











SPRING & SUMMER PRODUCE STORAGE GUIDE














40% of food in the U.S. is never eaten. Knowing how to store your fruits and veggies properly will extend their life, buying you time to make sure you can use them up.

GENERAL STORAGE TIPS

- 1 Don't wash fruits or veggies until right before use.
- 2 Keep produce in its packaging.
- 3 Produce past its "freshest" period can still be used! Try cooking it or putting it into smoothies.
- 4 Soak wilted vegetables in ice water for 5-10 minutes to re-crisp.
- 5 Adjust levers on crisper drawers to change humidity levels. Set one to high (closed - less air coming in) and one to low (open - more air coming air). Below is advice on which drawer is best for different items.

PRODUCE	AT FRESHEST	OPTIMAL STORAGE	USE IT UP / REVIVAL
ARTICHOKES 	1 week	Slice a small bit off the end of the stem and sprinkle the stem with water. Store in an airtight container in the high-humidity drawer.	Outside leaves may be bronzed due to frost but it's only cosmetic.
ASPARAGUS 	1 week	Store bundled stalks upright in a jar with 1" of water in the fridge.	Hard ends can be sliced thin and then used in sautés or soups.
AVOCADOS 	2-5 days after ripe	Store on the counter until ripe then refrigerate loose.	If it's not ripe once you cut it open, sprinkle the surface with lemon or lime juice, close it back up with the pit, wrap tightly, and place in the fridge.
BERRIES 	2-3 days for strawberries, raspberries, and blackberries. 10 days for blueberries	Store blueberries in original container or a covered bowl. Store strawberries (with green caps), raspberries, and blackberries in a single layer in an aerated container lined with cloth and then cover loosely with another cloth.	If a small amount of berries show mold, don't discard the entire container. Just throw away those that are bad.
CARROTS 	2 weeks	Store in a breathable bag in the high-humidity drawer. Separate green leafy tops from the roots, leaving 1" of stem at the top to keep moisture in.	Limp carrots and carrot tops can be used in soups, stews, and stock.
CELERY 	2 weeks	Refrigerate either standing in a jar with water or in a breathable bag in the high-humidity drawer.	Pitted or discolored surfaces are places where oxidation has occurred. They can still be eaten.
CORN ON THE COB 	2-3 days in husk 1-2 days husked	Store in husks in the warmer section of fridge. If husked, wrap in damp cloths in an airtight container.	Corn with dry, browned, or slightly slimy husks can still be good inside, if the corn looks fine.
CUCUMBERS 	1 week	Store in a breathable bag in the high-humidity drawer away from tomatoes, avocados, or bananas.	Peel or cut away any damaged flesh. Many times the skin of the cucumber can be undesirable but the inside flesh is fine.
EGGPLANT 	1 week	Store loose in a cool place. Refrigeration can lead to browning and off-flavors.	Salt the flesh of older eggplant to remove bitterness.
GARLIC & SHALLOTS 	Few weeks to several months unpeeled, several weeks peeled	Store unpeeled garlic and shallots in a cool, dark, and dry place. If peeled, store in an airtight container in the fridge.	Green garlic shoots can be used just like green onions.

PRODUCE	AT FRESHEST	OPTIMAL STORAGE	USE IT UP / REVIVAL
GRAPES 	2 weeks	Keep unwashed bunches in a paper or breathable bag on a shelf in the fridge.	If a small amount of grapes show mold, don't discard the entire container. Just throw away the ones that are bad.
GREEN BEANS SNAP PEAS FRESH PEAS 	3-5 days	Store unwashed peas and beans in a breathable bag in the high-humidity drawer.	Salvage less-than-ideal green beans by removing soft or slimy ones then wash the rest in cold water.
GREENS, HEARTY <small>(KALE, CHARD, COLLARD GREENS, BOK CHOY, CABBAGE)</small> 	3-5 days	Remove twist ties and store loosely, with a damp cloth, in an airtight container in the high-humidity drawer.	Kale stems can be blanched and made into pesto while chard stems make a great substitution for celery.
GREENS, SALAD <small>(LETTUCE, ARUGULA, SPINACH)</small> 	7 days, head lettuces may last longer	Store with a damp cloth in an airtight container in the high-humidity drawer.	Yes, lettuce can be cooked! Even older or wilted leaves and packaged mixes.
MELONS 	5-15 days if whole, 3-5 days if cut	If unripe, store in a cool place. Once ripe, store on a shelf in the fridge. Refrigerate cut melon regardless of ripeness, wrapped or in an airtight container. Don't remove the seeds to keep from drying out.	Don't worry about discoloration or deformed husks/rinds. That's no reason to discard them. Melons that have spoiled often have an unpleasant odor and are overly soft.
PEPPERS <small>(RED, GREEN OR HOT)</small> 	5-7 days if whole, 3 days if cut	Store whole peppers in a breathable bag in the low-humidity drawer. Store cut peppers in an airtight container in the fridge.	Green peppers last longer than red ones, which are fully ripe when picked.
RADISHES 	1-2 weeks for radishes, 2-3 days for greens	Store in a breathable bag in the high-humidity drawer. Separate green tops and store as you would other dark greens.	Radish greens are edible and can be eaten in a salad or cooked.
STONE FRUITS 	3-7 days after ripe	If unripe, store at room temperature. Once ripe, refrigerate loose in the low-humidity drawer.	Remove bruises – the rest of the fruit can be used. To prevent browning, toss with some lemon juice after slicing.
SUMMER SQUASH <small>(ZUCCHINI, PATTYPAN, CROOKNECK)</small> 	5 days	Wrap cut ends with a damp cloth and store in a breathable bag in the high-humidity drawer. Handle carefully, as bruising can reduce vitamin content.	Skin is edible. Peel or cut away any damaged flesh.
TOMATOES 	3 days on the counter if whole, 2-3 days in the fridge if cut or nearing overripe. Cherry tomatoes can last 1 week on the counter	Store on the counter away from direct sunlight, with stem end up. Refrigerating can help tomatoes last longer but may make flesh mealy—store in original container in the low-humidity drawer.	Wrinkled and cracked tomatoes can still be eaten. Just cut out the cracked parts.
TROPICAL FRUITS <small>(PINEAPPLE, PAPAYA, MANGO)</small> 	2-3 days past ripe on the counter, 5-7 days in the fridge	If unripe, store whole on the counter. Once ripe, store loose on the fridge shelf or in the low-humidity drawer. If cut, place in an airtight container.	If bruised or damaged, refrigerate it rather than leaving it at room temperature.

For more tips, visit SaveTheFood.com.

From Waste Free Kitchen Handbook by Dana Gunders, 2015. Used with permission from Chronicle Books, San Francisco.