

Understanding the Difference Between: Sell By, Use By, and Best Before Labels

It is safe to buy things past the use by and best before dates; the quality will not be as good, but you can freeze them after purchasing to preserve the quality.

*You want to avoid purchasing things past the sell by date.

Sell By

This is a purchase and safety date that tells the store how long to display the product for sale.

You should buy and consume the product before the date expires.

Use By

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. It is not a purchase or safety date.

Best Before

Are recommended for best flavor or quality.

It is not a purchase or safety date.



Refrigerator Chart

Type of Fresh Meat	Refrigerator (40 ⁰ F or below)	Freezer (0 °F or below)
Fish	1 to 2 days	3 to 8 months
Hamburger, ground beef, turkey, veal, pork, lamb, mixtures of them & products made with any of these ingredients	1 to 2 days	3 to 4 months
Steaks	3 to 5 days	4 to 12 months
Chops	3 to 5 days	4 to 12 months
Roasts	3 to 5 days	4 to 12 months
Chicken or turkey, whole	1 to 2 days	1 year
Chicken or turkey, pieces	1 to 2 days	9 months

Type of Milk	How long it lasts (in refrigerator) (40 °F or below)
Pasteurized	7 - 14 days
UHT or Shelf stable milk	7 - 14 days (once opened)
UH I or Shelf stable milk	/ - 14 days (once opened)

Not for breastmilk

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Types of Eggs	Refrigerator (40 °F or below)	Freezer (0 °F or below)
Raw eggs in shell	3 to 5 weeks	Do not freeze
Hard-cooked eggs	1 week	Does not freeze well
Egg substitutes, liquid (Unopened)	10 days	1 year
Egg substitutes, liquid (Opened)	3 days	Does not freeze well

Type of Bread	How Long It Lasts	
Store bought, slice bread in plastic bag	2 - 4 days (on counter)	
Bakery bread	1 - 3 days (on counter)	
All breads	2 –3 months (in freezer)	

You cannot defrost and refreeze items. They must be used after being taken out of the freezer.