

Fact Sheet

KEEPING FOOD SAFE DURING AN EMERGENCY

Environmental Health Officers, Food Businesses, Public

This is not an exhaustive list and should be used as a GUIDE ONLY. It is the responsibility of the individual or business to assess the types of food affected by the power outage.

These recommendations do not consider food damaged by flood or fire.

Recommendation of when to save and when to throw it out	
REFRIGERATED FOOD	Held above 5°C for over 4 hours
MEAT, POULTRY, SEAFOOD	
Raw or leftover cooked meat, poultry, fish, or seafood; soy or other meat substitutes	Discard
Thawing meat or poultry	Discard
Ready to Eat meats (ham, chicken, beef etc)	Discard
Salad with meat, chicken, fish (eg tuna), prawns or egg	Discard
Gravy, stuffing, broth	Discard
Hot dogs, bacon, sausage, dried beef	Discard
Pizza, with any topping	Discard
Canned meats and fish, opened	Discard
Shelf stable cured meats (business must have storage directions)	Safe
CHEESE	
Soft cheeses: blue/bleu, Roquefort, Brie, Camembert, cottage, cream, Edam, ricotta, mozzarella, Muenster, Neufchatel, queso styles	Discard
Shredded cheeses	Discard
Low-fat cheeses	Discard
Hard Cheeses: Cheddar, Colby, Swiss, Parmesan, provolone, Romano	Safe
Processed shelf stable cheeses eg cheese sold in the unrefrigerated section	Safe
Shelf stable grated / powdered Parmesan, Romano, or combination (sold in containers in the unrefrigerated section)	Safe
OTHER DAIRY/ DAIRY ALTERNATIVES	
Milk, cream, sour cream, buttermilk, evaporated milk, yogurt, eggnog, soy milk	Discard
Baby formula, opened	Discard



Recommendation of when to save and when to throw it out	
REFRIGERATED FOOD	Held above 5°C for over 4 hours
Butter, margarine	Safe
EGGS	
Egg dishes, raw egg products	Discard
Custards and puddings (not the shelf stable versions)	Discard
Hard cooked shell eggs	Discard
Shell eggs - fresh	Safe
CASSEROLES, SOUPS, STEWS	Discard
FRUITS	
Fresh fruits, diced	Discard
Commercial/ shelf stable fruit juices, opened	Safe
Canned fruits, opened	Safe
Whole fresh fruits, coconut, raisins, dried fruits, candied fruits, dates	Safe
SAUCES, SPREADS, JAMS	
Opened creamy-based dressings	Discard
Opened (commercial) mayonnaise, tartar sauce, horseradish	Discard if outage is over 8 hours
Peanut butter, jam (shelf stable - do not need to be stored in refrigerator)	Safe
Pickled/ brined vegetables eg olives, pickles	Safe
Condiments eg tomato, barbecue, Hoisin sauces, relish, salsas, mustards	Safe
Opened vinegar-based dressings	Safe
BREAD, CAKES, COOKIES, PASTA, GRAINS	
Cooked pasta, rice	Discard
Pasta salads with mayonnaise or vinaigrette	Discard
Fresh pasta	Discard
Cheesecake	Discard
Raw cookie dough	Discard
Bread, rolls, cakes, muffins, quick breads, tortillas	Safe
Bread rolls with cheese and meat toppings	Safe
Other —waffles, pancakes, bagels	Safe

Recommendation of when to save and when to throw it out	
REFRIGERATED FOOD	Held above 5°C for over 4 hours
PIES, PASTRY	
Pastries, cream or custard filled	Discard
Quiche	Discard
Meat pies, pasties	Safe for up to 8 hours
Baked custard products	Safe for up to 8 hours
Pastries – mock cream or bakers ‘custard’	Safe
Pies - fruit	Safe
VEGETABLES	
Greens, pre-cut, pre-washed, packaged	Discard
Vegetables, cooked; tofu	Discard
Vegetable juice, opened	Discard
Baked potatoes/ cooked potatoes	Discard
Commercial garlic in oil	Discard
Potato Salad	Discard
Vegetables, raw	Safe
Fresh mushrooms, herbs, spices	Safe

Recommendation of when to save and when to throw it out		
FROZEN FOOD	Still contains ice crystals and feels as cold as if refrigerated	Thawed & held above 5°C for over 4 hours
MEAT, POULTRY, SEAFOOD		
Beef, veal, lamb, pork, and ground meats	Refreeze	Discard
Poultry and ground poultry	Refreeze	Discard
Offal meats (liver, kidney, heart, chitterlings)	Refreeze	Discard
Casseroles, stews, soups	Refreeze	Discard
Fish, shellfish, breaded seafood products	Refreeze. However, there will be some texture and flavour loss.	Discard

Recommendation of when to save and when to throw it out		
FROZEN FOOD	Still contains ice crystals and feels as cold as if refrigerated	Thawed & held above 5°C for over 4 hours
DAIRY		
Milk	Refreeze. May lose some texture.	Discard
Eggs (out of shell) and egg products	Refreeze	Discard
Ice cream, frozen yoghurt	Discard	Discard
Shredded cheeses	Refreeze	Discard
Casseroles containing milk, cream, eggs, soft cheeses	Refreeze	Discard
Cheesecake	Refreeze	Discard
Cheese (soft and semi-soft)	Refreeze. May lose some texture.	Discard
Hard cheeses	Refreeze	Refreeze
FRUITS		
Juices	Refreeze	Refreeze. Discard if mould, yeasty smell, or sliminess develops.
Home or commercially packaged	Refreeze. Will change texture and flavour.	Refreeze. Discard if mould, yeasty smell, or sliminess develops.
VEGETABLES		
Juices	Refreeze	Discard
Home or commercially packaged or blanched	Refreeze. May suffer texture and flavour loss.	Discard
BREADS, PASTRIES		
Cakes, pies, pastries with custard or cheese filling	Refreeze	Discard
Pie crusts, commercial and homemade bread dough	Refreeze. Some quality loss may occur.	Refreeze. Quality loss is considerable.
Breads, rolls, muffins, cakes (without custard fillings)	Refreeze	Refreeze
Other—waffles, pancakes, bagels	Refreeze	Refreeze
OTHER		
Casseroles—pasta, rice based	Refreeze	Discard

Recommendation of when to save and when to throw it out		
FROZEN FOOD	Still contains ice crystals and feels as cold as if refrigerated	Thawed & held above 5°C for over 4 hours
Frozen meal, entree, specialty items (pizza, sausage and biscuit, meat pie, convenience foods)	Refreeze	Discard
Flour, cornmeal, nuts	Refreeze	Refreeze

For more information

SA Health

Health Protection and Licensing Services

Food and Controlled Drugs

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