

GUIDELINES FOR EVALUATING CANNED FOOD

When in doubt, throw it out!



SEVERE DENTS ON SIDE SEAM,
NEAR RIM, OR THAT PREVENT
STACKING



SIDE SEAM INCOMPLETE,
BLOWN OUT, OR MISWELDED



BULGING OR PUFFED ENDS



PITS OR PINHOLES



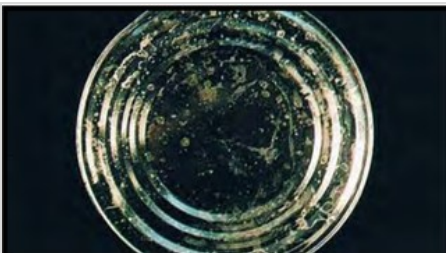
LEAKS



MISSING OR ILLEGIBLE LABELS



PITTED RUST



Store canned foods and other shelf-stable products in a cool, dry place. Never put them above the stove, under the sink, in a damp garage or basement, or any place exposed to high or low temperature extremes. For best quality, store **high-acid foods**, such as tomatoes and other fruit, up to **18 months**. **Low-acid foods**, such as meat and vegetables, can be kept **2 to 5 years**. If cans are in good condition (no dents, swelling, or rust) and have been stored in a cool, clean, dry place they are safe indefinitely.

While extremely rare, a toxin produced by *Clostridium botulinum* is the worst danger in canned foods. **NEVER USE** food from containers that show signs of botulism: leaking, bulging, rusting, or badly dented cans; cracked jars; jars with loose or bulging lids; canned food with a foul odor; or any container that spurts liquid when opening. **DO NOT TASTE THIS FOOD!** Even the tiniest amount of *botulinum* toxin can be deadly. (*USDA Food Safety Inspection Service*)