

FOODRESCUE.CA

FOOD DONATION & CONSUMPTION timetable

Keeping everyone safe is paramount to all of us involved in rescuing food. Very few foods have an expiry date. Most foods display a best before date which means that food is still edible after the date has passed. This guide helps to clarify when food can be donated and consumed past a best before date. Always use your senses to evaluate food quality.

BB = Best Before Date

FOOD CATEGORY	ITEMS	DONATE BY	CONSUME BY
 Produce	Perishable fresh fruits and vegetables	Still fit for human consumption	No visible rot, mold, or bio-degrading smell
	Shelf stable canned fruits and vegetables, pickles, sauces, or pastes	6 months past BB	1 year past BB
 Dairy	Perishable milk (including dairy alternatives), butter, yogurt, cheese, eggs, ice cream, sour cream	On or before BB	2 weeks past BB IF FROZEN 2-3 months past BB
	Shelf stable evaporated, powdered, or milk alternatives	On or before BB	1 year past BB
	Shelf stable baby formula	1 month prior to expiry date	Expiry date
 Protein	Raw meat and fish	Must be FROZEN on or before BB date to extend shelf life and for safer food rescue transport Sushi cannot be rescued	WHEN FROZEN: Beef, lamb, pork, whole poultry: 1 year past BB Poultry pieces: 6 months past BB Ground meat: 2-3 months past BB Fish: 2-6 months past BB
	Cooked luncheon meats	On or before BB	1 week past BB
	Shelf stable canned meat, fish, beans, chickpeas, nuts, nut butter, peanut butter, seeds, spam	6 months past BB	1 year past BB
 Bread / Grain	Perishable bread, buns, bagels, pitas, tortillas, flat bread, na'an, matzah	Still fit for human consumption	No visible rot, mold, or bio-degrading smell
	Dry, shelf stable cereal, crackers, flour, oats, pasta, rice, quinoa, meals or sides (I.e.: Kraft Dinner), energy bars	6 months past BB	1 year past BB
	Meal replacement or supplement bars	1 month prior to expiry date	Expiry date
 Baked Goods / Snacks / Desserts	Perishable cakes, cookies, pies, danishes, chocolate, pudding	Must be FROZEN on or before the BB to extend shelf life	72 hours past BB IF FROZEN 1 month past BB
	Shelf stable cookies, chips, popcorn, bagged snacks, snack cakes, granola bars (see Bread/Grain for other bar types)	6 months past BB	1 year past BB
 Prepared	Perishable single or mixed food that is pre-cooked or ready-to-eat; deli salads, pizza, sandwiches, re-heatable meals	MUST NOT have been 'plated', exposed to public touch, or temperature-abused	72 hours after rescue IF FROZEN 2-6 months past BB
	Frozen dinners, microwavable meals	3 months past BB	1 year past BB
	Shelf stable canned soups, stews, meals	6 months past BB	1 year past BB
	Shelf stable baby food	1 month prior to BB	1 year past BB
 Condiments	Frozen sauces, gravies	3 months past BB	IF FROZEN 3 months past BB
	Shelf stable mustard, relish, ketchup, jam, margarine, mayonnaise, oil, salad dressing, vinegars, spices, sauces, toppings	6 months past BB	1 year past BB
 Beverages	Juice, water, coconut water	30 days past BB	3-6 months past BB
	Supplemental beverages (i.e.: Ensure)	21 days prior to expiry date	Expiry date
	Other drinks; coffee, tea, sport or energy drinks, crystals	30 days past BB	3-6 months past BB

Sources: Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) and Toronto Public Health