

You Have Questions... Blue Poppy Has Answers!



“What the Difference between an ‘Expiration Date’ and a ‘Manufacturing Date?’”

Over the past few years, many manufacturers of herbal products have shifted from printing “expiration dates” on products to printing “manufacturing dates.” Across the industry, practitioners are noticing this change and wondering about the implications for product shelf life. Why the change in the industry standard and what does it mean for consumers? Most practitioners assume that expiration dates are a required feature for product packaging intended to protect the consumer against degraded product. However, in the eyes of the FDA, expiration dates are often used to benefit the industry at the expense of the consumer. Many pharmaceutical companies have long used a practice of giving short expiration dates to products that have a long, stable shelf life simply to encourage product turnover. Consequently, the FDA does not like to see products that are labeled with an expiration date unless there is sufficient scientific evidence to support that the product is good throughout the date listed and degrades beyond its date.

The FDA does not require herbal supplements to have expiration dates printed and, in fact, the practice is discouraged unless the company has evidence to support that the product is not effective beyond its expiration date. How long do sealed, prepared herbal extracts stay fresh and effective? The question is difficult to definitively answer, but it is clear that sealed extracts have the potential for significantly extended shelf life. At least one large company has done stability testing to assess constituent levels on hundreds of sealed granule products, and their results showed minimal changes after seven, eight, and even nine years. Based on the fact that hundreds of herbs have been tested far beyond the three to five- year period of use that most companies specify, we can assume that the majority of extract products retain their efficacy for a very long period of time.



[A Blue Poppy Originals Bottle Manufacture Date](#)

At Blue Poppy we produce many small batches because we aim to keep our products as fresh as possible. The switch from using expiration dates to manufacturing dates on our labels maximizes our compliance with FDA regulations and gives our customers increased convenience and flexibility. Stored in a sealed bottle in a cool, dry place, it is likely that most of our products maintain their efficacy far beyond the three-year recommended period.