

# Monongalia County Solid Waste Authority



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*A resource for Monongalia County residents to learn about solid waste issues, recycling events, and where to properly dispose of or recycle solid waste items.*

**Confused about what the date labels on food packages mean?**

**Here's what you should know:**

**U.S. FOOD & DRUG ADMINISTRATION**

**Best If Used By**

**You'll see a date on the label of most packaged foods.**

- Labels often include phrases like "Use by" or "Best if used by," but may only have a date. Other than infant formula, date labels are not required by federal law on packaged foods.
- Manufacturers often apply a date to inform consumers and retailers when the food will be at its best quality. Food packages may also have a date to indicate when the food was produced or packed.

**SELL BY**

**USE BY**

**Avoid wasting food**

- Don't just rely on the date label that appears on a package. Look at and smell the food for signs of spoilage to know if it is ok to eat. Toss it if the color, consistency, or texture has changed.
- If the label recommends eating the food within a certain number of days after opening the package, eat it before that window closes.

**Extending shelf life**

- Freezing is a good option for extending the shelf life of many packaged foods. Use the **USDA's FoodKeeper App** for information on how to safely store different foods to maximize freshness and quality.

<https://www.foodsafety.gov/keep-food-safe/foodkeeper-app>

**FK**

If you have questions about the shelf life, quality or safety of a packaged food you have purchased, contact the manufacturer listed on the package.

For more information and resources about food waste visit:  
<https://www.fda.gov/food/consumers/food-loss-and-waste>  
For links to the tools mentioned in this article, visit our website:  
[www.monongaliacountywa.com](http://www.monongaliacountywa.com)



**LOVE FOOD hate waste**

**CHILL THE FRIDGE OUT**



**Do you think I'm ugly?**

**FDA**

