

Safe Food Storage Guidelines

Product	Refrigerator (35-40 degrees F)	Freezer (0 degrees F)	Comments
BREADS, PASTRIES AND CAKES			
Breads, baked (no preservatives)	2-3 weeks	2-3 months	Store in refrigerator to inhibit mold growth.
Baked muffins	*	2-3 months	
Baked quick breads	*	2-3 months	
Partially baked cinnamon rolls	1-2 weeks	2-3 months	
Unbaked rolls and bread	3-4 days	1 month	Longer storage inactivates yeast, weakens gluten.
Cakes: frosted baked	*	1 month	
unfrosted baked	*	2-4 months	
Cookies, baked	2-3 weeks	6-12 months	
dough	3-4 days	3 months	
Flour, white or whole wheat	6-8 months	12 months	Keep in airtight container.
Pies: fruit, baked	2-3 days	2-4 months	
fruit, unbaked	1-2 days	2-4 months	
pumpkin or chiffon	2-3 days	1-2 months	
Waffles	1-2 days	1 month	
*Not necessary to refrigerate unless product cannot be used within 3-4 days or “use by” time recommended on package.			
DAIRY PRODUCTS			
Butter	2-3 months	12 months	Freeze in original carton, overwrap in plastic freezer bag.
Buttermilk	1-2 weeks	NR	Check date on carton. Will keep several days after date.
Cheese: cottage, ricotta cream cheese	5-7 days 2 weeks	1 month 1 month	Freezing changes texture of soft cheeses. Becomes crumbly when frozen; can be used in

			cooking when creaminess is not important.
Natural, aged cheeses (cheddar, Swiss, brick, gouda, mozzarella, etc.): large pieces, packaged or wax coated slices or opened packages Parmesan, Romano, (grated) Pasteurized process cheese	2-3 months 2-3 weeks 12 months 3-4 weeks	6-8 months 6-8 months	Natural and processed cheeses can be frozen. Defrost in refrigerator; cheese will be less likely to crumble. Use soon after thawing.
Coffee whitener (liquid)	3 weeks	See package	
Cream, light or half and half (UHT processed-opened) (UHT processed-unopened) whipping or heavy	1 week 1 week 4 weeks 1 week	3-4 weeks NR	Whipping cream will not whip after thawing. Whipped cream may be frozen and stored for 1-2 weeks.
Dip, sour cream, commercial homemade	2 weeks 3-4 days	NR NR	
Margarine	3 months	12 months	Overwrap in plastic freezer bag for frozen storage.
Milk: evaporated, opened fluid whole or low-fat reconstituted nonfat dry sweetened, condensed, opened	3-5 days 1 week 1 week 3-5 days	1-3 months 1-3 months 1-3 months 1-3 months	Freezing affects milk's flavor, appearance; use for cooking.
Sour cream	2-3 weeks	NR	Sour cream will separate if frozen.
Yogurt	1 month	NR	Yogurt will separate if frozen.
Whipped topping: frozen carton, thawed in aerosol can prepared from mix	2 weeks 3 weeks 3 days	NR NR NR	

EGGS AND EGG PRODUCTS

Eggs, fresh yolks or whites	4 days	12 months	To freeze, break eggs out of shell; stir until yolk is well blended with white or other yolks. Add small amount of salt, sugar or corn syrup to improve keeping quality.
Eggs, in shell, fresh	3-5 weeks	NR	
Eggs, in shell, hard-cooked	1 week	NR	Decorated Easter eggs: If you intend to eat them, keep refrigerated. If eggs are at room temperature for more than 2 hours, do not eat them.
Eggs, liquid pasteurized eggs or egg substitutes, opened	4-5 days	1 year	
Egg-containing products: canned puddings, opened custards, custard sauces, puddings, custard-filled, pastries and cakes	1-2 days	NR	

FRUITS

Apples	1-3 weeks	8-12 months*	
Apricots, cranberries	1 week	8-12 months*	
Avocados	3-5 days	4-6 months*	
Bananas	1-2 days, unpeeled	4-6 months	Peel, dip in lemon juice, tray freeze; store in freezer bag.
Berries, cherries	1-2 days	8-12 months*	
Canned fruits, opened	3-5 days	1-2 months	Texture will be softer after freezing. Refrigerate in glass or plastic to avoid metallic taste.
Citrus fruits	3 weeks	4-6 months*	Wrap cut surfaces to prevent loss of Vitamin C.

Dried fruit, cooked uncooked	3-5 days 6 months	4-6 months 12 months	
Grapes, peaches, pears, plums, and rhubarb	3-5 days	8-12 months*	
Juices: canned, bottled, frozen concentrate	1 week	12 months	Transfer canned juice to glass or plastic container after opening.
Melons	1 week	4-6 months*	Wrap cut surfaces to prevent Vitamin C loss, control odors.

*Freeze all fruits in moisture- and vapor proof containers.

MEATS

Fresh

Bratwurst, fresh precooked	1-2 days 5-7 days	2-3 months 2-3 months	Meats may be left in the supermarket packaging for refrigerator storage or for very brief freezer storage. For frozen storage beyond two weeks, rewrap in moisture- and vapor proof wrap or freezer bags.
Chops, lamb pork, veal	2-4 days 2-4 days	6-9 months 4-6 months	
Ground beef, stew meat, ground pork, turkey, veal, lamb	1-2 days	3-4 months	
Roasts: beef lamb veal or pork	2-4 days 2-4 days 2-4 days	6-12 months 6-9 months 4-8 months	
Sausage: pork, beef, turkey	1-2 days	1-2 months	
Steaks, beef	2-4 days	6-12 months	
Variety meats (tongue, liver, brains, heart, kidneys)	1-2 days	3-4 months	

Cooked

Canned meat, opened	2-3 days	NR	
Cooked meat and meat dishes	3-4 days	2-3 months	Quickly refrigerate all cooked meats and leftovers. Use as soon as possible. Cut large roasts

			into halves to cool in refrigerator. Fats tend to separate in homemade gravies, stews and sauces but usually recombine when heated.
Gravy and meat broth	1-2 days	2-3 months	Cool leftover gravy and broth quickly, in shallow containers, in the refrigerator.

Processed and Cured

Bacon	5-7 days	1 month	Keep packaged meats in original package. For best quality, use within one week of “sell by” date.
Corned beef: drained and wrapped in pouch with pickling juice	5-7 days 5-7 days	1 month NR	
Frankfurters (hot dogs)	3-5 days*	1-2 months	Frozen, cured meats lose quality rapidly; use as soon as possible.
Ham, canned, unopened half whole	8-12 months 3-5 days 7 days	NR 1-2 months 1-2 months	Small pieces of canned ham (opened) may be frozen for 4-6 weeks.
Luncheon meats	4 days*	1-2 months	
Sausage, smoked dry and semi-dry sausage	7 days 2-3 weeks	1-2 months 1-2 months	

*Storage time after vacuum-sealed package is opened. Unopened package may be kept two weeks or according to date on package.

MISCELLANEOUS PERISHABLE ITEMS

Baby food, prepared or opened	2-3 days	See comment	Store covered. Do not feed baby from jar. Reheat only enough for 1 feeding. Freeze homemade baby food in ice cube trays, covered. Use in 2-4 weeks.
Candies	6 months	6 months	Chocolates may discolor.

Casseroles	1-2 days	1 month	
Ground spices	6 months*	6-12 months	Can be stored in cupboard.
Salads (store prepared or homemade) – egg, chicken, ham, tuna and macaroni	3-5 days	NR	
Salad dressings, opened	6 months	NR	
Sandwiches	2-3 days	1 month	
Soups, stews	2-3 days	4-6 months	
Soy milk	1 week after opening	1-3 months	Unopened, aseptically packaged soy milk can be stored at room temperature for several months.
Tofu	1 week	5 months	Change storage water every day or two after opening.

*Refrigeration is not necessary, but will help keep flavor fresher.

POULTRY

Fresh

Chicken and turkey, whole	1-2 days	12 months	
Chicken, pieces	1-2 days	9 months	
Duck and goose, whole	1-2 days	6 months	
Giblets	1-2 days	3-4 months	
Turkey, pieces	1-2 days	6 months	

Cooked

Canned poultry, opened	1-2 days	NR	Quick-cool meat and broth separately in shallow containers. Add ice cubes to concentrated broth to speed cooling and to aid fat removal.
Cooked poultry dishes	3-4 days	4-6 months	
Fried chicken	3-4 days	4 months	
Pieces, covered with broth Pieces, not in broth	1-2 days 3-4 days	6 months 1 month	

Chicken nuggets, patties	1-2 days	1 month	
VEGETABLES			
Asparagus	2-3 days	8-12 months*	
Beans, green or wax; celery	1 week	8-12 months*	
Beets, cabbage, carrots, turnips	1-2 weeks	8-12 months*	
Broccoli, Brussels sprouts	1 week	8-12 months*	
Cauliflower	1 week	8-12 months*	
Corn, on the cob	1-2 days	8-12 months*	
Cucumbers	1 week	NR	
Lettuce, other salad greens	1 week	NR	Store in bag or lettuce keeper.
Mushrooms	1-2 days	8-12 months*	Do not wash before refrigerator storage.
Okra	3-5 days	8-12 months*	
Onions, green mature	3-5 days 1-2 weeks	NR 3-6 months*	
Peas, lima beans, unshelled	3-5 days	8-12 months*	Store unshelled in refrigerator until used.
Peppers	1 week	8-12 months*	
Radishes	2 weeks	NR	
Tomatoes, canned, open fresh, ripe	1-4 days 5-6 days	8-12 months*	See 9.341, <i>Canning Tomatoes and Tomato Products</i> .
*Blanch fresh vegetables and freeze in moisture- and vapor proof materials.			
WILD GAME AND SEAFOOD			
Wild Game			
Rabbit, squirrel	1-2 days	6-12 months	
Venison	2-4 days	6-12 months	
Wild duck, pheasant, goose, whole	1-2 days	6 months	

Seafood			
Canned fish, seafood, opened	3-4 days	NR	
Clams, oysters (shucked), and scallops	1-2 days	3-4 months	Store in coldest part of refrigerator. Do not use if liquid is frothy.
Cooked fish	3-4 days	4-6 months	
Crab	1-2 days	2 months	
Fillets, fatty: mullet, ocean perch, sea perch, sea trout, striped bass	1-2 days	2-3 months	
Fillets, lean: cod, flounder, haddock	1-2 days	4-6 months	
Fresh water fish, cleaned	1-2 days	6-9 months	
Lobster, shelled or not	1-2 days	6-12 months	
Salmon steaks	1-2 days	2 months	
Shrimp	1-2 days	6-12 months	
Smoked fish	14 days or date on vacuum package	2 months in vacuum package	
NR: Not recommended.			