

Food Safety Conversation No5: Food Labelling & Shelf Life

Key Learning

What You Need To Know

It is a legal requirement to ensure food is properly labelled with certain information to help you and the customer know what is in the food and how long it is safe to use or consume the food before it must be discarded

- Use 'By' dates relate to food safety and food must not be cooked, sold, frozen, consumed or used in any way past this date. It is illegal to sell any food that has passed its 'Use By' date.
- 'Best Before' dates relate to food quality and food is safe to eat after this date, depending upon the taste, texture and general quality of foods. Products with a 'Best Before' date may be used beyond this date, unless client site rules require 'Best Before' dates to be stringently observed.
- Do not use ANY out of date foodstuffs past their 'Use By' date.
- Sandwiches/wraps etc - Apply a shelf life of two days (day of production +1).
- Chilled / Ready To Eat food - Wrap or store in sealed containers and date code with a shelf life of 72 hours.
- Foods prepared and cooked in the unit then chilled and frozen have a food label with up to 6 months shelf life (3 months in Ireland).
- Food Delivery Checks must include a check of product labels to ensure they have sufficient shelf life to fit in with your menu schedule.
- All ready to eat foods with 'Use By' dates are checked daily at end of service and logged on the Closing HSE Checklist.
- Whenever transferring shelf life dates or other product information from the outer packaging or the food manufacturer's label, only the approved Compass food storage labels must be used



Product: _____

	DATE	TIME	DISCARD ON DATE	TIME	INITIALS
DECANTED/ OPENED					
REFRIGERATED					
FROZEN					
DEFROSTED					

This item contains the following allergens

Peanuts Fish Soya Mustard
 Nuts Eggs Sesame Seeds Lupin
 Crustaceans (Shellfish) Milk Celery Sulphur
 Molluscs (Shellfish) Cereals Containing Gluten

HACCP Stages

Colleague Validation

More Information

- Receipt
- Storage
- Preparation
- Cooling & Re-heating
- Food Service & Display
- Vending

1. Describe what a 'Use By' date is.
2. Describe what a Best Before date is.
3. What shelf life would you give in unit made sandwiches?
4. What shelf life would you give in unit made frozen food?

More information can be found within the **Good Hygiene Practice Guide No: 5 Food Labelling & Shelf Life** and the HSE website