

# Shelf Life of Common Food Bank Products



Food manufacturers voluntarily use different date codes and terms to ensure that consumers receive their products at peak quality. **These are not safety dates.** As long as an unopened food product has been stored and handled properly it can be past the code date and still be of good quality and safe to eat.

Please use the table below as a general reference for shelf-life extensions.

<b>SHELF-STABLE ITEMS</b>	<b>SHELF LIFE AFTER CODE DATE</b>
<b>Baby Food/Formula</b>	
Baby cereal, food, and formula	Do not consume after the expiration date on the package
<b>Beverages/Mixes</b>	
Coffee (ground or whole)	1 year
Coffee creamer, powdered	2 years
Hot chocolate	1 year
Juice (bottles or canned)	1 year
Milk (shelf stable)	1 year
Nutrition aid supplements	Do not consume after expiration date on the package
Rice milk, soy milk (shelf stable)	6 months
Tea	3 years
<b>CANNED FOODS</b>	
Fruit (including applesauce, juices)	18 months
Pickles, sauerkraut	18 months
Baked beans w/mustard and vinegar	18 months
Tomatoes, tomato-based sauces and soup	18 months
Gravy, soups/broths (non-tomato based)	4 years
Pasta, stews, cream sauces	4 years
Vegetables (except tomatoes)	4 years
Fish and meat	4 years
<b>CONDIMENTS/SAUCES/SYRUPS</b>	<b>SHELF LIFE AFTER CODE DATE</b>
Barbeque	1 year
Honey, molasses, syrups (chocolate, corn, pancake)	2 years
Jams, jellies, preserves	18 months
Ketchup, cocktail sauce, chili sauce	1 year
Mayonnaise	6 months
Mustard, olives	2 years
Salad dressings	1 year
Soy sauce, teriyaki sauce	3 years
Vinegar	2 years
Worcestershire sauce	2 years
<b>DRY GOODS</b>	<b>SHELF LIFE AFTER CODE DATE</b>
Baking Mixes (cake mix, pancake mix)	1 year
Baking powder/soda	3 years

Bars (e.g. granola, protein, cereal)	18 months
Beans and lentils (dried)	2 years
Bouillon cubes	2 years
Bread, cakes (commercially prepared) <i>*Frozen breads and cakes can be kept indefinitely as long as the food remains frozen. Once thawed, they can be kept in the refrigerator for 5 days.</i>	5 days
Cereal (hot or cold)	1 year
Cookies (commercially prepared)	6 months
Cornmeal	1 year
Crackers, pretzels	9 months
Flour	6 months (whole wheat), 1 year (white)
Fruit, dried	6 months
Macaroni and cheese mix	1 year
Nuts (jar or can)	1 year
Nut oils	6 months
Oils (olive, vegetable, canola)	1 year
Pasta, dry	3 years
Peanut butter	18 months
Popcorn kernels	2 years
Popcorn, popped and pre-bagged	3 months
Popcorn, microwave packets	1 year
Potato chips	2 months
Potatoes (mashed, instant flakes)	1 year
Rice (white or brown)	3 years
Spices	3 years
Sugar	3 years
Toaster pastries	1 year
Tortilla/wraps	3 months

<b>REFRIGERATED ITEMS</b>	<b>SAFE REFRIGERATION TIME AFTER CODE DATE</b>
Butter	2 months
Buttermilk	2 weeks
Cheese (cottage, ricotta, soft, cream cheese)	2 weeks
Cheese, processed slices, shredded	1 month
Coffee creamer (liquid, refrigerated)	3 weeks
Cream	1 week
Dough (biscuit, pie crust, pizza, rolls, etc.)	Do not consume after sell by date on package
Eggs in shell	1 month
Eggs, pasteurized; substitute or real	7 days
Fruit, cut	4 days
Guacamole, hummus	1 week
Juice, purchased refrigerated	3 weeks
Margarine	6 months
Meat, poultry, ground beef, pork, fish, seafood, venison	Follow use by date or cook/freeze within 1-3 days of date
Milk (not shelf stable)	1 week

Pasta, fresh	2 days
Pudding, purchased refrigerated	2 days
Salads, prepared (macaroni, egg, tuna, etc.)	2 days
Sour cream	3 weeks
Whipped cream, aerosol	1 month
Yogurt	2 weeks

<b>FROZEN ITEMS</b>	<b>RECOMMENDED TIME TO STORE FROZEN ITEMS IN REFRIGERATOR</b>
Bacon, ham, lunch meats, hot dogs, pepperoni (unopened)	2 weeks
Desserts	1 week
Dinners, prepared	1 week
Dough, bread, bagels	1 week
Fruit and juice concentrate	1 week
Meat and fish, cooked	4 days
Meat and fish, raw	2 days
Soy meat substitutes	4 days
Vegetables	1 week
Waffles, pancakes	1 week