

# DLC or DDM? The cheat sheet

methodus.bar

The two dates on French food labels, what each one requires, and what to do when it passes. Made for the walk-in door.

## DLC · date limite de consommation

"À consommer jusqu'au..." = use by

### WHAT IT IS

A **legal safety limit**. An exact day.

### ON WHICH PRODUCTS

Perishables: fresh meat, fish, charcuterie, dairy, prepared dishes.

### WHEN IT PASSES

**It goes in the bin. Not served, not sold, not donated. No exceptions.**

### WATCH OUT

Broken cold chain = product out, even inside its DLC.

## DDM · date de durabilité minimale

"À consommer de préférence avant..." = best before (ex-DLUO)

### WHAT IT IS

A **quality indication**. Not a safety limit.

### ON WHICH PRODUCTS

Dry goods, cans, frozen, oils, biscuits, chocolate.

### WHEN IT PASSES

**Inspect: packaging intact, look, smell, taste.**  
**Sound = usable.**

### WATCH OUT

"End of DLUO" on a label = the pre-2015 name for the DDM. Same rule.

## THE 4 HABITS THAT STOP THE LOSSES

- **FEFO**: first expired, first out. Every delivery goes behind the stock it replaces.
- **Date everything you open or make**: opened, defrosted or house-made containers carry today's date plus their secondary shelf life.
- **Shelves readable from the front**: oldest first, date visible without lifting.
- **Count stock on a rhythm**: a loss nobody valued is a loss that repeats.

**In doubt? It's out. No plate is worth a food-safety incident.**