

TIPS ON MAIL-ORDER FOOD

WHEN YOU ORDER A GIFT



1. Check on the cold source. Ask what kind of cold source will be used with perishable food and how long the package will be in transit. The cold source must last long enough so that food arrives still frozen or firm and cold. Canned or processed foods labeled "keep refrigerated" should also be shipped with a cold source.
2. Check that the package will be labeled as perishable food on the outside. Perishables have a much better chance of surviving if properly labeled.
3. Set a workable delivery date. Once you know how long the mailing takes, call your friends to find a date someone can be home to receive the gift. Is there a neighbor who is usually home? Mention that this "surprise" should go straight into the refrigerator. Then, call the mail-order house back and set up delivery.

WHEN YOU RECEIVE A GIFT

1. Fresh or cooked meat, poultry or fish should arrive frozen or still hard in the middle. If never frozen, it should be cold to the touch (see Table).
2. Ham - With the exception of dry-cured country hams, baked hams and most canned hams need refrigeration and should arrive cold.
3. Sausage - Some hard, dry sausages (pepperoni, hard salamis) do not need refrigeration; other types (summer sausage, Lebanon bologna, Thuringer) do. If the label says "refrigerate," the sausage should arrive cold.
4. Caviar and Lobster - Fresh caviar must arrive carefully packed and thoroughly cold. Otherwise, do not eat it. Do not even taste it. Canned caviar ordinarily only requires refrigeration after opening.
5. Cheese - There should be no mold on cheese except what is part of its nature (blue mold in blue cheese, for example).
6. Cheesecake, perishable because of its ingredients, should arrive fully frozen.

| Storing Mail Order Meat and Poultry | | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------|-------------|
| FOOD ITEM | CABINET | REFRIGERATOR | FREEZER |
| Smoked Turkey | | 7 days | 6 months |
| Wild Smoked Turkey | | 1-2 days | 6 months |
| Game Birds | | 1-2 days | 6 months |
| Country Ham Dry-Cured | unsliced several months | sliced 1-2 months | |
| Canned Smoked Ham | unopened 1 year | opened 1 week | |
| Canned Smoked Refrigerator Ham | unopened 6-9 months | open 1 week | |
| Lamb | | 1-2 days | 6-9 months |
| Beef | | 1-2 days | 6-12 months |
| Pork | | 1-2 days | 4-8 months |