



Susan Wengraf
Councilmember District 6

CONSENT CALENDAR

June 27, 2023

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
 From: Councilmember Wengraf and Councilmember Hahn
 Subject: Support for AB-660 Food Labeling (Assemblymember Irwin)

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a Resolution in support of AB-660 Food Labeling: quality dates, safety dates, and sell by dates (Assemblymember Jacqui Irwin), and send copies to Assembly Members Irwin and Wicks and Senator Skinner.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None.

BACKGROUND

[AB-660](#) aims to mandate specific terminology around date labels on food packaging in California. Specifically, AB-660 would require the phrases “Best if used by” or “Best if used by or frozen by” to indicate quality, or “Use by” or “Use if frozen by” to indicate safety. Brands would no longer be able to use consumer-facing “Sell by” dates, which are references for stores and confuse consumers.

According to study results published in the Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior, 84 percent of consumers toss food once the date on the package has passed, regardless of what the terminology means. About 64 percent of consumers knew the general meaning of the “Best if used by” and 44.8 percent understood “Use by labels”. Banning “Sell by” dates will help minimize food waste. Adopting uniform food labeling across the state will help prevent residents from throwing out good food and help them know when foods become a health concern. Consistent labeling will allow for effective consumer education.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

AB-660 addresses food waste, keeps organics out of landfills and cuts methane generation that contributes to climate change.

CONTACT PERSON

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Attachments: 1: Resolution

RESOLUTION NO. ##,###-N.S.

SUPPORT FOR AB-660 FOOD LABELING (ASM. IRWIN)

WHEREAS, consumers struggle to know if their food is still safe to eat with current food labels; and

WHEREAS, studies show that 20% of avoidable food waste is caused by consumer confusion over expiration dates; and

WHEREAS, wasted, decomposing food produces methane gas, a substance over 80 times more powerful as a greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide.

WHEREAS, AB-660 would require packaged food sold in California to be labeled with clear and consistent expiration dates; and

WHEREAS, streamlining food labeling dates would reduce food waste, financial losses to consumers, and methane emissions.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that it supports AB-660.