

HOW-TO GUIDE

Proper Storage and Handling of Fresh Fruits and Vegetables



There are three ideal temperature ranges for the maintenance of fresh fruits and vegetables. The following charts are grouped under these ranges and detail the commodity, the type of storage best suited for it, and proper handling techniques.

32 Degrees Ideal

<u>Item</u>	<u>Storage</u>	<u>Temp.</u>	<u>Handling</u>
Apples*	Refrigerated	31-32	Avoid excess movement. Keep cold.
Broccoli	Refrigerated	32-35	Store only briefly, 4-5 days max.
Cabbage	Refrigerated	32-35	Wash & Store in plastic bags
Cantaloupe*	Cool & Dry	38-42	Allow 2-3 days room temp. before serving
Carrots	Refrigerated	32-35	Wash & Store in plastic bags
Cauliflower	Refrigerated	32-35	Store only briefly 5 days max
Celery	Refrigerated	32-35	Wash, trim, & loosely pack in plastic bags
Grapes	Refrigerated	32-40	Highly perishable Store only Briefly
Lettuce	Refrigerated	32-35	Wash, trim, & loosely pack in plastic bags
Mushrooms	Dry & Refrigerated	34-40	Keep dry has very short life
Oranges* FL	Refrigerated	32-35	Proper rotation will maintain good fruit
Parsnips	Refrigerated	32	Wash & Store in plastic bags
Pears	Refrigerated	32-35/60-65	Pears ripen easily between 60-65
Radishes	Refrigerated	32	Trim, wash, & store in plastic bags
Rhubarb	Refrigerated	32	Pack loose for circulation
Strawberries	Refrigerated	32-35	Wash Before Cleaning. Don't hold over 48 hrs.
Tangerines	Refrigerated	32-35	Proper rotation will maintain good fruit
Turnips	Refrigerated	32-35	Oversized of Soft Product will be tough

45-55 Degrees Ideal

<u>Item</u>	<u>Storage</u>	<u>Temp.</u>	<u>Handling</u>
Avocados	Cool & Dry	32-42	Handle gently. Ripen at room temp.
Cucumbers	Cool & Dry	45-50	Avoid chilling Store Only Briefly, Never Below 45
Green Beans	Cool & Dry	45-50	Wash & Store in plastic bags
Lemons*	Cool & Dry	45-50	Hearty fruit Avoid abuse & over-ordering

45-55 Degrees Ideal, cont.

Onions	Cool & Dry	45-50	Keep cool & dry, loosely packed
Oranges CA	Cool & Dry	45-50	Proper rotation will maintain good fruit
Peppers	Cool & Dry	45-50	Store briefly, 4-6 days max, never below 45
Pineapples	Cool & Dry	45-50	Won't ripen after harvest Handle gently
Potatoes	Cool & Dry	45-55/60-70	60-70 degrees prevents accumulation of sugar and darkening
Squash	Cool & Dry	Soft Shell 40-45 Hard Shell 50-55	Easy Handling will avoid bruising

58-65 Degrees Ideal

<u>Item</u>	<u>Storage</u>	<u>Temp.</u>	<u>Handling</u>
Bananas	Never Refrigerate	56-60	Extreme care to avoid bruising
Mixed Melons*	Do not Refrigerate	Unripe 60-65 Ripe 45-50	Handle gently Ripen at room temp.
Tomatoes	Cool & Dry Don't Refrigerate	Firm 60-65 Soft 55-60	NEVER REFRIGERATE Highly Perishable
Watermelons	Cool & Dry	50-60	Do not cut until ready to use

**Ethylene producing items keep out of air flow*