

Eliminate freezer or refrigerator odors

Did your refrigerator or freezer quit? Was electricity interrupted? How do I clean it? How do I get rid of the odor in my freezer?

A clean refrigerator and freezer are important to keeping food safe.

Disconnect the unit from the electrical outlet, and remove all food. Clean the freezer or refrigerator thoroughly with soap and water, including the tray beneath, condenser coils, front grill, and the inside of the unit. Use a mild soap, such as dish soap – no solvent cleaning agents, abrasives, or cleansers that might impart taste to food or ice cubes or cause damage to the appliance interior. Follow the manufacturer's instructions. Then try some combination of these suggestions from the U. S. Department of Agriculture Food Safety and Inspection Service:

- Wipe out the inside of the appliance with a solution of equal parts vinegar and water. The vinegar is an acid, which destroys mildew.
- Wash the inside of the unit with a solution of baking soda and water. Scrub the gaskets, shelves, sides, and door. Allow the refrigerator to air out for several days in a secured place where children won't be endangered.

- Sprinkle fresh coffee grounds or baking soda loosely in the bottom of the freezer or in an open container inside the appliance and leave for 24 to 48 hours.
- Place a cotton swab soaked with vanilla inside the clean freezer or refrigerator. Close the door for 24 hours then check the unit for odors. The unit will smell like vanilla if its clean.
- Stuff the refrigerator or freezer with rolled newspapers. Close the door and leave the newspapers for several days. Remove the paper and clean the unit with a vinegar-water solution.

Smell better? If not, one or more of these techniques may need to be repeated. Refrigerator odors can be very difficult to remove.

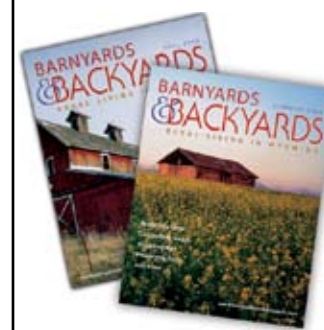
Once the refrigerator or freezer is clean and running, add new, safe foods to them.

Keep the refrigerator smelling fresh by making a habit of cleaning spills and throwing out old and spoiled food. A small, open box of baking soda kept on the shelf will absorb odors.

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A spring (March 2007) post-fire recovery workshop is being planned for landowners or managers affected by the Jackson Canyon Fire. To view a full agenda, when available, for this event or others of interest please visit the "Events" page at www.barnyardsandbackyards.com or contact a local Cooperative Extension Service office.



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