According to WFP, an average of 41 percent of shops reported facing electricity outage, between November 2022 and January 2023, which means that the refrigerated items in affected shops could go bad due to constant temperature changes. The highest percentage of shops reporting electricity outage was recorded in the historically marginalized North governorate reaching 96 percent in November 2022, due to lack of government support and systematic negligence of remote areas, compared to 6 percent in Beirut. In February 2023, the Lebanese Ministry of Economy announced that supermarkets in Lebanon would price items in US Dollars, affecting the purchasing power of many vulnerable families who are still getting their wages in a constantly devaluing Lebanese Pound, and unequally affecting marginalized populations.

Lebanon is entering its fourth year of a severe economic, political, and social crisis, with record-high global food and fuel prices adding to the country’s already dire situation. (1) The situation is stressful on vulnerable populations living in Lebanon, who have been facing the economic crisis with decreasing purchasing power for basic necessities, with food being on top of the list of priorities. Electricity cuts have been a main obstacle in ensuring safe food storage at homes as well, with unaffordable doubled fees from both generator-providers and the national power supplier Electricity Du Liban (EDL), especially with the later now increasing fees while only providing 4 hours of electricity at best. (2) Many families are adopting negative coping mechanisms by unsubscribing from life-sustaining electric services. (3)
"Canned martadella contains listeria bacteria that causes listeriosis, which affects the health of pregnant women, people with weak immune systems, and the elderly persons."

FACTS

- Listeriosis is a serious, but preventable and treatable disease.
- Pregnant women, the elderly or individuals with a weakened immune system, such as people with immuno-compromised status due to HIV/AIDS, leukemia, cancer, kidney transplant and steroid therapy, are at greatest risk of severe listeriosis and should avoid high risk foods.
- High-risk foods include deli meat and ready-to-eat meat products (such as cooked, cured and/or fermented meats and sausages), soft cheeses and cold smoked fishery products. Mortadella, and other canned meats are local favorites, but they can also carry diseases if not handled properly.
- Listeria monocytogenes are widely distributed in nature. They can be found in soil, water, vegetation and the feces of some animals and can contaminate foods.
PREVENTING FOODBORNE ILLNESS AT HOME

CLEAN
• Wash your hands after handling deli meats.
• Clean refrigerator shelves, kitchen countertops, utensils, and other surfaces that may have come into contact with deli meats. Listeria can survive in refrigerated temperatures and can easily spread to other foods and surfaces.

SEPARATE
• Don’t let juice from deli meats and mortadella get on other foods, utensils, or food preparation surfaces. Wrap them well in cellophane, or re-use your normal plastic bags after washing them, but make sure they are not perforated!

CHILL
• Keep factory-sealed, unopened packages of deli meats in the refrigerator for no longer than 2 weeks.
• Keep opened packages and meat sliced at a local deli in the refrigerator for no longer than 3 to 5 days.
• Make sure to only buy meats and dairy from trusted supermarkets, who are able to provide proper storage temperatures. Trusted supermarkets for now are the ones found in areas where there are less power outages.
• If you face power cuts at home, make sure to cook fresh produce thoroughly right after purchase, and consume them shortly after.
FOOD SAFETY FOR POWER OUTAGES

Refrigerated or frozen foods may not be safe to eat after the loss of power. What you can do to keep food safe during a power outage? When do you need to throw away food that could make you sick?

**DURING**

- Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible while the power is out. If you don’t open the door the food will maintain its temperature.

- A full freezer will keep food safe for 48 hours if full and 24 hours if half-full without power.

- A refrigerator will keep food safe for up to 4 hours without power

- If the power has been out for 4 hours, and a cooler and ice are available put refrigerated perishable foods in the cooler. To keep them at 4°C or below, add ice or a cold source like frozen gel packs.

**AFTER**

- Never taste food to determine if it is safe to eat. When in doubt, throw it out.

- Throw out perishable food in your refrigerator (meat, fish, cut fruits and vegetables, eggs, milk, and leftovers) after 4 hours without power or a cold source like dry ice.

- Throw out any food with an unusual odor, color, or texture.

- You can safely refreeze or cook thawed frozen food that still contains ice crystals or is at 4°C or below.

**SOURCES**

2. https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/listeriosis