



NEWS RELEASE

A new tool for smart food storage is now available from the United States Department of Agriculture, “FoodKeeper” App.

How many times have you gone into your pantry or refrigerator, only to find that what you were going to use in your meal was spoiled? The USDA, Cornell University and the Food Marketing Institute would like to help you avoid that problem in the future with our new application, the FoodKeeper.

Every year, billions of pounds of good food go to waste in the U.S. because home cooks are not sure of the quality or safety of items. USDA estimates that 21% of the available food in the U.S. goes uneaten at the consumer level. In total, 36 pounds of food per person is wasted each month at the retail and consumer levels!

This new downloadable application will help you understand how different storing methods affect a product’s shelf life. This should help you maximize the storage life of foods and beverages in your home. In addition, the application can remind you to use items before they are likely to spoil.

The FoodKeeper application offers users valuable storage advice about more than 400 food and beverage items, including various types of baby food, dairy products and eggs, meat, poultry, produce, seafood, and more. With the application you can:

- Find specific storage timelines for the refrigerator, freezer, and pantry, depending on the nature of the product;
- Get cooking tips for cooking methods of meat, poultry and seafood products;
- Note in your devices’ calendar when products were purchased and receive notifications when they are nearing the end of their recommended storage date;
- Search the application with swipe gestures or voice control; and,
- Submit a question to USDA using the ‘Ask Karen’ feature of the application. ‘Ask Karen’ is USDA’s 24/7 virtual representative. The system provides information about preventing foodborne illness, safe food handling and storage, and safe preparation of meat, poultry, and egg products.

The app is available for [Android](#) and [Apple](#) devices. Storage times listed are intended as useful guidelines and are not hard-and-fast rules. Some foods may deteriorate more quickly while others may last longer than the times suggested.

For information on how to properly store foods to ensure you are safe go to: www.food.unl.edu or contact local Nebraska Extension Office.

Submitted by Brenda Aufdenkamp, Nebraska Extension Educator.

Source: <https://www.foodsafety.gov/keep/foodkeeperapp/>