

## Food Safety Tips

- Fresh-looking fruits and vegetables are the best. Don't keep anything that is bruised, shriveled, moldy, and slimy or smells bad. This will promote decay.
- Buy only what you need. They go bad quickly need to be consumed within a few days. Don't stock up although Apples, potatoes and some citrus can be stored longer if properly maintained.
- Wash your hands before and after handling any fresh produce. Germs can stick to the surface of produce.
- Wash produce just before you use it, not just when you put it away.
- Leafy greens, such as lettuce should be rinsed before refrigerating to maintain its crispy crunchiness.
- Do not use soap when washing produce. Fruits and vegetable are porous and can absorb the detergent
- Actively rotate your product. Use the "First In, First Out" method.
- Once a shipment of fresh produce has been received and inspected to your satisfaction, it should be stored immediately. Remember, fresh fruits and vegetables are perishable and should not be left on the receiving floor/dock. To ensure high-quality fruits and vegetables for your customers, it is vital to get each item into its proper storage environment as soon as possible.

Knowing how to handle and store your Fruit and produce will maintain a products shelf life. One thing to watch out for is Ethylene, a natural, colorless, and odorless gas that promotes ripening. It is one of the most active plant hormones that is processed naturally. Example: By placing peaches in a closed bag, you're taking advantage of the fruit's natural Ethylene to speed softening.

While this is great for ripening some fruits, the gas can also cause premature decay among other fruits and vegetables that are sensitive to it. So some fruits and vegetables you will need to avoid storing in same compartments. If you only have one cooler, keep lids on storage boxes, store sensitive commodities as far away as possible from gas producers, and rotate product properly. If your inventory turns quickly, ethylene should not present problems.

### *These Fruits produce large quantities of ethylene*

Apples  
Apricots  
Avocados  
Bananas  
Cantaloupe  
Honeydew  
Kiwi  
Nectarines  
Papaya  
Peaches  
Pears

### *These commodities are sensitive to ethylene*

Asparagus  
Broccoli  
Cabbage  
Carrots  
Cauliflower  
Celery  
Cucumbers  
Eggplant  
Grapefruit  
Green Beans  
Lemons  
Peppers  
Potatoes  
Squash  
Sweet Potato  
Watermelon

Plums  
Quinces  
Tomatoes

Lettuce  
Lime  
Peas