

All About EXPIRATION DATES

Most Food Is Safe Even After Its Expiration Date



According to the [United States Department of Agriculture \(USDA\)](#), most foods are safe to eat beyond their expiration date. So, there is no need to throw food away just because the date has passed. See the guidelines below for details, but always check for an "off" odor, flavor, or texture before using, which means the food has spoiled and should not be eaten.



"EXPIRATION" or "USE BY"

A "Use-By" date is the last date recommended for use of the product at peak quality. It is not a safety date, EXCEPT for infant formula or nutritional supplements. DO NOT consume formula or supplements after the date.

Eggs, for example, can be used 2-4 weeks after this date.



"SELL-BY"

A "Sell By" date tells a store how long to keep a product on display, and doesn't indicate a strict safety date.

Use or freeze meats or other fresh foods within 1-2 days after the sell-by date.



"BEST USED BY/BEFORE"

"Best By" dates indicate best flavor or quality. It is not a safety date. According to Second Harvest of Silicon Valley, the following foods can be consumed within the timeframes below.

12-18 MONTHS past date: acidic food in cans

2-3 YEARS past date: non-acidic food in cans

2 YEARS past date: rice

4-5 YEARS past date: pasta

For more food waste reduction tips, visit
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