Commodity Foods Distribution Program

JUNE 2022









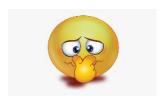
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Does this smell funny to you?

Don't assume that the expiration dates on packaged food means that the food isn't good after that date.

Let's break it down by terms. Most of the time, those dates are not straight up expiration dates.

Sell-By Dates

These dates can be helpful to us, but really, they're there so stores know what old stock to remove from shelves. Dairy products, fresh & deli meats, eggs, and packaged fresh produce are the kinds of foods you'll find with sell-by dates. Foods are totally fine to eat after this date, but for how long will vary. Dairy products are generally good for up to a week after the sell-by date, whereas eggs are safe for 3–5 weeks.

Best-If-Used-By (or Use-By) Dates

These dates ARE for consumers like us, but they're not cut-off dates. Food past its use-by/best-if-used-by date hasn't necessarily gone bad or spoiled. That date represents the last date the company can vouch for the best quality and flavor. It might taste fine beyond that, it might not. As long as the storage conditions are appropriate, these products might be good for months or years. BUT you have to be smart about it! If the packaging is compromised, like a dented or bulging can, skip it. And if you open a package and it just doesn't smell right, you know what to do!

Expiration Dates

Fun fact: The only federally required and regulated food dating is for baby formula, since the nutrients lose their potency over time. Other foods you might see with actual expiration dates are baking mixes, baking powders, and yeasts—that's because after the listed date, they might not function and be as effective. Jams & jellies sometimes list expiration dates, since they can lose their texture over time. Beyond that, you'll mostly find expiration dates on vitamins & medications!

Pack Dates

See a date listed but it doesn't have any "use by" directions or indicators? You're probably looking at a pack date. This is another one used by stores to keep track of and rotate their inventory. You'll see them on snacks like cookies & crackers, spices, some canned goods, etc. It can be useful to you at home in a "HOW long has this can of beans been in my pantry?" way, but that's about it.



COWBOY SKILLET - Serves 6

1# ground beef; ½ onion, chopped; 2) red bell peppers (cut into 2" pieces)

1 (16oz) can black beans, drained & rinsed

11/2 tsp. ea. chili powder, cumin & garlic powder; 12 tsp. ea. oregano, paprika & pepper

½ c. flour; ½ c. cornmeal; 2T sugar; 1T baking powder; 2 T oil; 1 egg; 1/3 c. milk

CRUMBLE hamburger in skillet and BROWN. DRAIN grease and ADD onions. COOK 3-5 minutes. ADD peppers, beans, and seasonings. SPREAD in a cast iron skillet or casserole dish.

In a separate bowl MIX together dry ingredients. ADD remaining ingredients & MIX well. SPOON over meat & SPREAD evenly. BAKE @ 350° for 20 minutes.

Per serving: 391 calories; 21 grams protein; 46 grams carbohydrates; 14 grams fat