



Why Date Marking Matters

Harmful bacteria, like Listeria, can grow in food when stored at cold temperatures for too long. Over time, these bacteria can reach unsafe levels and cause illness. To reduce this risk, food prepared in an establishment or in an opened/unsealed commercial package must be served, sold, frozen, or discarded within seven days.

When in doubt, reach out to the health inspector with questions!

Here are some steps for effective date marking:

1



FOOD

First determine if the food needs date marking. Refer to the list on the reverse side to help. Date marking is required once food is opened or prepared and will be stored for more than 24 hours.

2



DATE MARKING

Label food with either the date it was prepared or opened or the date it needs to be used by. The use by date is 7 days from the date opened or prepared. Some facilities choose to write both dates, whichever method you select needs to be consistent. You can write the date directly on the container, plastic wrap, or use a sticker.

3



USE OR FREEZE

All food must be consumed, frozen, or thrown away within 7 days, with the prepared or opened date counting as day 1. If food is frozen, the 7-day count pauses until the food is removed from the freezer to be used. At that point, the 7-day count resumes where it left off. For example, if you freeze food on day 3, when the food is removed from the freezer for use it must be used or discarded within 4 days. You can record this information by writing on the container, plastic wrap, or using a sticker.

4



DISCARD

Discard any food that has not been used or frozen by the use by date on the food.

Contact us:

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Main Building:
1952 9th Ave.
Longview, WA



Date marking is **required** for these refrigerated foods if stored for more than 24 hours after opening or preparation.

Pasteurized Milk (such as animal milks, half/half, nut milks, and soy milk)

Cold deli salads made at facility (such as garden/lettuce, egg, tuna, chicken, potato, pasta)

Eggs (hard boiled, pasteurized liquid)

Deli meats, including hot dogs

Soft or semi-soft cheeses (such as feta, brie, mozzarella, cream cheese, cottage cheese)

Cut produce (such as melons, lettuce, cabbage, tomatoes)

House-made dressings

Cooked & cooled foods (such as rice, beans, soups, meats)

Day 1 = Day item is prepared or opened

Day 7 = Day item needs to be used, frozen, or discarded



Date marking is **not required** for these foods.

Cereal, crackers, and other non TCS foods that do not need to be refrigerated

TCS foods in the sealed, commercial package

Cultured dairy (such as yogurt, sour cream, buttermilk)

Hard cheeses (such as cheddar, gouda, colby, swiss, provolone, parmesan)

Low moisture semi-soft cheeses (such as asiago, blue, gouda, havarti, monterey, provolone)

Commercially processed and packaged deli salads (such as garden/lettuce, egg, tuna, chicken, potato, pasta)

Foods that will be cooked before eating (eggs, raw meats)

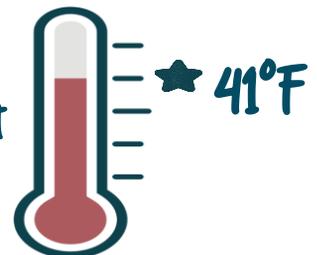
Shellstock (such as in-shell oysters, clams, mussels)

Shelf-stable, fermented, and salt-cured meats (such as pepperoni, dry salami, prosciutto)

Condiments that do not require refrigeration (such as ketchup and mustard)

Foods that will be consumed within 24 hours of preparation or opening

Always store refrigerated foods at 41°F or below!



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