

## Keep Food Safe

### Guide to Refrigerator and Freezer Storage Periods

When storing foods in your refrigerator, use foil, plastic bags and wraps, or airtight containers. Clean refrigerators regularly to reduce food odors. Remove spoiled foods immediately so decay cannot pass to other foods. Set refrigerator temperature between 34 degrees F and 40 degrees F. Refrigerator temperature can be checked with a refrigerator thermometer or outdoor thermometer. Use foods quickly. Don't depend on maximum-storage periods.

<b>Refrigerator Storage Periods</b>	
<b>FRESH MEATS (WRAPPED IN PLASTIC)</b>	<b>LENGTH (IN DAYS)</b>
Roasts, Steaks, Chops, pork, lamb, veal	3-5
Ground meat	1-2
Stew Meat	1-2
Pork Sausage	1-2
<b>COOKED MEATS</b>	<b>LENGTH (IN DAYS)</b>
All Meat Dishes	3-4
Gravy and Broth	1-2
<b>POULTRY</b>	
All Poultry (fresh, ground and cooked)	1-2
<b>PROCESSED MEATS</b>	<b>LENGTH (IN DAYS)</b>
Bacon	7
Hot Dogs	7
Ham	
whole	7
half	5
slices	3
Luncheon Meats	3-5
Smoked Sausage	7
Sausage (dry and semi-dry)	14-21

<b>SEAFOOD</b>	<b>LENGTH (IN DAYS)</b>
All Seafood (fresh and cooked)	1-2
<b>FRESH FRUITS</b>	
Bananas	refridgerate only when ripe
Citrus Fruit	21
Citrus Juices	6
Apples	7-21
Melons (tightly wrap cut surfaces)	7
Berries (including cherries)	2-3
Other (tightly wrap cut surfaces)	3-5
<b>FRESH VEGETABLES</b>	<b>LENGTH (IN DAYS)</b>
Greens (spinach, kale, collards)	3-5
Salad Greens (lettuce, romaine)	7
Cabbage	7
Tomatoes	7
Celery	7
Green Peppers	7
Root Vegetables (carrots, turnips)	14
<b>Dairy</b>	<b>LENGTH (IN DAYS)</b>
Milk	7
Yogurt	7-10
Hard Cheeses (wrapped in plastic)	3-4 Months
Soft Cheeses	14
Cottage Cheese	3-5
Ricotta and Cream Cheese	14
Eggs	3 weeks

## **Leftovers Refrigerator Storage Periods**

<b>FOOD ITEMS</b>	<b>LENGTH (IN DAYS)</b>
Casseroles	1-2
Soups/Stews	2
Meats (cooked)	3-4
Ham	7
Egg or Potato Salad	24 hours
Egg Dishes, Egg Whites	2-3
Canned Fruits (remove from can and store in a glass or plastic container)	7

## Canned Vegetables

(remove from can and store in a glass or plastic container)

2-3

For best freezer storage, make sure temperature is 0 degrees F or below. Maximum temperature is 5 degrees F. Use a freezer thermometer or an outdoor thermometer. If no thermometer is available, use this rule of thumb: If the freezer can't keep ice cream brick-solid, temperature is above the recommended level. Date food packages with an expiration date according to the chart below. For packaging, use heavy-duty foil, moisture and vapor-proof plastic bags and wraps, freezer wrap, or freezer containers. Longer storage for frozen food is not dangerous, but flavors and textures begin to deteriorate.

### Freezer Storage Periods

<b>FRUITS AND VEGETABLES</b>	<b>LENGTH (IN MONTHS)</b>
All Fruits and Vegetables	8
<b>TV DINNERS CASSEROLES</b>	<b>LENGTH (IN MONTHS)</b>
All TV Dinners and Casseroles	3-4
<b>SOUPS AND STEWS</b>	<b>LENGTH (IN MONTHS)</b>
Soups and Stews (with vegetable or meat)	2-3
Stew Meats	3-4
<b>PROCESSED MEATS</b>	<b>LENGTH (IN MONTHS)</b>
Bacon	1
Sausage (raw, smoked and hard)	1-2
Ham (fully cooked, whole, half, slices)	1-2
Hot Dogs and Lunch Meats	1-2 (in plastic wrap)
<b>POULTRY</b>	<b>LENGTH (IN MONTHS)</b>
Chicken, whole, cut up	6
Chicken livers	3
Poultry, cooked	3
Duck	6
Turkey	6-12
<b>FRESH MEATS</b>	<b>LENGTH (IN MONTHS)</b>
Steaks (beef)	6-12
Chops	
	pork 4-6
	lamb 6-9
Roasts	
	beef 6-12
	lamb 6-9
	pork and veal 4-6
<b>FRESH SEAFOOD</b>	<b>LENGTH (IN MONTHS)</b>

Lean Fish (Cod, Flounder)	6
Blue Crabs	4
Shrimp	5
Breaded Seafood	8
<b>EGGS</b>	<b>LENGTH (IN MONTHS)</b>
Raw, Whites	3-4
Raw, Yolks (see below)	3-4
Raw, Whole (see below)	3-4

**When freezing eggs:**

Raw egg whites freeze fine as is; raw egg yolks, add 1 tablespoon of corn syrup or sugar, or 1/2 teaspoon salt per cup of blended egg before freezing.

For raw whole eggs that are blended, add 1.5 teaspoons sugar or corn syrup, or 1/2 teaspoon of salt per 1 cup of blended whole egg.