

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 mouldy
- Badly bruised or colouring is off
- Rancid or pungent odor



DAIRY

- Swollen or damaged packaging
- Bad odor or strange consistency