

## 'Sell by' dates not backed by science, study shows, leading to \$32 billion in wasted food every year

.... [T]he lack of regulation, standardization, and general understanding of date labeling on food products (such as "best by" and "use by" dates) leads to billions of dollars per year in food waste in the United States alone. Many people don't realize that date labels on food products (with the exception of infant formula) are entirely at the manufacturer's discretion and are not supported by robust scientific evidence.

To address this concern and combat global food waste, researchers at the University of Maryland have come together across departments in the College of Agriculture & Natural Resources with the goal of [clarifying the science or lack thereof behind food date labels](#) ....

...

According to the [USDA], Americans discard or waste about 133 billion pounds of food each year, representing \$161 billion and a 31% loss of food at the retail and consumer level. According to the FDA, 90% of Americans say they are likely to prematurely discard food because they misinterpret date labels because of food safety concerns or uncertainty on how to properly store the product. This simple confusion accounts for 20% of the total annual food waste in the United States, representing more than 26 billion pounds per year and over \$32 billion in food waste.

[Read the original post](#)