

DATE-MARKING FOODS:

Refrigerated, ready to eat, time/temperature controlled for safety (TCS) foods:

❖ **Made in the facility and held longer than 24 hours:**

- Must be clearly marked with a “use by” date that is within 7 days of the date opened or prepared. The day that the food is prepared is counted as day 1.

❖ **Made by a food processing plant or manufacturer and held longer than 24 hours:**

- Must be marked with the time the original container is opened and the date marked by the facility may not exceed a manufacturer “use by” date. The day the original container is opened is counted as day 1.

WHICH ITEMS MUST CONTAIN A DATE MARK?

- Open TCS food (dairy products, cooked vegetables, cooked meat, cooked pasta and rice, cut melons, etc.)
- Refrigerated foods removed from the original containers
- TCS food items prepared in the facility and held for more than 24 hours



WHICH ITEMS DO NOT REQUIRE A DATE MARK?

- Commercially prepared deli salads (ham salad, chicken salad, macaroni salad, potato salad, etc.) Can only use manufacturer’s “use by” date as long as food remains in original container
- Cultured dairy products (yogurt, sour cream, buttermilk). Observe manufacturer’s “use by” date
- Certain low moisture hard and semi-soft cheeses
- Shelf stable dry fermented sausages (pepperoni, Genoa salami) and salt-cured products (prosciutto, Parma)

If the foods are frozen:

- ❖ Freezing ready to eat, TCS foods “stops the clock” on the number of days the food must be consumed or discarded, but it does not reset the maximum 7-day period.
- ❖ When the food is thawed, it must either be marked to be consumed within 24 hours or marked with the new use-by date.

**Any ready to eat foods or ingredients combined with additional ingredients or portions shall retain date marking of the earliest opened or first-prepared ingredient.*

**Food must be discarded if it exceeds the temperature or time specified, is unidentified or is expired.*