

Date Type	Description	Guidelines	Affects Food Safety?	Quality Affected but Edible
Sell by	Usually used for fresh/perishable foods. This is the date by which the grocery store must sell the product or remove it from the shelves. The product can still be eaten for days or weeks past this date (depending on the product). This date does NOT mean the product is unsafe to eat at that date.	The sell-by date reflects the "peak freshness" of the product. Avoid buying after this date. Sometimes meat are sold ½ price the day after the "sell by date" and most are fine for a couple days.	NO	YES
Best Used Or Best Buy	A rather arbitrary date to indicate when the product is as its very best. Stores may continue to sell the product beyond this date.	The product is at its best when used by this date but you can continue to use the product past the date.	NO	YES
Use By	Very similar to the best used or best buy dates. This date is provided by the manufacture to indicate the food should be used by this date for best quality.	The last date the producer will accept responsibility for freshness.	NO	YES
Guaranteed Fresh	Normally refers to baked /bakery goods	Peak freshness date.	NO	YES
Pack Date	These dates are typically encoded and for the reference of the manufacturer. This date allows the producer the ability to track when a food was packed. This is frequently seen on canned goods.	The date the product was packed/canned. It is not an expiration date.	NO	YES
Expiration Date	This type pf date is usually on fresh foods like meats and some dairy products. The product should be consumed by this date. Exception: eggs, are good for up to 5 weeks after that date.	The date by which the food should be used. In some cases the food can still be consumed. Don't take chances if feeding small children or anyone with a compromised immune system.	YES	BE CAUTIOUS