

Dear Customer,

Over the past few months we have seen a significant decline in demand, due to Coronavirus pandemic, which has led to a number of challenges with products and their Best Before dates. To help overcome these challenges, we have been working closely with Suppliers and Country Range to extend the shelf life of products. This is in line with guidance from WRAP on Best Before dates, with the guidelines being endorsed by the Food Standards Agency and DEFRA, to provide assurance to customers and consumers that it is safe and acceptable to sell and consume products which are past their Best Before dates.

It is important to understand the difference between Use By dates and Best Before dates. When deciding which to use the manufacturer will carry out a risk assessment to decide if the product is highly perishable, such as fresh vegetables or chilled meats, and if so, they will use a Use By date. If the product is more stable, such as UHT milk or dried pasta, a Best Before date will be used. The Best Before date means the product will be safe to eat for a period of time after it has passed. It is important to note that any extensions made are only for products with a Best Before date.

We have extended the Best Before dates on a small number of products, where the supplier has been able to approve an extension to the life of the product. Where the supplier has approved an extension, the product will be clearly labelled in the format below, providing the new Best Before date and when the date was extended. The original Best Before date and batch number will still be visible, so they can be used for traceability purposes.

BEST BEFORE END DATE: 03/09/20
THIS PRODUCTS BBD DATE WAS EXTENDED ON: 18/06/2020
THE BEST BEFORE DATE ON THE ORIGINAL LABEL MUST BE DISREGARDED EXCEPT FOR USE AS PRODUCT TRACEABILITY

We have also extended the life on a small number of chilled products by freezing them, again this is only where the supplier has approved the extension and freezing of the product. Where this has been approved the product has been clearly labelled in the format below, providing the new Best Before date, when the product was frozen, and the shelf life from defrost.

BEST BEFORE END DATE: 09/08/20
THIS PRODUCT WAS FROZEN ON: 01/06/2020
ONCE DEFROSTED USE WITHIN 24 HOURS
THE BEST BEFORE DATE ON THE ORIGINAL LABEL MUST BE DISREGARDED EXCEPT FOR USE AS PRODUCT TRACEABILITY

It is important that this information is taken into consideration if a product is received with an extended Best Before date. Your support is appreciated in accepting and using these products is in line with the extended Best Before dates, to help avoid unnecessary food waste. More information is available on request.