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Keep Food Safe - Expanded Nutrition & Family Programs  
Michigan State University  
Cooperative Extension Service  
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# Expanded Nutrition & Family Programs



## Keep Food Safe

(A/V)

### THE BIG IDEA *(Your Goal)*

When I (the aide) have taught this lesson, the homemaker will be able to:

1. **Tell why** properly stored foods will stay wholesome and taste good for a reasonable length of time.
2. **Tell which** foods need protection from heat, cold, light, air, moisture, and insects.
3. **Prepare** different foods for storage.
4. **Recognize** signs of food spoilage.

### FACTS BEHIND THE BIG IDEA *(For You to Show and Tell the Homemaker)*

- Food spoils when held too long in poor storage. Signs of dangerous food spoilage are:
  - off-odors in foods
  - sour taste in bland-tasting foods
  - bulging cans or lids
  - mold on foods, except on hard cheese and brined foods such as pickles.

DO NOT TASTE foods that show signs of spoilage. They may cause diarrhea, vomiting, stomach cramps and other unpleasant symptoms which can last for several hours or even days.

- Properly stored foods hold their natural goodness for reasonable lengths of time.

Some things that affect storage are:

**FREEZING**—In cold weather, food in glass jars can freeze. The jars may break. Root vegetables—onions, potatoes, etc., can also freeze and lose flavor and crispness.

**TOO MUCH HEAT** causes fresh fruits to become overripe, vegetables to be tough and limp, milk to spoil, and the fat in cheese to melt out.

**TOO MUCH LIGHT** causes fats and oils to become rancid (old tasting), decreases the Vitamin B<sub>12</sub> in dry foods and the riboflavin in milk.

**EXPOSURE TO AIR** removes the moisture from ripe fruits and vegetables, causing them to dry out or wilt.

**TOO MUCH MOISTURE** causes foods with low-moisture content, such as flour, bread, nonfat powdered milk, crackers, nuts, dry beans, and peas to get moldy or lumpy. Berries, fruits and fresh vegetables mold and rot in warm, moist air.

**INSECTS** can grow in dry cereals, flour, cornmeal, chili powder, and some spices when these foods are stored at room temperature.



## EXPANDED NUTRITION & FAMILY PROGRAMS

Cooperative Extension Service • Michigan State University • East Lansing, Michigan 48824

## **KEEP COLD FOODS COLD**

Perishable foods such as cream pies, seafoods, poultry, and dishes made with eggs, fish, meat, and poultry should be kept **COLD** (below 40°F). Do not let these foods stand at room temperature more than 2 hours.

## **KEEP HOT FOODS HOT**

Perishable foods such as seafood, poultry, and cooked meats should be kept **HOT** (above 140°F). Bacteria grow best in lukewarm foods. Never let these foods stand at room temperature more than 2 or 3 hours.

## **STORE FOODS CAREFULLY**

In the **KITCHEN** (room temperature) store crackers, nonfat milk powder, rice, cereals, canned food, flour, sugar.

In the **STOREROOM** (cellar) store apples, oranges, potatoes, onions, turnips, canned food.

In the **REFRIGERATOR** store ripe fruits and vegetables (except root vegetables), fresh milk, meat, poultry, fish, eggs, cheese.

In the **FREEZER** store all foods that cannot be used right away or stored any other place without loss of quality.

## **THINGS TO DO BEFORE VISIT**

Find pictures of different foods to show the homemaker which need to be protected from air, moisture, light, heat, cold, and insects.

Collect samples of plastic, aluminum, and other wrapping papers suitable for covering frozen foods. Also find plastic, glass, or metal containers to use in a refrigerator or on open shelves.

## **HOW DO YOU KNOW SHE LEARNED?**

Ask the homemaker to tell you how she now prepares and protects her foods. Ask her if she can store food differently to save more food. To save energy (fuel)? To cut the cost of storage containers?

## **REFERENCES (Available in Your State)**

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Cooperative Extension Work: United States Department of Agriculture and State Land-Grant Universities Cooperating.

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# Expanded Nutrition & Family Programs



## Keep Food Safe

(A/V)

(Take this sheet on home visits)

### THE BIG IDEA

When you store food properly you

- keep it from spoiling
- save its natural goodness.

### HOW TO PRESENT THE BIG IDEA

**Talk** about places to store food in the home.  
Where are they?

**Find out** what foods the homemaker stores.

**Point out** how proper storage prevents illness and food waste.

**Talk** about problems some families have in storing foods and how they have solved them.

**Go over** the homemaker handout with her.

**Show** her the food storage containers you brought on the visit.

**Help** her decide how she can improve the food storage in her home.

**Offer** to look at storage improvements on next visit.

### HOW DO YOU KNOW SHE LEARNED?

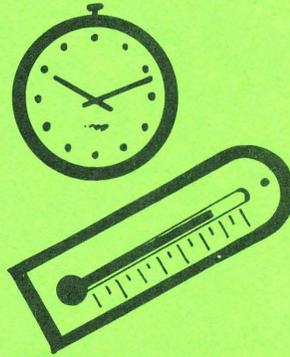
Ask her to tell you about or show you on your next visit—

- Changes she has made in food storage
- Changes her friends or neighbors have made as a result of her sharing the information you gave her.

## EXPANDED NUTRITION & FAMILY PROGRAMS

# Store Food

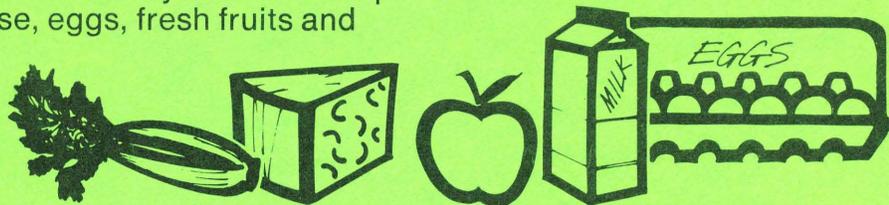
- At the right time—while it's fresh, and quality is best
- At the right temperature
- In the right place . . .



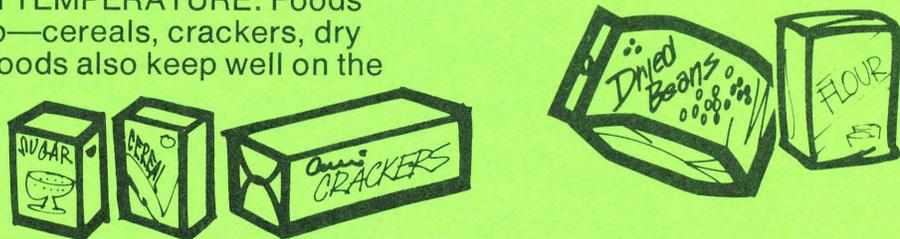
**IN THE FREEZER:** Frozen foods stay frozen—foods like ice cream, meat, frozen fruits and vegetables . . .



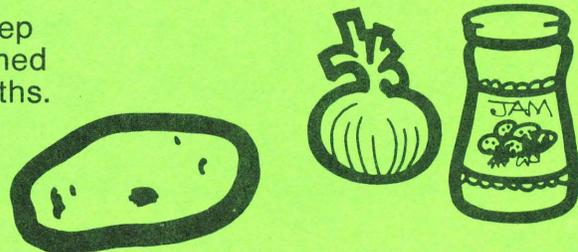
**IN THE REFRIGERATOR:** Foods stay cool and crisp—fluid milk, cheese, eggs, fresh fruits and vegetables . . .



**ON SHELVES AT ROOM TEMPERATURE:** Foods stay dry and crisp—cereals, crackers, dry beans. Canned goods also keep well on the shelf.



**A COOL, DRY PLACE** (like a cellar): Foods keep natural quality—potatoes, onions, canned foods you plan to keep for several months.



# Expanded Nutrition & Family Programs



## Keep Food Safe

### How Long Can I Store These Foods?

(H)

FOOD	STORAGE	RECOMMENDED STORAGE TIME
Breads	Original wrapper in the freezer.	2-3 months
Cereals, dry milk, flour, spices, sugar	Tightly closed cans or packages on kitchen shelf or in the refrigerator. Store away from heat.	Indefinitely
Fats, oils, peanut butter, margarine	Small containers, tightly covered in the refrigerator after opening.	Margarine—2 weeks Others—1 or more months
Fish, poultry, ground meat	Original wrapper in coldest part of refrigerator.	1-2 days
Cold cuts, meats, fresh roasts, chops	Cover loosely and refrigerate.	3-5 days
Leftover cooked meats and main dishes	In tightly covered container after quickly cooling. Refrigerate promptly.	3-4 days Exception: Cooked ham, 1 week Poultry stuffing, 1-2 days
Fresh milk	Tightly closed container in refrigerator.	1 week
Cheese, hard	Wrap tightly. Refrigerate	Several months
Cheese, cottage	Cover tightly and refrigerate.	5-7 days
Fresh fruit	In refrigerator after fruit is ripe.	3-5 days Citrus fruit—2 weeks Berries—2-3 days



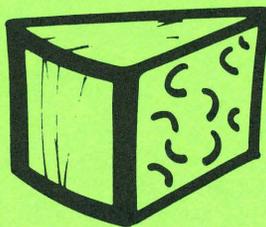
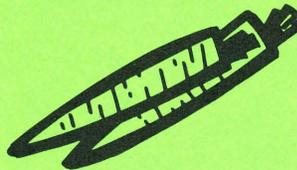
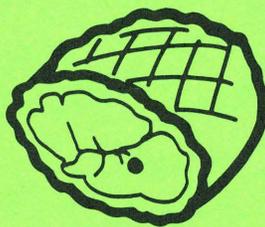
### EXPANDED NUTRITION & FAMILY PROGRAMS

# Store Food

Do you sometimes throw food away because it's spoiled?  
You can prevent spoilage by storing food . . .

- At the right time . . . while it's fresh
- At the right temperature
- In the right place

WHERE would you put each of the foods pictured below? (Draw a line from the food picture to the place where it should be stored.)



**FREEZER**

**REFRIGERATOR**

**SHELF**

**COOL PLACE  
(CELLAR)**