

## FREEZING AND RELABELLING FOOD

### CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THE USE AND DATE MARKING OF FROZEN FOOD

It has become a common practice in neighbourhood stores to freeze chilled foods to extend the product shelf life. This practice generally involves meat products and is a convenience for both the retailer and the customer. However the practice invalidates the chilled use by-date on the product and when frozen does not provide accurate information for the purchaser.

#### **Is It An Offence To Sell Frozen Foods That Have Not Been Correctly Labelled?**

It is an offence to sell a product beyond its use by date unless it is correctly labelled and approval is granted by the City of Albany.

#### **Retail Outlet Responsibilities**

The following points are compulsory if chilled products are to be frozen:

1. **Source good quality food:** Foods should to be sourced from reputable supplier and kept under recommended storage conditions prior to freezing.
2. **Ensure product is adequately packaged:** The packaging of the food must be intact and suitable for freezing. If the package is damaged it will greatly reduce the quality of the food.
3. **The product is to be frozen within its use-by or best before date:** The product must have at least 48 hours of date marking remaining to allow its freezing and storage.
4. **Correct freezer temperature** The product is to be frozen by a quick process to ensure product quality.
5. **Maximum storage time** The storage time for a frozen product as advised by the manufacturer. If no recommended time can be given refer to the following table.

Product	Storage life in months	
	- 12 C	-18 C
Raw beef	8	18
Raw lamb	12	18

Raw pork	6	10
Raw chicken	9	18
Raw lean fish	6	9
Raw glazed fatty fish	3	5
Cooked peeled prawns	2	5

- 6 **Establish a new shelf life:** Once the new date life has been established the label shall be placed over the first label and this first label shall not be visible as it may confuse the purchaser.
- 7 **The label shall include:** The new label shall include the use-by date and information that the product shall be consumed as soon as practical after thawing, or within 48 hours of thawing.

Council approval is required to relabel frozen food products and this will be granted provided there is compliance with all relevant aspects of this Info Pack.

### **Manufacturers Responsibilities**

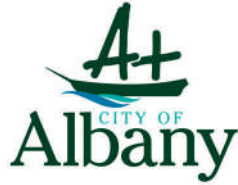
Written information should be available to retailers if the manufacturer considers the product is likely to be frozen for distribution, or to extend the shelf life.

The manufacturer should consider at the time of production the following points:

1. **Suitably of product to be frozen:** Advice on the suitability of a product to be frozen.
2. **Storage conditions required:** This shall include:
  - The appropriate packaging of the product.
  - The appropriate stored temperature of the product.
3. **The date marking to reflect altered storage conditions:** Eg “Use-by date \*\*\* unless frozen”. Length of time a product should be kept frozen in order to maintain suitable quality eg “ Max time in freezer \*\*\*\*” Refer to table.
4. **Thawing conditions:** Information that the product should be thawed in a refrigerator.
5. **Recommended shelf life:** Information that once the product has been thawed, it shall be consumed as soon as practical, or within 48 hours of thawing.

#### **\*\* DISCLAIMER \*\***

This information sheet is a guide only. Verification with original Local Laws, Acts, Planning Schemes, and other relevant documents is recommended for detailed references. The City of Albany accepts no responsibility for errors or omissions.



**APPLICATION FOR RELABELLING OF CHILLED FOOD PRODUCTS  
THAT HAVE BEEN FROZEN**

**1. APPLICANT:**

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**2. NAME & ADDRESS OF PREMISES:**

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**3. TELEPHONE NUMBER:**

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**4. FROZEN FOOD PRODUCT:**

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**5. MANUFACTURER:**

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**6. TEMPERATURE OF STORAGE FREEZER:**

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**7. STORAGE LIFE:**

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\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature of Applicant**

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**OFFICE USE ONLY**

**Approval to relabel chilled food products that have been frozen.**

Approval is granted to.....

For the freezing and relabelling of.....

In accordance with the Code of Conduct for the use and date marking of frozen food.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Environmental Health Officer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date