

FOOD & POWER OUTAGES

FREEZER FOOD

When to Save it and When to Throw It Out

If an appliance thermometer was kept in the freezer, check the temperature when the power comes back on. If the freezer thermometer reads 40° F or below, the food is safe and may be refrozen.

A full freezer will hold a safe temperature for approximately 48 hours (24 hours if it is

half-full and the door remains closed). Food may be safely refrozen if it still contains ice crystals or is at 40°F or below, however, its quality may suffer.

After a power outage never taste food to determine its safety. You will have to evaluate each item separately—use this chart as a guide. *When in Doubt, Throw it Out!*

	<i>Contains ice crystals and feels cold as if refrigerated</i>	<i>Thawed and held above 40°F for more than 2 hours</i>
<i>Meat, poultry, seafood</i>		
Meat, poultry, seafood - all types of cuts	Refreeze	Discard
Stews, soups	Refreeze	Discard
<i>Dairy</i>		
Milk	Refreeze (some loss of texture)	Discard
Eggs (out of shell) and egg products	Refreeze	Discard
Ice cream, frozen yogurt	Discard	Discard
Cheese (soft and semi-soft)	Refreeze (some loss of texture)	Discard
Hard cheeses	Refreeze	Refreeze
Shredded cheeses	Refreeze	Discard
Cheesecake	Refreeze	Discard
<i>Fruits</i>		
Juices	Refreeze	Refreeze (discard if mold, yeasty smell or sliminess develops)
Home or commercially packaged	Refreeze (will change texture and flavor)	Refreeze (discard if mold, yeasty smell or sliminess develops)

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Vegetables

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

Breads and pastries

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)

Other foods

Casseroles: pasta, rice based	Refreeze	Discard
Flour, cornmeal, nuts	Refreeze	Refreeze
Breakfast items: waffles, pancakes, bagels	Refreeze	Refreeze
Frozen meal, entree, specialty item (pizza, sausage and biscuit, meat pie, convenience foods)	Refreeze	Discard

REFERENCES

FoodSafety.gov A federal government website managed by the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services. 200 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20201

USDA. United States Department of Agriculture. Food Safety and Inspection Service.

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