

# Farmers' Market Tips

## Storing Fruits & Vegetables



Extend the freshness of your produce while avoiding the use of plastic.

### Fruit

**Apples:** Store on a cool counter or shelf for up to two weeks. For longer storage, place in a cardboard box in the fridge.

**Apricots:** Place on a cool counter at room temperature or in fridge if fully ripe.

**Cherries:** Keep in airtight container. Don't wash cherries until ready to eat – any added moisture encourages mold.

**Citrus:** Store in a cool place with good airflow and never in an airtight container.

**Berries:** Berries are fragile. Store in a single layer if possible. A paper bag works well, but wash before eating them.

**Dates:** Store drier dates (like Deglet Noor) on the counter in a bowl or in a paper bag. Moist dates (like Medjool) need refrigeration if they are going to be stored over a week. Use a cloth or paper bag (as long as it's porous) to keep the moisture away from the skin of the dates.

**Figs:** Figs don't like humidity so don't keep them in closed containers. A paper bag works to absorb excess moisture. Figs unstacked on a plate works well in the fridge for up to a week.

**Melons:** Keep uncut in a cool dry place, out of the sun, for up to two weeks. Cut melons should be kept in the fridge in an open container.

**Nectarines:** Store in the fridge if ripe or take them out a day or two before you plan on eating them so they soften.

**Peaches:** Refrigerate only when fully ripe. Firm fruit will ripen on the counter.

**Pears:** They will keep for a few weeks on a cool counter and are fine in a paper bag. Put an apple in to hasten ripening.

**Persimmon:** Store Fuyu (squat shape) at room temp. Keep Hachiya (long) at room temperature until completely mushy. The astringency subsides once they are

completely ripe. To hasten ripening, place them in a paper bag with a few apples for a week, keeping them in a single layer. Check frequently. They become very fragile when ripe.

**Pomegranates:** Can be kept up to a month stored on a cool counter.

**Strawberries:** Store in a paper bag in the fridge for up to a week. They don't like to be wet, so check the bag for moisture every other day.

### Vegetables

**Artichokes:** Place in a sealed, airtight container with light moisture.

**Asparagus:** Place them upright loosely in a glass or bowl with water at room temperature. They will keep for a week outside the fridge.

**Avocados:** Place in a paper bag at room temperature. To speed up their ripening, place an apple in the bag.

**Arugula:** Dunk in cold water and spin or lay flat to dry. Arugula should not stay wet! Place dry arugula in an open container wrapped with a dry towel to absorb any extra moisture.

**Basil:** Difficult to store well, Basil does not like to be cold or wet. The best method is an airtight container left out on a cool counter loosely packed with a small damp piece of paper inside.

**Beans:** Store shelling beans in an open container in the fridge and eat ASAP. Freeze them if you can't eat right away.

**Beets:** Leaving the top on root vegetables draws moisture from the root, causing them to lose flavor and firmness. Keep beets firm by cutting the tops off. Store beet greens separately. Wash beets and keep in an open container with a wet towel on top.

**Beet greens:** Place in an airtight container with a little moisture.

**Broccoli:** Place in an open container in the fridge or wrap in a damp towel before placing in the fridge.

Storing Fruits and Veggies

factsheet

## How To Store Fruits and Veggies (continued)

**Broccoli Rabe:** Leave in an open container in the crisper, but eat as soon as possible.

**Brussels Sprouts:** If bought on the stalk, leave them on that stalk. Put the stalk in the fridge or leave it in a cold place. Bought loose, store them in an open container with a damp towel on top.

**Cabbage:** Left out on a cool counter is fine for up to a week. Otherwise, place in the crisper. Peel off outer leaves if they start to wilt. Cabbage might begin to lose its moisture after a week so eat as soon as possible.

**Carrots:** Cut greens off and place root in a closed container with plenty of moisture by either wrapping in a damp towel or dunking in cold water every couple of days.

**Cauliflower:** Will last in a closed container in the fridge. Cauliflower flavor is best the day it's bought.

**Celery:** Does best when simply placed in a cup or bowl of shallow water on the counter.

**Celery root/Celeriac:** Wrap the root in a damp towel and place in the crisper.

**Corn:** Leave unhusked in an open container in the fridge. Corn tastes best the day it's picked.

**Cucumber:** Wrap in a moist towel in the fridge. If you're planning on eating them within a day or two after buying them, then they are fine left out in a cool room.

**Eggplant:** Does fine left out in a cool room. Don't wash before storing because it doesn't like extra moisture around its leaves. For longer storage, place loose in the crisper.

**Fava beans:** Place in an airtight container.

**Fennel:** If used within a couple days after it's bought, fennel can be left on the counter, upright in a cup or bowl of water (like celery). If keeping longer than a few days, place in the fridge in a closed container with a little water.

**Garlic:** Store in a cool, dark place.

**Green garlic:** Keep in an airtight container in the fridge or leave it out for a day or two. It's best before it dries out.

**Greens:** Remove any bands or twist ties. Most greens must be kept in an airtight container with a damp cloth to keep them from drying out. Kale, collards, and chard even do well in a cup of water on the counter or fridge.

**Green beans:** They like humidity, but not wetness. Keep a damp cloth draped over an open or loosely closed container.

**Green Tomatoes:** Store in a cool room away from the sun to keep them green. Use quickly or they will begin to color.

**Herbs:** Put in a closed container in the fridge to keep up to a week. Any longer encourages mold.

**Lettuce:** Keep damp in an airtight container in the fridge.

**Leeks:** Leave in an open container in the crisper, wrapped in a damp cloth or in a shallow cup of water on the counter (so the very bottom of the stem has water).

**Okra:** Place in a dry towel in an airtight container to keep the humidity low. It's best to eat it soon after purchase because it doesn't store that well.

**Onion:** Store in a cool, dark, and dry place. Good air circulation is best, so avoid stacking them.

**Parsnips:** Keep in an open container in the crisper or wrapped in a damp cloth in the fridge.

**Potatoes:** Store in cool, dark, dry place such as a box in a dark corner of the pantry. A paper bag also works well.

**Radicchio:** Place in the fridge in an open container with a damp cloth on top.

**Radishes:** Remove the greens so they don't draw moisture away from the roots. Place them in an open container in the fridge with a wet towel on top.

**Rhubarb:** Wrap in a damp towel and place in an open container in the refrigerator.

**Rutabagas:** The ideal situation is to store them in a cool, dark, humid root cellar or a closed container in the crisper.

**Snap peas:** Refrigerate in an open container.

**Spinach:** Store loose in an open container in the crisper. Keep cool as soon as possible. Spinach loves to be cold.

**Spring onions:** Remove any band or tie and place in the crisper.

**Summer Squash:** Will do fine for a few days, even after cut, if left out on a cool counter.

**Sweet peppers:** Wash them right before eating them because wetness will decrease the storage time. Store in a cool room to use in a couple of days. Place in the crisper if longer storage is needed.

**Sweet Potatoes:** Store in a cool, dark, well-ventilated place. Never refrigerate; sweet potatoes don't like the cold.

**Tomatoes:** Never refrigerate. Depending on ripeness, tomatoes can stay for up to two weeks on the counter. To hasten ripeness, place in a paper bag with an apple.

**Turnips:** Remove the greens and store separately. Store in an open container with a moist cloth.

**Winter squash:** Store in a cool, dark, well-ventilated place. Many growers say winter squash gets sweeter when stored for a week or so before being eaten.

**Zucchini:** Does fine for a few days if left out on a cool counter, even after cut. For longer storage, wrap in a cloth and refrigerate.