



FOOD SAFETY:

Whatcom County Master Food Preservers & Safety Advisors
1000 N. Forest Street, Suite 201 * Bellingham WA 98225 * 360/676-6736
<http://whatcom.wsu.edu>

Refrigerate Canned Ham

I found a canned ham in my cupboard that I now realize says "keep refrigerated" on the container. Since it's canned, do you think it's OK to eat?

Discard the ham. Canned ham that is meant to be refrigerated is only pasteurized, thus semi-preserved. They require refrigeration at a temperature of 40 degrees F. or lower to prevent bacterial growth.

When properly refrigerated, they should retain their high eating quality for six to nine months.

It is important to read the label of food products for information on how to store the food at home. It is best to do this at the store before buying. With some items, you may decide you do not want to buy the food, because you do not have the required freezer or refrigerator space.

Many foods today, especially some individually packaged entree items, are in containers that may look as though they belong on the pantry shelf, but require refrigeration.

Information developed by Carolyn Rude, Retired WSU Extension Faculty - Family Living
March 1997