

Food and Kitchen Safety Notes for Resources

Food Storage

It is important that foods are stored correctly to keep them safe to eat. This table tells you where different foods should be stored.

| Food | Where to store it | What to watch out for |
|--|---|---|
| Dry foods: rice, cereal, pasta, flour, dried lentils and beans | Cool, dry place (eg. the pantry) | Packages need to be resealed or put product into air-tight container. Otherwise, pests may get in, or moisture from the air coming into contact with the product helps bacteria to grow. |
| Milk, cheese, butter, yoghurt | Fridge | Make sure they are covered or sealed. |
| Meat, fish, poultry | Fridge or freezer | Meat should be stored towards the bottom of the fridge to stop any of its juices running onto other foods. Cover all food in the fridge. When freezing meat, it is a good idea to take it out of store packaging and re-wrap it in smaller quantities. Then label and date it so you know what it is and how old it is. Meat should be thawed in the fridge or microwave. |
| Eggs | fridge | |
| Cooked rice, pasta, lentils or beans, leftovers | Fridge | Put them in the fridge as soon as they stop steaming. Make sure they're covered! |
| Fruit and vegetables | Fridge: ripe or cut fruits and vegetables Room temperature (but out of sunlight): unripe fruit and vegetables, bananas, onions and potatoes. | Fruit and vegetables will ripen at room temperature, so if you buy them a bit unripe it is good to store them in a fruit bowl, but once they are ripe storing them in the fridge will keep them nice to eat for the next few days. Some fruits and vegetables do not store well in the fridge at all, and should be stored in a cool, dry place, out of sunlight. These include potatoes, onions and bananas. Cut fruit and vegetables are high-risk foods, and should be stored in the fridge. |

Freezing all foods makes them last longer, but after a while they mightn't be so nice to eat due to some texture or taste changes. This table is a guide to how long meat products can be frozen and still taste good:

| Product | Approximate frozen storage life |
|--------------------------|--|
| Beef/lamb roasts | 4-6 months |
| Ground beef mince | 2-3 months |
| Sausages | 1-2 months |
| Beef Steaks | 3-4 months |
| Beef/Lamb Casserole | 2-3 months |
| Lamb chops | 2-3 months |
| Offal | 1 month |
| Whole chicken | 4-6 months |
| Chicken portions | 3 months |
| Lean fish (eg. Whiting) | 4 months |
| Oily fish (eg. Mackerel) | 3 months |

(Source: Meat and Livestock Australia Food Safety Campaign Group: Food Safety in the Home)