Different fruits and vegetables require different temperature and humidity levels for proper storage.
Store these foods at room temperature!

- Tomatoes
- Pumpkins and Winter Squashes
- Bananas
- Onions
- Potatoes (all varieties)
- Melons (all varieties)
Store these fruits and vegetables in a clean, dry, well-ventilated place, away from direct sunlight and away from areas where meat, fish, and poultry are prepared.
Ripen these foods on counter, then store in refrigerator!

- Avocado
- Kiwifruit
- Plums
- Peaches and Nectarines
- Pears

Image source: www.pachd.com
Avoid placing produce in a sealed plastic bag on your countertop.

This slows ripening and may increase off-odors and decay from accumulation of carbon dioxide and depletion of oxygen inside the bag.
Most other fresh fruits and vegetables keep best stored in a clean refrigerator at a temperature of 40°F or below.
Store fruits in a separate refrigerator crisper drawer from vegetables.

- Fruits give off ethylene gas which can shorten the storage life of vegetables.
- Some vegetables give off odors that can be absorbed by fruits and affect their quality.
Refrigerate fruits and vegetables in perforated plastic bags to help maintain moisture. This helps provide air flow and prevent growth of mold or bacteria.
If you don’t have access to commercial, food-grade, perforated bags, use a knife or scissors to make several small holes in a food-grade plastic bag (about 20 holes per medium-size bag).
Store raw meat, poultry and seafood on the **bottom shelf** of the refrigerator so juices don’t drip onto other foods.
Wash hands properly before handling produce

- Wet hands with clean, warm water
- Apply soap; work into a lather
- Rub hands together for 20 seconds; rinse under clean, running water
- Dry hands with disposable paper towel or clean cloth towel
Wash produce thoroughly

Wash produce before using it, **NOT** when you bring it home. Fresh produce has a natural protective coating that helps keep in moisture and freshness.

*Washing produce before storage causes it to spoil faster.*
• Remove and discard outer leaves of produce such as cabbage and lettuce.
• Rinse under clean, running water just before preparing or eating.
• Don’t use soap or detergent as it can get into produce and make you sick
• Rub firm produce briskly, scrubbing with a clean brush or hands, to clean the surface

• Dry with a clean cloth or paper towel

• Cut away bruised and damaged areas
Moisture left on fruits and vegetables helps bacteria grow. Dry them if you won’t eat or cook them right away.
• Bacteria on the outside of produce can be transferred to the inside when they are cut or peeled

• Rinse produce even when the peel is removed — such as for melons and citrus fruits!
Once you have cut through the protective outer skin, bacteria can enter.

Refrigerate cut or peeled fruits and vegetables within TWO hours!
Friendly Advice
Enjoy picking your produce at the Farmers’ Market!
Take your time! Get some exercise and enjoy the day!
Got kids or grandkids? Take them along!

Many kids have never seen or tried some of the foods at Farmers’ Markets.

Let them see……
....carrots with their tops!
...zucchinis with blossoms
...cauliflower surrounded by a cocoon of leaves
Bring some cash!
• Take your own canvas or net bags or baskets, as Farmers’ Markets don’t usually have shopping carts
• Wide woven baskets help prevent produce from piling on each other
• Place heavier items at the bottom of the basket or bag
• To avoid squishing your produce, consider shopping with several bags or baskets
How Clean is Your Market Bag?

Reusable bags are an eco-friendly alternative to plastic bags for carting your grub home from the farmer's market, grocery store or big box store. You can help prevent bacteria, yeasts and mold from growing on your bags and cross-contaminating your food by washing and storing the bags safely between each use.

http://www.cleaninginstitute.org/clean_living/cleaning_reusable_bags.aspx
Got Germ-free Re-Useable Bags?

Reusable bags are an eco-friendly alternative to plastic bags for carrying your grub home from the farmer’s market, grocery store or big box store. You can help prevent bacteria, yeasts, and mold from growing on your bags and cross-contaminating your food by washing and storing the bags safely between each use. Here’s how...

Clean
Wash bags after each use, following care instructions. See fabric care label or below for more details. Wipe insulated bags with a disinfecting or sanitizing cloth, especially along seams.

Separate
Use separate bags for raw meats, seafood, and produce. Label bags to avoid confusion. Keep bags for non-food items like cleaners, books, sports gear, etc., separate from food bags.

Store
After washing, make sure bags are dry before storing. Don’t store your bags in your car trunk. This is a dark, warm and often humid environment that promotes bacteria growth. Help prevent bag bacteria by storing your bags at home in a cool dry environment where air can circulate.

When in doubt, wash your bags! If bags are worn & dirty, throw them out!

Woven or Nonwoven Polypropylene
A form of plastic that can be made from recycled plastic containers. Machine wash (gentle cycle with soap & cold water) or hand wash in soap & warm water, then line dry.

Nylon or Polyester
A durable, petroleum product. Hand wash in warm water & soap, then hang inside out to dry.

Bamboo or Hemp
Made of biodegradable, natural fibers. Hand or machine wash (gentle cycle) with mild laundry detergent, then place in dryer or line dry.

Cotton

Insulated Bags
Insulated polyester fiber and coated thermal film to keep foods/drinks cold or hot. Hand wash in warm water & soap or wipe with disinfecting or anti-bacterial wipes, especially along seams.

Contact: Nancy Bock, Senior Vice President, Education
Email: nbock@cleaninginstitute.org
DRESS COMFORTABLY
Shop early! The best and most popular items go first!

Enjoy the cooler mornings for your market adventure!
• The weather can change fast!
• Wear comfortable shoes if you have to walk a lot
• Keep a jacket and umbrella in the car in case of wet weather
Experiment! Try something new! You might find a tasty treat for your family’s menu!
Learn about new and old favorites, how to prepare them and when they are ripe. Most farmers and vendors love to share what they know and may be able to give you cooking and recipe hints.
CHECK IT ALL OUT!

- See who has what and at what price
- Buy something you haven’t tried before
- Ask the grower ways to select and prepare your produce
Avoid over-buying. Buy only what you’ll eat when fresh.
For More Information
“Pick” up more facts about produce at the following websites!
http://food.unl.edu/nep-materials

Fruit and Vegetable Tip Sheets!
WHO WE ARE

We can help you eat more fruits & vegetables! Fruits & Veggies—More Matters® is a health initiative focused on helping Americans increase fruit & vegetable consumption for better health. More

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http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/
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Further questions? Contact your local Extension office or check out [http://food.unl.edu](http://food.unl.edu)!
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