

# **‘Best Before’ bargains saved Britons £6.6m in 2017, with South reaping biggest rewards**

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Britons saved at least £6.6m last year by taking advantage of products sold after their ‘Best Before’ date, with people living in the South scooping the biggest savings, figures show. Data from online retailer Approved Food, which specialises in selling food and household products near or past their Best Before dates, showed that savings made by customers in its top 100 performing counties totalled more than £6,600,000. This figure represents the difference between prices paid by Approved Food customers for its products last year and the total of their recommended retail price.

Looking at savings by location, figures show that the only Northern counties to feature in the top 10 for highest savings were Lancashire and West Yorkshire. Essex topped the list with savings of around £375,380, followed by London, with £285,580. Lancashire came in fourth at £242,000, while West Yorkshire held on in the top 10 at eighth with total savings of £184,000.

Founder of Approved Food, Dan Cluderay states: “It’s really great to see the kind of savings people are making by taking a sensible approach to food labelling. Our hope is that word will spread about initiatives such as ours so more people around the country can benefit from the huge savings to be made by using this approach to shopping while also reducing the levels of food waste in the UK.”

The data has been released as Britain approaches ‘Blue Monday’, a day that claims to indicate the most depressing day of the year by taking into account a combination of issues including lack of money after Christmas, failed New Year’s resolutions, poor weather conditions and the blues that typically follow the end of a holiday season.

Regardless of the date’s authenticity, it does highlight the fact that millions of Britons will be struggling financially in January following the Christmas period. The cost of gifts, travel and heating over this period has taken its toll on the pockets of many Britons. Figures from price comparison service uSwitch suggest one in four families will start 2018 owing an average of £452 on their credit cards. As many as half predict they will not have paid this debt off by next Christmas.

The effects are expected to be felt especially acutely this year, with levels of ‘working poor’ (households below the poverty line despite at least one person being in work) having risen to 60% of all those classified as ‘in poverty’ in Britain, according to a study by Cardiff University.

The Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) says as many as 14 million people in this country are currently living in poverty, as rising food and energy bills continue to hit Britons hard.

Dan continues: “We are acutely aware of the financial difficulties that many people presently face in this country. We also know that Britons have always found clever and ingenious ways of making it through hard times. With one third of all food produced globally thrown out before it is eaten, we at Approved Food feel it is time to recognise the role that shops and supermarkets play in that wastage, and attempt to let people know that with a little understanding about what ‘Best Before’ actually means, there are millions of pounds of savings out there to be had.”

The Best By/Best Before date refers to the date after which food may lose a degree of flavour or texture.

It does not relate to safety, only quality.

Savings made on such products totalled £6,618,640 in 2017 by Approved Food customers alone. The South accounted for £3,978,005 of the figure, with the North reaping £2,640,632. However, the two regions were closer when considering the average that customers saved per order, with the South recording £66, while the North saw £61 savings per order.

Ends

Notes for editors:

1) Approved Food (<http://www.approvedfood.co.uk>)

is the largest online retailer of short-dated and residual stock food and drinks. A considerable amount of stock is short-dated or past its best-before date which enables the company to buy top brands in large quantities and pass significant savings on to customers. Approved Foods can save shoppers more than 70% off of a weekly grocery shop, offering fantastic value that no supermarket can ever compete with.

The company sits on the Surplus Food Redistribution Sub Committee.

Approved Food only trades in products that have a 'Best Before' date, which is the manufacturer's estimate of when the premium quality of the product may start to deteriorate. It does not sell chilled or frozen "Use By" products.