



## ESL Podcast 490 – Eating Spoiled Food

### GLOSSARY

**moldy** – with small green plants growing on something, usually because it is old and/or wet, especially on food

\* The bread will get moldy more quickly if we leave it in a plastic bag in a warm room.

**best if used by (date)** – a phrase printed on many packages for food and medicine, showing when something should be used or eaten

\* This container shows that the yogurt is best if used by August 24, but it's probably okay to eat it until the end of the month.

**to expire** – to become bad or unusable because something is too old, usually used when talking about food or medicine

\* Drugstores aren't supposed to sell medicine that has already expired.

**rotten** – decayed; very old and spoiled, so that one can no longer use it

\* The wood that they used to build the tree house is rotten, so it isn't safe to play on it.

**to go bad** – to become spoiled, rotten, bad, and unusable

\* Smell the leftovers to see if they've gone bad.

**discoloration** – a change in color that shows that something is bad or unhealthy

\* There's an area of discoloration on her cheek where she was hit by the ball.

**sour** – having a spoiled, unpleasant taste or smell, especially when talking about old milk or milk-related products

\* The milk went sour when they forgot to put it in the refrigerator overnight.

**you might as well** – a phrase used to suggest that someone do something; a phrase used to mean that one should do something

\* We might as well pack now so that we won't have to do it in a hurry right before we leave.

**stale** – not fresh; old and dried out, especially when talking about bread that has been exposed to the air for too long

\* The bread was too stale to use for sandwiches, so she broke it into small pieces and added them to the stew.



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**rancid** – not fresh; old, especially when talking about oil or butter

\* Please buy some more olive oil when you go to the store. The bottle we were using has become rancid.

**tainted** – unsafe; toxic or poisonous

\* The store was sued for selling tainted baby food.

**wilted** – with weak leaves that bend and are no longer strong and crisp, usually used when talking about plants or vegetables

\* This spinach is too wilted to eat fresh, but we can use it in a soup.

**canned goods** – food that is kept in sealed metal cans that are opened when one wants to eat the food inside

\* She keeps all the tomato sauce, olives, and other canned goods in this cupboard.

**rusted** – for a piece of metal to be covered with a brown or red dust that is created when the metal becomes wet and then is exposed to air

\* He bought an old, rusted car for just \$1,000.

**to go to waste** – to be unused and thrown away; to be discarded without ever being used

\* Kirill bought a lot of fresh fruits and vegetables, but then he went on vacation for a few weeks and they all went to waste.

**food poisoning** – an illness with vomiting and nausea, caused when one eats food that is too old or that hasn't been cooked well

\* Everyone who ate the chicken salad got food poisoning.

**hazardous waste** – garbage that is dangerous for people and/or the environment, usually chemicals

\* It is illegal for companies to put hazardous waste in the river.



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### COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Which of these things would most likely NOT cause food poisoning?
  - a) Rotten meat.
  - b) Fresh vegetables.
  - c) Rusted canned goods.
2. Why does Ryan have so much old food in his kitchen?
  - a) He dislikes taking out the garbage.
  - b) He dislikes throwing away uneaten food.
  - c) He dislikes eating home-cooked meals.

### WHAT ELSE DOES IT MEAN?

#### **to go bad**

The phrase “to go bad,” in this podcast, means to become spoiled, rotten, bad, and unusable: “How many months can meat be kept in the freezer before it goes bad?” The phrase “to go mad” means to become crazy or insane: “Have you gone mad? What’s wrong with you?” The phrase “to go gray” means for one’s hair to change color as one gets older: “She started coloring her hair when she noticed that it was starting to go gray.” The phrase “to go hungry” means to not have enough money to buy food: “It must be horrible to watch your children go hungry.” Finally, the phrase “to go all out” means to try very hard to do something, or to use maximum effort: “She went all out at the audition, but she didn’t get the part.”

#### **sour**

In this podcast, the word “sour” means for milk or milk-related products to have a spoiled, unpleasant taste or smell: “This cake tastes horrible. Did you make it with sour milk?” The word “sour” is usually used to talk about acidic foods, like lemons and limes: “The children really like sour, lemon-flavored candies.” The phrase “sour grapes” is used to talk about someone who pretends not to like something, even though he or she really would like to have it or do it: “Franklin said bad things about the car his brother bought, but it was really a case of sour grapes, because he would have bought the same car if he’d had enough money.” Finally, if something “turns sour,” it becomes less pleasant: “She and her husband used to have a great relationship, but their marriage lately has turned sour.”



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### CULTURE NOTE

Recently there have been many regional and national food-related “health scares” (something that makes people worry about their health) in the United States. Many of these have been food “recalls,” which happen when a company realizes that the food it sells is unsafe and so it tries to get people to bring it back to the stores where it was purchased.

In the past, “sprouts” (very small, young plants, often eaten on sandwiches or in salads) and “spinach” (dark green leaves, often eaten in salads or cooked) have been recalled because they “harbor” (contain) a bacteria known as *Escherichia coli* that causes food poisoning and can make people very sick.

Early in 2009, the United States had a large peanut recall when a company called the National Peanut Corporation realized that some of its products were “contaminated” (infected, or made impure) with “salmonella,” which is another type of bacteria that can cause food poisoning or even death. Many other companies used products from the National Peanut Corporations to make their own products, and all of those foods had to be recalled, too.

Previously, the United States had a “huge” (very large) recall of “beef” (meat from cows), because it found some meat that was infected with “mad cow disease” (a disease that can be transmitted from cows to humans when humans eat beef).

All of these food recalls have “raised concerns” (made people worry) about food safety and the government’s ability to “track” (follow the movements of) food from its “origin” (where something is made) to where it is “consumed” (eaten).

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Comprehension Questions Correct Answers: 1 – b; 2 – b



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### COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT

Welcome to English as a Second Language Podcast number 490: Eating Spoiled Food.

This is English as a Second Language Podcast episode 490. I'm your host, Dr. Jeff McQuillan, coming to you from the Center for Educational Development in beautiful Los Angeles, California.

Our website is [eslpod.com](http://eslpod.com). Go there to download a Learning Guide for this episode that contains all of our vocabulary, definitions, sample sentences, additional definitions, comprehension questions, cultural notes...what else? Oh, and a complete transcript of this episode.

This episode is called "Eating Spoiled Food." "Spoiled food" is food that is no longer good to eat. We'll listen to a dialogue between Ryan and Corrie using a lot of vocabulary that you might see or hear describing spoiled food. Let's get started.

[start of dialogue]

Ryan: It's really nice of you to make dinner for me. It's been a long time since I've had a home-cooked meal.

Corrie: I'm happy to do it. First, though, let's see what you have in your fridge.

Ryan: I have tons of food in there.

Corrie: What is that? It looks moldy.

Ryan: Oh, that's cheese. I'm sure it's still good, if we just cut off the moldy parts.

Corrie: Okay, but look at the "best if used by" date. This expired three months ago. What about this?

Ryan: That's hamburger. Maybe you could make some spaghetti with meatballs.

Corrie: Not with this rotten meat. It's definitely gone bad. Can't you tell by the discoloration? Meat isn't supposed to be gray.

Ryan: I guess you're right. I bet this milk isn't any good either, is it?



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Corrie: Nope. It's gone sour, and you might as well throw out this bread, too. It's stale.

Ryan: Isn't there anything you can use in this kitchen?

Corrie: Well, this oil is rancid, this butter looks tainted, the vegetables are wilted, and even your canned goods are rusted. You do have a lot of food in your kitchen, but it's been here a long, long time.

Ryan: I don't like things to go to waste.

Corrie: I guess not. I'm still willing to make you dinner, but we'll have to do some shopping. My cooking isn't the best, but I don't usually give people food poisoning, and I don't want to start now.

Ryan: Okay, okay, give me a list and I'll go to the market.

Corrie: And while you're there, I'll see what I can do about getting rid of all of this hazardous waste!

[end of dialogue]

Ryan begins our dialogue by saying, "It's really nice of you to make dinner for me. It's been a long time since I've had a home-cooked meal." A "home-cooked meal" would be, of course, one that you make yourself in your house. Corrie says, "I'm happy to do it. First, though, let's see what you have in your fridge." So, Corrie is over at Ryan's apartment or house and she is agreeing to cook a meal for him, so she looks inside of his fridge. "Fridge" is short for refrigerator; it's a box that keeps cold where you store or put your food. Ryan says, "I have tons of food in there." Notice we say "tons of food," it's very common for informal English to use this idea of "tons," meaning a lot. A "ton," of course, is 2,000 pounds, but here it just means a lot of food.

Corrie then asks, "What is that? It looks moldy." "Moldy" (moldy) comes from the word "mold," which are small green plants, really, that grow on things usually because they are old or wet, especially food. Ryan says, "Oh, that's cheese. I'm sure it's still good, if we just cut off the moldy parts." Corrie says, "Okay, but look at the 'best if used by' date." Most food, especially fresh food that you would put in your refrigerator for example, has a date on it after which you shouldn't probably eat it. That's what Corrie means by the "best if used by" date, meaning this food should be used by a certain date. "This expired three months ago," she



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says. “To expire” means something has passed its time; it is no longer able to be used. In this case, it’s for food that is too old to be eaten; it’s no longer good.

Then Corrie says, “What about this?” pointing to something else. Ryan says, “That’s hamburger. Maybe you could make some spaghetti with meatballs.” Corrie says, “Not with this rotten meat.” “Rotten” (rotten) comes from the verb “to rot” (rot), which means to spoil, to decay so that you can’t use it anymore. Rotten meat would be meat that is no longer good to eat because it is too old. Corrie says that the hamburger has definitely gone bad. “To go bad” means to become rotten, to become spoiled, to become so that you can no longer eat it. “To go” has, of course, hundreds of meanings in English; take a look at our Learning Guide for just a few more of those.

Corrie then says, “Can’t you tell by the discoloration? Meat isn’t supposed to be gray.” “Discoloration” is when something changes its color, usually to indicate that there is a problem or that it has gone bad. Ryan says, “I guess you’re right. I bet this milk isn’t any good either, is it?” Corrie says, “Nope,” an informal way of saying no – “nope” (nope). “It’s gone sour.” “To be sour” means to have spoiled, to have an unpleasant taste or smell, especially if we are talking about milk or something made from milk. Corrie says, “you might as well throw out this bread, too. It’s stale.” The expression “you might as well” is used to suggest that someone do something or to indicate what you should do. “Stale” (stale) is the opposite of “fresh.” When we’re talking about bread, stale bread would be dry and old, fresh bread would be soft and moist. Ryan then says, “Isn’t there anything you can use in this kitchen?” meaning isn’t any of my food any good. This is the problem if you walk into my kitchen, I don’t have a lot that you could eat!

Corrie says, “Well, this oil is rancid, this butter looks tainted, the vegetables are wilted, and even your canned goods are rusted.” There are several words there that we use to describe particular kinds of food or things that you eat that go bad. Let’s start with the first one about the oil. Corrie says, “this oil (such as vegetable oil or olive oil) is rancid.” We use “rancid” (rancid) specifically to talk about oil or fat or food that has fat in it that goes bad – that spoils. It usually will have a bad smell and a bad taste. Corrie also says that the butter looks “tainted.” You could also use the adjective “rancid” when talking about butter. But Corrie, here, is saying that the butter is “tainted.” Here, she means that it is not safe to eat; it is perhaps something that could even hurt you. She says, “the vegetables are wilted.” “Wilted” is when a vegetable that is normally stiff and crisp (that is, it normally is sort of hard) becomes very soft and the leaves of it are weak. For example if you have lettuce, which is a green food that you use in salads, if the lettuce is put in the heat the leaves of the lettuce – the pieces of lettuce will wilt



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(wilt). So she says the vegetables are “wilted,” meaning they are no longer fresh. She also says that Ryan’s canned goods are “rusted.” “Canned” means it is food that you buy in a can that you then open. “Canned goods” could include things like tomato sauce or corn; many different kinds of food can be purchased in a can. But these canned goods – these canned foods are rusted. The actual can is made of metal, and the metal, if it is very old, can turn brown creating something we call “rust.” Well, you don’t want to eat canned food that comes from the cans that are rusted, there could be something there that could make you sick.

Corrie says, “You do have a lot of food in your kitchen, but it’s been here a long, long time.” Ryan says, “I don’t like things to go to waste.” The expression “to go to waste” means that you don’t use it; not using something that you paid money for. But of course, if you wait too long, well, the food will no longer be able to be eaten. Corrie says, “I guess not,” meaning I guess you don’t like to waste things. That’s obvious by the fact that he didn’t throw anything away. Corrie says, “I’m still willing to make your dinner, but we’ll have to do some shopping. My cooking isn’t the best, but I don’t usually give people food poisoning. “Food poisoning” is when you get very sick because of something that you have eaten. I had food poisoning about 10 years ago, where I had to go to the hospital because I was so sick. I won’t tell you where I ate, although the restaurant is still here in Los Angeles. So if you come to Los Angeles I’ll tell you which restaurant you should not eat at!

Anyway, Corrie says that she needs to buy some new food so that she can prepare the meal – some fresh food. Ryan says, “Okay, okay, give me a list and I’ll go to the market,” place where they sell, in this case, food. Corrie says, “And while you’re there, I’ll see what I can do about getting rid of all of this hazardous waste!” “To get rid of” means to throw out. The term “hazardous waste” is usually one that we apply to chemicals that are very dangerous. Corrie is making a joke here; she’s saying that the food is old and so spoiled that it is like a hazardous waste. “Hazardous” comes from the word “hazard,” meaning something that could cause you harm, something that is dangerous.

Now let’s listen to the dialogue, this time at a normal speed.

[start of dialogue]

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Ryan: Okay, okay, give me a list and I'll go to the market.

Corrie: And while you're there, I'll see what I can do about getting rid of all of this hazardous waste!

[end of dialogue]

The script for this episode is so good you can eat it! It's by our very own script cook, Dr. Lucy Tse.



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From Los Angeles, California, I'm Jeff McQuillan. Thank you for listening. Come back and listen to us next time on ESL Podcast.

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