

Here's how to...

Ensure Product Quality – Dating & Rotation

Properly **dating**, **rotating** and **storing** product are keys to maintaining product quality. Ensuring that your store has systems in place to monitor product quality is critical.

What products must be dated?	All perishable products (i.e., food items) and dry goods must be dated. Dating products is the foundation of food safety. It's the number one indicator health department inspectors look for to determine if food safety practices are followed in your store.
What is FIFO?	First-In-First-Out is our system for product rotation. This means that the first product brought into storage (i.e., oldest) is the first product to be taken out and used. All food products, including dry storage goods, must be properly rotated using FIFO.
What are points to note for dating, rotating and storing products?	<p>Dating Record date of receipt when receiving food orders; record the date clearly and with a grease pencil, dating gun, or date label in the most visible location (keeping in mind that lids get removed, items get stacked, individual items get removed from larger boxes, etc.).</p> <p>Rotating Place newest products underneath or behind any existing product to ensure that the older merchandise is used first.</p> <p>Storing Place all incoming orders into designated areas as soon as they have been checked in; store temperature sensitive items in refrigerators/freezers immediately to avoid the temperature danger zone and product defrosting/re-freezing; store dry food products in cool dry areas away from heaters and heat producing equipment.</p>
What about expired products?	Immediately discard any expired products in your store to ensure that crew members do not accidentally serve these expired items.
What are some dating Best Practices?	<p>Labels Small, water-soluble, inexpensive stickers made specifically for dating food items and are a great alternative to grease pencils or markers are available. Contact Ecolab at 800-321-3687, or www.daydots.com.</p> <p>Checklists The regular use of daily checklists is the most important practice in monitoring product quality! It is crucial that each team member is properly trained on using the checklists and that crew members are held accountable for completing the checklists. Checklists are your best tool to help ensure that items are dated and that we are serving only fresh, safe food to our guests!</p>
How do I maintain product quality?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Follow the procedures and recipes in the library of job aids• Use fresh, not spoiled or out-of-date products• Hold all products at the proper temperature• Maintain proper equipment temperatures (use a hanging thermometer or a back-up temperature gauge in each unit; keep calibrated thermometers available and in use)

Use Only Fresh Products

When it comes to getting people to try your food, there is no better way to get your product in their hands than to give them a sample! It's easy to make sampling a part of your marketing strategy every day. Many people may not try your restaurant or different menu items, simply because they have never tried the food. By setting up sampling areas in your store, you are able to give the consumer a risk-free way to try it. Product sampling is a great way to increase customer awareness, trial and sales. To ensure that customers are sampling our best product, **do not use expired products for sampling**. Instead, ensure that systems for checking expiration dates are in place, monitor if a product is approaching its expiration date and sample it before that date—not once it has expired!