

What do food date labels really mean?

With one exception, it's not about food safety.

The dates on food labels are set by manufacturers to indicate when they recommend consuming the product for peak quality. With the exception of infant formula, products may still be safe to eat after this date if they have been stored properly.



Sell by:
Manufacturer's date to tell store how long to display item for sale.



Best before/Best by/Use by:
Manufacturer's recommended date for optimal flavor/quality.

Food Storage Tips



Immerse limp greens in ice water for 30 minutes or place them upright in a glass of water for a few hours to spruce them up.



Certain fruits can cause other fruits to spoil faster. Keep bananas, avocados, apples and tomatoes stored away from other fruit.

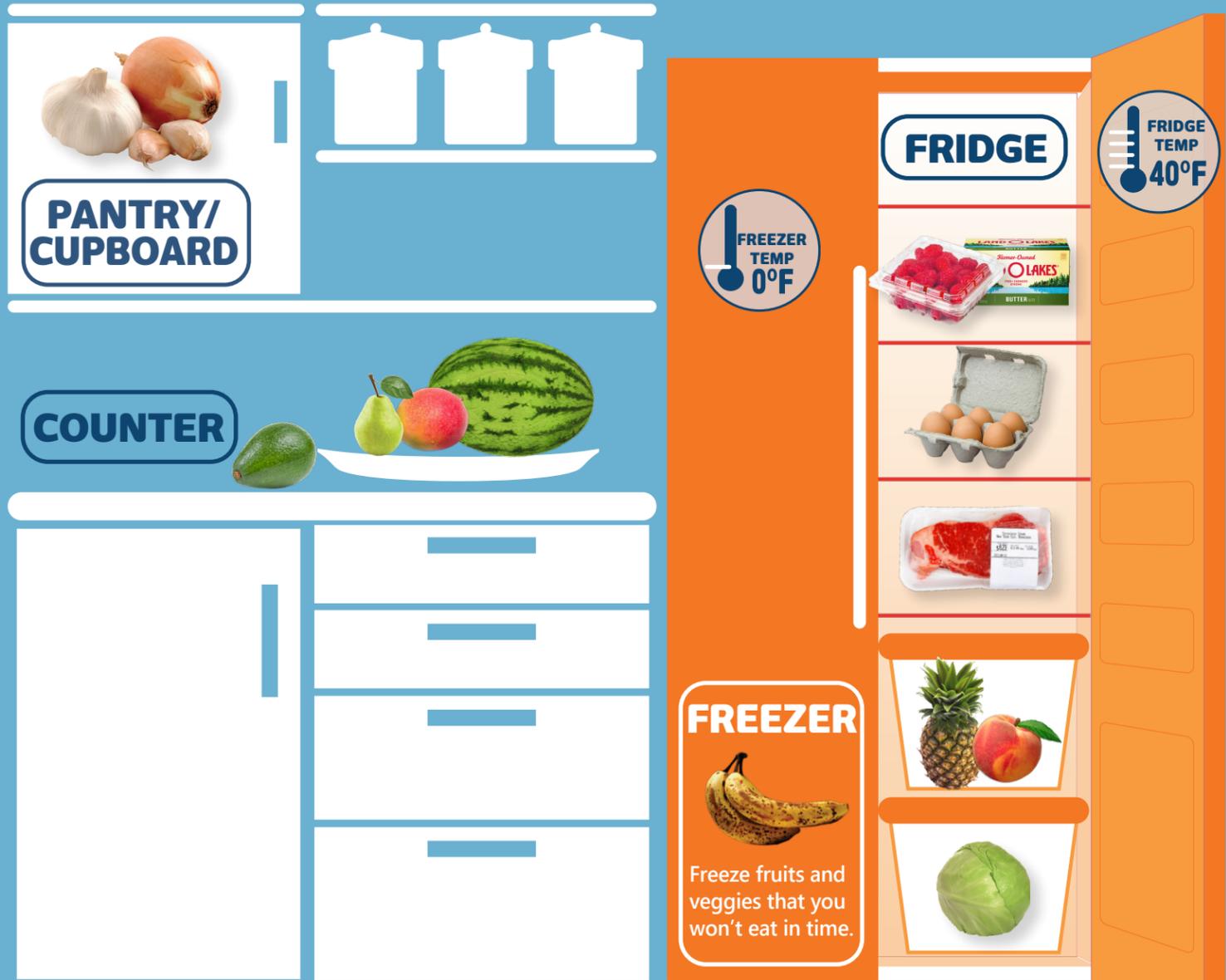


Always refrigerate cut or peeled produce and store them in clear containers so you can see what's inside.

Brochure developed by King County Solid Waste Division

KEEP IT FRESH!

Food Storage Guide



FRUITS

Do not wash until ready to use

Refrigerator: High-Humidity Crisper Drawer



Tomatillos
Store in a paper bag



Strawberries
Store in breathable bag or container

Refrigerator: Low-Humidity Crisper Drawer



Apples
Store in breathable bag or container, away from other fruits and vegetables



Tropical Fruits (ripe)
kiwis, mangoes, papayas, pineapples



Cherries



Stone Fruits
peaches, plums, nectarines, apricots



Pears (ripe)



Citrus Fruits
lemons, limes, oranges, grapefruit

Store loose

Refrigerator: Shelf



Blueberries
Store in sealed container



Raspberries, blackberries, and grapes
Store in breathable bag or container



Melons (ripe)



Avocados (ripe)

Store loose

Counter



Bananas
Store loose, away from other fruits and vegetables



Avocados (not ripe)



Tomatoes
Store out of direct sunlight



Pears (not ripe)



Tropical Fruits (not ripe)
kiwis, mangoes, papayas, pineapples



Melons (not ripe)

Store loose

VEGETABLES

Do not wash until ready to use

Store in breathable bag or container



Green Beans, Wax Beans, Snap Peas, Fresh Peas



Celery



Cauliflower



Root Vegetables
beets, carrots, parsnips, radishes, turnips



Zucchini and Summer Squash



Broccoli and Brocolini



Brussels Sprouts



Peppers



Green Onions, Scallions

Store in breathable bag or container



Bok Choy



Greens, hearty or leafy

Store with damp cloth in sealed container



Cucumbers



Herbs (other than basil)

Store with damp cloth in breathable bag or container



Cabbage
Store loose



Okra
Store in a paper bag



Artichoke
Store in sealed container

OTHER FOOD



Asparagus
Trim ends, store upright in water with loose plastic bag over top



Corn on the Cob
Keep in husks, store loose, if husked – store in airtight container



Ginger
Store in sealed container



Mushrooms
Store in paper bag



Eggs

Store in original packaging



Butter



Cheese
Store in wax or parchment paper



Fish, meat and Poultry
Store in original or airtight packaging

Cupboard or Pantry



Garlic and Shallots



Winter Squash

Store loose



Onions
Store loose or in mesh bag away from potatoes



Potatoes
Store loose or in paper bag away from onions



Beans and Black-eyed Peas



Rice

Store in original or airtight container



Bread
Store in paper bag



Eggplant
Store loose



Herb (Basil)
Trim ends, store upright in water with loose plastic bag over top



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