

Pantry items that stay fresher in the fridge

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(HealthDay)—You may know to keep tomatoes out of the fridge to preserve their taste, but did you know which pantry staples actually do better under refrigeration?

While many of the following foods may stay fresh for up to six months under "ideal" conditions—in a cool, dark pantry—that's not always possible, especially if your home often gets warm and humid.

Here's what you need to know.

Keep whole intact grains and whole grain flours and meals in the fridge or freezer.

These include:

- Whole grains, such as wheat berries, quinoa, brown rice, cornmeal and barley.
- Whole [wheat flour](#).
- Coconut flour and coconut flakes.
- Wheat germ, [wheat bran](#) and rice bran.
- Ground flaxseed.

The good-for-you natural oils in nuts go rancid faster at room temperature. They'll stay tasty for a year or more in the fridge and up to 2 years in the freezer. Nut flours, natural peanut butter, other nut butters like cashew and almond butter, and nut and seed oils, especially walnut and sesame oils, should be refrigerated.

If you don't use up opened bottles of other oils, such as olive and safflower oils, within a month, consider keeping them in the fridge, but definitely away from the heat of your stove. Note that refrigerating oils may cause them to become cloudy, but they'll return to normal at [room temperature](#), and this doesn't affect taste.

More surprising foods for the fridge are maple syrup, vanilla, molasses, instant coffee and active dry yeast.

Before the big chill, place foods in airtight containers or sealed plastic bags so they won't absorb any moisture or pick up odors from other foods. And periodically check the temperature inside your fridge—it should always be between 34 and 40 degrees.

More information: Maximize the benefits of your fridge and freezer with these tips from the [Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln](#).

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