

Food Labelling

a quick guide to get the most from your food

Many of us throw out food that's perfectly safe to eat, mainly because we don't understand what the food labels actually mean.

Here's a quick guide to what the labels on your food mean and whether you should tuck into that yoghurt two weeks past its Best Before date or scrape the mould off the bread in the cupboard.

USE BY DATE

This date is applied to food labels for safety reasons. Food consumed after the Use By date can be harmful, even if it looks and smells fine to eat. Always follow storage instructions correctly and try to eat foods with a shorter Use By date first to avoid any potential waste.

It's also important to follow the brand's recommendations on how quickly you should eat the food after it has been opened.



BEST BEFORE DATE

The Best Before date is applied to food labels to specify how long it will stay fresh for. After this date the food is not harmful to eat but may have lost some of its flavour and quality.

Bear in mind that this date is not applicable to eggs, which have a Best Before date of no more than 28 days after being laid. Do not eat eggs after their Best Before date; if Salmonella bacteria is present in the egg it can quickly reproduce after 28 days and cause sickness.



DISPLAY UNTIL & SELL BY DATE

The Display Until and Sell By dates are applied to some food labels for use by shop staff stocking shelves. You can ignore these dates.



Find out more information about how to stop wasting food and start saving pennies at

[ao.com/life/wasteless](https://www.ao.com/life/wasteless)

