

Very long shelf life			
<i>Product</i>	<i>Specification</i>	<i>Decay characteristics</i>	<i>Guideline shelf life</i>
Salt, sugar, flour/wheat		Provided kept dry, no decay. After very long time possibly stale. Mind hardness, absorption, presence of insects, mites, rancidity and fungi	Up to 1 year (and possibly longer) after THT, provided product retains its characteristics and no defects are noticeable to product or packaging. With the exception of infant formulae (powder): comply to THT-date!
Dry pasta products	Noodles, macaroni, spaghetti		
Couscous, meal			
Coffee, tea			
Rice			
Instant powder (non-fat)	Coffee, seasoning, custard	Flavour can deteriorate (enzymatic browning)	
Water, soda's and UHT-processed drinks (e.g. fruit juices)		Rust on tins/cans. Generation of gas (bulging), changes in colour or odour	
Fully preserved products, tin/can/glass	Vegetables, fruit, soup, meat, fish, coffee cream, jam	Crystallisation	
Syrup, honey			
Sweets, candy - hard	Lolly pops, sour balls		
Frozen food	Originally put on the market as a frozen product	Dehydration, rancid fat	

Long shelf life			
<i>Product</i>	<i>Specification</i>	<i>Decay characteristics</i>	<i>Guideline shelf life</i>
Dry cookies		Stale, loss or change of flavour, dehydration, change in texture, presence of larva and insects	Up to 2 months (and possibly longer) after THT, provided product retains its characteristics and no defects are noticeable to product or packaging. Keep frozen food at a temperature of or below - 18 °C degrees With the exception of infant formulae (powder): comply to THT-date!
Muesli, cereal, cornflakes			
Sandwich filling (peanut butter, chocolate sprinkles, paste)		Rancidity of fat, changes in odour, colour, oxidation, forming of fungi, presence of insects	
Crisps, salty biscuits, peanuts			
Oil, deep frying fat			
Sauces	Mayonnaise, ketchup		
Instant powder (fat)	Soup, milk powder		
Margarine, butter			
Hard cheeses	E.g. Gouda, Emmenthaler, Parmesan		
Sweets, candy - soft	With filling, chocolate, liquorice		
Sterilised milk and milk products	UHT-packed long-life milk, packed custard. Sterilised bottled products	Surrounding smell can get through packaging. Change in or loss of flavour.	
Frozen food	Fresh produce, frozen ultimately one day before expiration of TGT or THT-date	Dehydration (freezer burn), rancidity	

Limited shelf life			
<i>Product</i>	<i>Specification</i>	<i>Decay characteristics</i>	<i>Guideline shelf life</i>
Bread, rye bread, par-baked bread		Stale, forming of fungi	Comply to THT-date, exceptions possible, but determine well! Fresh bread supplied daily can be frozen, preferably consume within 2-3 weeks.
Sponge cake, cakes with filling, soft cakes, gingerbread		Forming of fungi	
Semi-preserves (herring, mussels,...)	Requires cold storage	Rancidity of fat	
Reduces hard cheeses (slices, grated)			
Vegetables and fruit (fresh, not soft fruit)		Forming of fungi	Determine visually (can have no signs of decay)

Short shelf life			
<i>Product</i>	<i>Specification</i>	<i>Decay characteristics</i>	<i>Guideline shelf life</i>
Fresh meat, chicken, fish, meat products	These products often have a TGT-date and almost always require cooling (below 7 °C degrees). In some cases even, cooling is required below 4 °C (e.g. fish)!	Bacterial growth (possibly fungi) en decay. Forming of fungi	NEVER accept and/or distribute after TGT/THT-date. Consumer has to be able to use product ultimately on the TGT/THT-date. Closed food chain is important (storage, transport, distribution); if this cannot be guaranteed, do NOT distribute these products.
Cakes/baked goods			
Refrigerated meals, salads			
Dairy-based deserts			
Fresh dairy (milk- and yoghurt products)			
Soft cheeses			
Freshly squeezes fruit juices			
Cut vegetables and fruit (fresh)			
Eggs			NEVER accept and/or distribute after TGT/THT-date.