A GUIDE TO UNDERSTANDING EXPIRATION DATES

food gatherers

Expiration dates are not federally regulated in the US! The only exception is baby formula & food, and OTC medications.

SELL BY

For store staff. Not a safety date!

USE BY

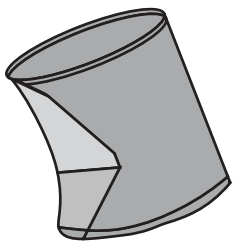
BEST BY

Last recommended date for peak quality. Not a safety date unless baby formula!

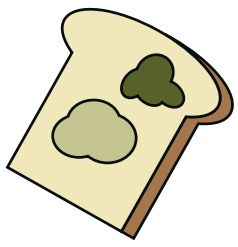
Foods past these dates are still good to use if they have been handled properly, and all food pantries go through safety training to ensure the food distributed is in good shape.

WHEN IN DOUBT, THROW IT OUT!

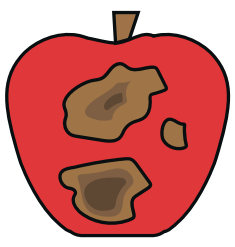
Trust your five senses! If it smells, looks, feels, or tastes off, it's no longer good.



Tins - Bloated or Sharp Dents



Mold



Slimy/Soggy

Unpleasant Smell

How much longer can your items last past the printed dates?

IN GENERAL... Ready-to-Eat Items can last 1 more day. Frozen Items if frozen before use-by date will last forever. Once thawed, eat within 1 day.

Scan Me

For more food safety and food product dating information, visit: foodgatherers.org/foodsafety