

Food Redistribution



Guidance for Charities &
Community Groups

Application

What is a food business?

A food business includes any undertaking, whether for profit or not and whether public or private, carrying out any of the activities related to any stage of production, processing and distribution of food.

Any operation handling food on a regular basis with a degree of organisation would be considered a food business and must be registered with the local Environmental Health Department and comply with the relevant food law.

Food placed on the market (effectively offered for supply or sale) must be safe; placing on the market means the holding of food or feed for the purposes of sale, including offering for sale or any other form of transfer, whether free of charge or not, and the sale, distribution and other forms of transfer themselves.

Definitions

Shelf Life

The period of time during which a food will remain safe and/or of a suitable quality for consumption while the packaging is intact and it is stored as instructed.

Open Life

The period of time during which a food will remain safe and/or of a suitable quality for consumption while the packaging is intact and it is stored as instructed.

Use By

The term 'Use By' should only be applied on foods which, from a microbiological point of view, are highly perishable and are therefore likely, after a short period, to constitute an immediate danger to human health.

Best Before

The term 'Best Before' indicates the period for which a food can reasonably be expected to retain its optimal condition (e.g. bread will not be stale) and so relates to the quality of the food

Guidance on how to use products

Observe the durability code



Use By



Best Before

Use-By Foods

Foods must be eaten/used before the expiry of the Use-by date, or the food frozen or further processed, i.e. if the expiry date of the food is 30th March 2018 the food must have been eaten/used or placed in the freezer before midnight 12:00am on the day of expiry (see section on Further Processing).

Unless indicated that the product is suitable for freezing it must be eaten (for ready to eat products) or cooked and eaten before the expiry of the Use-By date.

Best Before

Food quality will begin to deteriorate after this date, therefore products should be eaten/used as soon as possible and products should be checked for any damage and or deterioration before use.

Observe Storage and Handling Instructions



Keep in fridge



Store in a cool dry place

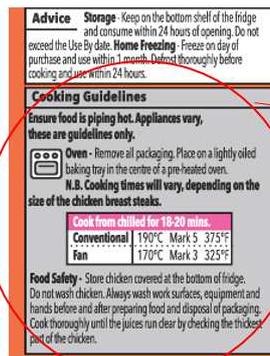
Chilled food must be handled and transport under appropriate conditions (kept in insulated storage boxes or transported in refrigerated vehicles) and be placed into refrigerated storage conditions as quick as possible before use.

Ready to eat food (such as cooked meats, sandwiches, and dairy products) must be kept separate from raw foods such as meat and poultry.

Where foods require cooking prior to eating cooking instructions will be given on pack with possible indication on the front of pack.



Cooking Indication



Cooking Instructions

Further Processing

Freezing

Where a product can be frozen, this will be indicated on pack, for Use-by products ensure product freezing commences as quick as possible after collection and before the expiry of the Use-by date. Where freezing instructions and thawing instructions are included on pack these should must be followed.

It is important to ensure product is frozen as soon as possible as this dictates how long the food can be left thawed before it should be used.



Should you wish to keep the food for use at a later stage, you need to be able to demonstrate to an Environmental Health Officer on questioning, that the product has been frozen before the expiry of Use by date. It is up to you how to demonstrate this to the Environmental Health Officer, however it is recommended that the date of Freezing is recorded on the product by attaching a label to the packaging and that it is used within one month.

Foods should be thawed in the refrigerator once you are ready to use them. Once thawed products should be used as soon as possible. However, if a product was frozen within two hours of its use-by expiry then you should ensure the product is eaten or used within two hours of defrosting, or if frozen within one hour of its expiry then product should be eaten or used within one hour of defrosting.



Suitable for freezing



Freezing/Defrost Instructions

For Best Before products, freezing should be commenced as soon as possible to minimise further deterioration of quality and it is recommended food is eaten within one month unless otherwise stated.

Product Recalls

Occasionally we may need to alert customers to an issue with a product we may have sold (or distributed further) by issuing point of sales notices such as the one below in our stores.

PRODUCT RECALL

Stores display notice until -03 April-

**-Co-op Breaded Cod Fillets 270g -
-02 April-**

-Some packs may contain battered fillets instead
(allergen risk of mustard & milk)-

- Customers who have bought this product are requested not to
consume the product and should return to store for a full refund.

We apologise for any inconvenience caused.

As we may have supplied affected product to you we will send you a copy of all such notices we issue so that you can check if you have received this product and affected batch. This will be sent to your nominated email address you have provided so please ensure that it is checked regularly.

If on checking you do have the product and/or affected batch, you are requested to dispose of this immediately or any products this may have been used to make. Please do not return to our stores.

For your own traceability you may wish to make a note of all products you receive to aid identification of any affected products and where they may have been stored/used.

Things to consider

- Appropriate collection and segregation equipment to minimise cross contamination and maintain appropriate storage temperature.
- Adequate storage facilities for all products (ambient, chilled and frozen (including when requiring to then thaw products)).
- Process to identify those products which need to be eaten before expiry of Use-by date and those that can be frozen.
- Ensuring products when frozen are placed into the freezer as soon as possible.
- Identification of date/time of freezing for products to be frozen and when products need to be consumed by.
- Identification of time products need to be consumed by once defrosted.
- System for identification of products you have received and where these are stored/have been used.

- This information is provided only as Guidance. You should contact your local Environmental Health Department for specific guidance to your food business.
- Charities and community groups who have signed up to the scheme are reminded of the Terms and Conditions of being a member of such. Food which has been donated will be suitable for consumption at the point of collection. Once food has been collected, it is up to the individual charity to ensure the food is then treated appropriately and any requirements of food legislation are met.

Further guidance is available from

WRAP

http://www.wrap.org.uk/food-date-labelling?utm_source=PR&utm_medium=media-wrap&utm_campaign=date-labelling