

## Storing Fresh Asparagus

Some experts tell you not to wash fresh produce before storage and some will tell you to wash off any garden dirt before even bringing produce into the home. At issue is this: if you bring in garden dirt on your fresh produce, you may be introducing pathogenic microorganisms into your kitchen—while, if you wash your produce before storage, you run the risk of increasing the likelihood that your fresh produce will mold and rot more quickly.

If you choose to wash produce before storage, be sure to **thoroughly** dry fruits and vegetables with a clean paper towel. If you choose to store without washing, take care to shake, rub or brush off any garden dirt with a paper towel or soft brush while still outside. Never wash berries until you are ready to eat them. Storing fresh produce in plastic bags or containers will minimize the chance that you might contaminate other foods in the refrigerator. Keep your refrigerator fruit and vegetable bin clean.

All stored produce should be checked regularly for signs of spoilage such as mold and slime. If spoiled, toss it out. All cut, peeled or cooked vegetables or fruits should be stored in clean, covered containers in the refrigerator at 40°F or less.

Storage method/time	Tips
Refrigerator crisper: up to three days	Once picked, asparagus loses quality quickly. Wrap the base of a bunch of asparagus with a moist paper towel, place in a plastic bag and store in the refrigerator. Wash before using.



## Fresh Asparagus

### Health Benefits:

Asparagus is an excellent source of vitamin K, the B vitamin folate, vitamin C, vitamin A. Asparagus is a very good source of numerous B vitamins, as well as dietary fiber, copper, phosphorus, potassium and protein. Asparagus has been found to protect and promote healthy gut flora, as well as acts like a natural diuretic.

### Serving Ideas:

For a delectable hors d'oeuvre, roast asparagus along with other vegetables such as pattypan squash, Portobello mushrooms, and beets.

### Recipe: Asparagus Pizza (serves 4)

#### Ingredients:

- 1 pound asparagus, trimmed
- 1 13.8 ounce can refrigerated pizza crust, unbaked
- 2/3 cup red bell pepper, diced
- 1/2 cup chopped onion
- 1 cup sliced mushrooms
- 1/2 cup sliced black olives
- 3 ounces mozzarella cheese, part skim milk, shredded
- 3 ounces feta cheese, crumbled

#### Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 425°F.
2. Trim ends from asparagus. Place stalks in boiling water for 2 minutes. Immediately submerge in ice water for 2 minutes to stop cooking. Drain well.
3. Place crust on ungreased pizza pan on baking sheet. Layer vegetables on pizza dough in this order: red bell pepper, onion, mushrooms, and black olives. Arrange asparagus, tips toward the edge.
4. Sprinkle with mozzarella and feta cheeses.
5. Bake at 425°F until crust and cheese are lightly browned, about 12 to 15 minutes.

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### Storage

#### method/time

#### Tips

Room temperature:  
one to two days;  
refrigerator crisper:  
up to one month.

Ripen apples at room temperature. Once ripe, store in plastic bags in the crisper. Wash before eating.



## Fresh Apples

### Health Benefits:

Apples are a good source of dietary fiber and vitamin C. Most of the apple's fiber is contained in its skin. An apple a day keeps the doctor away... They help support a healthy heart, and as a cancer fighting agent. The large amounts of vitamin C serve as an anti-oxidant to ward off the common cold or flu.

### Recipe: Apple Bake (Serves 9)

#### Ingredients:

- Crust:
  - o 3/4 cup all-purpose flour
  - o 1/2 cup whole wheat flour
  - o 2 tablespoons powdered sugar
  - o 2 tablespoons softened butter or margarine
  - o 4 tablespoons canola oil
- Filling:
  - o 2 large Gala or Fuji apples, peeled, cored and cut into bite-sized chunks
  - o 2 large Granny Smith apples, peeled, cored and cut into bite-sized chunks
  - o 1-1/2 cups apple cider, divided
  - o 2 tablespoons cornstarch
  - o 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
  - o 1/8 teaspoon nutmeg
  - o 2 tablespoons packed brown sugar
  - o Pinch salt
  - o 1/4 cup apple butter, unsweetened
  - o 1/2 cup lowfat granola

#### Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 375°F. In medium bowl, mix together dry crust ingredients. Cut in margarine and canola oil until mixture is completely combined. Press crust mixture into bottom of 8x8- or 9x9-inch square baking pan. Bake 15 minutes. Remove from oven and set aside to cool.
2. Lower oven temperature to 325°F. Prepare filling: In saucepan over medium heat, cook apples in 1 cup apple cider for 5 minutes or until tender. Mix cornstarch with remaining 1/2 cup cider in small bowl. Add to cooking apples, stirring constantly until mixture thickens and cornstarch is completely cooked. Stir in cinnamon, nutmeg, sugar and salt. Set aside.
3. Using back of spoon or spatula, spread prepared crust with apple butter. Top with cooked apple mixture. Sprinkle with granola. Bake 20-30 minutes or until hot and bubbly.

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### Storage

#### method/time

Room temperature; once cut, refrigerator crisper: two to three days.

#### Tips

Fresh ripe tomatoes should not be stored in the refrigerator. Refrigeration makes them tasteless and mealy. Wipe clean and store tomatoes at room temperature away from sunlight. Wash before eating. (Refrigerate only extra-ripe tomatoes you want to keep from ripening any further.) Store cut tomatoes in the refrigerator.



## Fresh Tomatoes

### Health Benefits:

Tomatoes are an excellent source of vitamin C, vitamin A, and vitamin K. Overall, they promote optimal health due to the many benefits they generate such as anti-oxidant properties, colon health, lowering cholesterol, improving heart health, and prostate health in men.

### Serving Ideas:

Enjoy a classic Italian Caprice salad with sliced tomatoes, fresh basil, and mozzarella cheese drizzled with olive oil.

### Recipe: Italian Tomato Sauce (Serves 4)

#### Ingredients:

- 1 slice thick sliced bacon or pancetta, chopped
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 5 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/2 cup onion, chopped
- 5 medium tomatoes, peeled, seeded, chopped fine
- 1/4 cup red wine
- 8 basil leaves, chopped
- 6 cups cooked spaghetti
- 1/2 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese

#### Directions:

1. Cook bacon in olive oil until golden. Add garlic and onion and cook gently until onion is softened and transparent.
2. Add tomatoes, wine and chopped basil leaves. Simmer 40 to 50 minutes.
3. Serve over spaghetti or other pasta of choice or gnocchi. Sprinkle with Parmesan cheese.

**Serving Ideas:** Serve with crusty bread and a tossed salad with vinegar and oil dressing.

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## Storing Fresh Peppers

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### Storage

#### method/time

#### Tips

Refrigerator crisper:  
up to two weeks

Wipe clean and store in plastic bags. Wash before using.



## Fresh Peppers

### Health Benefits:

One cup of raw, chopped red peppers provides over 100% of the DV for vitamin C and vitamin A. Red peppers are also an excellent source of vitamin B6. Green peppers are a very good source of fiber, folate, and vitamin K. Peppers have been proven to protect against free radicals, heart disease, and lung disease. They are thought to even help eyesight.

### Serving Ideas:

Add finely chopped bell peppers to tuna or chicken salad.

### Recipe: Hot Stuffed Peppers (4 Servings)

#### Ingredients:

- 4 ancho, poblano, Mexi-bell, Anaheim or other peppers
- Nonstick vegetable spray
- 1 cup fresh corn scrapped from the cob or 1 cup frozen corn kernels, thawed
- 1/4 cup chopped sweet onion
- 1/3 cup chopped green bell pepper
- 2 tablespoons fresh cilantro, chopped
- 1 cup grated reduced fat Cheddar cheeses
- 1/4 cup bread crumbs
- 1 cup reduced fat sour cream

#### Directions:

1. Cut hot peppers in half lengthwise, remove seeds and membranes. Spray baking pan with nonstick vegetable spray and place pepper halves in pan.
2. Combine remaining ingredients, except sour cream, to make stuffing. Fill peppers.
3. Bake at 350oF for 45 minutes. Serve with reduced fat sour cream.

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Storage method/time	Tips
Refrigerator: two to three days	The sugar in peas quickly begins to turn to starch even while under refrigeration, so eat quickly after harvesting. Store peas in perforated plastic bags. Wash before shelling.



## Fresh Peas

### Health Benefits:

Peas are rich in vitamin C, vitamin K, manganese, dietary fiber, folate, and thiamin. They have been shown to promote heart health, and are a good energy booster.

### Quick Serving Ideas:

Add some fresh peas to green salads, or sauté fresh snap peas with shiitake mushrooms.

### Recipe: Peas and Peanuts Salad (Serves 8)

#### Ingredients:

- 2 cups green peas, shelled or 2 cups frozen peas, thawed
- 1 cup lightly or unsalted roasted peanuts
- 1 cup chopped celery
- 1/4 cup chopped red onion
- 3 tablespoons crumbled, crisp bacon
- 1/2 cup reduced fat mayonnaise
- 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice

#### Directions:

1. For fresh peas, blanch shelled peas 1-1/2 minutes. Drain and chill in ice water for 2 minutes. Drain well. Pat dry.
2. In large bowl, combine peas, peanuts, celery, onion, and bacon.
3. Combine remaining ingredients well in small bowl. Pour over peas/peanut mixture and stir gently to combine. Chill until serving.

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## Fresh Summer Squash, Zucchini, Patty Pan

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Storage method/time	Tips
Refrigerator: two to three days	Wipe clean and store in plastic bags. Wash before eating.



## Fresh Summer Squash, Zucchini, Patty Pan

### Health Benefits:

Summer squash is an excellent source of manganese and vitamin C. It is also a very good source of magnesium, vitamin A, dietary fiber, potassium, copper, folate, and phosphorus. Summer squash have been found to have anti-cancer agents, as well as cardiovascular benefits.

### Serving Ideas:

Sprinkle grated zucchini or other summer squash on top of salads and sandwiches.

### Recipe: Brown Rice with Zucchini and Mushrooms (Serves 6)

#### Ingredients:

- 2 cups low-sodium, fat-free broth (chicken, beef, or vegetable)
- 1 cup brown rice
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1/2 cup onion, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 medium zucchini, halved lengthwise and sliced, about 3 cups
- 8 ounces sliced mushrooms
- 3 tablespoons chopped fresh Italian parsley
- 1/2 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper

#### Directions:

1. Cook brown rice in broth as directed on the package. Add no salt or butter during cooking of the rice.
2. While rice cooks, heat oil in a large skillet. Sauté onions over medium heat 5 minutes, stirring often, until onions become translucent. Add garlic and stir for 1 minute.
3. Add zucchini and mushrooms. Raise heat to high and continue to sauté until squash just begins to brown in spots.
4. Lower heat and add cooked rice and remaining ingredients. Cook, stirring often, for 3 to 5 minutes.

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## Storing Fresh Potatoes

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### Storage

#### method/time

#### Tips

Room temperature:  
one to two weeks.

Store potatoes in a cool, dry, well-ventilated area away from light, which causes greening. Scrub well before cooking.



## Fresh Potatoes

### Health Benefits:

Potatoes are a good source of vitamin C, vitamin B6, copper, potassium, manganese, and dietary fiber. Studies have found that potatoes have the potential to lower blood pressure, protect the heart, and nervous system.

### Serving Ideas:

Purée roasted garlic, cooked potatoes and olive oil together to make delicious garlic mashed potatoes. Season to taste.

### Recipe: New Potato and Green Bean Salad

#### Ingredients:

- 1-1/2 pounds (about 4 cups) new potatoes, quartered
- 3/4 pound (about 3 cups) green beans cleaned and cut in half if desired
- 1/2 cup reduced fat Italian dressing
- 1/4 cup red onions, chopped
- 1/2 cup (2-1/4 ounces) sliced ripe olives, drained

#### Directions:

1. Cook potatoes, covered, in a large pan of boiling water for 3 minutes. Add green beans and continue cooking for 6 to 7 minutes or until potatoes are tender. Drain. Transfer drained vegetables to a large bowl.
2. Toss hot vegetables with dressing. Add onion and olives, toss well. Cover and refrigerate 1 to 2 hours or until chilled.

Serves 8

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## Storing Fresh Onions (Red, White, Yellow, Green)

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Storage method/time	Tips
Dry onions: Room temperature two to four weeks;	Store dry onions loosely in a mesh bag in a cool, dry well-ventilated place away from sunlight.
Green onions: Refrigerator crisper:	Wash green onions carefully before eating.



## Fresh Onions (Red, White, Yellow, Green)

### Health Benefits:

Onions are rich in chromium, Vitamin C, and fiber. They have been shown to improve cardiovascular health, as well as support bone and muscle tissue.

### Tips for Cutting Onions:

Cut onions into ¼-inch slices to cook them evenly and quickly. Let them sit for at least 5 minutes to help enhance their health-promoting benefits.

### Recipe: Watermelon and Onion Fresco Salad

#### Ingredients:

- 4 cups watermelon, cubed and seeded
- 1/2 cup sweet onions, very thinly sliced and quartered
- 2 tablespoons fresh basil, chopped
- 1/4 cup raspberry and/or blueberry vinegar

#### Directions:

1. Salt and fresh ground black pepper to taste
2. Lettuce leaves
3. Toss watermelon, onions and basil until well mixed.
4. Pour vinegar over watermelon mixture. Toss gently to combine mixture. Season to taste with salt and pepper.
5. Serve on lettuce.

Yields 4 servings.

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## Storing Fresh Peaches, Nectarines and Pears

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Storage method/time	Tips
Refrigerator crisper: five days	Ripen the fruit at room temperature, then refrigerate it in plastic bags. Wash before eating.



## Storing Fresh Peaches, Nectarines and Pears

### Health Benefits:

- **Peaches:** Peaches are rich in many vitamins including A, B and C. These are known to help with vision, skin health, and inflammation. Peaches are also rich in Iron, which prevents anemia.
- **Nectarines:** Nectarines provide very good sources of carotenes, potassium, flavonoids, and natural sugars. They are good sources of lycopene and lutein, which are helpful in preventing heart disease and cancer.
- **Pears:** Pears are rich in fiber, Vitamin C, copper, and Vitamin K. They have been found to aid in promoting cardiovascular and colon health, as well as fight free radicals in the body.

### Recipe: Blackberry Peach Crisp (Serves 8)

#### Ingredients:

- 1 cup quick or old fashioned oats
- 1 cup brown sugar, packed
- 3/4 cup flour, divided
- 1/2 cup margarine
- 4 cups blackberries, fresh, frozen or canned
- 2 cups sliced peaches

#### Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Spray an 8-inch by 8-inch baking dish with nonstick vegetable spray. Combine oats, brown sugar and 1/2 cup flour. Cut in margarine with pastry blender until well blended and moist enough to form a ball.
2. Place well drained berries in bottom of baking dish and toss with remaining 1/4 cup flour. Add peaches to baking dish. Sprinkle crumb mixture evenly over fruit and bake in 350°F oven for 35 to 40 minutes or until golden brown.

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## Storing Fresh Melons: Watermelon, Honeydew, Cantaloupe

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### Storage method/time

### Tips

At room temperature until ripe. Refrigerator: three to four days for cut melon.

For best flavor, store melons at room temperature until ripe. Store ripe, cut melon covered in the refrigerator. Wash rind before cutting.



## Fresh Melons: Watermelon, Honeydew, Cantaloupe

### Health Benefits:

Melons provide a good source of potassium and vitamin C. Like many other fruits, they are also fat and cholesterol free, high in water content, and are relatively low in calories. Vitamin C helps to support the immune system, and acts as an anti-oxidant.

### A Few Quick Serving Ideas:

Add some sparkling water to fresh squeezed cantaloupe juice for a delightfully refreshing drink in the warm months of the year.

### Recipe: Watermelon Sundaes (4 Servings)

#### Ingredients:

- 2 cups cold watermelon formed into 4 large balls\*
- 1/2 cup low-fat vanilla yogurt
- 1 cup chilled fresh fruit such as blueberries, chopped strawberries or peaches
- 2 tablespoons toasted almonds

#### Directions:

1. Wash melon well in cool, running, drinkable water before cutting. To form watermelon balls cut melon using an ice cream scoop or make several smaller balls using a cookie dough scoop or melon baller.
2. For each serving put 1 watermelon ball in a sundae glass or small bowl.
3. Stir yogurt until smooth, spoon 2 tablespoons over each watermelon ball.
4. Sprinkle each serving with 1/4 cup fresh fruit and 1/2 tablespoon nuts.

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## Storing Fresh Lettuce, Spinach and other Delicate Greens

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### Storage method/time

### Tips

Refrigerator crisper: five to seven days for lettuce; one to two days for greens.	Discard outer or wilted leaves. Store in plastic bags in the refrigerator crisper. Wash before using.
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## Fresh Lettuce, Spinach and other Delicate Greens

### Health Benefits:

Calorie for calorie, leafy green vegetables like spinach with its delicate texture and jade green color provide more nutrients than any other food. Delicate greens are full of vitamins and minerals that have shown to improve brain functions, increase energy, build strong bones and muscles, and aid in cardiovascular and eye health. Studies show that spinach helps combat both prostate and ovarian cancer as well.

### A Few Quick Serving Ideas:

Add layers of steamed spinach to your next lasagna recipe.

### Recipe: Spring Pasta with Asparagus, Spinach and Bacon (Serves 4)

#### Ingredients:

- 8 ounces whole grain pasta, uncooked
- 1 tablespoon canola oil
- 1/2 cup chopped sweet onion
- 1 pound asparagus, tough ends removed, cut in 1-inch pieces
- 1 cup fat-free, reduced sodium chicken or vegetable broth
- 4 cups fresh spinach, coarsely chopped
- 1/4 cup Parmesan cheese, shredded
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 2 slices cooked bacon, crumbled or imitation bacon bits
- 1/4 cup Parmesan cheese, shredded

#### Directions:

1. Cook pasta according to directions on package, omitting salt. Drain. Keep warm.
2. Heat oil in large skillet over medium heat. Add onion to pan and cook stirring occasionally, 2 minutes. Add asparagus and broth. Bring mixture to a boil, reduce heat and simmer 4 minutes. Remove from heat. Add cooked, drained pasta, spinach, 1/4 cup Parmesan cheese and pepper. Toss well with tongs.
3. Transfer mixture to serving dish and sprinkle with crumbled bacon and remaining 1/4 cup Parmesan cheese.

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## Storing Fresh Herbs

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Storage method/time	Tips
Refrigerator crisper two to three days	Herbs may be stored in plastic bags or place upright in a glass of water (stems down). Cover loosely with plastic bag.



## Fresh Herbs

### Health Benefits:

Herbs have been used for centuries to help treat different diseases, illness, and even extend life. There are a variety of herbs, each providing their own unique benefits. Common herbs include:

- **Garlic:** helps reduce cholesterol and triglycerides to promote cardiovascular health.
- **Basil:** Promotes anti-inflammatory agents, as well as cardiovascular benefits.
- **Parsley:** It's an effective treatment for asthma, jaundice and menstruation. It's rich in B vitamins and potassium.
- **Cinnamon:** alleviates pain due to its anti-inflammatory compounds. It improves the ability of cells to take in glucose which helps to lower blood sugar in diabetics.
- **Dill:** Dill relieves gas and bloating. Dill has been shown to promote milk production for nursing mothers.
- **Ginger:** Helps boost the immune system, and has also been found to help relieve the side effects of chemo therapy in cancer patients.
- **Ginseng:** Lowers blood pressure and improve circulation to the brain. It has also been found to help relieve symptoms of cold and flu.

### Recipe: Tomato and Basil Pasta (4 servings)

#### Ingredients:

- 2 large fresh tomatoes, cored and chopped
- 1 tablespoon fresh basil, chopped
- 1 teaspoon chopped garlic
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 6 ounces angel hair pasta
- 1/4 cup Parmesan cheese, shredded

#### Directions:

1. Mix first 5 ingredients and let set at room temperature for 1 hour.
2. Cook pasta according to package directions, omitting salt. Drain pasta and add tomato mixture. Serve immediately topped with Parmesan cheese.

### For Nutrition Information visit:

<http://www.fcs.okstate.edu/food/food/food/cooking/index.htm>





## Storing Fresh Eggplant

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If you choose to wash produce before storage, be sure to **thoroughly** dry fruits and vegetables with a clean paper towel. If you choose to store without washing, take care to shake, rub or brush off any garden dirt with a paper towel or soft brush while still outside. Never wash berries until you are ready to eat them. Storing fresh produce in plastic bags or containers will minimize the chance that you might contaminate other foods in the refrigerator. Keep your refrigerator fruit and vegetable bin clean.

All stored produce should be checked regularly for signs of spoilage such as mold and slime. If spoiled, toss it out. All cut, peeled or cooked vegetables or fruits should be stored in clean, covered containers in the refrigerator at 40°F or less.

Storage method/time	Tips
Refrigerator: one to two days	Eggplants do not like cool temperatures so they do not store well. Harvest and use them immediately for best flavor. If you must store them, store in a plastic bag in the refrigerator. Be careful as the eggplant will soon develop soft brown spots and become bitter. Use while the stem and cap are still greenish and fresh-looking.



## Fresh Eggplant

### Health Benefits:

In addition to featuring a host of vitamins and minerals, eggplant also contains important phytonutrients, many which have antioxidant activity. Phytonutrients contained in eggplant include phenolic compounds, such as caffeic and chlorogenic acid, and flavonoids.

### Tips for Preparing Eggplant

When cutting an eggplant, use a stainless steel knife as carbon steel will react with its phytonutrients and cause it to turn black. Wash the eggplant first and then cut off the ends. Eggplant can be baked, roasted in the oven, or steamed.

### Recipe: Tomato & Eggplant Gratin (4-6 servings)

#### Ingredients:

- 2 medium eggplants (1-1/2 pounds)
- 4 tablespoons olive oil
- 14 ounces ripe tomatoes, sliced
- 1/2 teaspoons salt (optional)
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper
- 1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese

#### Directions:

1. Preheat broiler. Thickly slice eggplant and arrange in a single layer on a foil lined broiler rack. Brush with some olive oil and broil 15-20 minutes, turning once, until golden on both sides. Brush second side with oil after turning.
2. Preheat oven to 400°F. Toss eggplant and tomatoes together in bowl with seasoning then pile into shallow oven-proof dish. Drizzle with remaining olive oil and sprinkle with cheese. Bake 20 minutes until cheese is golden and vegetables are hot. Serve immediately.

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## Storing Fresh Corn

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Storage method/time	Tips
Refrigerator crisper: one to two days	For best flavor, use corn immediately. Corn in husks can be stored in plastic bags for one to two days.



## Fresh Corn

### Health Benefits:

Our food ranking system qualified corn as a good source of many nutrients including thiamin, vitamin B5, folate, dietary fiber, vitamin C, phosphorus, and manganese. These have been found to promote lung health, cardiovascular health, and support memory.

### Tips for Preparing Corn:

Corn can be cooked either with or without its husk in a variety of different ways. If using the wet heat methods of boiling or steaming, make sure not to add salt or overcook as the corn will tend to become hard and lose its flavor. Or, they can be broiled in the husk. If broiling, first soak the corn in the husk ahead.

### Recipe: Farmers Market Salsa (8 servings)

#### Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup corn, fresh cooked or frozen
- 1 can (15 ounces) black beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 cup fresh tomatoes, diced
- 1/2 cup onion, diced
- 1/2 cup green pepper, diced
- 2 tablespoons fresh lime juice
- 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 1/2 cup picante sauce

#### Directions:

1. Combine all ingredients in a large bowl. Chill until serving time.
2. Drain before serving.
3. Serve with low fat baked tortilla chips or fresh vegetables.

#### For Nutrition Information visit:

<http://www.fcs.okstate.edu/food/food/food/cooking/index.htm>



## Storing Fresh Collards

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All stored produce should be checked regularly for signs of spoilage such as mold and slime. If spoiled, toss it out. All cut, peeled or cooked vegetables or fruits should be stored in clean, covered containers in the refrigerator at 40°F or less.

### Storage method/time

### Tips

Refrigerator crisper: four to five days	Collards store better than most greens. Wrap leaves in moist paper towels and place in sealed plastic bag. When ready to use wash thoroughly. Greens tend to have dirt and grit clinging to the leaves.
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## Fresh Collards

### Health Benefits:

Collards are an excellent source of vitamin C, beta-carotene, and manganese, and a good source of vitamin E and zinc which are excellent sources of antioxidants. As an excellent source of vitamin K and a very good source of omega-3 fatty acids, collard greens provide us with two anti-inflammatory nutrients. Collard greens have also been found to have cardiovascular health benefits, as well as digestive support due to the excellent source of fiber they provide.

### Tips for Preparing Collard Greens:

Rinse collard greens under cold running water. Chop leaf portion into ½-inch slices and the stems into ¼-inch pieces for quick and even cooking.

### Recipe: 5 Minute Collard Greens

#### Ingredients:

- 1 pound collard greens
- 1/2 red onion, sliced
- 1 teaspoon lemon juice
- 1 medium clove garlic, pressed or chopped
- 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 1-1/2 tablespoons sunflower seeds

#### Optional Ingredients:

- 6 kalamata olives, sliced
- 3 tablespoons toasted pumpkin seeds
- 5 drops tamari soy sauce
- Dash of cayenne pepper

#### Directions:

1. Rinse collard greens under cold running water. Separate leaves from stems. Chop leaf portion into 1/2-inch slices and the stems into 1/4-inch pieces.
2. Fill bottom of a steamer with 2 inches of water. Place on high heat.
3. Slice collard leaves into 1/2-inch slices and cut again crosswise. Cut stems into 1/4-inch slices. Place collards and red onion into steamer, close tightly and steam 4 to 5 minutes.
4. Transfer collards to a bowl. Add lemon juice, garlic, olive oil, salt, pepper and sunflower seeds. Toss well. Add optional ingredients of choice. Toss again and serve. Serves 2.

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## Storing Fresh Chard

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### Storage method/time

### Tips

Refrigerator crisper: two to three days	Store leaves in plastic bags. The stalks can be stored longer if separated from the leaves. Wash before using.
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## Fresh Chard

### Health Benefits:

It is an excellent source of vitamins C, E, and K, carotenes, chlorophyll, and fiber.

It is also an excellent source of several minerals including potassium, magnesium, iron, and manganese.

### Recipe: Chard with Dried Cranberries

#### Ingredients:

- 3 tablespoons dried cranberries
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 pounds chard, stemmed and washed in several changes of water, stems diced and set aside
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 3 tablespoons pine nuts
- 1 to 2 garlic cloves, minced
- Salt and freshly ground pepper, optional

#### Directions:

- Place dried cranberries in a bowl and cover with hot water. Soak 10 minutes, drain.
- Bring a large pot of water and 1 teaspoon salt to a boil. Add chard leaves and cook 1 to 2 minutes, until tender. While chard cooks, fill a bowl with ice water. Immediately after chard is tender, transfer it to the ice water to stop cooking. Let chard chill for a few minutes then drain. Squeeze out as much water as possible, and chop coarsely.
- Heat oil over medium heat in a large, heavy nonstick skillet. Add chard stems and cook 3 to 5 minutes, until tender. Add pine nuts and cook, stirring, until they begin to brown, 2 to 3 minutes. Add garlic and cook for 1 minute, stirring. Add cooked, chopped greens and drained cranberries. Toss until greens are coated with oil and heated through, 2 to 3 minutes. If desired, season to taste with salt and pepper. Serve hot or at room temperature. Serves 4.

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<http://www.fcs.okstate.edu/food/food/food/cooking/index.htm>





## Storing Fresh Green or Wax Beans

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All stored produce should be checked regularly for signs of spoilage such as mold and slime. If spoiled, toss it out. All cut, peeled or cooked vegetables or fruits should be stored in clean, covered containers in the refrigerator at 40°F or less.

Storage method/time	Tips
Refrigerator crisper: up to three days	Store in plastic bags. Do not wash before storing. Wet beans will develop black spots and decay quickly. Wash before preparation.



## Fresh Green or Wax Beans

### Health Benefits of Green/Wax Beans:

Green beans are an excellent source of vitamin C, vitamin K and manganese. Plus green beans are very good source of vitamin A, dietary fiber, potassium, folate, and iron.

### Tips for Preparing Green Beans:

Just prior to using the green beans, wash them under running water. Remove both ends of the beans by either snapping them off or cutting them with a knife.

### Recipe: Green Bean Gremolata (Serves 8)

#### Ingredients:

- 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 tablespoons grated lemon peel
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/2 cup fresh parsley, chopped
- 2 pounds green beans, stem ends trimmed but pointed tips left on if desired
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1/2 teaspoon black pepper
- Salt to taste, optional

#### Directions:

1. In a small bowl mix together the Parmesan cheese, lemon peel, garlic and parsley. Set aside.
2. Bring a large pot of water to a boil. Add green beans and cook until crisp-tender, about 6 to 7 minutes. Drain very well and place in a large bowl.
3. Toss beans with olive oil to coat thoroughly, add the parsley mixture and toss gently to coat thoroughly. Add pepper and salt to taste (optional). Serve immediately.

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## Storing Fresh Cucumbers

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All stored produce should be checked regularly for signs of spoilage such as mold and slime. If spoiled, toss it out. All cut, peeled or cooked vegetables or fruits should be stored in clean, covered containers in the refrigerator at 40°F or less.

Storage method/time	Tips
Refrigerator crisper: up to one week	Wipe clean and store in plastic bags. Do not store with apples or tomatoes. Wash before using.



## Fresh Cucumbers

### Health Benefits of Cucumbers:

The flesh of cucumbers is primarily composed of water but also contains ascorbic acid (vitamin C) and caffeic acid, both of which help soothe skin irritations and reduce swelling. Cucumbers' hard skin is rich in fiber and contains a variety of beneficial minerals including silica, potassium and magnesium.

### Tips for Preparing Cucumbers:

Unwaxed cucumbers do not need to be peeled but should be washed before cutting. Waxed cucumbers should always be peeled first. Cucumbers can be sliced, diced or cut into sticks. While the seeds are edible and nutritious, some people prefer not to eat them. To easily remove them, cut the cucumber lengthwise and use the tip of a spoon to gently scoop them out.

### Recipe: Cucumber Mango Salsa

#### Ingredients:

- 3 mangos - peeled, seeded and diced
- 1 cucumber - peeled, seeded, and diced
- 2 jalapeno peppers, seeded and finely chopped
- 1 large onion, finely diced
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh cilantro
- 1 tablespoon lime juice, or to taste
- salt and pepper to taste

#### Directions:

1. Stir together the mango, cucumber, jalapeno pepper, onion, garlic, and cilantro in a mixing bowl.
2. Season with lime juice, salt, and pepper. Refrigerate at least 2 hours before serving to allow the flavors to blend. S
3. Serve with tortilla chips!

#### For Nutrition Information visit:

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## Storing Fresh Broccoli

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All stored produce should be checked regularly for signs of spoilage such as mold and slime. If spoiled, toss it out. All cut, peeled or cooked vegetables or fruits should be stored in clean, covered containers in the refrigerator at 40°F or less.

Storage method/time	Tips
Refrigerator crisper: three to five days	Store in loose, perforated plastic bags. Wash before using.



## Fresh Broccoli

### Health Benefits of Broccoli:

Broccoli can provide you with some special cholesterol-lowering benefits if you will cook it by steaming. Broccoli provides a high amount of vitamin C, which aids iron absorption in the body, prevents the development of cataracts, and also eases the symptoms of the common cold. The potassium in broccoli aids those battling high blood pressure, while a large amount of calcium helps combat osteoporosis.

### Tips for Preparing Broccoli

Rinse broccoli under cold running water. Cut florets into quarters for quick and even cooking. Be sure to enjoy the stems and leaves of broccoli; they provide a good balance of flavors. Peel the broccoli stem and cut the stem into 1/2" slices. To get unique health benefits from broccoli, let it sit for several minutes before cooking.

### Recipe: Cavatelli and Broccoli (Yields 12 Servings)

#### Ingredients:

- 3 heads fresh broccoli, cut into florets
- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 1/2 pounds cavatelli pasta
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes
- 2 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese

#### Directions:

1. In a large pot of boiling water, blanch broccoli for about 5 minutes. Drain, and set aside.
2. Heat olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Sauté garlic until lightly golden, being careful not to burn it. Add the broccoli. Sauté, stirring occasionally, for about 10 minutes. Broccoli should be tender yet crisp to the bite.
3. Meanwhile, cook cavatelli in a large pot of boiling salted water for 8 to 10 minutes, or until al dente. Drain, and place in a large serving bowl. Toss with the broccoli, and season with salt and hot pepper flakes. Serve with parmesan cheese. Serve!

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## Storing Fresh Cabbage

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Storage method/time	Tips
Refrigerator for up to two weeks	Store, after removing outer leaves, in perforated plastic bags.



## Fresh Cabbage

### Health Benefits:

Cancer prevention tops all other areas of health research with regard to cabbage and its outstanding benefits. Cabbage has also been found to have benefits that promote digestive tract health, and cardiovascular health. Cabbage is an excellent source of vitamin K and vitamin C. It is also a very good source of fiber, manganese, folate, vitamin B6 potassium and omega-3 fatty acids. Cabbage is also a good source of thiamin, riboflavin, calcium, magnesium, vitamin A, and protein.

### Recipe: Ground Beef and Cabbage Casserole (serves 6)

#### Ingredients:

- 1 pound lean ground beef
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 2 cups no salt added tomato sauce
- 1/4 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cloves
- 1/2 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1/2 teaspoon dried basil
- 4 cups shredded cabbage

#### Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Spray a 2-quart casserole dish and lid with non-stick vegetable spray.
2. Brown ground beef and chopped onion in large skillet. When almost browned, add garlic and continue cooking until meat is completely browned. Drain.
3. To meat mixture in skillet add salt, tomato sauce, cinnamon, ground cloves, thyme and basil. Bring to a simmer and cook 10 minutes.
4. Spread half the cabbage in prepared casserole. Top with half the meat mixture. Repeat layers. Cover casserole with lid and bake in preheated 350oF oven 45 minutes.

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### Storage

#### method/time

#### Tips

Refrigerator crisper:  
one to two days

The fresher the sprouts, the better the flavor.  
Remove outer leaves and store fresh sprouts in plastic bags. Wash before eating.



## Fresh Brussels Sprouts

### Health Benefits:

A cup of Brussels sprouts contains vitamin A plus beta-carotene, both of which play important roles in defending the body against infection and promoting supple, glowing skin. Brussels sprouts are one of the vegetable that has a highest content of vitamin C. In addition to providing vitamins to the diet, one cup of Brussels sprouts contains more than 4 grams of fiber to promote healthy digestion.

### Tips for Preparing Brussels sprouts:

Brussels sprouts are usually cooked whole, for an even cooking cut an "X" in the bottom of the stem before cooking to allow the heat to penetrate throughout the leaves.

### Recipe: Brussels Sprouts with Toasted Pecans and Dried Cranberries (Serves 4)

#### Ingredients:

- 6 cups water
- 1 pound fresh Brussels sprouts
- 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
- 2 teaspoons balsamic vinegar
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped, lightly toasted pecans
- 1/4 cup dried cranberries
- 1/2 teaspoons salt
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper

#### Directions:

1. Bring water to a rolling boil in a large pot.
2. To prepare the Brussels sprouts, first soak sprouts in lukewarm water for 10 minutes. Drain. Cut a small slice from the stem end. Cut an X into the base of each sprout for even cooking. Add prepared sprouts to boiling water and cook 6 to 9 minutes, until just tender.
3. While sprouts cook, stir together olive oil, vinegar, pecans, cranberries, salt and pepper in a small bowl.
4. When sprouts are done, drain well. Transfer drained sprouts to a serving dish. Toss with olive oil, vinegar mixture.

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## Storing Fresh Berries (Blackberries, Raspberries, Straw- berries, Blueberries)

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Storage method/time	Tips
Refrigerator crisper: two to three days	Before storing berries, remove any spoiled or crushed fruits. Store unwashed in plastic bags or containers. Do not remove green tops from strawberries before storing. Wash gently under cool running water before using.



## Fresh Berries (Blackberries, Raspberries, Strawberries, Blueberries)

### Health Benefits:

The pigments that give berries their beautiful blue and red hues are also good for your health. Berries contain phytochemicals, and flavonoids that may help to prevent some forms of cancer. Cranberries and blueberries contain a substance that may prevent bladder infections. Eating a diet rich in blackberries, blueberries, raspberries, cranberries and strawberries may help to reduce your risk of several types of cancers. Blueberries and raspberries also contain lutein, which is important for healthy vision. Considering their size, berries contain a giant portion of phytochemicals, in addition to vitamins, minerals and fiber that provide numerous health benefits.

### Easy ways to increase your consumption of berries:

- Top a bowl of berries with a dollop of light-whipped topping and a sprinkling of chopped pecans or walnuts
- Add strawberry slices to a bowl of whole grain cereal
- Sprinkle blueberries on a salad
- Stir fresh raspberries into vanilla yogurt
- Combine frozen berries with bananas and low-fat milk to make a smoothie

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## Storing Fresh Beets, Carrots, Parsnips, Radishes, Turnips

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### Storage

#### method/time

#### Tips

Refrigerator crisper:  
one to two weeks

Remove green tops and store vegetables in plastic bags. Trim the tap roots from radishes before storing. Wash before using.



## Fresh Beets, Carrots, Parsnips, Radishes, Turnips

### Health Benefits:

**Beets:** One cup of raw beets is high in carbohydrates and low in fat. It contains phosphorus, sodium, magnesium, calcium, iron, and potassium, as well as fiber, vitamins A and C, niacin, and biotin.

**Carrots:** Carrots are an excellent source of antioxidant compounds, and the richest vegetable source of the pro-vitamin A carotenes. Carrots' antioxidant compounds help protect against cardiovascular disease and cancer and also promote good vision, especially night vision.

**Parsnip:** Parsnips provide an excellent source of vitamin C, fiber, folic acid, pantothenic acid, copper, and manganese. They also offer a very good source of niacin, thiamine, magnesium, and potassium. They are a good source of riboflavin, folic acid, and vitamins B6 and E.

**Radishes:** Radishes and their greens provide an excellent source of vitamin C. Radish leaves contain almost six times the vitamin C content of their root and are also a good source of calcium. Red Globes also offer a very good source of the trace mineral molybdenum and are a good source of potassium and folic acid.

**Turnips:** Turnips provide an excellent source of vitamin C, fiber, folic acid, manganese, pantothenic acid, and copper. They also offer a very good source of thiamine, potassium, niacin, and magnesium. Turnip greens are more nutrition dense than the root. The greens provide an excellent source of vitamins A, B6, C, E, folic acid, calcium, copper, fiber, and manganese.

### For Nutrition Information visit:

<http://www.fcs.okstate.edu/food/food/food/food/cooking/index.htm>

