



How to Store Fruits & Vegetables



On average, households throw away about \$1500 worth of food per year. Reduce food waste by following the guidelines in this booklet on how to store your fruits and vegetables.

There are four places to store your food:

- Counter
- Cupboard/Pantry
- Fridge - *anywhere*
- Fridge Crisper Drawers - *high/low humidity*



Where to Store

These guidelines help to achieve ideal temperature and moisture levels which vary by produce item.

How to Store

Most of these guidelines help to balance moisture with airflow for different produce items. For example, reducing airflow by storing in a sealed container increases moisture, while storing loose or in a paper bag decreases it.

Produce Storage Guide



Acorn Squash

Cupboard/Pantry
Store Loose



Apples

Fridge
Keep separate from
other produce.



Apricots

Ripen on counter, then
store in fridge.
Store Loose



Artichokes

Fridge
Store in plastic bag or
sealed container.



Arugula

Fridge
Remove bags & ties. Put in
sealed container lined with
damp towel.



Asparagus

Fridge
Remove bags & ties. Store
upright in glass of water
with plastic bag over top.



Avocados

Ripen on counter, then
store in fridge
Store Loose



Bananas

Counter
Keep away from
other fruits & vegetables.



Basil

Counter
Remove bags & ties. Trim
stems then store upright in
glass of water with plastic
bag over top.

Tips and Tricks

To avoid avocados from browning, leave the pit in and squeeze some lemon or lime on the surface. To also help preserve them longer, refrigerate in a sealed container.

Did you know?

Ethylene producing vegetables and fruits can lead to spoilage of other produce. It is important to store ethylene producing items separate from other produce.

Ethylene Producing:

Apricots, Avocados, Bananas
Cantaloupes, Honeydew melons
Kiwis, Mangoes, Nectarines
Papayas, Peaches, Pears
Plums, Tomatoes

Sensitive to Ethylene:

Apples, Asparagus, Broccoli
Carrots, Cucumbers, Eggplants
Green beans, Lettuce and other
greens, Potatoes, Summer squash
Watermelons

Did You Know?

To keep apples lasting longer and to avoid having them ripen too early, store them in the fridge.

Did you know?

For some produce a dry towel is helpful in absorbing unneeded moisture helping to prolong its longevity and use.

Tips and Tricks

One rotten berry, grape or cherry can spoil the rest. Pay attention and before storing remove any rotting fruit.



Beans

Fridge

Store in a plastic bag or sealed container.



Berries

Fridge

Store in shallow container lined with a dry towel; leave lid slightly cracked for air circulation. Wash only when ready to eat.



Brussel Sprouts

Fridge

Store in sealed a container.



Cantaloupe

Ripen on counter, then store in fridge.

Store Loose



Beets

Fridge

Keep in sealed container with a dry towel. Store green tops separately (see "Leafy Greens").



Bok Choy

Fridge

Remove bands & ties. Store in sealed container lined with a damp towel.



Butternut Squash

Cupboard/Pantry

Store Loose



Carrots

Fridge

Keep in sealed container with a dry towel. Store green tops separately (see "Leafy Greens").



Bell Peppers

Fridge - crisper drawer

Store Loose



Broccoli

Fridge - crisper drawer

Wrap in a damp towel.



Cabbage

Fridge - crisper drawer

Store Loose



Cauliflower

Fridge - crisper drawer

Store in plastic bag or sealed container.



Celery

Fridge

Store in a sealed container.



Chard

Fridge

Remove bands & ties. Store in a sealed container lined with a damp towel.



Cherries

Fridge

Store in a plastic bag or sealed container. Wash only when ready to eat.



Chives

Fridge

Store in a plastic bag or sealed container. Wash only when ready to eat.



Cilantro

Fridge

Remove bags & ties. Trim stems then store upright in glass of water with plastic bag over top.



Citrus Fruits

Fridge - crisper drawer

Store Loose



Collard Greens

Fridge

Remove bands & ties. Store in a sealed container lined with a damp towel.



Corn

Fridge

Store Loose



Cucumbers

Fridge - crisper drawer

Store Loose



Dill

Fridge

Remove bags & ties. Trim stems then store upright in glass of water with plastic bag over top.



Eggplant

Fridge - crisper drawer

Store Loose



Grapefruit

Fridge - crisper drawer

Store Loose

Did you know?

It is important to use your crispers properly to avoid combining produce with some of the fruits that give off a gas that can lead to spoilage. Try storing fruits and vegetables separately to help produce last longer.

Did you know?

Limp greens can be rejuvenated simply by immersing them in ice water for 30 minutes or placing them in an upright container of water for a few hours.

Did you know?

For produce that shouldn't get too damp, paper bags help absorb moisture without letting the produce dry out too much.

Tips and Tricks

To help store cut melon properly, place it in a sealed container or cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate.

Tips and Tricks

To help peppers have better longevity, store them inside a sealed container with seeds and stems attached.

Did you know?

Store potatoes and onions separately to help them last longer. Onions produce sulphur gas that spoils potatoes faster.



Grapes

Fridge

Store in a sealed container. Wash only when ready to eat.



Green Beans

Fridge

Store in plastic bag or sealed container.



Green Onions

Fridge

Wrap in a damp towel.



Honeydew

Ripen on counter, then store in fridge.

Store Loose



Hot Peppers

Fridge - crisper drawer

Store Loose



Kale

Fridge

Remove bands & ties. Store in a sealed container lined with a damp towel.



Kiwi

Ripen on counter, then store in fridge.

Store Loose



Leafy Greens

Fridge

Remove bands & ties. Store in a sealed container lined with a damp towel.



Leeks

Fridge

Wrap in a damp towel.



Lemons

Fridge - crisper drawer

Store Loose



Lettuce

Fridge

Remove bands & ties. Store in a sealed container lined with a damp towel.



Limes

Fridge - crisper drawer

Store Loose



Mangos

Ripen on counter, then
store in fridge.
Store Loose



Nectarines

Ripen on counter, then
store in fridge.
Store Loose



Oranges

Fridge - crisper drawer
Store Loose



Peaches

Ripen on counter, then
store in fridge.
Store Loose



Mint

Fridge
Remove bands & ties. Trim stems
then store upright in glass of
water with plastic bag over top.



Okra

Fridge
Store in a paper bag.



Oregano

Fridge
Remove bands & ties. Store in
a sealed container lined with
a damp towel.



Pears

Ripen on counter, then
store in fridge.
Store Loose



Mushrooms

Fridge
Store in a paper bag.



Onions

Cupboard/Pantry
Store loose or in a mesh bag
separate from potatoes.



Parsnips

Fridge
Store in sealed container
with a dry towel. Store green
tops separately (see "Leafy
Greens").



Peas

Fridge
Store in a sealed
container.

Did you know?

Too much moisture is often a cause for mold to grow on berries. To help increase air circulation and to help prevent mold, berries should be stored in an unsealed container and only washed prior to eating.

Tips and Tricks

After cutting winter squash, place in a sealed container or plastic bag to help extend the longevity.

Tips and Tricks

To help ripen tomatoes faster, you can store the tomatoes with an apple in a paper bag on the counter until they are at the ripeness you prefer.

Four Ways to Prevent Food Waste:

Buy What You Need

Plan meals and make a grocery list with quantities needed. Purchase local and in season when possible. Buy fresh items in smaller quantities and more often, if possible.

Store It to Last

Use a fruit and veggie storage guide. Freeze what you can't finish. Prep items for easy snacking/cooking (example: chop celery into sticks before storing).



Peppers

Fridge - crisper drawer
Store Loose



Pineapples

Ripen on counter, then
store in fridge.
Store Loose



Plums

Ripen on counter, then
store in fridge.
Store Loose



Pomegranates

Fridge
Store Loose



Potatoes

Cupboard/Pantry
Store loose or in a mesh bag
separate from onions.



Pumpkins

Cupboard/Pantry
Store loose



Radicchio

Fridge
Remove bands & ties. Store in
a sealed container lined with
a damp towel.



Radishes

Fridge
Store in sealed container
with a dry towel. Store green
tops separately (see "Leafy
Greens").



Rhubarb

Fridge
Wrap in a damp towel.



Root Vegetables

Fridge
Store in a sealed
container with dry towel.



Rutabagas

Fridge
Store in sealed container
with a dry towel. Store green
tops separately (see "Leafy
Greens").



Spinach

Fridge
Remove bands & ties. Store in
a sealed container lined with
a damp towel.



Sprouts

Fridge

Store in a sealed container.



Mint

Fridge

Remove bands & ties. Trim stems then store upright in glass of water with plastic bag over top.



Summer Squash

Fridge

Wrap whole or cut ends in a damp towel.



Winter Squash

Cupboard/Pantry

Store loose



Tomatoes

Ripen on counter, then store in fridge.

Store out of direct sunlight.



Turnips

Fridge

Store in sealed container with a dry towel. Store green tops separately (see "Leafy Greens").



Watermelons

Ripen on counter, then

store in fridge.

Store Loose



Wax Beans

Fridge

Store in plastic bag or sealed container.



Zucchini

Fridge

Wrap whole or cut ends in a damp towel.

Use It All Up

Have a regular Leftovers Night. Try out recipes that combine ingredients you have on hand. Use parts of food that are often discarded, such as carrot tops.

Track What You Have

Store new items behind the old in your fridge and cupboards. Create an "Eat Me Now" box for your fridge. Use a white board or app to remember what needs to be eaten.

The **Plan to Save: Reduce Food Waste** campaign is organized by **Dufferin Waste** and **Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health** to address issues of food waste in Dufferin County. If you have any questions about this project, please contact: **519.941.2816 ext. 2620** or **Public Health** at **1.888.265.7293**.

Adapted from Seattle Public Utilities Fruit & Vegetable Storage Guide



www.dufferincounty.ca/foodwaste



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