

# Food Declarations & Date Labels

*Expiry dates are responsible for 10% of the 88 million tons of food lost or wasted across the value chain in Europe (equivalent to 3 to 6 billion euros) ([WRAP, 2015](#))*

Use by dates are important to follow, while before dates need your assessment - use your senses to figure out if something has actually expired.

## Goals

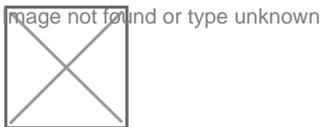
*The students understand food declarations and food labels*

*The students can assess the quality of food*

## Start

Before the exercise, it's a good idea to talk to the students about the "Good to know" page and give them a few examples of the two types of date labels and the addition "often good after".

Let them also come up with their own examples. For example, you **can't** add "often good after" to minced beef, ham or fresh fish, because they have the "use by" date label.



## Addition

If you want to you can show one or more examples of the see-smell-taste test. Have small bowls prepared with spices, sugar, yogurt and other "best before" items that the students can **see, smell and taste**.

The products do not have to be past their date. The important thing about the exercise is that students try the "see-smell-taste test".

## Guide

### The supermarket trip

Divide the class into groups of four and let them explore the local supermarket with these questions in mind:

- Which date labels are on the different types of food? Are they fresh, pickled, dry, frozen or something else?
- What do the labels mean?
- In the supermarket, the groups must look for and take pictures of/note three items that they think should have the addition "often good after"

On the way back or when back at school, the group should discuss their findings and learnings from the supermarket.

### Back at school

After the students have been in the supermarket let them share their pictures and talk about their findings in class.

If students have found products that have "use by" date labeling, it is important to emphasize that these products **must not be eaten** when the date is exceeded.

This applies to all product types marked with "use by", which includes fresh foods such as meat and fish, which can develop bacteria that cannot always be smelled or seen, but which can be very dangerous to ingest.

***Therefore, "often good after" can only be added to "best before" products.***

Ask the students about the following and get them to discuss with one another:

- The difference between the "use by" and "best before".
- Which items in the supermarket could have the additional date labeling "often good after"? Why these products in particular?
- In what ways could the addition of "often good after" help reduce food waste?

## **In the end**

Remember to present their home assignment:

The students must each take a look in their kitchens and note whether there is food that's over date. With their new knowledge, they can assess whether the food must be thrown out or can easily be eaten.