

# Food Safety: Canned and Boxed Items

Most canned and boxed products are safe to eat long after the date on the container, and the shelf life of refrigerated and frozen foods can be extended if they are handled properly.

<b>Canned Foods</b>	
Beans	3 years
Fish: salmon, tuna, sardines, mackerel	3 years
Frosting, canned	10 months
High-acid foods <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fruit (including applesauce, juices)</li><li>• Pickles, sauerkraut</li><li>• Baked beans w/ mustard/ vinegar</li><li>• Tomatoes, tomato-based soups and sauces</li></ul>	1-2 years
Low-acid foods <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Gravy, soups/ broths that aren't tomato-based</li><li>• Pasta, stews, cream sauces</li><li>• Vegetables (not tomatoes)</li></ul>	2-3 years
Meat: beef, chicken, pork, turkey	2-3 years
<b>Dry Goods</b>	
Baking mix, pancake	9 months
Beans, dried	1 year
Casserole mix	9-12 months
Cereal, cold	1 year
Macaroni and cheese, mix	9-12 months
Oatmeal	12 months
Pasta, dry	2-3 years
Peanut Butter	18 months
Rice, brown	1 year
Rice, white	2 years
Rice-based mixes	6 months
Stuffing mix	9-12 months

<b>Shelf-Stable Beverages</b>	<b>Shelf Life After Code Date</b>	
Juice, bottle, shelf-stable	9 months	
Juice, box	4-6 months	
Juice, canned	18 months	
Milk, non-fat dry	1 year	
Milk, shelf-stable UHT	6 months	
<b>Dairy and Cooler Items</b>	<b>Refrigerated</b>	<b>Frozen</b>
Cheese, cottage	10-15 days	Freezes poorly
Cheese, hard	6 months	6-8 months
Cheese, soft	1-2 weeks	6 months
Cheese, processed	3-4 weeks	6 months
Eggs, in shell	4-5 weeks	Do not freeze
Margarine	6 months	12 months
Milk (not shelf-stable)	1 week	1-3 months; use for cooking
Sour Cream	2-3 weeks	Do not freeze
Yogurt	10-14 days	1-2 months
<b>Fish/Seafood: Uncooked</b>	<b>Refrigerated</b>	<b>Frozen</b>
Fatty fish (salmon, mackerel, perch, bluefish)	2 days	3-6 months
Lean fish (cod, flounder, sole, haddock, Pollock)	2 days	12 months
<b>Meats, Raw</b>	<b>Refrigerated</b>	<b>Frozen</b>
Roasts, Steaks, Chops	3-5 days	1 year
Poultry: Chicken or Poultry, whole cuts	2 days	1 year
Ground Meats (beef, pork, lamb, or poultry)	2 days	9-12 months
<b>Meats, Processed</b>	<b>Refrigerated</b>	<b>Frozen</b>
Bacon, unopened	2 weeks	6 months
Chicken, Nuggets/Patties	2 days	3 months
Ham, unopened	2 weeks	1 year
Hot dogs, unopened	2 weeks	9 months
Luncheon Meats, unopened	2 weeks	1-2 months



This material was funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – SNAP, and the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program – EFNEP. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. It can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more, contact 1-877-219-4646. This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.