



12/9/13

Safe Handling Tips for Fruits and Vegetables

Keep your produce safe to eat with proper food preparation and storage.

Buying

- If you shop at a farmer's market, go early to avoid produce that has been sitting out all day.
- Buy produce in season when possible.
- At a grocery store, if you are not satisfied with the selection, ask the produce manager if there is more available.
- Buy loose produce rather than packaged. You have more control over what you select.
- Don't purchase produce with mold, bruises or cuts.
- Buy only the amount of produce you will use within a week.
- Buy only pasteurized juices.

Storing

- Promptly store produce that needs refrigeration. Fresh whole produce such as bananas and potatoes don't need refrigeration.
- Refrigerate fresh produce within two hours of peeling or cutting.
- Throw away cut produce left at room temperature for more than two hours.
- Discard cooked vegetables after three to four days.

Preparing

- Wash all fresh fruits and vegetables with cool tap water immediately before eating.
- Scrub firm produce such as melons and cucumbers with a clean produce brush.
- Remove and discard outer leaves of lettuce.
- Use two separate cutting boards to avoid cross-contamination: one for raw meat and another for fruits and vegetables.
- Cook raw sprouts such as alfalfa and clover; cooking significantly reduces your risk of illness.

Reference <http://www.eatright.org/Public/content.aspx?id=10952>

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