



# FOOD SAFETY FACT SHEET

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## Date Marking

The growth of pathogenic bacteria to dangerous levels can result when potentially hazardous foods are held at refrigerated temperatures for extended periods. To monitor and limit refrigeration time, refrigerated ready-to-eat, potentially hazardous food must be date marked to ensure that the food is either consumed or discarded within 7 days.



Food must be datemarked if it is:

- Prepared on-site or commercially processed, and
- Refrigerated, and
- Potentially hazardous, and
- Ready-to-eat, and
- Held for more than 24 hours

Mark the food with the date by which it must be consumed or discarded.

Allow 7 days if held at 41° F or below. The day the food was prepared, or the day commercial processed food was opened, counts as day one.

When food is removed from the freezer, mark it with a consume-by date that is 7 days minus the length of time food was refrigerated before it was frozen.