

10 Surprising Foods That Benefit from Refrigeration



monkeybusinessimages/iStock/Getty Images Plus

You may already know milk, meat and eggs belong in the fridge. But what about less obvious foods? Storing these 10 foods in the fridge will help to keep them safe and taste great longer.

1. *Tortillas*

Some tortillas are prone to molding. That's why the fine print on many tortilla packages recommends refrigerating after opening. Chill tortillas to help them stay fresh. The date on their package is for quality purposes, so when foods are stored properly they may be consumed beyond their date, if there are no signs of spoilage.

2. *Salami*

Cured meats including salami are less likely to harbor bacteria than cooked meats, but that doesn't mean they're always 100-percent safe. Refrigeration can slow potential bacterial growth, but people who are at higher risk of foodborne illness, such as pregnant women, older adults, and people with weakened immune systems should reheat ready-to-eat foods like lunch and deli meats. Store unopened salami in the refrigerator for up to two weeks. After opening, it should be consumed within three to five days.

3. Ripe Bananas

It's fine to ripen bananas on the kitchen counter. Trouble is, they keep ripening, and ripening and ripening. Once they're ready to eat, pop them in the fridge for up to three days. Their skins may turn brown, but they're still fine to eat.

4. Nuts

Nuts' fragile unsaturated fats can go rancid quickly. While that may not hurt your health, it can definitely be bad news for flavor. Keep nuts tasting fresh by stowing them in a sealed plastic or glass container in the refrigerator for four to six months.

5. Maple Syrup

Maple syrup has a surprisingly short shelf life. So if yours is sitting in your pantry, it's time to relocate it to the fridge. Stored in the refrigerator, maple syrup usually can stay fresh for up to a year. However, if you notice any mold growth, be sure to toss it immediately.

6. Dried Fruit

Dried fruit has less moisture than fresh fruit, so it doesn't spoil as quickly, but refrigeration can help it maintain its freshness longer. Keep it in the main compartment of your refrigerator for up to six months.

7. Ketchup

Restaurants may leave their ketchup on the table, but that doesn't mean you should. While its high acid content will keep most bacteria at bay, cool temperatures help maintain flavor and freshness. Refrigerate ketchup for up to six months.

8. Corn on the Cob

After picking, corn begins to lose its sugar content dramatically when left at room temperature. Unless you're going to cook it right away, keep corn in the fridge — husks and all — for one to two days.

9. Chocolate Syrup

Chocolate syrup is an easy way to make a glass of milk taste even better. But not if it has developed funny flavors. Chill yours after opening and you can enjoy it for six months.

10. Pecan and Pumpkin Pies

Made with eggs, these treats are magnets for bacteria. Fresh from the oven, they're okay to eat at room temperature for up to two hours and only one hour if it is over 90 degrees Fahrenheit. After that, they should go straight into the fridge and eaten within three to four days or frozen for another time.