

Code dates on products do not indicate when food is unsafe to eat.  
Please refer to these handy guidelines which only apply to **UNOPENED FOOD**.

All information taken from the Food Marketing Institute [www.fightbac.org](http://www.fightbac.org) and Feeding America "Donor Requirements & Restrictions"



## Understanding Food Dating

What kind of dating	What the code looks like?	How it is used
Use-By Do Not Use After Expiration	12-24-89	Manufacturer states that using the product before the stamped date will ensure that it is at best quality and not spoiled
Sell-By	12-24-89	Last recommended date of sale that allows lots of time for storage at home
Coded Dates Julian Dating	2061510365 2061	Packing numbers specific for the manufacturer. Each code may mean something different.
Best-By Best If Used By Enjoy By	12-24-89	Tells you when to eat or drink the product for the <i>best flavor or quality</i> .

## Shelf-Stable Foods Extensions

Product	Storage Life Past Code Date
<b>Staples</b>	
Beans, Dried ( <i>pinto, red, etc</i> )	12 months
Canned Goods	High Acid ( <i>pineapple, tomatoes, pickles, etc.</i> ): 18 months Low Acid ( <i>meats, beans, corn, soup, etc.</i> ): 5 years
Cereal ( <i>hot and cold varieties</i> )	12 months
Coffee and Decaf	Ground in Cans: 2 years Instant: 12 months
Dry Egg Noodles, Dry Pasta ( <i>spaghetti, penne, etc.</i> )	2 years
Flour	White: 12 months; Whole Wheat: 1 month
Rice	White or Wild: 2 years; Brown: 12 months
Sugar	Brown, Raw: 4 months; White, Granulated: 2 years
<b>Beverages</b>	
Bottled Water	All varieties: 12 months
Juice Boxes	6 months
Shelf Stable Milk	Consume by date shown
<b>Condiments &amp; Snacks</b>	
Beef Jerky	12 months
Chocolate Syrup	2 years
Condiments ( <i>bbq sauce, jam/jelly, ketchup, mayo, etc.</i> )	12 months
Cookies, Packaged	2 months
Crackers ( <i>Saltines, Ritz, etc</i> )	8 months
Granola Bars	12 months
Microwave Popcorn	18 months
Peanut Butter	9 months
Popcorn ( <i>dry kernels</i> )	2 years
Slim Jims	18 months
Vegetable Oil Spray	2 years
Vinegar	2 years

## Refrigerated Foods Extensions

Refrigerated Foods Extensions	
Product	Storage Life Past Code Date
<b>Beverages</b>	
Juices	Citrus, pasteurized: <b>7 days</b> ; Odwalla, naked Juice: <b>consume by code date</b> Punches, juice blends: <b>14 days</b>
<b>Dairy Products</b>	
Butter	<b>1-3 months</b>
Cheeses	Hard cheese: <b>6 months</b> ; Shredded Cheese: <b>2 weeks</b> Cottage Cheese: <b>21 days</b> ; Cream Cheese: <b>3-4 weeks</b>
Dips ( <i>sour cream based</i> )	<b>14 days</b>
Eggs ( <i>whole</i> )	<b>5 weeks</b>
EggBeaters ( <i>egg substitute</i> )	<b>60 days</b>
Margarine	<b>6 months</b>
Milk ( <i>all varieties</i> )	<b>7 days</b>
Sour Cream	<b>21 days</b>
Whipping Cream/Aerosol Whipped Cream	<b>30 days</b>
Yogurt	<b>10 days</b>
<b>Deli Products</b>	
Fruit ( <i>cut</i> )	Consume by date shown
Hot dogs, Lunch Meats	<b>5 days</b> (Freeze if not using right away)
Pesto, Salsa	Consume by date shown
<b>Dough Products</b>	
Cookie Dough, Pie Crust	Consume by date shown
Pasta ( <i>fresh</i> )	<b>2 days</b>
Tube Cans ( <i>biscuits, rolls, pizza dough, etc.</i> )	Consume by date shown
<b>Soy Products</b>	
Soy Milk & Soy Dips	<b>7 days</b>
Tofu ( <i>all varieties</i> )	<b>21 days</b>
<b>Baby Products</b>	
All baby products	<u>Use before date shown</u>

## Baked Goods Extensions

Baked Goods Extensions			
Product	Shelf Storage Past Code Date	Refrigerator Storage Past Code Date	Freezer Storage Past Code Date
Bagels	<b>1 day</b>	<b>7 days</b>	<b>2 months</b>
Bread	Sliced: <b>4 days</b> ; French, loaf: <b>1 day</b>	Sliced: <b>14 days</b> ; French, loaf: <b>14 day</b>	Sliced: <b>3 months</b> ; French, loaf: <b>2 months</b>
Cakes ( <i>angel food, chiffon, sponge</i> )	<b>2 days</b>	<b>7 days</b>	<b>2 months</b>
Chocolate	Unfrosted: <b>2 days</b> Pound cake: <b>4 days</b>	Unfrosted: <b>7 days</b> Pound cake: <b>7 days</b>	Unfrosted: <b>4 months</b> Pound cake: <b>6 months</b>
Cookies	<b>3 weeks</b>	<b>2 months</b>	<b>10 months</b>
Croissants	<b>1 day</b>	<b>7 days</b>	<b>2 months</b>
Danish, Muffins	<b>2 days</b>	<b>7 days</b>	<b>2 months</b>

## Frozen Food Extensions

Product	Storage Life Past Code Date
<b>Dairy Products</b>	
Butter	6 - 9 Months after Expiration Date
Cheese	6 Months after Expiration Date
Milk	1 Month after Expiration Date
<b>Baked Products</b>	
Bread	2 - 3 Months after Expiration Date
<b>Fresh Fruits and Vegetables</b>	
Fruits	5 - 6 Months
Bell Peppers, Tomatoes	3 - 4 Months
Cabbage, Lettuce, Onions	DO <u>NOT</u> FREEZE
Other Vegetables	8 - 12 Months
<b>Meat Products</b>	
Chicken Parts	9 Months after Expiration Date
Whole Chicken or Turkey	12 Months after Expiration Date
Chops	4-6 Months after Expiration Date
Ground Meat	3 - 4 Months after Expiration Date
Roasts	4 - 12 Months after Expiration Date
Steaks	6 - 12 Months after Expiration Date
<b>Deli Products</b>	
Bacon	1 - 2 Months after Expiration Date
Ham — Fully Cooked	1 - 2 Months after Expiration Date
Sausage Links & Patties	1 - 2 Months after Expiration Date
<b>Fish Products</b>	
Lean Fish (Cod)	6 Months after Expiration Date
Fatty Fish (Mackerel/Salmon)	2 Months after Expiration Date
Live Clams, Oysters, Scallops	7-10 Days after Purchase
Raw Crayfish, Shrimp, Squid	3-6 Months after Purchase
Cooked Shellfish	3 Months after Expiration Date