

Keep Fruits & Vegetables Safe to Eat

Selection:

- Purchase fresh-looking produce.
- Don't buy any that is bruised, shriveled, moldy or slimy.



Storage Tips:

- Clean out your refrigerator crisper bin once a week and discard any moldy, slimy items.
- Proper storage will help to save flavor, vitamins, and minerals
- Store most fresh vegetables in the refrigerator. Most fresh vegetables can be stored for 2 to 5 days.
- Store fresh fruits in the refrigerator except for bananas. Most fresh fruits can be stored for 3 to 5 days. Exceptions are berries for 1-2 days. Citrus fruits and apples up to 3 weeks.
- Store potatoes, dry onions, and winter squash in a dark, cool, dry place. These can be stored for up to several weeks.
- Keep food rotated. Keep the ripest ones where they will be used first.
- Store unopened canned foods at room temperature for one year.
- Refrigerate cut fruits, vegetables, and any leftovers from an open can into proper containers.

Preparation Tips:

- Wash all fruits and vegetables in clean drinking water before eating. This includes melons. Do not wash and put away, instead wash just before serving. Soaking will draw out nutrients in water.
- Peel and discard outer leaves. Scrub hearty vegetables, such as potatoes and carrots, if you want to eat the fiber and nutrient-rich skins.
- Keep prepared salads and other cut produce items in the refrigerator until just before serving. Discard cut produce items if they have been out of the refrigerator for four hours or more.
- If fruits and vegetable must be cut, large chunks are preferable to small chunks. Small chunks have more surface area exposed to air, increasing the loss of some vitamins. Cook until just tender crisp. Overcooking destroys vitamins.
- Most importantly, enjoy fresh produce.

Clean:

- Wash Hands and Surfaces Often.
- Wash your hands with warm soapy water for 20 seconds before handling food or food utensils. Especially after handling raw meat, poultry, fish, shellfish, or eggs.
- Also wash hands with warm soapy water for 20 seconds after using the bathroom, changing diapers, or playing with pets.
- Wash the cutting boards and utensils after each food item.
- Replace cutting boards once they are worn or have hard to clean grooves.
- Mixing raw meats with fruits and vegetables that will not be cooked is *dangerous*.



Separate:

- Separate raw, cooked, and ready to eat foods while shopping, preparing, and storing.
- Keep raw meat, poultry, eggs, fish and shell fish away from other foods, surfaces, utensils, or serving plates. This includes in the refrigerator. This prevents cross-contamination.

Cook:

- Cook foods to a safe temperature.
- Proper cooking makes most unsafe food safe. Use a food thermometer.
- Reheat leftovers to 165 °F.
- Choose only pasteurize juices.



Chill:

- Refrigerate perishable foods promptly.
- When shopping, buy perishable foods like fruits and vegetables last.
- Take foods straight home.
- At home, store food properly.
- Refrigerate within 2 hours of purchasing or preparing.
- If temperature is over 90° F a refrigerator thermometer is a good purchase.

When in Doubt, Throw it Out!

- It is cheaper to throw food away than to get sick.