

# Make the Most of Your Dairy

From uneaten leftovers to spoiled food, 30-40% of food goes uneaten in the U.S. each year.<sup>1</sup> Learn what you can do to reduce your dairy food waste.

## KEEP IT FRESH



Make refrigerated foods your last stop at the grocery store, and the first thing you put away at home.

Only buy the product size you will use in one week.



Don't leave perishable foods sitting out for more than 2 hours - only 1 hour if the temperature is above 90° F.<sup>2</sup>

Cheese is best served at room temperature. Hard cheeses can sit out for 2 hours, but soft cheeses should be tossed after 2 hours at room temperature.<sup>3</sup>



Store milk, cheese and yogurt between 35° and 40° F to maximize freshness.<sup>2</sup>

## USE IT



Don't toss yogurt because there is liquid on the top - that's just the whey! Simply stir the whey back in for a creamier consistency.

Make smoothies, marinades and dips with yogurt for an extra boost of protein and creaminess.



Remove mold from hard cheese by cutting a one-inch square around it. The rest is safe to eat.<sup>4</sup>

When cooking with cheese on the stovetop, use low to medium heat, stirring constantly. High heat will toughen the cheese and make it stringy.



Make your oatmeal, hot chocolate and soups with milk instead of water for a creamier, more nutritious taste.

Milk should be heated gently and slowly. Excessive heat can result in a scorched flavor or a film of protein on the top of the milk.

## FREEZE IT



Milk can be frozen for up to 3 months.<sup>5</sup> Freeze it in any container, but remember to leave room for expansion because milk expands as it freezes.

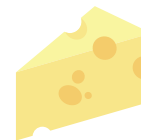
To thaw frozen milk, place in the refrigerator for at least a day. Freezing may alter the color or texture, but it's still good for drinking and cooking!



Salted butter can be frozen for up to 9 months and unsalted butter for 6 months.<sup>6</sup> Let frozen butter thaw in the refrigerator or try grating it with a cheese grater.



Yogurt can be frozen for up to 2 months<sup>7</sup>, but there may be changes in texture and loss of its live active cultures.



Most hard cheeses can be frozen, but there may be changes in texture. Some cheeses become crumbly when thawed, while most shredded cheeses freeze well.

Allow 24-48 hours to thaw in the refrigerator, which allows moisture to go back into the cheese.<sup>8</sup>

# SAVE THE DATE



The date on the milk container is the Sell-By date, not the expiration date.

The **Best if Used By/Before date** indicates when a product will be of best flavor or quality. It is not a purchase or safety date.<sup>9</sup>

The **Sell-By date** tells the store how long to display the product for sale for inventory management. It is not a safety date.<sup>9</sup>

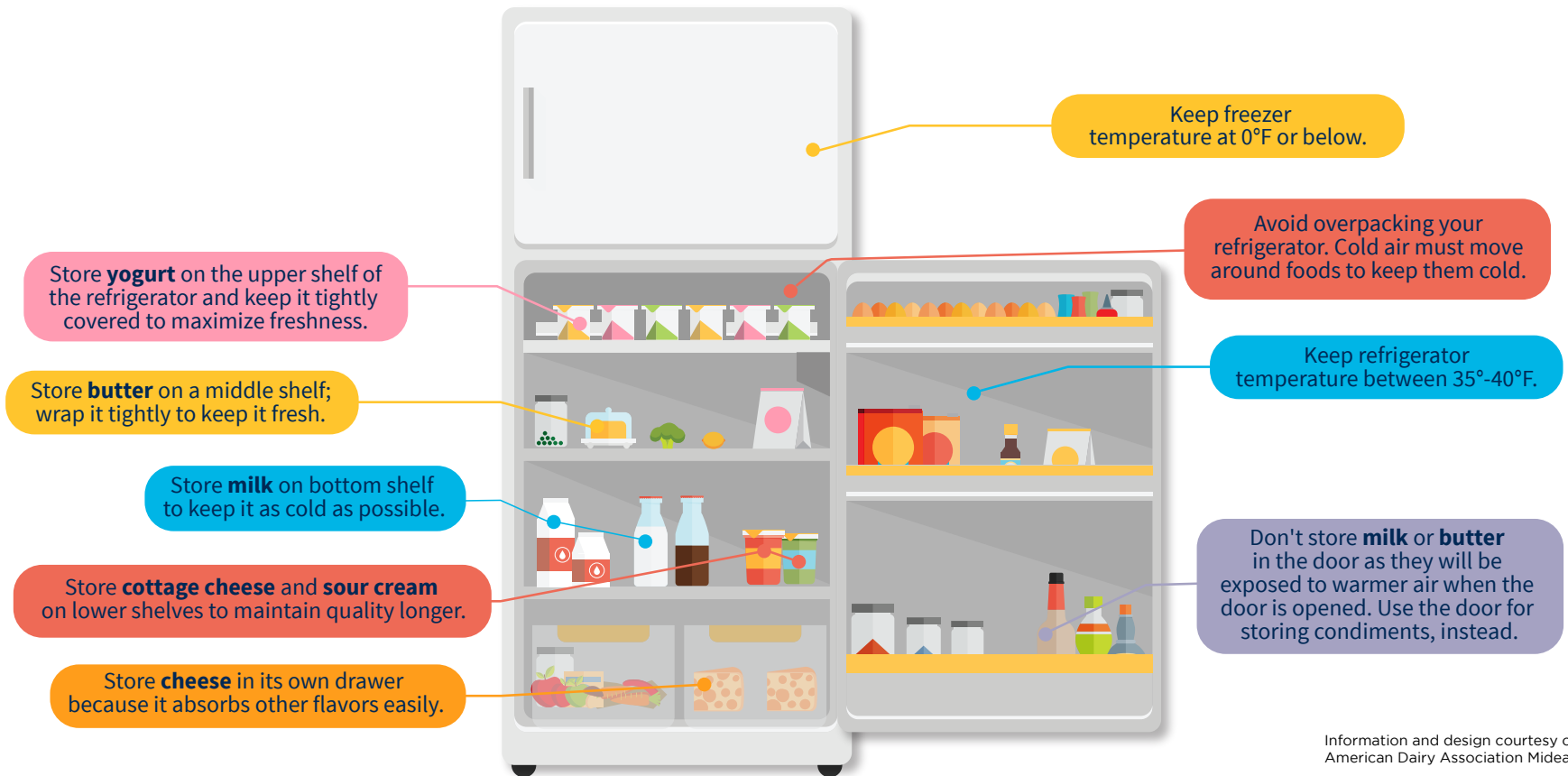
The **Use-By date** is the last date recommended for the use of the product while at peak quality. It is only a safety date on infant formula.<sup>9</sup>



The softer the cheese, the shorter the shelf life<sup>10</sup>:

- **Ricotta cheese** can last for 1 week
- **Cottage cheese** can last for 1 week
- **Cream cheese** can last for 2 weeks
- **Hard cheese** can last 3-4 weeks tightly wrapped in the refrigerator

# STORAGE TIPS<sup>5</sup>



Information and design courtesy of American Dairy Association Mideast



**Dairy MAX**  
YOUR Local Dairy Council

## Resources

<sup>1</sup>USDA Office of the Chief Economist. U.S. Food Waste Challenge FAQ's. <https://www.usda.gov/oce/foodwaste/faqs.htm>. Accessed May 4, 2017.

<sup>2</sup>FDA U.S. Food & Drug Administration. Refrigerator Thermometers: Cold Facts about Food Safety. <https://www.fda.gov/food/resourcesforyou/consumers/ncm253954.htm>. Accessed May 4, 2017.

<sup>3</sup>Foodsafety.gov. Refrigerated Food and Power Outages: When to Save and When to Throw Out. [https://www.foodsafety.gov/keep/charts/refridg\\_food.html](https://www.foodsafety.gov/keep/charts/refridg_food.html). Accessed May 4, 2017.

<sup>4</sup>USDA/FSIS. Molds on Food: Are They Dangerous? [https://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/food-safety-education/get-answers/food-safety-fact-sheets/safe-food-handling/molds-on-food-are-they-dangerous\\_ct\\_index](https://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/food-safety-education/get-answers/food-safety-fact-sheets/safe-food-handling/molds-on-food-are-they-dangerous_ct_index). Accessed May 4, 2017.

<sup>5</sup>Save the Food. Food Storage Directory - Dairy, Eggs. <http://www.savethefood.com/food-storage/dairy>. Accessed May 4, 2017.

<sup>6</sup>Still Tasty. How to Freeze and Thaw Butter. <http://www.stilltasty.com/articles/view/66>. Accessed May 4, 2017.

<sup>7</sup>Still Tasty. How Long Can You Keep Yogurt. <http://www.stilltasty.com/fooditems/index/18717>. Accessed May 4, 2017.

<sup>8</sup>DairyGood. Can You Freeze Cheese. <https://dairygood.org/content/2016/can-you-freeze-cheese>. Accessed May 4, 2017.

<sup>9</sup>USDA/FSIS. Food Product Dating. <http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/food-safety-education/get-answers/food-safety-fact-sheets/food-labeling/food-product-dating/food-product-dating>. Accessed May 4, 2017.

<sup>10</sup>Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. Home Food Safety. <https://www.drink-milk.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Home-Food-Safety.pdf>. Accessed May 4, 2017.