

WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN 'USE BY' / 'BEST BEFORE' / 'SELL BY DATES'?

According to SA Legislation, all food products must be date marked except for certain food lines, such as sugar, fresh fruit and vegetables.

Depending on the type of food, the date mark must say 'best before', 'used by' or 'sell by'.

'BEST BEFORE' (BB)

Best before dates are found on shelf-stable products, such as biscuits, cereal, peanut butter. This date is an indication of quality rather than safety. It indicates for how long the product is likely to remain at its best quality if stored correctly. After the best before date has passed, the food may still be safe to consume, but its flavour/texture may deteriorated slightly.

'USE BY' EXPIRES ON

Use by dates are generally used for perishable foods like diary, meat and ready made products. This dated is an indication as to when the food much be used by. After the use by date has passed, the food should not be eaten or frozen for storage. With these type of products you cannot see, smell or taste the bacteria that causes food poisoning.

'SELL BY'

This date is generally used on fresh food such as fresh meat, vegetables and fruit. It is not for consumer use but is used by retailers to indicate how long they should display a product on the shelves. The consumer can still store and consume the product a few days after the sell by date.

Food products which are not required to be labelled with the above dates, may contain 'Date of Manufacture'. Most manufactured food products also contain a packaging code.

MAN 06 MAY 2019 DATE OF MANUFACTURE

9195 09:28 U2 12 PACKAGING CODE