



DO NOT PLACE ANYTHING IN THIS COOLER WITHOUT A DATE MARK



DATE MARKING FACTS

Why Date Marking Is Important

It is a means of controlling the growth of *Listeria monocytogenes*, a bacteria that can grow at cold temperatures. Date marking ensures that foods are discarded before these bacteria can cause foodborne illness. Listeria is most harmful to children and the elderly and may cause miscarriage in pregnant women.

DATE MARKED
FOOD CAN BE
KEPT AT 41°F OR
BELOW FOR UP
TO 7 DAYS

WHICH FOODS MUST BE DATE MARKED?

- Open TCS Food
 - Dairy products
 - Cooked vegetables
 - Cooked meats
 - Cooked pasta and rice
 - Cut leafy greens
 - Cut tomatoes
 - Cut melons
- Sauces made or mixed on site
- Refrigerated food removed from original containers
- Food items made on site and kept for longer than 24 hours

FAQ

What if the food appears spoiled before its expiration date?

Spoiled product should never be served/sold - discard the product or return to purveyor for credit.

What if foods with different date marks are combined?

Use the date of the *oldest* ingredient as the reference date.

What if the date marked items are frozen?

Freezing foods *stops* the date mark clock but does not reset it. If the food is thawed, it must be consumed or discarded within 24 hours or marked with a new use-by date. The new use-by date should include the total number of days the food was refrigerated before and after being frozen.

How do I mark the containers?

Mark the container with a start date (preparation or open date) **or** an expiration date. Day dots may be used in place of written dates. Whichever method is used must be consistent and used by all employees.

How long can date marked food be kept?

Date marked food must be used or discarded within **7 days (6 days after the day the food was prepared or opened)**.

Example: Coleslaw made on April 15 should be used by or discarded after April 21.