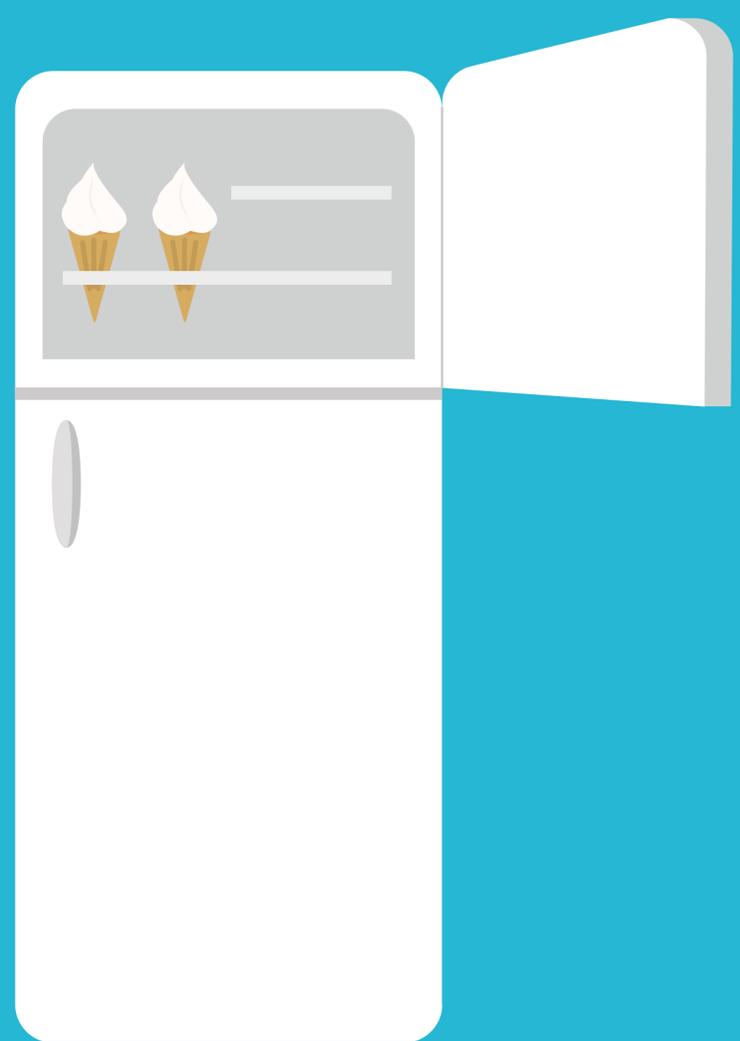


## WHAT IS FREEZER BURN?

Freezer burn is caused when water molecules escape from frozen food, which allows oxygen molecules to seep in. The oxygen molecules allow for color change and will modify the flavor of a frozen product. Food that has freezer burn is safe to eat, but you may find the texture and taste to be different.

## TIPS TO IDENTIFY FREEZER BURN

- Many foods change color when frozen for a long time.
  - Meat, poultry, and fish may develop dark brown or grayish-white leathery areas.
  - When cooked, the texture may be dry and tough.
- Starchy foods like cooked grains, rice, or pasta, as well as baked goods like bread or cake, will develop a rough texture.
- Meanwhile, grains may be coated with ice crystals, and baked goods will be dry and less voluminous.
- When Ice cream gets freezer burn, it loses its creaminess and gains ice crystals instead.



## PACKAGING TIPS TO REDUCE FREEZER BURN

- You can minimize freezer burn by keeping your freezer at 0°F or lower. Food freezes faster at this temperature, allowing smaller crystals to form. These are less likely than larger crystals to significantly change the quality of your food.
- It is also important to package your food properly to minimize oxygen exposure. For example, wrap meat, poultry, or seafood in freezer paper or plastic wrap, then foil, then a freezer bag.
- Remove as much air as possible from the packaging of frozen fruits and vegetables, and use small containers to minimize any empty space when freezing leftovers. You can also cover the top of ice cream with freezer paper or plastic wrap before replacing the lid.

## RECOMMENDED FREEZER STORAGE LENGTH

ITEM	MONTHS	ITEM	MONTHS
Bacon/Sausage	1-2	Meat, Uncooked Ground	3-4
Casseroles	2-3	Meat, Cooked	2-3
Egg Whites/Egg Substitute	12	Poultry, Uncooked Whole	12
Frozen Dinner/Entrees	3-4	Poultry, Uncooked Parts	9
Gravy, Meat or Poultry	2-3	Poultry, Uncooked Giblets	3-4
Ham, Hot dogs, Lunch Meat	1-2	Poultry, Cooked	4
Meat, Uncooked Roasts	4-12	Soups and Stews	2-3
Meat, Uncooked Steaks/Chops	4-12	Wild Game, Uncooked	8-12

**TEXAS A&M**  
**AGRILIFE**  
**EXTENSION**

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