



# Food 'use by' and 'best before' dates

In Australia all packaged foods that last less than two years should have a 'use-by' or 'best before' date stamped on the box, wrapper or bottle.

## Foods stamped with a "use by" date

Always eat food stamped with a "use by" date before the date on the product. It is not safe to eat these foods after the "use by" as they might make you sick.



This cream has a "use by" date of 19 April 2007

## Foods stamped with a "best before" date

It is best to eat this food before the date stamped on the product. It might still be safe to eat this food after the "best before" date if it has been properly stored, but it might have lost quality and some nutritional value. If the food looks and smells as you would expect, it should be safe to eat, even if the "best before" date has passed.

Many frozen and canned products keep their quality for some time after the "best before" date has passed.



This butter has a "best before" date of 28 July 2007

## Food needs proper storage

- \* Food products must be stored properly to stay fresh and edible up to the 'use-by date' or 'best before' date. If a food product is not stored properly it may spoil before the date on the package.
- \* Many foods need to be kept in the fridge or freezer. For example, fresh milk needs to be refrigerated. If it is kept out of the fridge it will quickly sour, regardless of its 'best before' date.
- \* When shopping, buy cold and frozen foods last, just before you go home. When you get home, put away your cold and frozen foods first. This way they are out of the fridge or freezer for the shortest amount of time possible. Cooler bags can help cold food stay cold until you get it home.



## Lunch box checklist

Try to include food from each of these groups in the lunch box every day:

- b Bread** – slice of bread, flat bread, pita bread, fruit bread, rice cakes, crispbread, wholemeal crackers, noodles, pasta, rice.



- b Vegetables** - salad, crunchy vegetable sticks (for example: carrot, celery, cucumber, capsicum, with or without dips), cherry tomato, vegetables in muffins, vegetables in sandwiches eg. grated carrot, tomato, lettuce.



- b Fruit** - different types of fresh fruit in season, fruit salad, canned fruit in natural juice, fruit and yoghurt, stewed fruit and cut up pieces of fruit.





## Lunch box checklist continued ...

- Lean meats and alternatives - tuna, chicken, ham, hard boiled egg, lentils, baked beans, peanut butter.



- Dairy products - fruit yoghurt, cheese sticks, cheese slices, custard, milk, calcium fortified soy milk, use yoghurt, mayonnaise or ricotta cheese to bind sandwich fillings eg. tuna, diced chicken, yoghurt based dips.



- Drinks - water is best, diluted 100% fruit juice (½ juice and ½ water).



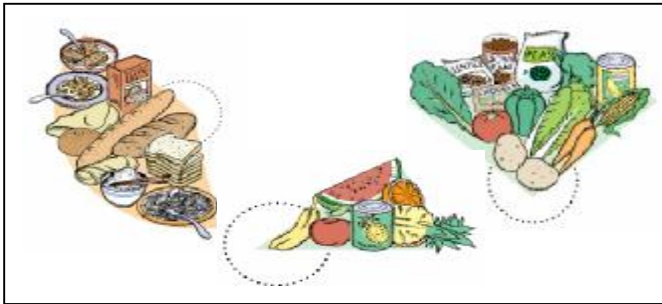
Food can be kept cold and safe by including a frozen bottle of water, or frozen freezer blocks, and using an insulated lunch box bag.



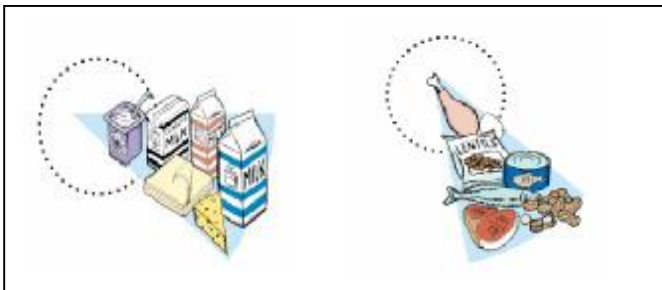
## Shopping tips — save money

**You can get value for money even when you are shopping on a budget. Some tips for buying healthy foods on a budget:**

- p** Spend most of your food money on these foods—bread, rice, noodles, vegetables, fruit and legumes (dried beans, chickpeas, lentils)



- p** Spend some of your money on these foods—meat, fish, chicken, eggs, milk, yoghurt and cheese



- p** Spend little of your money on foods like these—soft drinks, cordials, sweet biscuits and cakes



- p** Plan the weekly menu before you shop and make a shopping list.
- p** Shopping once a week saves time and money.
- p** Look for specials advertised in the local newspaper.
- p** In the supermarket, stick to aisles where the products on your list are. Avoid temptation or opportunities for children to request food you don't want them to eat.
- p** Where possible buy food in bulk. Think about joining together with friends and sharing the cost.
- p** Check food packages for the "use by" date. Buy products with the longest amount of time left before this date
- p** Compare prices on shelves. More expensive products are kept at eye level.
- p** Choose generic brands. They are cheaper and most are similar in quality to brand name products.
- p** Often it 's cheaper to buy fruit and vegetables from the farmers markets instead of supermarkets.
- p** Fruit and vegetables in season are usually cheaper.
- p** Compare the prices of fresh, frozen and canned foods. Dried or tinned peas, beans and lentils are not expensive.



# House brand products

## What is a house brand product?

A brand or product line that is made by and exclusive to individual Supermarkets.

For example, Savings, Home Brand and Black & Gold.

Woolworths Home Brand mushrooms



## What is a brand name product?

A brand or product line that is labeled with a brand, owned by a private company.

For example, Golden Circle & Birds Eye

A brand name product, Golden Circle Sliced Pineapple



## Facts about house brand products...

- \* They can save you money. House brand products are generally cheaper.
- \* Even though these products are cheaper, they are very similar in quality, safety and nutrition to brand name products. All foods sold in Australia need to meet certain guidelines and standards.
- \* They are often made in the same factories as brand name products, with slightly different ingredients and recipes.
- \* Many food suppliers, including Coles, Safeway, Woolworths and IGA, offer a guarantee on their products. This means, if you are not happy with the house brand product, you can return your product to the store where you brought it with the receipt, and get your money back.



# What should you be drinking?

**Water is the best drink.** Tap water is safe to drink and is free. There is no need to purchase bottled water in Australia.

**Drink water every day and often**



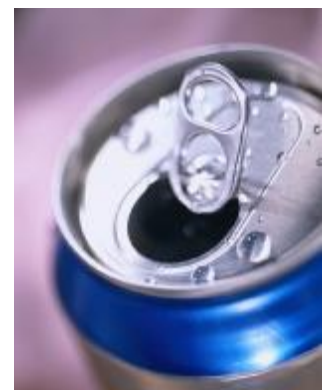
Plain milk is healthy for children. Children can have milk from the supermarket after one year of age. It is recommended they have full cream milk. Children should not drink more than three glasses per day as they will fill up and not eat other nutritious foods. After two years of age reduced fat milk is recommended.

**Milk is a healthy drink that can be consumed every day**



Sweet drinks include soft drinks, coca cola, energy drinks, sports drinks, cordial, flavoured mineral water and fruit juice. They all contain a lot of sugar which can cause tooth decay, weight gain and can replace other important foods in your diet.

**Drink only on special occasions. No more than two times per week**





# Is processed food as good as organic food?

## What are organic foods?

Organic food comes from plants and animals that have been grown without the use of synthetic fertilizers, pesticides, antibiotics, growth hormones and additives.



Organic apple



Normal apple

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## Are processed foods safe?

All Australian processed foods are safe. They are packaged or tinned so they last longer and can be stored on a shelf instead of a fridge or freezer.

All processed foods must go through safety tests before they can be sold in supermarkets.



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**There are official Australian standards for all organic and processed foods that producers must adhere to by law.**

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