



Safe Handling Practices for Fresh Produce for Foodservice

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Purchasing and Receiving

Purchase food from known safe sources (reputable suppliers) and maintain its safety from time of receiving through service.

When fresh produce is received, follow supplier recommendations, if provided, regarding handling, storage temperatures, "use by" dates and other recommendations for the produce.

Avoid receiving or using damaged and partially decayed produce.

Maintain purchasing records of fresh produce.

Storage

Store raw produce so that it does not contaminate other foods with soil, etc.

Store any fresh produce, whole or cut, where other products – especially raw meat and poultry – cannot cross-contaminate it.

Segregate fresh produce from other refrigerated foods in refrigeration units by using a separate set of storage racks or separate cooler, if possible.

Cover and store washed cut produce above unwashed, uncut fresh produce.

Store all produce off the floor. Remember keep all foods 6" off the floor.

The Nebraska Food Code requires that melons and tomatoes, cut in any way, be held at 41⁰F or below. To maintain quality of other cut, peeled or prepared fresh fruits and vegetables, refrigerate at 41⁰F or below or hold on a salad bar at 41⁰F or below.

Food Handler

Wash hands thoroughly with soap and warm running water before and after handling fresh produce.

Avoid bare hand contact when preparing and serving fresh produce – use gloves, tongs, deli tissue or other appropriate utensils.

Make sure that food employees are reporting illness and are not working while sick.

Preparation

Wash, rinse and sanitize all sinks, utensils, cutting boards, slicers and food preparation surfaces before use with fresh produce. If possible, designate specific cutting boards and utensils for use with fresh produce.

Remove outer leaves, stems and hulls from produce like cabbage, head lettuce, berries and tomatoes.

Always wash fresh produce under running, potable water before use.

Do not use soap or detergent for washing produce as these products are not food grade. Produce washes that are designated for use with produce can be used but are not necessary for produce safety.

Rinse fresh fruits and vegetables under running tap water. Scrub firm fruits and vegetables like potatoes and carrots with a vegetable brush under running tap water.

Soaking produce or storing produce in standing water or ice is not recommended for most types of fresh produce.

Commercial, “fresh-cut” carrots, salad greens and other produce have already been washed before processing and should be considered ready-to-eat with no further need for washing unless the label says otherwise.

Refrigerate foods prepared with fresh produce ingredients at 41⁰F or below.

Label and date all foods prepared with fresh produce ingredients. If not used within 7 days, discard prepared fresh produce.

Freshly prepared juice on site requires a HACCP plan.

Service

On self-serve and salad bars, use small batches of fresh produce and monitor self-service units.

Fresh produce should not be held directly on ice.

Provide appropriate utensils for self-service of fresh produce.

Do not re-serve freshly prepared dishes containing any raw produce, including dishes made with raw tomatoes, cilantro and hot peppers such as salsa and guacamole.

Throw away fresh fruits and vegetables that have not been refrigerated (41⁰F or below) within 4 hours of cutting, peeling or preparation.