### Categories Explained

**Room Temperature**
- Fresh Produce: 2-7 days
- Refrigerated: 3-6 months
- Frozen: 1 year

**Best Before Dates**
- Juices and Drinks-Tetra Pak: 1 month
- Loaves, Rolls, Bagels, Muffins: 1 week
- Granola, Flours, Rices, Dry Pastas, Cookies, Crackers: 2 weeks
- Canned and Bulk: 5-7 days
- Fish and Shellfish: 3-4 days
- Beef, Lamb, Pork, Veal, Whole Poultry: 2-3 months
- Meat Mixtures: 3 months
- Grilled Fish: 6 months
- Tuna, Salmon: 6 months
- Soup and Stews: 1 year
- Infant Formula and Nutritional Supplements: 1 year

**Expiry Dates**
- Infant Formula: 1 year
- Baby Foods: 1 year
- Nutritional Supplements and Meal Replacements: 1 year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product</th>
<th>Time Frame Past Best Before</th>
<th>Fruit / Vegetables</th>
<th>Fruit / Vegetable Juices</th>
<th>Bread</th>
<th>Grains &amp; Cereals</th>
<th>Meat uncooked</th>
<th>Meat cooked</th>
<th>Deli Meats</th>
<th>Dairy-Pasteurized</th>
<th>Dairy-Sterilized</th>
<th>Fats</th>
<th>Combination Foods</th>
<th>Soups/Stews</th>
<th>Non-Food</th>
<th>Infant Formula and Nutritional Supplements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fresh Produce</td>
<td>Fresh</td>
<td>2-7 days</td>
<td>1 Month (Tetra Pak)</td>
<td>1 Week</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>less than 2 hours</td>
<td>less than 2 hours</td>
<td>less than 2 hours</td>
<td>2-3 days</td>
<td>2 Weeks (after opening)</td>
<td>3 Months</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>2-3 Days</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refrigerated</td>
<td>Refrigerated</td>
<td>3-6 Months (Tetra Pak)</td>
<td>2 Week</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>3-4 Days</td>
<td>Fish and Shellfish</td>
<td>5-7 days</td>
<td>&lt; 2 hours (after opening)</td>
<td>&lt; 2 hours (after opening)</td>
<td>1 Week</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>less than 2 hours</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frozen</td>
<td>Frozen</td>
<td>1 Year</td>
<td>1 Year</td>
<td>1 Month</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>1 Year</td>
<td>1 Year</td>
<td>1 Year</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>1 Year</td>
<td>1 Year</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canned / Jarred</td>
<td>Canned / Jarred</td>
<td>1 Year</td>
<td>1 Year</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>6 Months</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>6 Months</td>
<td>3 Months</td>
<td>3 Months</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boxed / Bagged</td>
<td>Boxed / Bagged</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>1 Week</td>
<td>6-12 Months</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Varies*</td>
<td>6 Months</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>6 Months</td>
<td>1 Year</td>
<td>1 Year</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Milk powder is a critical quality factor for milk powder. Keep milk powder cool.

**Best Before Date**
- This gives consumers information as to when the product is at its best - with sensory qualities as acceptable as the day it was made when stored under appropriate conditions and packaging is intact.

**Expiry Date**
- Tells consumers that the product may not be providing them with the nutrients expected of the product and they should no longer consume it after that date.

**Products with Expiry Dates must never be shared past the date on the packaging.**

**Food Products and their ability to be shared should always be based on:**
1) Ensuring the product has been handled safely (i.e. Chilled product is kept chilled)
2) Assessing all cans for integrity (i.e., dents, creases, etc.) based on Food Banks Canada Safe Food Handling Standards
3) That the product is at a level of quality (e.g., taste and smell) that is still worth sharing
4) That the Manufacturer’s Branding will not be compromised if the product is shared

**Note:** This information is to be used as a guide only. It was developed based on general knowledge, industry practices and the understanding that best before dates are about sensory quality.

**For reference:**

**INFORMATION:** Contact Craig McGurn, Manager National Food Sharing, Food Banks Canada

Created: January 2011  Updated: July 2013