

The Food Keeper

The Food Keeper contains valuable storage advice to help you maintain the freshness and quality of foods.

Some foods deteriorate quickly, while the quality of other items may last longer than expected. This is why the storage times listed in the accompanying charts are intended as useful guidelines, not hard and fast rules. Remember to buy foods in reasonable quantities and rotate them in your pantry, refrigerator and freezer.

REFRIGERATED FOOD

Refrigerate food to preserve freshness. However, over time, even chilled food begins to go bad. The Food Keeper charts indicate refrigerator storage times for a wide variety of food items, calculated from the date of purchase.

Temperature

- ◆ Set the refrigerator to maintain a temperature of 40°F or below.
- ◆ Keep a refrigerator thermometer in the unit or check the temperature seasonally.
- ◆ Don't overload the refrigerator. Air must circulate freely to cool all foods evenly.

Foods Purchased Refrigerated

PRODUCT	REFRIGERATED	FROZEN
BEVERAGES, FRUIT		
Juice in cartons, fruit drinks, punch	3 weeks, unopened; 7-10 days open	8-12 months
DAIRY PRODUCTS		
Butter	1-3 months	6-9 months
Buttermilk	1-2 weeks	3 months
Cheese, hard (such as cheddar, swiss, block parmesan)	6 months unopened; 3-4 weeks opened	6 months
Parmesan, shredded	1 month opened	3-4 months
Shredded cheddar, mozzarella, etc.	1 month	3-4 months
Cheese, processed slices	1-2 months	Doesn't freeze well
Cheese, soft (such as Brie, Bel Paese)	1 week	6 months
Cottage cheese, ricotta	1 week	Doesn't freeze well
Cream cheese	2 weeks	Doesn't freeze well
Cream, whipping, ultrapasteurized	1 month	Do not freeze
Whipped, sweetened	1 day	1-2 months
Aerosol can, real whipped cream	3-4 weeks	Do not freeze
Aerosol can, nondairy topping	3 months	Do not freeze
Cream, half-and-half	3-4 days	4 months
Dips, sour cream based	2 weeks	Do not freeze
Egg substitutes, liquid		
unopened	10 days	Do not freeze
opened	3 days	
Eggnog, commercial	3-5 days	6 months
Eggs, in shell	3-5 weeks	Do not freeze
raw whites, yolks*	2-4 days	12 months
hard cooked	1 week	Doesn't freeze well
Kefir (fermented milk)	1 week after date; opened 1-2 days	
Margarine	6 months	Do not freeze
Milk, plain or flavored	1 week	12 months
Pudding	Package date; 2 days after opening	3 months
Sour cream	7-21 days	Do not freeze
Yogurt	7-14 days	Doesn't freeze well
DOUGH		
Tube cans of biscuits, rolls, pizza dough, etc.		
Ready-to-bake pie crust	Use-by date	Do not freeze
Cookie dough	Use by date, unopened or opened	2 months
PASTA, fresh	1-2 days or use-by date on package	2 months
PESTO or SALSA	Date on carton; 3 days after opening	1-2 months
SOY PRODUCTS		
Soy or rice beverage, refrigerated	7-10 days	Do not freeze
Tofu	1 week or package date	5 months
Miso	3 months	Do not freeze



**When freezing egg yolks, beat in either 1/8 teaspoon salt or 1/2 teaspoon sugar or corn syrup per 1/4 cup egg yolks (4 yolks).*

Storing

Refrigerated Food

- ◆ Leave meat, poultry and seafood in the store packaging before using. Repeated handling can introduce bacteria into products.
- ◆ Store opened food in foil, plastic wrap, leak-proof plastic bags or airtight food storage containers to keep food from drying out.
- ◆ Place meat, poultry and seafood in the coldest part of the refrigerator. Store eggs in their original carton on a shelf, not in the door.

- ◆ Defrost or marinate meat in the refrigerator – never on the kitchen counter.
- ◆ Place meat, poultry and seafood items on the lowest shelf to minimize leakage onto other stored foods.
- ◆ Clean the refrigerator regularly to remove spoiled food, odors and bacteria. Don't overload the refrigerator. Air must circulate freely to cool all foods evenly.

HANDLING FOOD SAFELY AT HOME

Many cases of foodborne illness occur each year due to improper handling of food in the home. Microorganisms multiply rapidly at temperatures between 40°F and 140°F. Unfortunately, the harmful bacteria that cause most cases of foodborne illness cannot be seen, smelled or tasted. Therefore, it's important to:

Keep Cold foods Cold (400F or below) and Hot foods Hot (1400F or above).

and follow these additional rules from the FightBAC® Partnership for Food Safety:

1. **CLEAN:** Wash hands and surfaces often and thoroughly.
2. **SEPARATE:** Don't cross-contaminate.
3. **COOK:** Cook to proper temperatures.
4. **CHILL:** Refrigerate promptly, after home cooking! 3-4 days refrigerated or 2-3 months frozen.



Shelf-Stable Foods/Bakery Items

SHELF STABLE FOODS	UNOPENED IN PANTRY	REFRIGERATOR AFTER OPENING	IN PANTRY AFTER OPENING
Spices, whole ground paprika, red pepper, & chili powder	2-3 years total		Included in total
Sugar, brown granulated	4 months	Store in refrigerator	Included in total
confectioners	2 years		
sugar substitutes	18 months		
Syrup, pancake genuine or real maple	2 years		Sugar never spoils
Tapoca	12 months	12 months	12 months
Tea, bags loose	18 months		12 months
Tea, bags instant	2 years		6-12 months
Toaster pastries, fruit filled non-fruit fillings	3 years		Keep foil packets sealed
Formates, sun dried, packed in oil	6 months		3-6 months
Vinegar	12 months	6-12 months	3-6 months
Yeast, dry, packets and jars	9 months		12 months
Water, bottled	2 years		3-6 months
Worcestershire Sauce	Use by date	Refrigerate open jars	12 months
	1-2 years		3 months
	1 year		1 year
BAKERY ITEMS	SHELF	REFRIGERATOR	FREEZER
Bread, commercial*	2-4 days	7-14 days	3 months
Bread, flat (tortillas, pita)	2-4 days	4-7 days	4 months
Cakes, angel food	1-2 days	1 week	2 months
chiffon, sponge	1-2 day	1 week	2 months
chocolate	1-2 days	1 week	4 months
fruit cake	1 month	6 months	12 months
made from mix	3-4 days	1 week	4 months
-pound cake	3-4 days	1 week	6 months
(Refrigerate any cake with frosting made of dairy products or eggs)			
Cheesecake			2-3 months
Cookies, bakery or homemade			
Crossants, butter	2-3 weeks	2 months	8-12 months
Doughnuts, glazed or cake	1 day	1 week	2 months
dairy cream filled	1-2 days	3-4 days	1 month
Eclairs, dairy cream filled			
Muffins	1-2 days	3-4 days	2 months
Pastries, danish	1-2 days	1 week	2 months
Pies, cream chiffon			
fruit	3-4 days	1-2 days	2 months
minicrust	1-2 days	1 week	8 months
pecan	2 hours	1 week	8 months
pumpkin	2 hours	3-4 days	1-2 months
Quiche	2 hours	3-4 days	2 months
Rolls, yeast, baked	3-4 days	1 week	2 months
yeast, partially baked filled, meat or vegetables	Package date	1 week	2 months
	2 hours	3-4 days	2 months

*Any breads containing meat, hard cooked eggs, custard filling or other perishable ingredients must be refrigerated within two hours.

Foods Purchased Refrigerated

MEAT, POULTRY & FISH	REFRIGERATED	FROZEN
FISH		
Lean fish (cod, flounder, haddock, halibut, sole, etc.)	1-2 days	6-8 months
Lean fish (pollock, ocean perch, rockfish, sea trout)	1-2 days	4 months
Fatty fish (bluefish, mackerel, mullet, salmon, tuna, etc.)	1-2 days	2-3 months
Caviar, fresh, in jar	1-4 weeks; 2 days open	Doesn't freeze well
Cooked fish, all	3-4 days	1-2 months
Surimi seafood	3-4 days or package date	9 months
SHELLFISH		
Shrimp, scallops, crawfish, squid	1-2 days	3-6 months
Shucked clams, mussels and oysters	1-2 days	3-4 months
Crab meat, fresh	1-2 days	4 months
Crab meat, pasteurized	6 months unopened; 3-5 days, opened	4 months
Crab legs, king, dungeness, snow	5 days	9-12 months
Live clams, mussels, crab and oysters	1-2 days	2-3 months
Live lobsters	1-2 days	2-3 months
Lobster tails	1-2 days	6 months
Cooked shellfish, all	3-4 days	3 months
SMOKED FISH		
Herring	3-4 days	2 months
Salmon, whitefish, cold-smoked	5-8 days	2 months
Salmon, whitefish, hot smoked	14 days or date on vacuum pkg	6 months in vacuum pkg
MEAT, FRESH		
Beef, lamb, pork or veal chops, steaks, roasts	3-5 days	4-12 months
Ground meat	1-2 days	3-4 months
Variety meats (liver, tongue, chitterlings, etc.)	1-2 days	3-4 months
Cooked meats (after home cooking)	3-4 days	2-3 months
MEAT, SMOKED OR PROCESSED		
Bacon	1 week	1 month
Corned beef, in pouch with pickling juices	5-7 days	1 month
Ham, canned ("keep refrigerator" label)	6-9 months	Do not freeze
Ham, fully cooked, whole	1 week	1-2 months
Ham, fully cooked, slices or half	3-4 days	1-2 months
Ham, cook before eating	1 week	1-2 months
Hot dogs, sealed in package	2 weeks	1-2 months
Hot dogs, after opening	1 week	1-2 months
Lunch meats, sealed in package	2 weeks	1-2 months
Lunch meats, after opening	3-5 days	1-2 months
Sausage, raw, bulk type	1-2 days	1-2 months
Sausage, smoked links, patties	1 week	1-2 months
Sausage, hard, dry (pepperoni), sliced	2-3 weeks	1-2 months
POULTRY, FRESH		
Chicken or turkey, whole	1-2 days	12 months
Chicken or turkey, parts	1-2 days	9 months
Duckling or goose, whole	1-2 days	6 months
Giblets	1-2 days	3-4 months
POULTRY, COOKED OR PROCESSED		
Chicken nuggets, patties	1-2 days	1-3 months
Cooked poultry dishes	3-4 days	4-6 months
Fried chicken	3-4 days	4 months
Ground turkey or chicken	1-2 days	3-4 months
Lunch meats, sealed in package	2 weeks	1-2 months
Lunch meats, after opening	3-5 days	1-2 months
Pieces covered with broth or gravy	1-2 days	6 months
Hotterse chicken	3-4 days	4 months

Keeping Food Safe During a Power Outage

sooner or later, the electricity may fail due to a power outage, and a refrigerator without electricity cannot keep food safe very long. To be prepared, keep an appliance thermometer in both the refrigerator and freezer to monitor the temperature.

IN THE FREEZER

- ◆ Even when the power is off, a full freezer will stay frozen for about two days; a half-full freezer about one day. So keep the freezer door closed.

- ◆ If you think power will be out for several days, locate some block ice, bags of ice or dry ice to put in the freezer along with your refrigerated perishable food, or keep the food continually iced in an insulated cooler.

- ◆ You can also pack foods tightly together to insulate one another.

- ◆ All thawed raw or cooked foods can be refrozen if they still contain ice crystals or are 40°F or below, but there may be some quality loss.

- ◆ Foods thawed and held above 40°F for more than two hours should be discarded.

FOODS IN THE REFRIGERATOR

- ◆ Refrigerated foods should be edible as long as power is out no more than four hours.

- ◆ Discard any perishable foods that have been above 40°F for two hours or more, and any food that has an unusual odor, color, or texture, or feels warm to the touch.

- ◆ If you have any doubts about the safety of any item in your refrigerator after power is restored, it's best to err on the side of caution and discard it.

For additional information about food safety during power outages, call the toll-free USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline at 1-800-535-4555



= Does not apply

Frozen Foods

Because foods frozen at peak quality will taste better than foods frozen near the end of their useful life, quickly freeze items you don't plan to use in the next day or two. Keep the freezer temperature at 0°F, or below; frozen food quality deteriorates more rapidly above 0°F. Remember, freezing to 0°F inactivates but does not destroy microbes such as bacteria, yeasts and molds that can be present in food. Once a frozen food item is thawed, these microbes can become active, multiplying under the right conditions to levels that can lead to foodborne illness.

DEFROSTING

Never defrost foods outdoors, in a cold room in the house, such as the basement, or on the kitchen counter. These methods encourage growth of harmful bacteria.

- ◆ There are three ways to defrost food:
 - ◆ in the refrigerator, in a sealed package in cold water, and in the microwave oven.
 - ◆ Never defrost or thaw a food product by leaving it out on the kitchen counter.
 - ◆ Food thawed in the refrigerator can be refrozen without cooking. Plan ahead because food may take several hours to thaw in the refrigerator (or even days for turkeys).
 - ◆ Foods defrosted in cold water or in the microwave should be cooked immediately.
- ◆ **DELI FOODS**
Your supermarket deli maintains rigid quality assurance and sanitation standards to ensure you will always receive fresh, wholesome products.
 - ◆ As soon as you get home, immediately put cold perishables into the refrigerator or freezer.
 - ◆ Hot perishable foods from the deli department need to be kept at 140°F or above, or consumed within two hours.
 - ◆ For hot deli foods to be eaten at a later time, place them in shallow, covered containers and refrigerate or freeze within two hours.
 - ◆ Reheat foods to 165°F.

Foods Purchased Frozen

FROZEN ITEMS	FREEZER	REFRIGERATOR AFTER THAWING
Bagels	2 months	1-2 weeks
Bread Dough, commercial	Use-by date	After baking, 4-7 days
Burritos, sandwiches	2 months	3-4 days
Egg substitutes	12 months	Date on Carton
Fish, breaded	3-6 months	Do not defrost. Cook frozen.
Fish, raw	6 months	1-2 days
Fruit such as berries, melons	4-6 months	4-5 days
Guacamole	3-4 months	3-4 days
Ice cream	2-4 months	
Juice concentrates	6-12 months	7-10 days
Lobster tails	3 months	2 days
Pancakes, Waffles	2 months	3-4 days
Sausages, uncooked	1-2 months	1-2 days
precooked	1-2 months	
Sherbet, sorbet	2-4 months	
Shrimp, shellfish	12 months	1-2 days
Soy crumbles and hotdogs	9 months	3-4 days
Soy meat substitutes	12-18 months	3-4 days
Tempeh	12 months	1-2 weeks
Topping, whipped	6 months	2 weeks
TV Dinners, entrees,		
breakfast	3 months	Do not defrost. Cook frozen.
Vegetables	8 months	3-4 days

Deli Foods

DELI FOODS	REFRIGERATOR	FREEZER
Main dishes or meals, hot or refrigerated	3-4 days	2-3 months
Meats covered with gravy or broth	1-2 days	6 months
Commercial brand vacuum packed dinners with USDA seal	2 weeks	Does not freeze well
Chicken, rotisserie or fried	3-4 days	4 months
Luncheon meats, store-sliced	3-5 days	1-2 months
Pañé	1-2 days	1-2 months
Cheese, store-sliced, hard cheese such as cheddar or swiss	3-4 weeks	6 months
Cheese, soft (such as brie, bel paese, goat cheese, fresh mozzarella)	1 week	6 months
Salads containing meat, fish, poultry or eggs	3-4 days	Don't freeze.
Salads, vegetable	3-5 days	Don't freeze.
Side dishes such as cooked vegetables, rice or potatoes	3-4 days	1-2 months
Olives	2 weeks	Don't freeze.
Pudding	Package date; 2 days after opening	Don't freeze.
Fruit, cut	Package date; 4 days after opening	Don't freeze.
Cheesecake	1 week	2-3 months



Shelf-Stable Foods

SHELF-STABLE FOODS	UNOPENED IN PANTRY	REFRIGERATOR AFTER OPENING	IN PANTRY AFTER OPENING
BAKING INGREDIENTS	Baby food, jars or cans, fruits & vegetables meats & eggs cereals, dry mixes	Use-by date	
	Formula	2-3 days 1 day	
	Bacon Bits, imitation		2 months
	Beans, Dried	1-2 days refer to jar	4 months 12 months
	Canned goods, low acid (such as meat, poultry, fish, gravy, stew, soups, beans, carrots, corn, pasta, peas, potatoes, spinach)	3-4 days	
	Canned goods, high acid (such as juices, fruit, pickles, sauerkraut, tomato soup, and foods in vinegar-based sauce)	5-7 days	
	Cereal, ready-to-eat	6-12 months	3 months
	Cook before eating (oatmeal, etc.)	12 months	6-12 months
	Coffee, whole beans, non-vacuum bag ground, in cans instant, jars and tins	1-3 weeks 2 years 12 months	1 week 1 week 2-3 months
			(For all types; 3-4 months frozen; 2 weeks refrigerated)
CONDIMENTS	Baking powder	6 months	3 months
	Baking soda	18 months	6 months
	Biscuit or pancake mix	15 months	Pkg use-by date
	Cake, Brownie, Bread Mixes	12-18 months	Pkg use-by date
	Corrmeal, regular, degerminated stone ground or blue	6-12 months 1 month	12 months 2-3 months
	Comstarch	18 months	18 months
	Flour, white	6-12 months	6-8 months
	Flour, whole wheat	1 month	3 months
	Frosting, canned	10 months	1 week
	Frosting mixes	12 months	3 months
Chocolate, unsweetened and semi-sweet, solid	18-24 months	1 year	
Chocolate syrup	2 years	6 months	
Cocoa and Cocoa Mixes	Indefinitely	1 year	
CONDIMENTS	Barbecue sauce, bottled	12 months	1 month
	Ketchup, Cocktail or Chili sauce	12 months	1 month
	Chutney	12 months	6 months
	Horseradish, in jar	12 months	1-2 months
	Mayonnaise, commercial	2-3 months	3-4 months
	Mustard	12 months	2 months
	Olives, black and green	12-18 months	1 month
	Pickles	12 months	2 weeks
	Salad Dressings, commercial, bottled	10-12 months	1-2 weeks
	Salsa, picante & taco sauces	12 months	3 months 1 month
COOKIES, packaged	2 months	8-12 months frozen	4 weeks
	8 months	Freeze or refrigerate 3-4 months	1 month
CRACKERS			

Pantry Storage

Shelf-stable foods such as canned goods, cereal, baking mixes, pasta, dry beans, mustard, ketchup and peanut butter can be kept safely at room temperature. To keep these foods at their best quality, store them in clean, dry, cool (below 85°F) cabinets away from the stove or the refrigerator's exhaust. Extremely hot (over 100°F) and freezing temperatures are harmful to canned goods.

NEVER use food from cans that are leaking, rusting, bulging, badly dented, or with a foul odor; cracked jars or jars with loose or bulging lids; or any container that spurts liquid when you open it. **NEVER TASTE** such foods. Throw out any food you suspect is spoiled. In general, most canned foods have a long shelf life, and when properly stored, can be eaten for several years:

- ◆ Low-acid canned goods — two to five years (canned meat and poultry stews, soups except tomato, pasta products, potatoes, corn, carrots, spinach, beans, beets, peas and pumpkin).
- ◆ High-acid canned goods — 12 to 18 months (tomato products, fruits, sauerkraut and foods in vinegar-based sauces or dressings).
- ◆ Some canned hams are shelf-stable. Never store ham or any foods labeled “keep refrigerated” in the pantry. These foods must be stored in the refrigerator.

Many shelf-stable foods remain edible for several weeks, or even months, after opening, as the accompanying chart indicates. However, be sure to read package labels. Some items must be refrigerated after opening. Of course, products that become contaminated (bugs in flour, for example) should be immediately thrown out.



= Does not apply

Food Product Dating

Dates are printed on many food items, but product dating is not required by federal regulations except on infant formula and baby foods. Dating of some foods, usually dairy products, is required by more than 20 states. An expired date doesn't necessarily mean that the food needs to be discarded. Still, it's helpful to understand the differences among package dates.

Coded dates (packing numbers) may appear on shelf-stable products such as cans and boxes of food. This enables manufacturers to rotate their stock, as well as locate their products in the event of a recall.

Calendar dates help stores determine how long to display the product for sale and relate to the peak quality of food, not safety. Calendar dates are found primarily on perishable foods, such as dairy products, eggs, meat and poultry.

Here are the three ways that products are dated:

- ◆ "Sell-by" date - tells the store how long to display the product for sale. You should buy the product before the date expires.
- ◆ "Best if Used By (or Before)" - recommended for best flavor or quality. It is not a purchase or safety date.
- ◆ "Use By" - the last date recommended for use of the product while at peak quality. The manufacturer of the product has determined the date.



BABY FOOD

Do not buy or use infant formula and baby food past its "use-by" date. Federal regulations require a date on these products.

Shelf-Stable Foods

SHELF STABLE FOODS	UNOPENED IN PANTRY	REFRIGERATOR AFTER OPENING	IN PANTRY AFTER OPENING
Diet powder mixes	6 months		3 months
Extracts, vanilla, lemon, etc.	3 years		1 year
Fruits, dried	6 months	6 months	1 month
Garlic, chopped, commercial jars	18 months	Refrigerate; use by date on jar	
Gelatin, flavored unflavored	18 months		Use all or reseal for 3-4 months
Gravy, jars and cans	3 years		
dry gravy mixes	2-5 years	1-2 days	Use entire can
Herbs, dried	2 years	1-2 days	Mix entire packet
Honey	1-2 years		Cool, dark place 1 year
Jams, jellies, preserves	12 months		12 months
Jerky, commercially dried	12 months	6 months	
Jerky, homemade	12 months	2-3 months	
Juice, boxes	1-2 months	1-2 months	1-2 months
Lentils, dried	4-6 months	8-12 days	12 months
Marshmallows, marshmallow creme	12 months		1 month
Milk, canned evaporated	12 months	4-5 days	
Molasses	12 months		6 months
Mushrooms, dried	6 months		3 months
Oils, olive or vegetable nut oils	6 months	4 months	1-3 months
vegetable oil sprays	6 months		
Nuts, jars or cans	2 years		1 year
	12 months	Refrigerate 4-6 months Freeze 9-12 months	1 month
Pasta, dry, without eggs	2 years		1 year
Dry egg noodles	2 years		1-2 months
Peanut butter, commercial	6-9 months		2-3 months
Peas, dried split	12 months		12 months
Pectin	Use by pkg. date		1 month
Popcorn, dry kernels in jar	2 years		1 year
Commercially popped in bags	2-3 months		1-2 weeks
microwave packaged	12 months		1-2 days popped
Potato chips	2 months		1-2 weeks
Potatoes: instant	6-12 months		6-12 months
Pudding mixes	12 months		3-4 months
Rice, white or wild brown	2 years		1 year
flavored or herb mixes	1 year	6 months	1 year
Sauce mixes, nondairy (spaghetti, taco, etc.)	6 months		Use all
Cream sauces, milk solids	2 years		Use entire amount
Shortening, solid	1 year		
Soda such as carbonated cola drinks, mixers; diet sodas, bottles or cans	8 months		3 months
regular sodas, bottles			
regular sodas, cans	3 mos. after date		1 week
Soup mixes, dry bouillon	3 mos. after date	2-3 days	2 weeks
	9 mos. after date	2-3 days	
	12 months		12 months
SOY PRODUCTS			
Soy or rice beverage, shelf stable	3 months or "use-by" date		
soy beverage powders	6 months	7-10 days	3-4 months
soy flour, de-fatted, low-fat	1 year		1 year
soy flour, full-fat	2 months		
textured soy protein (TSP)	2 years	6 months	3-4 months
Re-hydrated TSP	3-4 months	3-4 days	
Spaghetti sauce in jars	18 months	4 days	

Fresh Fruits and Vegetables

FRUITS	SHELF	REFRIGERATOR	FREEZER
Apples	1-2 days	3 weeks	Cooked, 8 months
Apricots	Until ripe	2-3 days	Do not freeze
Avocados	Until ripe	3-4 days	Do not freeze
Bananas	Until ripe	2 days, skin will blacken	Whole peeled, 1 month
Berries, cherries		1-2 days	4 months
Citrus Fruit	10 days	1-2 weeks	Do not freeze
Coconuts, fresh	1 week	2-3 weeks	Shredded, 6 months
Grapes	1 day	1 week	Whole, 1 month
Kiwi Fruit	Until ripe	3-4 days	Do not freeze
Melons	1-2 days	3-4 days	Balls, 1 month
Papaya, mango	3-5 days	1 week	Do not freeze
Peaches, nectarines	Until ripe	3-4 days	Sliced, lemon juice & sugar, 2 months
Pears, Plums	3-5 days	3-4 days	Do not freeze
VEGETABLES	SHELF	RAW, REFRIG.	FROZEN*
Artichokes, whole	1-2 days	1-2 weeks	Do not freeze
Asparagus		3-4 days	8 months
Beans, green or wax		3-4 days	8 months
Beets	1 day	7-10 days	6-8 months
Bok choy		2-3 days	10-12 months
Broccoli: raab, rapini		3-5 days	10-12 months
Brussels sprouts		3-5 days	10-12 months
Cauliflower		3-5 days	10-12 months
Cabbage		1-2 weeks	10-12 months
Carrots, parsnips		3 weeks	10-12 months
Celery		1-2 weeks	10-12 months
Corn on the cob		1-2 days	8 months
Cucumbers		4-5 days	Do not freeze
Eggplant	1 day	3-4 days	6-8 months
Garlic	1 month	1-2 weeks	1 month
Ginger Root	1-2 days	1-2 weeks	1 month
Greens		1-2 days	10-12 months
Herbs: fresh		7-10 days	1-2 months
Leeks		1-2 weeks	10-12 months
Lettuce, iceberg		1-2 weeks	Do not freeze
Lettuce, leaf		3-7 days	Do not freeze
Mushrooms		2-3 days	10-12 months
Okra		2-3 days	10-12 months
Onions, dry	2-3 weeks	2 months	10-12 months
Spring or green		1-2 weeks	10-12 months
Parsley, cilantro		1 week	1-2 months
Peppers, bell or chile		4-5 days	6-8 months
Potatoes	1-2 months	1-2 weeks	Cooked and mashed, 10-12 months
Radishes		10-14 days	Do not freeze
Rutabagas	1 week	2 weeks	8-10 months
Spinach		1-2 days	10-12 months
Squash, summer		4-5 days	10-12 months
winter	1 week	2 weeks	10-12 months
Turnips		2 weeks	8-10 months
Tomatoes	Until ripe	2-3 days	2 months

*It is recommended to blanch (partially cook) or cook vegetables before freezing.

Fresh Produce

Raw fruit and vegetables can be held at room temperature, stored in the refrigerator or frozen. For most produce, refrigeration is the best way to maintain quality and delay ripening.

- ◆ Wash produce under running water before preparation.
- ◆ Once fruits and vegetables are cut, chopped or cooked, they should be placed in the refrigerator within two hours, or frozen in plastic freezer containers.

Here are more rules for handling food safely in the home:

- ◆ Keep EVERYTHING clean – hands, utensils, counters, cutting boards and sinks.
- ◆ Always WASH HANDS and EQUIPMENT thoroughly with soap and hot water before preparing foods and after handling raw meat, poultry or seafood.
- ◆ Don't let juices from raw meat, poultry or seafood touch ready-to-eat foods during shopping, in the refrigerator or during preparation.
- ◆ Always put cooked food on a clean plate that did not previously hold raw meat, poultry or seafood.
- ◆ Cutting boards can be a source of bacterial contamination, so it's a good idea to use different cutting boards for raw meat and poultry, produce and ready-to-eat foods. When using cutting boards, make sure that they are thoroughly cleaned.
- ◆ Cook foods to proper temperatures to kill bacteria.
- ◆ Use a clean food thermometer to make sure foods reach proper temperatures.



 = Does not apply