

## How to Store and Use Commodity Food

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### I. Understanding what COMMODITY FOOD is:

Food commodities are the commonly used food items that we consume to get benefits from their nutritional values. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) distributes commodity foods through several food programs. The federal government is authorized to purchase these food items and support farm prices.



### II. Knowing the common commodity foods:

**Whole grains:** Oats, whole grain pasta, rice and cereals

**Proteins:** Lean meats, poultry, fish and beans, soy protein

**Low-fat dairy:** Shelf-stable milk, cheese and peanut butter

**Vegetables:** Carrots, potatoes and canned vegetables (low sodium or no added salt)

**Canned and dried fruits:** Unsweetened or lightly sweetened

### III. Knowing the minerals and nutrients commodity foods provide:

Protein, Vitamins A, C and D, Iron, Calcium and low-sodium foods to promote healthy living



#### IV. Let us see how we can store these food items:

Type of Commodity	Use-By-Date		Notes
	Unopened	Opened	
<b>Fruit, Fruit Juices, Vegetables &amp; Vegetable Juices:</b>			
Dried (raisins, cherries, etc.)	6-12 months	6 months	Refrigerate after opening.
Canned low acid (applesauce, apricots, asparagus, etc.)	12-18 months	2-7 days	Store off the floor in cool, dry place. Refrigerate after opening.
Canned high acid (grapefruit, tomato juice, pineapple, etc.)	12-18 months (Cranberry juice: 9 mos.)	5-7 days	Refrigerate in non-metallic container after opening.
Fresh (pears, etc.)	Varies		Refrigerate most fruits and vegetables.
<b>Meats, Poultry, fish:</b>			
Canned	36 months	3 days	Store off the floor in cool, dry place. Refrigerate after opening.
Frozen meat, fish, poultry	Check date on package	2-3 days	Refrigerate once thawed.
<b>Nuts &amp; nut butters:</b> peanut butter, trail mix	12 months	4-6 months	Store off the floor in cool, dry place. Refrigerate after opening.
<b>Cereal:</b> (Cold, ready-to-eat)	6 months	4-6 weeks	Store off the floor in cool, dry place.
<b>Soup and sauces:</b> Canned high acid: tomato soup, spaghetti sauce	12-18 months	5-7 days	Refrigerate in non-metallic container after opening.
Canned low acid: vegetable soup, etc.	2-5 years	3-4 days	Store off the floor in cool, dry place. Refrigerate after opening.
<b>Other:</b> corn syrup, egg mix, dried milk			Use-by dates vary. See USDA fact sheets.

Note: This chart has general guidelines for food storage.  
See USDA Food Fact Sheets for specific storage information for individual commodity items.



# Healthy



# Recipes

## Apple Coleslaw

### INGREDIENTS:

2 cups cabbage, finely shredded  
1/3 cup raisins  
1/3 cup lemon yogurt  
2 unpeeled apples, cored and coarsely shredded or chopped

### DIRECTIONS:

Combine all ingredients in a bowl. Toss gently to combine, chill and serve. Makes 4 servings.

### VARIATIONS:

- Use vanilla yogurt with grated lemon peel for a dressing. Add marshmallows in place of raisins.
- Add chunk or crushed pineapple, drained, in place of apples or in addition to one of the apples.

### HEALTH HINTS:

- The mayonnaise used in traditional coleslaws adds fat and calories but does not add nutrition to the salad. Yogurt has protein, calcium, and fewer calories than mayonnaise—a much healthier choice!
- Using unpeeled apples adds fiber to the salad.

### COOKING TIP:

When using raw cabbage in a dish like coleslaw, chop it finely. This makes it easier to eat.

## Cereal Peanut Butter Bars

### INGREDIENTS:

3 1/2 cups flake or crispy rice cereal, crushed  
1/2 cup shredded coconut, optional  
1/2 cup light corn syrup  
1/2 cup sugar  
1/2 cup peanut butter, smooth or chunky  
1/2 cup chocolate chips  
1/2 cup butterscotch chips

### DIRECTIONS:

Spray an 8 x 8-inch pan with nonstick cooking spray and add cereal and coconut; mix.

In saucepan, combine corn syrup and sugar. Bring to a boil and add peanut butter. Stir until smooth, pour over cereal mixture covering as much of the cereal as possible. Mix thoroughly. Pat into pan.

Combine chocolate and butterscotch chips in a saucepan. On the stovetop at a very low heat, stir until melted and smooth. May also be melted in the microwave by cooking for 60 to 90 seconds and stirring mid-way to hasten the melting process.

Spread the melted chocolate mixture over the bars. Cool and cut. Makes 16 servings.

## References:

1. <https://www.nutrition.gov/topics/shopping-cooking-and-food-safety/recipes>
2. [http://mtdh.ruralinstitute.umn.edu/?page\\_id=817](http://mtdh.ruralinstitute.umn.edu/?page_id=817)
3. [https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/resource-files/CSFP-slick-sheet-2020%20revision\\_4.8.20.pdf](https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/resource-files/CSFP-slick-sheet-2020%20revision_4.8.20.pdf)
4. <https://www.fns.usda.gov/csfp/commodity-supplemental-food-program>