

Food Handlers' Storage Guide

General guidelines for the shelf life of common foods.

Intended as general information. Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health assumes no responsibility toward persons using this guide. Adapted from the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care.

Cupboard

(room temperature)

Unless otherwise specified, times apply to unopened packages.



Cereal Grains

(store in airtight containers once opened)

Bread crumbs (dry).....3 mo.
Cereals (ready-to-eat).....8 mo.
Cornmeal.....6-8 mo.
Crackers.....6 mo.
Pasta.....several yr.
Rice.....several yr.
Rolled oats.....6-10 mo.
White flour.....1 yr.
Whole wheat flour.....3 mo.

Canned Foods

(refrigerate in airtight containers once opened)

Evaporated milk.....9-12 mo.
Other canned foods.....1 yr.

Dry Foods

(store in airtight containers once opened)

Baking chocolate.....7 mo.
Baking powder/soda.....1 yr.
Beans, peas, lentils.....1 yr.
Cocoa.....10-12 mo.
Coffee (ground).....1 mo.
Coffee (instant).....1 yr.
Coffee whitener.....6 mo.
Fruit (dried).....1 yr.
Gelatin.....1 yr.
Jelly powder.....2 yr.
Mixes
 cake, pancake, biscuit.....1 yr.
 pie filling, pudding.....18 mo.
 main dish acc.9-12 mo.
Potatoes (flakes).....1 yr.
skim milk powder
 unopen.....1 yr.
 open.....1 mo.

Sugar (all types).....several yr.
Tea bags.....1 yr.

Miscellaneous Foods

Honey.....18 mo.
Jam, jellies (refrigerate once opened).....1 yr.
Mayonnaise, salad dressings
 unopen.....6 mo.
 open.....1-2 mo.
Molasses.....2 yr.
Nuts.....1 mo.
Peanut butter
 unopen.....6 mo.
 open.....2 mo.
Pectin - liquid.....1 yr.
 open (cover in fridge).....1 mo.
 powdered.....2 yr.
Sandwich spread (covered in fridge once open).....8 mo.

Syrups (corn, maple, table).....1 yr.
Vegetable oils (covered in fridge once opened).....1 yr.
Vinegar.....several yr.
Dry yeast.....1 yr.

Vegetables

Potatoes, rutabaga, squash.....1 wk.
Tomatoes.....1 wk.
Cool room (7-10°C, 45-50°F)
Onions (dry, yellow skin).....6 wk.
Potatoes (mature).....6 mo.
Rutabaga (waxed).....several mo.
Winter squash.....several mo.

Scan for more information:

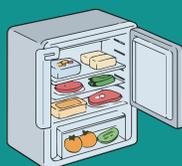


Or call 1-800-265-7293 ext. 4753

Fridge

(4°C, 40°F)

Unless otherwise specified, cover all foods.



Dairy Products and Eggs

(check best before dates)

Butter
 unopen.....8 wk.
 open.....3 wk.
Cheese
 cottage (open).....3 days
 firm.....several mo.
 processed
 unopen.....several mo.
 open.....3-4 wk.
Eggs.....3 wk.
Margarine
 unopen.....8 mo.
 open.....1 mo.
Open milk, cream, yogurt.....3 days

Fish and Shellfish

Live clams, crab, lobster, mussels.....12-24 hr.

Cleaned fish

raw.....3-4 days
cooked.....1-2 days
Live oysters.....24 hr.
Raw scallops, shrimp
 1-2 days
Cooked shellfish.....1-2 days

Fresh Fruit (Ripe)

Apples.....2 mo.
 purchased Feb. to Jul.....2 wk.
Apricots (uncovered).....1 wk.
Blueberries (uncovered).....1 wk.
Cherries.....3 days
Cranberries (uncovered).....1 wk.
Grapes.....5 days
Peaches (uncovered).....1 wk.
Pears.....1 wk.
Plums.....5 days
Raspberries (uncovered)
 2 days
Rhubarb.....1 wk.
Strawberries (uncovered)
 2 days

Fresh Vegetables

Asparagus.....5 days
Beans (green, wax).....5 days
Beets.....3-4 wk.
Broccoli.....3 days
Brussels sprouts.....1 wk.
Cabbage.....2 wk.
Carrots.....several wk.
Cauliflower.....10 days
Celery.....2 wk.
Corn.....use same day
Cucumbers.....1 wk.
Lettuce.....1 wk.
Mushrooms.....5 days
Green onions.....1 wk.
Parsnips.....several wks.
Peas.....use same day
Peppers.....1 wk.
Potatoes (new).....1 wk.
Spinach.....2 days
Sprouts.....2 days
Summer squash.....1 wk.

Meat and Poultry

Uncooked

Chops, steaks.....2-3 days
Cured or smoked meat
 6-7 days
Ground meat.....1-2 days
Poultry.....2-3 days
Roasts.....3-4 days
Variety meats, giblets
 1-2 days

Cooked

All meats and poultry
 3-4 days
Casseroles, meat pies, meat sauces.....2-3 days
Soups.....2-3 days

Miscellaneous Foods

Ground coffee.....2 mo.
Nuts.....4 mo.
Shortening.....12 mo.
Whole wheat flour.....3 mo.

Freezer

(-18°C, 0°F)

Use freezer wrapping or airtight containers. Freeze fresh food at its peak condition.



Dairy Products and Fats

Butter
 salted.....1 yr.
 unsalted.....3 mo.
Cheese - firm, processed
 3 mo.
Cream - table, whipping (separates when thawed).....1 mo.
Ice cream.....1 mo.
Margarine.....6 mo.
Milk.....6 wk.

Fish and Shellfish

Fish (fat species: lake trout, mackerel, salmon).....2 mo.
Fish (lean species: cod, haddock, pike, smelt).....6 mo.

Fruits and Vegetables

.....1 yr.

Meat, Poultry and Eggs

Uncooked

Beef roasts, steaks...10-12 mo.
Chicken, turkey
 cut up.....6 mo.
 whole.....1 yr.
Cured or smoked meat
 1-2 mo.
Duck, goose.....3 mo.
Eggs (whites, yolks).....4 mo.
Ground meat.....2-3 mo.
Lamb chops, roasts...8-12 mo.
Pork chops, roasts...8-12 mo.
Sausages, wieners.....2-3 mo.

Variety meats, giblets...3-4 mo.
Veal chops, roasts...8-12 mo.

Cooked

All meat.....2-3 mo.
All poultry.....1-3 mo.
Casseroles, meat pies...3 mo.

Miscellaneous Foods

Baked cakes, cookies.....4 mo.
Baked pastries, quick bread
 1 mo.
Bean, lentil, pea, casseroles
 3-6 mo.
Breads (baked or unbaked, yeast).....1 mo.
Herbs.....1 yr.
Sandwiches.....6 wk.

Soups (stocks, cream).....4 mo.
Unbaked pastry crust.....2 mo.
Unbaked fruit pie.....6 mo.

Know the Difference:

Best Before Date =
about **QUALITY**

Taste or freshness may decline, but food is generally **safe** if properly stored.

Expiry Date = about SAFETY

After this date, certain foods (e.g., infant formula, nutritional supplements, etc.) are **unsafe** to sell or consume.