**Nulo Pet Food Shelf-Life & Storage Guidelines**

**How is the shelf-life of pet food determined?**

The shelf-life of a food product is the length of time for which a perishable food item is considered fit for consumption. The length of time a product remains wholesome and suitable for feeding is dependent on several factors, including the ingredients used and the way the food is prepared, packaged, and stored. Pet food manufacturers determine a product’s shelf-life by reviewing data from scientific sources and conducting shelf-life studies, which involve testing the product for nutritional, microbiological, chemical, and organoleptic quality over a period of time under controlled conditions. Always make sure to check your pet food label for information such as the best before date and any special storage or handling guidelines for your pet’s favorite foods and treats.

**Can I feed my pet food after the Best Before Date has passed?**

For the best experience for your pet, we recommend feeding our products before the best before date. After this date, degradation may occur in the nutritional potency, probiotic viability, flavor and aroma of the food which can make the product unsuitable for feeding. Deterioration typically occurs at a slow rate over a long period of time, and you should inspect the food for signs of spoilage if you choose to feed products beyond the manufacturer’s best before date.

**How do I know if my pet’s food is spoiled?**

Signs of food spoilage may include changes in color, texture, an unpleasant odor, or undesirable taste. Various factors can cause food spoilage, including light, oxygen, heat, humidity, and spoilage microorganisms (bacteria, molds, and yeast). Depending on the product and its packaging, the shelf-life and storage guidelines can be very different. For more information for each of Nulo’s products, please read the guidelines below.

**Shelf-Life & Storage of Dry Kibble, Freeze-Dried Food, and Cold-Pressed Food:**

1. The shelf-life of Nulo kibble is 18-20 months; Freeze-Dried Raw is 24 months; and Cold Pressed is 20 months from the day it is produced.
2. Store unopened bags in dry and cool (room temperature, or under 100° F or 38° C) area away from direct sunlight. Avoid storing in an uncontrolled environment (garage, or outside) where exposure to extreme heat, water damage, and high levels of humidity could occur.
3. Store opened pet food bags in its original container or packaging. This allows you to have the UPC, lot code and best buy date available in case you ever need to contact the manufacturer with a question or in response to a safety concern.
4. Keep opened bags in their original packaging or in a secondary airtight container (ideally place the whole bag into the container) to provide a barrier from moisture, oxygen, and food pests. This helps prevent mold growth, fat oxidation, or exposure to other contaminants that may be present in the environment.
5. We recommend using feeding kibble within one month (approximately 30 days) of opening for maximum freshness. If feeding the kibble over longer periods of time (60-90 days), changes in the product’s aroma and flavor may start to occur that may affect your pet’s interest in the food.
6. Dry food can be left in a bowl for a 24-hour period as long as it is kept in a dry, cool area away from direct sunlight. However, we recommend washing and filling the bowl with a fresh serving of food every day along with a bowl of fresh, clean water.
7. Freezing kibble for prolonged storage is not recommended, as condensation can collect in freezers and cause the product to become wet after thawing.
8. Kibble that is left in a car on a hot day is still safe to feed to your pet, however several vitamins heat-sensitive and may degrade in potency if the food is not stored properly.

**Shelf-Life & Storage of Wet Foods:**

1. The shelf life of Nulo’s wet foods are: 3 years (cans) or 2 years (pouches and cups) from the day they are produced.
2. Store unopened wet foods (cans, pouches, and cups) in dry and cool (room temperature, or under 100° F or 38° C) area. Unopened wet foods are guaranteed fresh until the before the best by date printed on the packaging, unless the package is punctured, dented, or showing signs of swelling.
3. Open wet foods should be treated like fresh meat: serve immediately, or store in the refrigerator within 4 hours of opening. Wet food that is left out at room temperature for longer than 4 hours should be discarded, and the bowl should be thoroughly washed and dried before the next meal.
4. Unused portions of cans or cups may be sealed with plastic wrap or silicone lid, or transferred to a clean, airtight container and refrigerated. Unused portions of a pouch can be stored in its original packaging after squeezing out any air. Seal tightly to prevent moisture and oxygen from getting in or store the product in an airtight container. Under these storage conditions, the wet food should be used within 3-5 days of opening.
5. Make sure to take a close look at the unused portion before feeding it to your pet. If the product has changed color, aroma, or texture, it should be thrown away.
6. For lickable cat treats, try to use them in one feeding within 4 hours after opening. Do not store treats that have been partially consumed for later consumption, since your cat may have introduced contaminants to the treat while licking.
7. Unused portions of wet foods may be frozen for prolonged storage (up to 3 months). When freezing wet foods, ensure the food has been transferred to a clean, airtight, freezer-rated storage container. Allow frozen wet food to thaw slowly in the refrigerator, and feed within 3 – 5 days of thawing. Do not microwave wet foods, as this can damage heat-sensitive nutrients and increase the risk of burn injury from food that is too hot.
8. Wet foods that are left in a car on a hot day are still safe to feed to your pet, however several vitamins heat-sensitive and may degrade in potency if the food is not stored properly. Extreme heat and high altitude may also cause air pressure to expand within the container, leading to damage to the packaging integrity. Always inspect the packaging and food carefully before feeding to your pet if it has been improperly stored.

**Shelf-Life & Storage of Bone Broths:**

1. The shelf-life of Nulo’s bone broths is 18 months from the day they are produced.
2. Store unopened bone broths in dry and cool (room temperature, or under 100° F or 38° C) place. Unopened bone broths are good until before the best by date printed on the packaging, unless the container has been punctured, damaged, or show signs of swelling.
3. Unused bone broth can be stored in the refrigerator (at 40°F or 4°C) for up to 3-5 days after opening or can be frozen for up to 2-3 months in the freezer (at 0°F or -18°C).

**Shelf-Life & Storage of Crunchy Treats:**

1. The shelf-life of Nulo’s crunchy treats (granolas, functional cat treats) is 24 months from the day they are produced.
2. Store any opened and unopened bag of treats in a temperature-controlled environment, in its original packaging.
3. Make sure to tightly seal the opened bags before storing.
4. Check the best by date of treats before serving it to your pet.

**Shelf-Life & Storage of Semi-Moist Treats, Jerky Strips, and Soft Chew Supplements:**

1. The shelf-life of Nulo’s semi-moist pet treats and soft chew supplements is 2 years from the day they are produced.
2. Store any opened and unopened bags or jars in a temperature-controlled environment, in the original packaging.
3. Make sure to tightly seal the opened containers before storing.
4. For maximum freshness, we recommend using these products within 30 days of opening. After this period of time, the product may begin to dry out and may be less palatable for your pet.
5. Protect semi-moist products from high levels of humidity, which can lead to mold growth.
6. Always check the best by date of products before serving it to your pet.