

# What do food date labels really mean?

With one exception, it's not about food safety.

The dates on food labels are set by manufacturers to indicate when they recommend consuming the product for peak quality. With the exception of infant formula, products are still safe to eat after this date if they have been stored properly. Trust your senses! If food looks and smells okay, it probably is.



**Sell by:**  
Manufacturer's date to tell store how long to display item for sale.



**Best before/Best by/Use by:**  
Manufacturer's recommended date for optimal flavor/quality.

## Food Storage Tips



Immerse limp greens in ice water for 30 minutes or place them upright in a glass of water for a few hours to spruce them up.

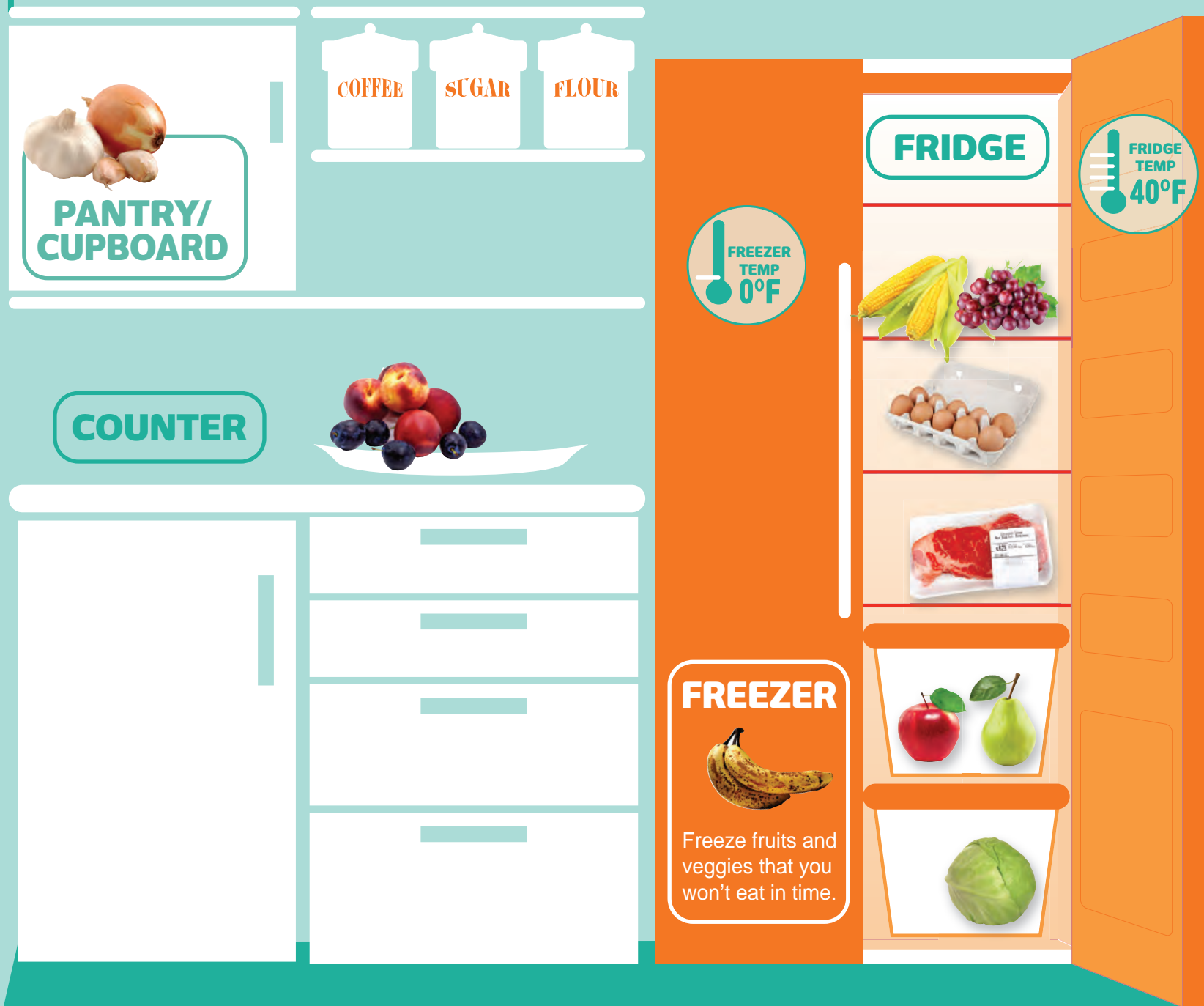


Certain fruits can cause other fruits to spoil faster if stored together. Keep ripe bananas, avocados, apples and tomatoes stored away from other fruit.



Always refrigerate cut or peeled produce and store them in clear containers so you can see what's inside.

# KEEP IT FRESH! Food Storage Guide Waste Less, Save More.



# FRUITS

Do not wash until ready to use

# VEGETABLES

Do not wash until ready to use

## Refrigerator: High-Humidity Crisper Drawer



**Tomatillos**  
Store in a paper bag



**Strawberries**  
Store in breathable bag or container

## Refrigerator: Low-Humidity Crisper Drawer



**Apples**  
Store in breathable bag or container, away from other fruits and vegetables



**Tropical Fruits (ripe)**  
kiwis, mangoes, papayas, pineapples



**Stone Fruits**  
peaches, plums, nectarines, apricots



**Citrus Fruits**  
lemons, limes, oranges, grapefruit



**Cherries**



**Pears (ripe)**

Store loose

Store loose

Store in breathable bag or container



**Green Beans, Wax Beans, Snap Peas, Fresh Peas**



**Celery**



**Cauliflower**



**Bok Choy**



**Greens, hearty or leafy**



**Cucumbers**



**Herbs (other than basil)**

Store with damp cloth in sealed container

Store with damp cloth in breathable bag or container



**Root Vegetables**  
beets, carrots, parsnips, radishes, turnips



**Zucchini and Summer Squash**



**Broccoli and Broccolini**



**Brussels Sprouts**



**Peppers**



**Green Onions, Scallions**

Store in breathable bag or container

# OTHER FOOD

## Refrigerator: Shelf



**Blueberries**  
Store in sealed container



**Raspberries, blackberries, and grapes**  
Store in breathable bag or container



**Melons (ripe)**



**Avocados (ripe)**

Store loose



**Asparagus**  
Trim ends, store upright in water with loose plastic bag over top



**Corn on the Cob**  
Keep in husks, store loose, if husked – store in airtight container



**Ginger**  
Store in sealed container



**Mushrooms**  
Store in paper bag



**Eggs**



**Butter**

Store in original packaging



**Cheese**  
Store in wax or parchment paper



**Meat, Fish and Poultry**  
Store in original or airtight packaging

## Counter



**Bananas**  
Store loose, away from other fruits and vegetables



**Avocados (not ripe)**  
Store in paper bag



**Tomatoes**  
Store out of direct sunlight



**Pears (not ripe)**



**Tropical Fruits (not ripe)**  
kiwis, mangoes, papayas, pineapples



**Melons (not ripe)**

Store loose

## Cupboard or Pantry



**Garlic and Shallots**



**Winter Squash**

Store loose



**Onions**  
Store loose or in mesh bag away from potatoes



**Potatoes**  
Store loose or in paper bag away from onions



**Beans and Black-eyed Peas**



**Rice**

Store in original or airtight container



**Bread**  
Store in paper bag



**Eggplant**  
Store loose



**Herb (Basil)**  
Trim ends, store upright in water with loose plastic bag over top



**TOO GOOD TO WASTE**



Department of Natural Resources and Parks  
Solid Waste Division

Waste Prevention

Resource Recovery

Waste Disposal