



March 2018 Newsletter

Best-by, Use-by, Sell-by: What They Mean to You

Did you know that the USDA estimates that thirty-percent of food loss and waste is the result of confusion about the meaning of dates displayed on food labels? When seeing phrases like “*Best if Used By*,” “*Use-By/Before*,” or “*Sell-by*,” many families don’t clearly understand what the phrases mean, so foods are discarded unnecessarily.

If you’re among the many consumers who aren’t sure what these phrases mean, this edition of the BLT Newsletter is for you.

Best-by/Better if Used By

These phrases can be summarized as freshness dates. If your product is labeled this way, it indicates that the product will have the best flavor or quality during that dating period. In most cases, baked goods, cereals, snacks, frozen entrees, and some canned foods will have freshness dates. These phrases are not safety dates, so the food is safe to eat after the date. However, a product with a freshness date ending in October 2017 is probably going to taste stale and/or have an odd texture.

Use-By

Foods that can spoil like meat, yogurt and eggs will typically have use-by dates. A use-by date is the last date recommended for the

use of the product. However, if properly stored, most experts allow a one-week grace period after the passage of the use-by date. The exceptions to this grace period are infant formulas and eggs. Infant formula should be discarded immediately after the use-by date. Eggs stored in the refrigerator at 40° F or colder can usually be kept beyond the use-by date for about 30 days.

Sell-by

“Sell-by” dates tell stores how long to display products like poultry, seafood, dairy, and meats for sale. Most foods are safe to eat after the sell-by date, but they should be cooked within a day or two of home refrigeration or placed in the freezer for longer storage.

Using this information should help you to avoid throwing out foods that are still good.



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Local Events

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Recipe of the Month

(Source: adapted from the USDA Mixing Bowl)

Glazed Meatloaf (Makes: 4 servings)

Ingredients:

1 teaspoon of vegetable oil
 1 small onion (peeled and chopped)
 ½ green bell pepper (cored and diced)
 2 cloves of garlic (peeled and diced)
 1 teaspoon of dried thyme
 2 tablespoons of tomato paste
 ½ cup of water
 1 tablespoon of yellow mustard
 ½ teaspoon of salt
 ¼ teaspoon of black pepper
 1 pound of ground beef or turkey
 1 large egg
 ½ cup of rolled oats

For the glaze:

1 teaspoon of tomato paste
 1 teaspoon of yellow mustard

Directions:

1. Preheat the oven to 325° and lightly grease a baking sheet.
2. Put the skillet over medium heat and when it's hot, add the oil. Add the onion, bell pepper, garlic and thyme and cook for about 10 minutes or until golden.
3. Lower the heat and add the water and tomato paste. Cook for about 10 minutes until the onion is soft and most of the liquid has been absorbed. Set the mixture aside to allow cooling before adding the mustard, salt and pepper.
4. Add the ground beef, four tablespoons of rolled oats and the egg into a bowl and gently mix by hand.

5. Add the cooled onion mixture and gently mix until everything is thoroughly incorporated. Avoid over mixing.
6. Form the mixture into a loaf about 8 x 4 inches and place it on the prepared baking sheet.
7. To make the glaze, put the tomato paste and mustard in a small bowl and mix well. Rub the mixture on top of the meatloaf and sprinkle the top with the remaining two tablespoons of rolled oats.
8. Place the loaf in the oven and cook it for about one hour or until the loaf is deep brown and cooked throughout. Serve the meatloaf immediately or cover and refrigerate for up to two days.

Note:

- If you use ground turkey instead of beef, use an extra egg.
- This recipe can also be used to make burger patties.



228 Calories, 7g Fat, 31g Protein, 2g Saturated Fat, 12g Carbohydrates, 2g Dietary Fiber, 454 mg Sodium

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