

This information on what foods can be saved and what should be thrown away is from the (USDA) **United States Department of Agriculture, Food Safety and Inspection Service website:**

[https://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/food-safety-education/get-answers/food-safety-fact-sheets/emergency-preparedness/keeping-food-safe-during-an-emergency/CT\\_Index](https://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/food-safety-education/get-answers/food-safety-fact-sheets/emergency-preparedness/keeping-food-safe-during-an-emergency/CT_Index)

**Q. May I refreeze the food in the freezer if it thawed or partially thawed?**

**A.** Yes, the food may be safely refrozen if the food still contains ice crystals or is at 40 °F or below. You will have to evaluate each item separately. Be sure to discard any items in either the freezer or the refrigerator that have come into contact with raw meat juices. Partial thawing and refreezing may reduce the quality of some food, but the food will remain safe to eat. See the attached charts for specific recommendations.

**Q. Some of my food in the freezer started to thaw or had thawed when the power came back on. Is the food safe? How long will the food in the refrigerator be safe with the power off?**

**A.** **Never taste food to determine its safety!** You will have to evaluate each item separately. If an appliance thermometer was kept in the freezer, read the temperature when the power comes back on. If the appliance thermometer stored in the freezer reads 40 °F or below, the food is safe and may be refrozen. If a thermometer has not been kept in the freezer, check each package of food to determine the safety. Remember you can't rely on appearance or odor. If the food still contains ice crystals or is 40 °F or below, it is safe to refreeze. Refrigerated food should be safe as long as power is out no more than 4 hours. Keep the door closed as much as possible. Discard any perishable food (such as meat, poultry, fish, eggs, and leftovers) that have been above 40 °F for 2 hours.

**Refrigerator Foods**

**When to Save and When to Throw It Out**

| <b>FOOD</b>  | <b>Held above 40 °F for over 2 hours</b> |
|--|--|
| <b>MEAT, POULTRY, SEAFOOD</b>  |  |
| Raw or leftover cooked meat, poultry, fish, or seafood; soy meat substitutes | Discard                                  |
| Thawing meat or poultry  | Discard                                  |
| Meat, tuna, shrimp, chicken, or egg salad                                    | Discard                                  |
| Gravy, stuffing, broth   | Discard                                  |

Lunchmeats, hot dogs, bacon, sausage, dried beef Discard

Pizza, with any topping Discard

Canned hams labeled "Keep Refrigerated" Discard

Canned meats and fish, opened Discard

### **CHEESE**

Soft Cheeses: blue/bleu, Roquefort, Brie, Camembert, cottage, cream, Edam, Monterey Jack, ricotta, mozzarella, Muenster, Neufchatel, queso blanco, queso fresco Discard

Hard Cheeses: Cheddar, Colby, Swiss, Parmesan, provolone, Romano Safe

Processed Cheeses Safe

Shredded Cheeses Discard

Low-fat Cheeses Discard

Grated Parmesan, Romano, or combination (in can or jar) Safe

### **DAIRY**

Milk, cream, sour cream, buttermilk, evaporated milk, yogurt, eggnog, soy milk Discard

Butter, margarine Safe

Baby formula, opened Discard

### **EGGS**

Fresh eggs, hard-cooked in shell, egg dishes, egg products Discard

Custards and puddings Discard

**CASSEROLES, SOUPS, STEWS** Discard

### **FRUITS**

Fresh fruits, cut Discard

Fruit juices, opened Safe

Canned fruits, opened Safe

Fresh fruits, coconut, raisins, dried fruits, candied fruits, dates Safe

### **SAUCES, SPREADS, JAMS**

Opened mayonnaise, tartar sauce, horseradish Discard if above 50 °F for over 8 hrs.

Peanut butter Safe

|   |         |
|---|---------|
| Jelly, relish, taco sauce, mustard, catsup, olives, pickles | Safe    |
| Worcestershire, soy, barbecue, Hoisin sauces                | Safe    |
| Fish sauces (oyster sauce)                                  | Discard |
| Opened vinegar-based dressings                              | Safe    |
| Opened creamy-based dressings                               | Discard |
| Spaghetti sauce, opened jar                                 | Discard |
| <b>BREAD, CAKES, COOKIES,PASTA, GRAINS</b>                  |         |
| Bread, rolls, cakes, muffins, quick breads, tortillas       | Safe    |
| Refrigerator biscuits,rolls, cookie dough                   | Discard |
| Cooked pasta, rice, potatoes                                | Discard |
| Pasta salads with mayonnaise or vinaigrette                 | Discard |
| Fresh pasta   | Discard |
| Cheesecake  | Discard |
| Breakfast foods—waffles, pancakes, bagels                   | Safe    |
| <b>PIES, PASTRY</b>   |         |
| Pastries, cream filled                                      | Discard |
| Pies—custard,cheese filled, or chiffon; quiche              | Discard |
| Pies, fruit   | Safe    |
| <b>VEGETABLES</b>   |         |
| Fresh mushrooms, herbs, spices                              | Safe    |
| Greens, pre-cut, pre-washed, packaged                       | Discard |
| Vegetables, raw   | Safe    |
| Vegetables, cooked; tofu                                    | Discard |
| Vegetable juice, opened                                     | Discard |
| Baked potatoes  | Discard |
| Commercial garlic in oil                                    | Discard |
| Potato Salad  | Discard |

## Frozen Food

### When to Save and When To Throw It Out

| <b>FOOD</b>   | <b>Still contains ice crystals and feels as cold as if refrigerated</b> | <b>Thawed. Held above 40 °F for over 2 hours</b> |
|---|---|--|
| <b>MEAT, POULTRY, SEAFOOD</b>                         |   |  |
| Beef, veal, lamb, pork, and ground meats              | Refreeze  | Discard  |
| Poultry and ground poultry                            | Refreeze  | Discard  |
| Variety meats (liver, kidney, heart, chitterlings)    | Refreeze  | Discard  |
| Casseroles, stews, soups                              | Refreeze  | Discard  |
| Fish, shellfish, breaded seafood products             | Refreeze. However, there will be some texture and flavor loss.          | Discard  |
| <b>DAIRY</b>  |   |  |
| Milk  | Refreeze. May lose some texture.  | Discard  |
| Eggs (out of shell) and egg products                  | Refreeze  | Discard  |
| Ice cream, frozen yogurt                              | Discard   | Discard  |
| Cheese (soft and semi-soft)                           | Refreeze. May lose some texture.  | Discard  |
| Hard cheeses  | Refreeze  | Refreeze   |
| Shredded cheeses                                      | Refreeze  | Discard  |
| Casseroles containing milk, cream, eggs, soft cheeses | Refreeze  | Discard  |
| Cheesecake  | Refreeze  | Discard  |
| <b>FRUITS</b>   |   |  |
| Juices  | Refreeze  | Refreeze. Discard if mold,                       |

|  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| Home or commercially packaged  | Refreeze. Will change texture and flavor.     | yeasty smell, or sliminess develops.<br>Refreeze. Discard if mold, yeasty smell, or sliminess develops. |
| <b>VEGETABLES</b>  |   |   |
| Juices   | Refreeze                                      | Discard after held above 40 °F for 6 hours.   |
| Home or commercially packaged or blanched  | Refreeze. May suffer texture and flavor loss. | Discard after held above 40 °F for 6 hours.   |
| <b>BREADS, PASTRIES</b>  |   |   |
| Breads, rolls, muffins, cakes (without custard fillings)                                       | Refreeze                                      | Refreeze  |
| Cakes, pies, pastries with custard or cheese filling   | Refreeze                                      | Discard   |
| Pie crusts, commercial and homemade bread dough  | Refreeze. Some quality loss may occur.        | Refreeze. Quality loss is considerable.   |
| <b>OTHER</b>   |   |   |
| Casseroles—pasta, rice based   | Refreeze                                      | Discard   |
| Flour, cornmeal, nuts  | Refreeze                                      | Refreeze  |
| Breakfast items—waffles, pancakes, bagels  | Refreeze                                      | Refreeze  |
| Frozen meal, entree, specialty items (pizza, sausage and biscuit, meat pie, convenience foods) | Refreeze                                      | Discard   |