

# Datemarking



## What needs to be datemarked?

You must datemark any food meeting all of the following:

- Potentially Hazardous Food (PHF)/Time-Temperature Controlled for Safety (TCS) food requires time and temperature control to limit the pathogen growth or toxin formation, and
- Ready-to-eat (RTE) foods that may be eaten without any additional preparation steps to make the food safe, and
- Foods stored under refrigeration for more than 24 hours.

**Examples:** Sliced or opened lunchmeats, facility made salads (tuna, pasta, potato), cream cheese, milk, cheesecake, cream pies, cut melon, etc.

## What are the exceptions?

Most cheeses, unaltered commercial salad dressings, cultured dairy products, preserved fish, shelf-stable dry fermented sausages, pepperoni and salami not labeled as “keep refrigerated.”

## How do I datemark?

Be consistent with your facility’s datemarking system. Place the **DATE(s)** on the product. The health inspector looks for consistency in date marking, so make sure it is what your facility uses!

## How do I know what the DISCARD DATE is?

Once opened, prepared, sliced, or removed from the freezer, the food must be used or discarded within **7 total days**.

## Could you give me some examples?

- Lunchmeat stored at 41°F and sliced on 6-3-18 must have a **DISCARD DATE** of: **6-9-18** (*open date + 6 days*).
- Tuna salad stored at 41°F and made on 10-12-17 must have a **DISCARD DATE** of: **10-18-17** (*make date + 6 days*).

**Make sure you either use or discard the foods by the **DISCARD DATE!****