

Deep Clean in the Deep Freeze

With the cold weather outside, it's a good time to clean the freezer. It's important to keep the freezer clean of frost and food debris. Here are some tips from Michigan State University Extension for cleaning and maintaining your freezer:

- Remove all frozen food items.
- Check items for expiration dates and for freezer burn.
- Consider throwing out any food that appears old and dried out. It may still be safe to eat, but the quality may be poor. Ice crystals on the inside of packages may indicate thawing and refreezing—those packages may need to be thrown out. Frozen food can be stored up to 1 year.
- Pack food items you are keeping in another freezer or a cooler until you can return them to the freezer.
- Wipe down the freezer with one tablespoon of baking soda in one quart of water. Then wipe with clean water before turning the freezer back on.
- Let the freezer cool down for about 30 minutes before placing the frozen items back into it.
- Put a freezer thermometer near the door of the freezer and check it periodically. Adjust the temperature control as needed to keep foods at or below 0°F.