

# Hints for Homemakers

by **SONDRA REID**

## Perishability Factor Shopping Ahead for Meals

Home economists often urge homemakers to make cooking easier on themselves and the family budget by shopping ahead for several days' meals. But they also urge that



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you keep in mind the perishable points of the items you heap into the market cart.

No one can say precisely how long a food may be kept in the refrigerator without spoiling or losing nutrients. Too many unknowns are involved, such as: how fresh was the food when it came to market, under what conditions was it kept there, what temperature does the home refrigerator maintain?

But the guide here suggests how long certain foods may be stored under good conditions, still look and taste fresh, and retain much nourishment. Keeping them a little longer doesn't necessarily mean they will be harmful. But for quality's sake, it's wise to stick closely to these limits.

### Storage Times

The times given here are for foods properly handled before and after storage in a refrigerator in good repair (which maintains even temperatures of 42 degrees to 44 degrees in the warmest part and 40 degrees or less in the coldest part, other than the freezing compartment).

Remember, it's smart to shop in stores that keep perishables well-refrigerated. Also, never overload refrigerator shelves. Doing so may prevent the cold from penetrating properly.

As a general rule, uncooked meats, poultry and fish should be loosely wrapped in moisture-resistant materials when not stored in the special meat keeper provided in many refrigerators. They should not be washed, because droplets of water may remain in crevices of the meat, making an ideal place for spoilage agents to

grow. In addition, water tends to impair surface color of meat. A slight drying of the surface is advantageous.

Cooked and leftover meats and vegetables should be tightly wrapped or stored in covered containers. Canned fruits and vegetables may be stored in the can with tight wrapping over it.

The packaging materials around meats at self-service counters are designed for display and convenience, but may not be intended for long storage. Fresh transparent film or other moisture resistant wrappings or bags are desirable unless the meat is to be used immediately.

Get all food into refrigerator promptly, whether fresh or leftover. Forget the old wives' tale about waiting for hot foods to cool completely.

Defrost the refrigerator regularly. A heavy accumulation of frost acts as a blanket on the refrigeration unit, interfering with its function of cooling air.

For safety's sake, thoroughly clean refrigerator, inside and out, weekly.

### REFRIGERATOR STORAGE LIMITS

#### Very Perishable

Fresh fish, shellfish, 24 hours.

Cooked fish, shellfish, 1 to 2 days.

Fresh poultry, 1 to 2 days.

Cooked poultry, 2 to 3 days.

Poultry stuffing (removed from bird) 1 to 2 days.

Ground meat, 24 hours.

Soups, gravies, 1 to 2 days.

Variety meats, 1 to 2 days.

Meat, poultry, fish and egg salads, 24 hours.

Casseroles, stews, 2 to 3 days.

Custards, custard sauces, cream-filled pies or cakes, 2 to 3 days.

Vegetables, salad greens, 3 to 5 days.

Berries, 1 to 2 days.

Apples, 7 days.

Other fruits, 3 to 5 days.

Fruit juices, 3 to 5 days.

Bananas should not be refrigerated.

Avocados may be refrigerated when fully ripe.

### Moderately Perishable

Baby foods, 2 to 3 days.

Meats, 3 to 5 days.

Cooked meats, 2 to 4 days.

Cured meats, sliced ham, 3 to 5 days; bacon, 1 week; whole ham, 2 weeks.

Cold cuts, 3 to 5 days.

Milk, cream, 3 days.

Evaporated milk, 3 to 5 days.

Butter, margarine, 1 to 2 weeks.

Cottage cheese, 3 to 5 days.

Other soft cheeses, 1 to 2 weeks.

Hard cheeses, 3 to 6 months.

Eggs, 2 to 4 weeks.

Cooked or canned vegetables, 1 to 4 days.

Cooked or canned fruit, 2 to 4 days.

Citrus fruits (unpeeled) maintain high degree of flavor and nutrients up to 2 weeks stored in cool place and up to 4 to 5 weeks on refrigerator shelf.



### BRUNCH TREAT

## Easy Rabbit Sauce

Brunch is an easy way to entertain when convenience foods are used. This rabbit dish has guests coming back for seconds.

### FRENCH FRIED MUSHROOMS WITH RABBIT SAUCE

- 2 6-oz. pkg. frozen whole mushrooms
- 2 eggs
- 1/4 cup milk
- 2 pkg. frozen Welsh rabbit
- 1 cup seasoned bread crumbs
- Oil

6 large or 12 small hot waffles  
Remove mushrooms from package without defrosting. Beat eggs with milk and add mushrooms, letting soak until thoroughly defrosted. Heat rabbit according to package directions. Roll mushrooms in bread crumbs to cover. Cook in deep fat heated to 375 deg. until golden brown. Place waffles on serving dish, cover with rabbit sauce and top with mushrooms. Makes 6 to 8 servings.



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