

# BREAKROOM BUZZ

November 2024

## How Long are Holiday Leftovers Good For?

November 29 is Throw Out Your Leftovers Day. Holiday leftovers typically keep for a matter of days post-meal but can also be stored in the freezer to extend their life and ensure the best quality.

- **Cooked turkey:** Refrigerate for up to four days.
- **Gravy:** Refrigerate for up to two days.
- **Green bean casserole:** Refrigerate for up to four days. Frozen cooked green beans do not store well.

- **Mashed potatoes and yams:** Refrigerate for up to five days.
- **Cranberry sauce:** Refrigerate for up to two weeks.

Remember, homemade pumpkin pie should be stored in the refrigerator, not at room temperature. Harmful sickness-causing bacteria can't be seen, smelled, or tasted. Learn more about food safety and the holidays at [extension.illinois.edu/turkey](https://extension.illinois.edu/turkey).

First time cooking a turkey?

Find a guide to preparing the bird at [extension.illinois.edu/turkey](https://extension.illinois.edu/turkey).



## National Recycling Day is November 15

Here are a few suggestions for addressing the problem:

- Before you shop, ask whether or not you need that item. Don't purchase it if you don't need it.
- Confirm if the item is eco-friendly. Has it passed the standard for energy savings, and is it something that is built to last?
- Recycle bottles, cans, paper, and cardboard.
- Keep food and liquid out of your recycling.
- Reuse plastic bags or learn where to recycle them.
- Invest in reusable cups instead of plastic or waxed cups.
- Reuse or repurpose items such as clothing.
- Check out where the local recycling program is located and what they will collect.

Check out the United States Environmental Protection Agency for tips on recycling. [www.epa.gov/recycle/how-do-i-recycle-common-recyclables](https://www.epa.gov/recycle/how-do-i-recycle-common-recyclables)



## Clean Out the Refrigerator Day is November 15



Throw away old leftovers and wipe your fridge clean. Here are what those dates on food mean:

- **Sell-by:** This date indicates when stores must remove products. Food will be safe to eat after this date if it has been refrigerated.
- **Best if used by:** This date is a recommendation to consumers when the product's flavor or quality is highest.
- **Use by:** This is the last date recommended to ensure a product's peak quality.
- **Pack date:** This date, usually used on canned food, is when the product was packaged and is used by manufacturers for tracking.
- **Expiration date:** Infant formula, baby food, and over-the-counter drugs should never be consumed after the expiration date because they may not function in the body as initially intended.

Learn more about storing food at [extension.illinois.edu/food/storing-food](https://extension.illinois.edu/food/storing-food).

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