

## **STORAGE TIPS FOR FARMERS MARKET PRODUCE**

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Shopping at farmers markets is a fun and motivating way to incorporate more great seasonal produce into our menus. What a feeling it is to bring home those canvas totes filled with this week's finds! But how do you maximize use, enjoyment and benefits before these items go bad? Planning a few simple meals around your purchases along with buying quantities easily consumed in a week's time are two helpful approaches - just like many chefs do! And, using appropriate storage techniques is another way to help maintain freshness and nutrient value. Below is a list of eight commonly purchased summer produce items with storage recommendations. NOTE: Remember to **wash all fresh fruits and vegetables thoroughly before cutting and using**.

### **BERRIES**

Berries are quite perishable so it is best to refrigerate them until ready to use. Spread them out in a single layer in a container lined with a paper or cloth towel. In general, berries will last as follows:

- blueberries - up to 5 days
- raspberries - 3 days
- strawberries - up to 3 days
- blackberries - 4 - 5 days

When ready to use, rinse gently under cold water and drain well.

### **CUCUMBERS**

Cucumbers can be stored in the refrigerator for up to one week. Once cut, cover cut end (or place slices in covered storage container) and use within two days.

### **GREEN OR YELLOW BEANS**

Beans can be stored in a paper bag or wrapped in a paper or cloth towel and store in the refrigerator for up to one week.

### **LEAFY GREENS**

There are several ways in which to store leafy greens and shelf life depends on the type of green.

- Tall, leafy lettuces can be stored in a tall glass (or other container) of cold water just like flowers. Give the stems a fresh cut before placing them into the water. Change the water daily. These types of greens can last up to a week or more.
- Tender greens (baby lettuce, spring mix, spinach, arugula) can be wrapped in a paper or cloth towel and placed in an open plastic bag in the refrigerator. Tender greens will last up to one week.
- Hearty greens (kale, collards, swiss chard, cabbage) can be wrapped in a paper or cloth towel and stored in the refrigerator. Kale, collards and chard will last up to two weeks, and cabbage can last up to one month.

### **PEPPERS**

Peppers do best if stored in a cold part of the refrigerator and will last for up to five days.

### **SWEET CORN**

Sweet Corn is best when eaten the day it is picked or purchased. To store it longer, peel the ears, wrap them in a damp paper towel and place them into a plastic bag. Refrigerate for up to two days.

### **TOMATOES**

Tomatoes do best when stored at room temperature. Refrigeration changes the flavor of tomatoes, so only refrigerate after cutting and covering the cut side.

### **ZUCCHINI AND YELLOW SUMMER SQUASH**

Zucchini and Summer Squash can be stored in the refrigerator for up to four days. Yellow Summer Squash tends to be more perishable than zucchini so may need to be used earlier.