

Keep Produce at Its Peak



Produce—fresh fruits and vegetables—is a gold mine of nutrients, usually with a price to match. To get the most nutrition for the “lettuce” you fork over for fresh produce, follow these suggestions.

- Select fruits and vegetables that look crisp or feel firm.
- When buying citrus fruits and pineapple, choose fruits that feel heavy for their size.
- Don’t buy produce that’s soft or bruised.
- Don’t buy more than you can use within a few days. If not used within a few days, store it under refrigeration. Most kinds of produce kept at room temperature ripens—or spoils—more rapidly. That’s fine if you’re eager to eat an avocado or banana, but not so great if you want to be able to use every last orange or lemon in the bag.
- Don’t soak produce in water—nutrients will leach out.
- Pat produce dry after washing, to prolong freshness.
- Don’t cut vitamin C rich fruits or vegetables, like strawberries and peppers, until just prior to eating. Exposure to the air destroys vitamin C.