

## Keep Food Safe

### How safe is your food?

Unsafe food causes many diseases, ranging from diarrhoeal diseases to various forms of cancer. A safe food supply supports economy, trade and tourism, contributes to food and nutrition security, and stimulates sustainable development. Access to sufficient amounts of safe and nutritious food is key to sustaining life and promoting good health.<sup>1</sup>

### FIVE KEYS TO SAFER FOOD<sup>2,adapted</sup>

*Practice the World Health Organization's (WHO) **Five Keys to Safer Food** when handling and preparing food.*

#### **1. Keep clean**

- Wash your hands before handling food and often during food preparation
- Wash your hands after going to the toilet
- Wash and sanitize all surfaces and equipment used for food preparation
- Protect kitchen areas and food from insects, pests and other animals
- Separate raw meat, poultry and seafood from other foods
- Use separate equipment and utensils such as knives and cutting boards for handling raw foods
- Store food in containers to avoid contact between raw and prepared foods

#### **2. Separate raw and cooked food**

- When shopping, keep raw meat, poultry, fish and shellfish away from your basket or your grocery trolley and use separate bags for transportation.
- Separate raw meat, poultry and seafood from other foods
- Use separate equipment and utensils such as knives and cutting boards for handling raw foods
- Store food in containers to avoid contact between raw and prepared foods

#### **3. Cook thoroughly**

- Cook food thoroughly, especially meat, poultry, eggs and seafood
- Bring foods like soups and stews to boiling to make sure that they have reached 70°C. For meat and poultry, make sure that juices are clear, not pink. Ideally, use a thermometer
- Reheat cooked food thoroughly

#### **4. Keep food at safe temperatures**

- Do not leave cooked food at room temperature for more than 2 hours
- Refrigerate promptly all cooked and perishable food (preferably 5°C or below)
- Keep cooked food piping hot (more than 60°C) prior to serving
- Do not store food too long even in the refrigerator
- Do not thaw frozen food at room temperature

#### **5. Use safe water and raw materials**

- Use safe water or treat it to make it safe
- When there is any doubt about the safety of drinking water, boil or treat it before drinking
- Select fresh and wholesome foods
- Choose foods processed for safety, such as pasteurized milk
- Wash fruits and vegetables well in safe water, especially if eaten raw
- Read the food labels when buying and preparing food. Do not use food beyond its expiry date

### If in doubt, throw it out<sup>3</sup>

#### Safety and Storage

- Check food labels on how is best to store and prepare food
- Do not re-use containers that were initially used to store chemicals to store food
- In your kitchen, store chemical products in a safe place away from food

<sup>1</sup> Adapted. WHO (*World Health Organization*) Food Safety Toolkit. 2015.

<sup>2</sup> Adapted. Prevention of Foodborne Disease: The Five Keys to Safer Food. *World Health Organization*.

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.portlandgeneral.com/safety\\_and\\_outage/outage/power\\_out/food\\_storage\\_cooking.asp?bhcp=1](http://www.portlandgeneral.com/safety_and_outage/outage/power_out/food_storage_cooking.asp?bhcp=1)

## Reading Food Labels



"Best Before" or "Best Before End" means the date which signifies the end of the period under any specific storage conditions during which the product will remain fully marketable and will retain any specific qualities for which express claims have been made.

"Use by", "Best Consumed Before" or "Expiry Date" means the date which signifies the end of the period, after which the product probably will not have the quality attributes normally expected by the consumers and after which date the food should not be regarded as marketable.

The manufacturer determines the appropriate storage instruction relevant to the nature of the foodstuff, to ensure that any specific quality attributes are retained and preserved in the food.

## POWER OUT CHART<sup>4,5</sup>

Use the following charts as a guide to decide which foods are safe to eat when the power is restored.

### Refrigerator Foods

(Refrigerator, 5°C or below)<sup>6, 7</sup>

When to Save and When to Throw It Out	
FOOD	Held above 7°C for over 2 hours
<b>MEAT, POULTRY, SEAFOOD</b> Raw cooked, cured or leftovers	Discard
<b>CHEESE</b> Soft Cheeses, Processed Cheeses, Shredded Cheeses, Low-fat Cheeses(excluding hard cheeses e.g. Cheddar, Parmesan)	Discard
<b>DAIRY</b> Milk and milk products	Discard
<b>EGGS</b> Fresh eggs, hard-cooked in shell, egg dishes, egg products, Custards and puddings	Discard
<b>CASSEROLES, SOUPS, STEWS</b>	Discard
<b>FRUITS</b> Fresh fruits, cut	Discard
<b>SAUCES, SPREADS, JAMS</b> Opened mayonnaise, tartar sauce, horseradish	Discard if above 10°C for over 8 hours
Fish sauces (oyster sauce), Opened creamy-based dressings and spaghetti sauce	Discard
Refrigerator cookie dough, cooked pasta, rice, potatoes, pasta salads with mayonnaise or vinaigrette, Fresh pasta, Cheesecake	Discard
<b>PIES, PASTRY</b> Pastries, cream filled, Pies – custard, cheese filled, or chiffon; quiche	Discard
<b>VEGETABLES</b> Greens, pre-cut, pre-washed, packaged, Vegetables, cooked; tofu, Vegetable juice, opened, Baked potatoes, Commercial garlic in oil, Potato Salad	Discard

<sup>4</sup> Clemson Extension, Home and Garden Information Center. Food Safety in Power Outages. <http://hgic.clemson.edu/factsheets/HGIC3760.htm>

<sup>5</sup> USDA/FSIS (2006), Keeping Food Safe During and Emergency.

[http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Fact\\_Sheets/keeping\\_food\\_safe\\_during\\_an\\_emergency/](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Fact_Sheets/keeping_food_safe_during_an_emergency/)

<sup>6</sup> Andrew Etzinger, Demand Side Manager at Eskom: supplied information: compiled by Andrew Etzinger, Demand Side Manager at Eskom and sourced from Doctor Ingrid van Heerden, Health24's EnviroHealth expert.

<sup>7</sup> [http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Fact\\_Sheets/Keeping\\_Food\\_Safe\\_During\\_an\\_Emergency/index.asp](http://www.fsis.usda.gov/Fact_Sheets/Keeping_Food_Safe_During_an_Emergency/index.asp)

**Frozen Food**

(The freezer, -17°C or lower)

When to Save and When To Throw It Out		
FOOD	Still contains ice crystals and feels as cold as if refrigerated	Thawed. Held above 7°C for over 2 hours
<b>MEAT, POULTRY, SEAFOOD</b> Beef, veal, lamb, pork, and ground meats, Poultry and ground poultry, Variety meats (liver, kidney, heart, chitterlings), Casseroles, stews, soups	Refreeze	Discard
Fish, shellfish, breaded seafood products	Refreeze. However, there will be some texture and flavour loss.	Discard
<b>DAIRY</b> Milk, Cheese (soft and semi-soft)	Refreeze. May lose some texture.	Discard
Eggs (out of shell) and egg products	Refreeze	Discard
Ice cream, frozen yogurt	Discard	Discard
<b>CHEESES</b> Hard cheeses	Refreeze	Refreeze
Shredded cheeses, Casseroles containing milk, cream, eggs, soft cheeses, Cheesecake	Refreeze	Discard
<b>BREADS, PASTRIES</b> Breads, rolls, muffins, cakes (without custard fillings)	Refreeze	Refreeze
Cakes, pies, pastries with custard or cheese filling	Refreeze	Discard
<b>OTHER</b> Casseroles – pasta, rice based	Refreeze	Discard
Frozen meal, entree, specialty items (pizza, sausage and biscuit, meat pie, convenience foods) or leftovers	Refreeze	Discard

**Eating brings us together. Celebrate with safe, healthy, nutritious food.**