

Food Date Labeling Act of 2025

In July 2025, Representatives Chellie Pingree (D-ME), Dan Newhouse (R-Wash.) along with U.S. Senators Richard Blumenthal (D-Conn.) and Rick Scott (R-Fla.) reintroduced the Food Date Labeling Act to standardize food date labels across the United States.

With the exception of infant formula, there are no uniform federal standards for date labels. In the absence of federal law, states have enacted a dizzying variety of date label laws. Some states even ban or restrict past-date food sales and donations, causing additional food waste. But these dates are generally not intended to communicate safety information; instead, they signal a manufacturer's estimate of how long food will taste its best. Unfortunately, consumers mistakenly believe that these dates are indicators of safety, and many report throwing away food once the date passes due to fear of safety risks.

The Food Date Labeling Act of 2025 would:

- Establish a dual label system reducing the available labeling language to two phrases: one quality date indicator and one discard date indicator.
 - If a manufacturer chooses to use a date to indicate a food product's quality, it must use the phrase "BEST if Used By" or "BB" if the package has limited space.
 - If a manufacturer chooses to use a date to indicate when a food should be discarded for safety reasons, it must use the standard language "USE By" or "UB" if the package has limited space.
 - A manufacturer may choose to add "or Freeze By" following a quality date or discard date uniform phrase.

Eliminate state laws that bar the sale or donation of food past the quality date. However, states would still be allowed to prohibit the past-date sale or donation of foods bearing the "Use by" discard date.

Instruct the USDA and FDA to work together to educate consumers and food companies about the meaning of new labels so that they could make better economic and safety decisions.

RESOURCES

Read the full text of S.2541 [here](#)

Provisions to standardize food date labeling are also included in Agriculture Resilience Act, [H.B. 3077](#)