

## **CSA Berlin's Frozen Food Policy**

Dear CSA Berlin Customers,

The CSA Berlin's mission is to provide our customers with a broad range of U.S. products not otherwise available in Germany. To do so, we work with our partners in the Department of Defense Commissary Association (DECA), who are our primary supplies of frozen goods. Although we sit at the end of a long supply chain, we strive to always provide the freshest possible selection to our customers.

The most important thing we do to keep our products fresh is freeze them. We follow guidelines set by the Food and Drug Agency, U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), DECA and industry resources such as the Industrial Refrigeration Handbook. When we make an order for Berlin, the products are professionally frozen by our DECA suppliers in Germany. Not only does freezing food keep it fresh, it also keeps it safe. Per the USDA, "food stored constantly at 0 degrees Fahrenheit will always be safe...by slowing the movement of molecules, causing microbes to enter a dormant stage...[which] prevents the growth of microorganisms that cause both food spoilage and foodborne illnesses\*".

Most of these products, particularly meat products, are frozen shortly after production. For example, if we order ground beef, DECA will select a packet of ground beef produced a day or two earlier and freeze it for us. However, it is very important to note that DECA products are primarily for use in the military commissaries in Germany. As such, while they quickly freeze goods for us, their packaging (including the date of expiration) reflects their expected sale in Germany, where they will **not** be frozen. Our frozen products show the DECA expiration date, which is meant for unfrozen goods.

While frozen goods will always be safe, we want to make sure they are also the best possible quality. Below are industry guidelines on when frozen food quality begins to suffer.

Type of Frozen Product	Industry Standard	CSA Berlin Standard
Beef	18 months	15 months
Pork	18 months	15 months
Poultry, Turkey	12 months	12 months
Fruits & vegetables	12 months	10 months
Fish	6 months	3 months
Dough	12 months	9 months
Bread, bagels, buns	8 months	6 months

Please let us know if you have questions or concerns. We are always here for you!

[https://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/wcm/connect/cce745c9-0fc9-4ce6-a50c-84363e5b5a48/Freezing\\_and\\_Food\\_Safety.pdf?MOD=AJPERES](https://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/wcm/connect/cce745c9-0fc9-4ce6-a50c-84363e5b5a48/Freezing_and_Food_Safety.pdf?MOD=AJPERES)

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