventually lose its flavor, but dry leaves will last a very long time. The shelf life of tea depends on a variety of factors, such as the best-before date, the preparation method and how it was stored. Tea is rich in antioxidants, easy to prepare in a variety of ways and one of the most popular drinks around the world.



<b>UNPREPARED</b>	<b>Pantry</b>	<b>Freezer</b>
	<b>Past Printed Date</b>	<b>Past Printed Date</b>
Packaged tea bags last	6-12 Months	1-2 Years
Loose tea (packaged) lasts	6-12 Months	1-2 Years
Powder iced tea mix lasts	18-24 Months	--
<b>PREPARED</b>	<b>Refrigerator</b>	<b>Freezer</b>
Prepared tea (bagged or loose) lasts	3-5 Days	6-8 Months
Prepared powder iced tea lasts	3-5 Days	6 Months

# How Long Do Sports Drinks Last?

Sport drinks are usually good for 9 months beyond their best-by date. Gatorade will eventually deteriorate. The shelf life of sport drinks is influenced by a variety of factors, such as the processing method, best-by date, exposure to light and heat, and how the sport drink was stored. Gatorade, Powerade, Propel and Vitamin Water contain sodium, potassium, essential carbohydrates (sugars) and some also have caffeine. Sport drinks are used to replenish the body during or after exercise.



UNOPENED	Pantry
	Past Printed Date
Gatorade (bottle varieties) lasts	9 Months
PowerAde (all varieties) lasts	9 Months
Propel (all varieties) last	9 Months
Vitamin Water (all varieties) lasts	9 Months
Gatorade (dry powder mix) lasts	6-8 Months
OPENED/PREPARED	Refrigerator
All open/prepared sport drinks last	3-5 Days

# How Long Does Bottled Water Last?

Water is the most abundant compound on Earth and is essential to every form of life. Since the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) does not require a shelf life for bottled water, the actual shelf life of water is indefinite! Because of this, you will probably not find any sell-by, use-by or best-by dates on bottled water. Water does not go bad on its own, but packaging and other environmental factors may cause water to go bad. Do NOT freeze sparkling water.



UNOPENED	Pantry	Refrigerator
	Past Printed Date	Past Printed Date
Bottled water lasts	2+ Years	2+ Years
Flavored bottled water lasts	9 Months	9 Months
Vitamin-added water lasts	9 Months	9 Months
Sparkling water/seltzer lasts	1+ Years	1+ Years
OPENED	Counter	Refrigerator
Bottled water lasts	2-3 Hours	3-5 Days
Sparkling water/seltzer lasts	2-3 Hours	2-3 Days

Because of the chemicals in the plastic, freezing bottled water for later consumption is not recommended. Freezing and boiling temperatures break down the chemicals in plastic bottles which can then leech into the water. You can freeze them to use in place of ice in a cooler or ice chest – but do not drink them when thawed.



# How Long Does Mayonnaise Last?

Unopened mayonnaise will last at least a week beyond its best-by date, erring on the safe side. The shelf life of opened mayonnaise, regardless of the sell-by date, use-by date, or best-before date is not very long. Despite its high concentration of fat, it can look fine when expired, but make you very sick if consumed.



UNOPENED	Pantry
	Past Printed Date
Mayonnaise lasts	1 Week
Miracle Whip lasts	1 Week
OPENED	Refrigerator
Mayonnaise lasts	1 Month
Miracle Whip lasts	1 Month



# How Long Does Salad Dressing Last?

Salad dressings last for 1–4 months beyond the date printed on the bottle, depending on several variables discussed below. The shelf life of salad dressing lasts beyond the sell-by date or best-by date if unopened or stored properly in the refrigerator. Both storage and shelf life greatly depend upon the base ingredients of the dressing.



UNOPENED & OPENED	Pantry
	Past Printed Date
Balsamic dressing lasts	1-2 Months
Bleu cheese dressing lasts	1-2 Months
Caesar dressing lasts	1-2 Months
Italian dressing lasts	3-4 Months
Ranch dressing lasts	1-2 Months
Thousand Island dressing lasts	3-4 Months

# How Long Do Oils Last?

The shelf life of oil depends on the best before date and how it is stored. Although oils do tend to last longer than their best-before dates, they will eventually spoil and be unuseable.

Oils are extracted from various plants, either from fruits as in olive, vegetables as in corn, seeds as in sunflower, or nuts as in peanut.



UNOPENED	Pantry	Refrigerator
Avocado Oil lasts for	9-12 Months	1 Year
Blended Oil lasts for	2 Years	--
Canola Oil lasts for	2 Years	--
Coconut Oil lasts for	Months-Years	--
Corn Oil lasts for	1 Year	1 Year
Chili Oil lasts for	9-12 Months	1 Year
Extra Virgin Olive Oil (EVOO) lasts for	2-3 Years	--
Grape Seed Oil lasts for	3 Months	6 Months
Hazelnut Oil lasts for	1 Year	1 Year
Macadamia Nut Oil lasts for	2 Years	2-3 Years
Olive Oil lasts for	2-3 Years	--
Peanut Oil lasts for	3 Years	3 Years
Sesame Oil lasts for	1 Years	2 Years

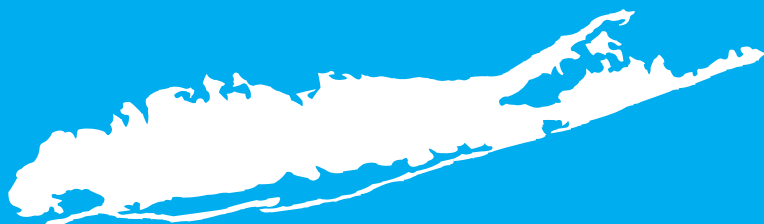
<b>UNOPENED</b>	<b>Pantry</b>	<b>Refrigerator</b>
Safflower Oil lasts for	2 Years	2 Years
Sunflower Oil lasts for	2 Years	2 Years
Truffle Oil lasts for	1 Year	1 Year
Vegetable Oil lasts for	1 Year	1 Year
Walnut Oil lasts for	1 Year	1 Year
<b>OPENED</b>	<b>Pantry</b>	<b>Refrigerator</b>
Avocado Oil lasts for	6-8 Months	9-12 Months
Blended Oil lasts for	1 Year	1 Year
Canola Oil lasts for	1 Year	1 Year
Coconut Oil lasts for	Month-Years	--
Corn Oil lasts for	1 Year	1 Year
Chili Oil lasts for	6 Months	1 Year
Extra Virgin Olive Oil (EVOO) lasts for	2-3 Years	--
Grape Seed Oil lasts for	3 Months	6 Months
Hazelnut Oil lasts for	3 Months	9-12 Months
Macadamia Nut Oil lasts for	2 Years	2-3 Years
Olive Oil lasts for	2-3 Years	--
Peanut Oil lasts for	2 Years	2 Years
Sesame Oil lasts for	6-8 Months	2 Years
Safflower Oil lasts for	1 Year	1-2 Years
Sunflower Oil lasts for	1 Year	1-2 Years
Truffle Oil lasts for	4-6 Months	6-8 Months
Vegetable Oil lasts for	1 Year	--
Walnut Oil lasts for	3-4 Months	6-8 Months
Spray Oil Can lasts for	2 Years	--

# About Island Harvest Food Bank

**Island Harvest Food Bank** is a leading human services organization whose mission is to end hunger and reduce food waste on Long Island. We accomplish this through innovative programs and services aimed at enhanced hunger awareness, short-term case management, nutrition education, outreach and advocacy initiatives, a Workforce Skills Development Institute and efficient food collection and distribution.

Our work directly supports children, families, seniors, and veterans who turn to us in times of crisis and supports a network of community-based nonprofit organizations. Island Harvest Food Bank is a member of Feeding America®, a nationwide network of food banks leading the fight against hunger in the U.S.

More information can be found at [www.islandharvest.org](http://www.islandharvest.org).



Melville | Calverton | Uniondale | Brentwood

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