

Keeping Food Safe

Food safety starts when you buy foods and continues during storage, and preparation.

- When in doubt, throw it out!! Food may look and smell ok, but contain bacteria that may make you ill.



- **BEST BEFORE dates:** Check BEST BEFORE dates on packages. Buy food items with the longest date away from the day you are doing your shopping.

For example: If you are shopping on Nov 6th, and the BEST BEFORE dates on a package is Nov 14th and on another is Nov 30th, choose the package with the Nov 30th BEST BEFORE date.

- **Storage times:**

	At what temperature?	For how long?
Dry goods (cans, pasta,)	room temperature	up to 2 years
Refrigerator	32 to 40° F (0° to 4° C)	1-7 days
Freezer	below 0° F (-18° C)	1-6 months

- Food in the freezer needs to be wrapped and labeled with the date and what is inside.
- Do not buy cans that are dented or leaking. They may contain bacteria that make you sick.



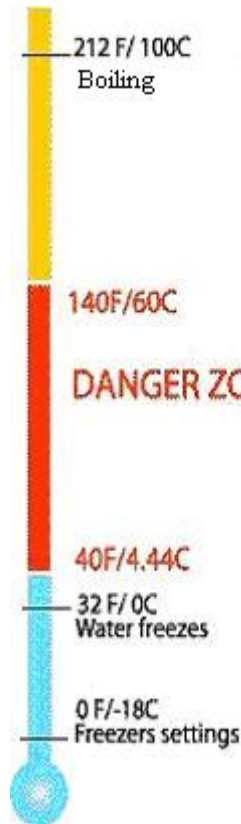
Handling Fresh Fruits and Vegetables

- Check that produce you buy is not bruised, moldy, or damaged.
- Check that packaged salads and pre-cut fruit are refrigerated at the store.
- Clean hands with warm water and soap for 30 seconds before washing fruit.
- Wash all fruits and vegetables before peeling, cutting or eating. Wash under cool running water and rub with your hands. Firm vegetables like potatoes and cantaloupe need to be scrubbed with a brush.
- When you shop or when you store your food, do not put fresh fruit and vegetables next to cleaners or raw meat.



DANGER ZONE

Do not store food between 40° to 140° F (4° to 60° C)



Foods must be stored at the right temperature to stay safe.

- The DANGER ZONE is where bacteria can grow very fast in foods. This can make you sick.
 1. Keep HOT foods HOT - store at a temperature higher than 140° F (60° C).
 2. Keep COLD foods COLD - store at a temperature less than 40° F (4° C).
 - Food should not be in the DANGER ZONE longer than 2 hours.
 - Use a thermometer to check temperatures.
 - When packing a picnic or lunch use ice or ice packs to keep food cold.
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- Never defrost frozen food at room temperature. Thaw food in the refrigerator, or use a microwave if you will be cooking the food right away.
 - Divide large amounts of leftovers into small containers for quicker cooling in the fridge.
 - Cool a large pot of soup in a clean sink filled with ice water

Safe Handling of Meats



**SEPARATE:
Keep raw meats away from
cooked foods.**



- Keep raw meat and fish away from ready to eat foods in the shopping cart and at home in the refrigerator.
- Store raw meat on a plate to catch leaks. The best place in the fridge is the bottom shelf.
- Use different colored cutting boards - one color for raw meat and fish and one color for fresh fruit, vegetables and bread etc.
- Throw away old worn cutting boards.
- Sauce that is left over after you have marinated raw meat should always be boiled before using.
- Do not place cooked food back on the same plate or cutting board that had raw food. Wash the plate or cutting board first.
- Always wash cutting boards, knives, and plates with hot soapy water after they touch raw meat.



Wash Your Hands Often

- Wash your hands before handling food.
- Wash your hands after coughing or sneezing.
- Wash your hands after touching raw meat, fish, or eggs.
- Wash your hands after going to the washroom.

Some useful places to find out more information:

- **Food Safety Info Line**
1-800-892-8333 Mon—Fri 8am till 4pm (Pacific Time)
www.foodsafetyline.org
- **Canadian Partnership for Consumer Food Safety Education**
www.canfightbac.org