



Shopping for Safe Food

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Make shopping for food your last stop before going home. Meat, eggs, and milk are “perishable” foods. Plan ahead to make sure you have enough refrigerator/freezer space for your perishable foods.

Perishable foods spoil if they are left out for more than two hours. If it is over 90 degrees, or if groceries sit in a hot car, food will begin to spoil much sooner. Get perishable foods home and into your refrigerator within one hour if it is very hot. If it takes longer to get home, bring along an ice chest for perishable foods. Pack ice, or fill a milk jug with water and freeze it. Put either in the ice chest to keep food cold. A cardboard box can be used if you don't have an ice chest. Pack lots of newspaper around the food to keep it cold and add ice.

Pick up cold and frozen foods last

Cold and frozen foods should go into your grocery cart last. Put raw meat and poultry in plastic bags so the blood won't drip on other food.

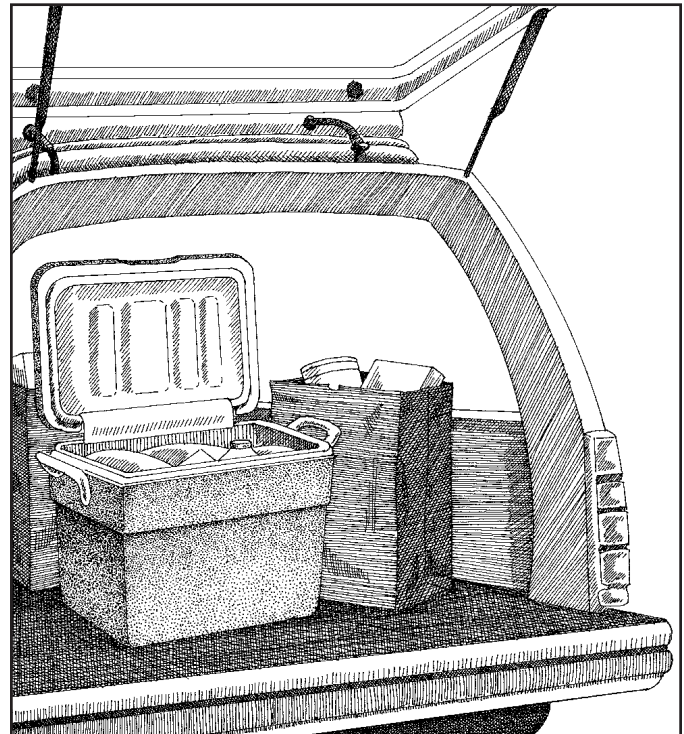
Avoid buying torn packages, bulging or dented cans, and dirty or cracked eggs. These foods could be spoiled.

Frozen foods should be frozen solid. Foods like corn, peas and berries should feel loose in the package. If they are one big lump, they may have been thawed and refrozen. Their quality will be poor.

Refrigerated foods should feel cold to the touch. Buy only milk and milk products that have been

pasteurized. It is unsafe to drink “raw” or unpasteurized milk.

Some foods have dates to help you decide if they are fresh. University of Missouri Outreach & Extension guide N369 describes three types of dates used on foods. This guide can be found at <http://muextension.missouri.edu/xplor>.



Take along an ice chest for perishable foods.

