University of Missouri Extension

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Storing Food in the Cupboard

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Knowing how to properly store food and how long it will keep means less food dollars wasted and ensures food will look and taste good when used. Retaining a food's original nutrients and knowing that it is safe to eat are important.

Cupboard storage hints

- Store foods in cool cabinets and away from appliances which produce heat.
- Many staples and canned foods have a relatively long shelf life, but buy only what you expect to use within the time recommended in the chart. Date food packages and use the oldest first. Foods stored for longer than recommended times or beyond date on the package may change quality, color and flavor. Geographic areas will affect recommended storage time. Warm and humid conditions shorten the shelf life of goods.
- Buy fresh-looking packages. Dusty cans or torn labels can indicate old stock. Do not purchase dented or bulging cans.

How to crisp foods

- When cereals, crackers or snacks get stale, spread them on a cookie sheet and place in a 425 degrees Fahrenheit oven. They'll be crisp again in a few minutes and ready to eat, provided they have no off-flavors.

Related MU Extension publications

- GH1451, Quality for Keeps: Before You Start to Can, Learn the Basics
  http://extension.missouri.edu/p/GH1451
- GH1452, Quality for Keeps: Steps to Success in Home Canning
  http://extension.missouri.edu/p/GH1452
- GH1454, Quality for Keeps: Preserve Your Garden Delights — How to Can Fresh Vegetables
  http://extension.missouri.edu/p/GH1454
- GH1455, Quality for Keeps: Fruitful Canning
  http://extension.missouri.edu/p/GH1455
- GH1456, Quality for Keeps: Tantalizing Tomatoes — How to Can Fresh Tomato Products
  http://extension.missouri.edu/p/GH1456
- GH1457, Quality for Keeps: Pickling Basics — In a Pickle
  http://extension.missouri.edu/p/GH1457
- GH1459, Quality for Keeps: Pack a Pickled Product
  http://extension.missouri.edu/p/GH1459
- GH1490, Quality for Keeps: Canning Meat, Fish and Poultry