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SAFETY OF FROZEN CANNED FOOD

More than pipes can freeze during icy weather. Frozen canned foods store in unheated storage areas may also prompt calls from concerned consumers. If canned foods have frozen, they may still be safe to eat. Safety will depend on the condition of the can or jar. To evaluate safety, consider the following:

Metal Cans

- If the seams are still intact, the food is safe to use. Thaw gradually and store at room temperature.
- If the seam has broken and the food has thawed to room temperature, it should be discarded.
- If the seam has broken and the food is still cold (refrigerator temperature or below), it may be safely salvaged. Transfer it to a container and either store it in the refrigerator or refreeze for future use.
- All food that has been frozen in tin cans should be examined carefully for spoilage before use. For an extra margin of safety, boil low acid foods (meats, fish, poultry and vegetables) for 10 minutes before using.

Glass Jars

- If jars have cracked or broken during freezing, the food should not be used.
- If the seal is still intact, the food is safe to use. Thaw gradually and store at room temperature. Recheck seals after thawing.
- If the seal has broken and food has thawed to room temperature, it should be discarded.
- If the seal has broken and food is still cold (refrigerator temperature or below), it may be safely salvaged. Store in the refrigerator or refreeze for future use.
- All food that has frozen in glass jars should be examined carefully for spoilage before use. For an extra margin of safety, boil low-acid foods (meat, fish, poultry, vegetables) for 10 minutes before using.

In General

- Discard any product with an off-color or odor. **DO NOT TASTE** food that looks or smells suspicious.
- Texture changes of canned vegetables and pasta may occur during freezing. Although mushy, these foods are safe to eat if the can is intact and not swollen.

For further information contact Jeanne Darling, Cornell Cooperative Extension 607-865-6531
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