

PRINT AND INTERNET

<http://www.nhregister.com/business/article/MARKET-MATTERS-Looking-for-a-sell-by-date-12330138.php>

New Haven Register

<http://www.middletonpress.com/business/article/MARKET-MATTERS-Looking-for-a-sell-by-date-12330139.php>

THE MIDDLETOWN PRESS

<http://www.registercitizen.com/business/article/MARKET-MATTERS-Looking-for-a-sell-by-date-12330137.php>

THE REGISTER CITIZEN

INTERNET ONLY

<http://www.ctpost.com/business/article/MARKET-MATTERS-Looking-for-a-sell-by-date-12330139.php>

CONNECTICUT POST

<http://www.thehour.com/business/article/MARKET-MATTERS-Looking-for-a-sell-by-date-12330139.php>

The Hour

<http://www.stamfordadvocate.com/business/article/MARKET-MATTERS-Looking-for-a-sell-by-date-12330139.php>

**stamford
advocate.com**

<http://www.newstimes.com/business/article/MARKET-MATTERS-Looking-for-a-sell-by-date-12330139.php>

newstimes.com

<http://www.greenwichtime.com/business/article/MARKET-MATTERS-Looking-for-a-sell-by-date-12330138.php>



MARKET MATTERS: Looking for a 'sell by' date?

By Joseph Matthews

Published Sunday, November 5, 2017



Photo: Joseph Matthews / Journal Register Co.
Joseph Matthews

Just about every Saturday morning you can find me pacing the aisles at the local grocery store. With a list in my hand prepared by my wife and kids — and with a little bit of intuition — I cobble together what we're going to eat for the next week. Although I tell myself every week that it's going to be my only trip to the store, invariably at least one other trip is required as items are overlooked or expectations change.

One of the things ingrained in me from the days I worked my way through school as a grocery clerk is to check for “sell by” dates. While some are easier to find and read than others, they clearly give us a time frame to work within for optimal results from our purchase.

Unfortunately, as investors, we don’t get the same guidance from our investments as we get from many of the groceries we buy. So what to do? The first step is to gain a clear understanding of your financial goals. For most investors, funding a comfortable retirement is their primary goal. Focal points of this work should involve: determining when you would like to retire, what you would like to spend in retirement, and the savings, investing and withdrawal strategies that will be necessary to create a high probability of successfully achieving those goals.

For most of us, calculating a personal funding ratio is a great place to start. With the help of a financial professional, an investor can determine if they are on track to fund expected future liabilities with the current portfolio and using an estimated rate of return. A funding ratio of 100 percent towards retirement goals tells an individual that they are on track to live the lifestyle they want in retirement — provided the assumptions made are reasonably accurate. Just like the expectations I use when I grocery shop though, things can change. Therefore, it’s critical to review the inputs you use annually to make sure they are up to date.

After you have established your funding ratio, you will now have a solid foundation upon which you can base your portfolio decisions. This will allow you to become a goals-based investor. By doing so, your decision making will be focused on where you stand relative to what you are trying to accomplish — not compared to a particular index or another individual’s portfolio. This will go miles in helping you sidestep your two worst enemies when you are making decisions about your portfolio: fear and greed.

Many investors still appear to be waiting to exhale. With the financial crisis nine years behind us, many investors are still sitting on the sidelines waiting for the market to stop going up. The mindset of many is that we’re due for a bear market. While it’s hard not to argue that we’re closer to the end of this nine-year bull market than the beginning, the wall of worry the market continues to climb should give investors some peace of mind. This lack of speculative excess in

conjunction with solid economic growth globally points towards the market's ability to go higher. Of course, there are never any guarantees.

Just like when you're shopping, putting together a plan and sticking to it goes a long way toward successfully completing your task. The bottom line: pay attention to your goals and where you stand relative to them and make adjustments where necessary as things change.

Joseph Matthews is a Financial Advisor with the Wealth Management Division of Morgan Stanley in Fairfield. He can be reached at 203-319-5165 or by email at joseph.matthews@morganstanley.com.

The information contained in article is not a solicitation to purchase or sell investments. Any information presented is general in nature and not intended to provide individually tailored investment advice. The strategies and/or investments referenced may not be suitable for all investors as the appropriateness of a particular investment or strategy will depend on an investor's individual circumstances and objectives. Investing involves risks and there is always the potential of losing money when you invest. Morgan Stanley and its Financial Advisors do not provide tax or legal advice. The views expressed herein are those of the author and may not necessarily reflect the views of Morgan Stanley Wealth Management, or its affiliates. Morgan Stanley Smith Barney LLC, member SIPC.