Premier Produce

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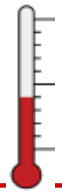
Produce Storage and Handling

Fruit and vegetable quality depends on seasons and weather patterns that we are unable to control. However, there are many variables you can control to receive the ultimate freshness and yields from your products.

Temperature

Temperature is the defining factor in maintaining and maximizing your produce quality. Temperature abuse is the leading cause of produce losses. Always be aware of temperatures in receiving, storage and prep areas to effectively manage optimal product life.



Rotation

Proper rotation is as easy as writing delivery dates on products and storing in order so that the oldest product is always used first. This is called the FIFO, or First In, First Out, Method.

Ideal Cooler Storage Temperatures

Front 40 to 45 F

Artichokes
Beans
Cucumbers
Eggplant
Lemons
Limes
Okra
Peppers
Pineapple
Soft Squash

Middle 37 to 40 F

Corn
Melons
Herbs (except Basil)

Back 32 to 36 F

Apples
Apricots
Asparagus
Beets
Berries
Broccoli
Cabbage
Carrots
Cauliflower
Celery
Grapes
Green Onions
Greens
Kiwi
Lettuce/Salad
Mushrooms
Oranges
Spinach

Handling Overview

TEMPERATURE:
Temperature fluctuates from front to back of the cooler, this is due to the location of the cooling unit and the frequency of the door being opened. The area closest to the door will generally be the warmest.

FRESH– CUT PRODUCE:

- Store at 34° F. Each degree higher reduces shelf life
- Maximize shelf life with proper refrigeration
- Keep time out of refrigeration to a minimum
- Store product in original bags or shipping cartons when possible

TOMATOES:
Should be held at room temperature to ripen and then used immediately. Refrigerated tomatoes lose flavor.

BERRIES:
Berries should not be washed until ready to use and drained well. Most berries usually have a 3 to 5 day shelf life after delivery.

BEST KEPT IN DRY STORAGE

Avocados (unripe)
Bananas
Tomatoes (ripe)
Pears (unripe)
Watermelons (whole)
Pumpkins
Squash (hard)
Onions
Potatoes

Fresh Fruit Ripening

Some fresh fruit continues to ripen after harvest while others do not. This is a key factor in determining product storage and shelf life.

FRUIT THAT RIPENS AFTER HARVEST
Store at room temperature

Bananas
Kiwi
Nectarines
Pears
Plums
Tomatoes
Peaches

FRUIT THAT DOES NOT RIPEN AFTER HARVEST
Store in a properly cooled area

Apples
Grapes
Oranges
Pineapple
Strawberries
Watermelon