

# Words on Wellness

## Understanding Food Date Labeling



Almost all food has a food date label. The product date indicates food quality, appearance, and flavor, not food safety. Some unopened foods may be safe to eat past their product date if properly handled and stored at home. Below are some dates on a food product and what they mean.

- **“Best If Used By/Before”** is how long the product will remain at its best quality while unopened. Foods not showing spoilage may be purchased, donated, and consumed beyond the date. (For donation information, contact your local food bank or use HS 142C [Healthy Food Pantry Donation Guide](https://store.extension.iastate.edu/product/16109), [store.extension.iastate.edu/product/16109](https://store.extension.iastate.edu/product/16109).)
- **“Use By”** is the last date recommended for using a product at peak quality and is a required safety date for infant formula. Do not use infant formula beyond this date due to nutrient loss.
- **“Sell By”** is the last day stores can display an item for sale while at peak quality.

Source:

[USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service](https://www.amsis.gov/), [go.iastate.edu/JSL1NT](https://go.iastate.edu/JSL1NT).

## *Chocolate Chip Oatmeal Muffin*

Serving Size: 1 muffin | Serves: 12

### Ingredients:

- 1 cup old-fashioned or quick-cooking oats
- 1 cup milk
- 1/3 cup oil (canola or vegetable)
- 1/3 cup brown sugar
- 1 cup white all-purpose flour
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/3 cup mini chocolate chips

### Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 375°F. Spray a muffin tin with cooking spray or line it with muffin liners.
2. Stir oats, milk, oil, and brown sugar together in a medium bowl. Let oats soak in wet ingredients for 10 minutes.
3. Stir flour, salt, baking powder, and baking soda together in a small bowl. Stir dry ingredients into wet ingredients until just combined.
4. Stir in chocolate chips.
5. Divide the batter into the muffin tins. Bake until the muffins are golden and a tester inserted into the center of a muffin comes out clean, about 14–16 minutes.
6. Store leftovers in an airtight container.

### Nutrition information per serving:

170 calories, 8g total fat, 1.5g saturated fat, 0g trans fat, 200mg sodium, 23g total carbohydrate, 1g fiber, 10g sugar, 3g protein. This recipe is courtesy of ISU Extension and Outreach’s SpendSmart. EatSmart. website. For more information, recipes, and videos, visit [spendsmart.extension.iastate.edu](https://spendsmart.extension.iastate.edu)

## Mobile Food Pantry

One in 14 Iowans is facing hunger. Iowa has many resources to help, such as the [Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program](https://dhs.iowa.gov/food-assistance) (dhs.iowa.gov/food-assistance), food banks, and food pantries—including mobile pantries!

Iowa Food Bank's mobile pantry operates in 30 counties; many provide a drive-thru option. How does the mobile food pantry work?

- Trucks deliver produce, meat, bread, and nonperishable items to the prearranged site.
- Local volunteers set up a farmers market-style distribution system.
- Food is given to people in need at the scheduled time.
- Participants stay in the vehicle and unlock the trunk or backseat.
- Volunteers safely place a prepackaged food box or bag in the designated area.
- Volunteers reset the space to its original condition when the food is gone.

To see if there is a mobile food pantry near you, family, or friends who may be in need, visit [Food Bank of Iowa](https://www.foodbankofiowa.org), [go.iastate.edu/RZLEVJ](https://go.iastate.edu/RZLEVJ).

## Love Your Body

While scrolling through social media, do you compare yourself with people who appear physically fit? Does it make you feel bad about your body? You are not alone. Poor or distorted body image issues have increased and affect people of all ages. This can lead to unhealthy practices with food and exercise.

A positive body image increases confidence (self-efficacy), self-acceptance, and healthy behaviors. Changing how you think, see, and feel will help you to learn to love your body. Here are some ways to help achieve and maintain a positive body image.

- Concentrate on what makes you special by exploring your unique skills and talents.
- Make a list of positive things to say to yourself and repeat the affirmations daily.
- Focus on appreciating and respecting your body. Plan time to relax and celebrate what your body can do.
- Set goals to improve your overall health and well-being.
- Speak out against unrealistic images of beauty portrayed in the media.

Source: [National Eating Disorder Collaboration-NEDC Fact Sheet - Body Image](https://www.nationaleatingdisorders.org/fact-sheet/body-image), [go.iastate.edu/FZSEW2](https://go.iastate.edu/FZSEW2).

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[go.iastate.edu/  
RZLEVJ](https://go.iastate.edu/RZLEVJ)

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*If you or someone you know is skipping meals, going hungry, or choosing between food and medicine, call 1-855-944-3663 to apply for assistance today.*

*Call Iowa 2-1-1 or Iowa Lifelong Links, 1-866-468-7887, for additional resources.*



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