

BEST BEFORE VS. EXPIRY DATES

You can often identify if a food item is unsafe to eat by using your senses to examine the appearance, smell, and feel. However, when you are unsure it is best to follow the rule: when in doubt, throw it out.

EXPIRY VS. BEST BEFORE

BEST BEFORE DATE (BBD)

The Greater Vancouver Food Bank (GVFB) follows Food Banks Canada's guidelines for BBD and food distribution. **Expired food is never distributed. Foods past their BBD are safe to eat.** BBD refers to conditions including: freshness, taste, colour and nutritional value. The GVFB will distribute goods up until 18 months after its best before date, depending on the food. Please see our Food Distribution Guidelines on our website for full details: <https://foodbank.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/2020-GVFB-Food-Distribution-Guidelines.pdf>

EXPIRY

Foods past their expiry date are **unsafe to eat**. An expiry date is required on certain foods including formulated liquid diets, meal replacements, nutritional supplements, and infant formula. **The GVFB will not distribute any items after their expiry date.**

FOOD SAFETY GUIDELINES



DRY GOODS

- Signs of a rip or tear in inner packaging
- Visible water or moisture damage
- Display of chewing or pest infestation



CANNED GOODS

- Can bulging, rusted, or corroded
- Signs of leaking or broken seal
- Contents cloudy, mushy, or bubbling



FRESH PRODUCE

- Appearance is soft or moldy
- Badly bruised or coloring is off
- Rancid or pungent odor



DAIRY

- Swollen or damaged packaging
- Bad odor or strange consistency

READING NUTRITIONAL LABELS

Nutrition labels provide information about the food's nutritional content and ingredient list. This makes it easier to compare similar foods, identify specific nutrients, and select appropriate foods for different dietary conditions.

Nutrition Facts	
8 servings per container	
Serving size	2/3 cup (55g)
Amount per serving	
Calories	230
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 8g	10%
Saturated Fat 1g	5%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 160mg	7%
Total Carbohydrate 37g	13%
Dietary Fiber 4g	14%
Total Sugars 12g	
Includes 10g Added Sugars	20%
Protein 3g	
Vitamin D 2mcg	10%
Calcium 260mg	20%
Iron 8mg	45%
Potassium 235mg	6%

SERVING SIZE

Serving size refers to the amount of food the table below is based on. Be sure to compare the below to the amount you actually eat.

CALORIES

A calorie is a unit of energy that food provides to the body. For a healthy body weight you should consume the amount of calories your body uses.

DAILY VALUE (%DV)

DV is a measurement of how much of a nutrient is in a serving. Under 5% is considered little in nutrient while 15% or more is high in the nutrient.

NUTRIENTS

Some nutrients are healthier than others, as such, we should have more of some and less of others.

The Daily Value listed helps us identify how much of the nutrient is in the product. See list to see what nutrients that we should have more of and which we should have less of.

More:

- Fibre
- Vitamin A
- Vitamin C
- Iron
- Calcium

Less:

- Fat
- Saturated fat
- Trans fat
- Sodium
- Cholesterol

INGREDIENTS

The ingredient section lists all ingredients that are contained within the product. They are listed in order of weight from highest to lowest.

CHECK THE DATE & INSPECT THE PRODUCT Some foods may last beyond the “sell by” or “best by” date. The quality and freshness may be compromised, but they are still considered safe to eat. Discard foods that are bottled or jarred past the expiration date or if liquids appear cloudy or discolored. Always inspect your product upon receiving.

WHEN IN DOUBT, THROW IT OUT! HFB’s policy is to discard bulging, rusted, or severely dented cans with metal touching metal, opened or leaking packages, and broken seals. If you notice items with these flaws when you unpack them at your facility, do not distribute them or cook with them.