



United States Department of Agriculture

One Team, One Purpose



# Food Safety and Inspection Service

Protecting Public Health and Preventing Foodborne Illness



## Food Safety and Inspection Service: FSIS Policy on Sell-By/Use-By

- **Terms used with calendar dates are not required labeling features; voluntary requirements apply if used (9 CFR 317.8, 381.129)**
  - **For poultry, required code/date of packing for shipping container or immediate container; dressed poultry required to have slaughter date**
  - **Poultry industry, more so than meat industry, voluntarily uses sell or use by date**
- **Calendar dates must explain the purpose and include the month of the year and day of the month, while canned products include the year**
- **Retailers cannot change the dates applied by Federal establishment**
  - **However, if the retailer places a calendar date on meat or poultry, the original sell date must be included with the new sell date**
  - **Once package is opened, pathogen growth/recontamination concern arises**
- **Safety based date labeling addressed by NACMCF (JFP 2005, 68-8; 1761—1775) – concluded little or no impact for *L. monocytogenes* disease**
- **Modified atmosphere packaged product has restrictions for use-by due to changes in spoilage bacteria effects**
- **Foodkeeper App use-by guidance has a non-food safety focus**

Food Safety and Inspection Service:

## QUESTIONS?

**Contact:**

**Dr. Daniel Engeljohn**

**Assistant Administrator**

**Office of Policy and Program**

**Development**

**FSIS, USDA**

**(202) 205-0495**

**[daniel.engeljohn@fsis.usda.gov](mailto:daniel.engeljohn@fsis.usda.gov)**

