

How to?

5) Ensure effective stock rotation

Why is this important?

Stock rotation is essential to ensure that safe food is served to customers.

The presence of food on premises with an expired “Use by” date is an offence.

All food must be stored correctly, in accordance with the product requirements. Old stock should be used before new ensuring older food gets used up first.

Rotation and Labeling

All pre-packed foods require full labeling, which must include the product description, weight/quantity, storage instructions and a “use by” or “best before” date.

Food which is prepared in house more than 24 hours in advance of use must also be adequately labeled. Product description and production date need to be shown.

If food is frozen in-house as a method to extend the shelf life, the wrapping or container must also include the date of freezing. This is generally accepted, along with cooking, as a method of using food within its date code.

When food is frozen, the wrapping must be as tight as possible to exclude air. This will avoid dehydration and quality problems such as “freezer burn”.

Food prepared and/or frozen in-house should be given the following storage life periods:

<u>Chilled</u>	- 3 days (may be longer, depending on food type).
<u>Frozen</u>	- Three months (including food frozen on delivery, such as fresh meat and batch prepared/ cooked food).

Use the **‘First expired, first out’ principle** – This means using food which is going to expire before foods which have a longer time until this date. This will ensure that foods can be used before they pass their “Use by” date, and they are still likely to be safe for eating.

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Check your understanding by:

You identify some cooked ham which has past its “Use by” date. What should you do with it now?

What is the advantage of using stock which due to ‘go off/expire’ sooner than foods which have a longer time until this (‘First expired, first out’ policy)?

You can tell it’s correct if:

All food past their ‘Use by’ date has been disposed of.

Older stock is being used before new stock.

All food is labelled correctly and team members are generally aware of when food has been placed in storage and when it is required to be used.

Hints and tips:

Keep an eye on which products are going to be past their ‘Use by’ date first, and then ensure that these products are used before others.