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Storage Tips

Organic produce does not have the shelf life of conventional produce, since it is grown without the use of preservatives. However, proper storage techniques will help maintain the life of your produce.

Fruits

Apples

Apples that are properly stored have a relatively long shelf life. They should be stored in the refrigerator, away from any strong-smelling foods to prevent them from absorbing odors. Some apples will turn brown when cut or exposed to air. Dipping cut apples into a mixture of one part lemon juice and three parts water will slow this process.

Bananas

Bananas should be stored at room temperature. To speed the ripening of bananas that are still green, place them in a perforated bag with a ripe apple and store the bag at room temperature for a few days. To slow the ripening process, store them in the refrigerator. If your bananas get overripe, they are great for baking.

Berries

Berries should be refrigerated in an airtight container. Do not wash berries until you are ready to use them.

Cherries

Cherries are highly perishable. Store them unwashed, in a plastic bag in the refrigerator for two to three days.

Citrus

Most citrus fruit can be stored at room temperature or in the refrigerator for up to 2 weeks.

Grapes

Store grapes unwashed, in a perforated plastic bag for up to one week. Whole grapes are not recommended as a snack for infants and toddlers because they pose a significant choking hazard. They should be cut in quarters before serving them to young children.

Kiwi

Like many tropical fruit, they will continue ripening after harvest. Green Kiwi has a longer shelf life than gold kiwi. Green Kiwi can be refrigerated for up to three weeks compared to one week for gold kiwi.

Mango

Mangos are green at first, turning yellow as they ripen. Store them at room temperature until they are ripe and then refrigerate for up to five days.

Melons

Melons will continue to ripen at room temperature. Refrigerate most melons for up to five days. Watermelons can be stored at room temperature for about a week. Refrigerate them after cutting.

Pears

Pears are ripe when the neck yields slightly to pressure. To speed the ripening process, place them in a perforated bag with an apple. Refrigerate when ripe. They should keep for about five days.

Pineapple

Ripe pineapple is slightly soft to the touch. Ripe pineapple should be wrapped and refrigerated for up to three days.

Peaches

Under ripe peaches will ripen at room temperature after one or two days. Store ripe peaches in the refrigerator for up to five days.

Plums

Ripe plums should be firm, but yield to slight pressure. Store ripe plums in the refrigerator for up to four or five days.

Strawberries

Strawberries are all red when ripe. Store them unwashed in the refrigerator for up to three days. Be sure to wash them before cutting off the hull.

Vegetables

Artichoke

Store unwashed, for up to four days in the refrigerator.

Asparagus

Store for up to four days in the refrigerator.

Avocados

Like tomatoes, avocados are botanically a fruit. Avocados are ripe when they yield to slight pressure. When they are ripe store them in the refrigerator.

Beans

Store beans in a plastic bag in the refrigerator for up to five days.

Broccoli

Refrigerate unwashed for up to five days.

Cabbage

Store cabbage in a plastic bag in the refrigerator for up to ten days. Discard outer leaves before using.

Carrots

Store in the refrigerator separated from apples.

Celery

Refrigerate in a plastic bag for up to two weeks.

Corn

Keep corn in the husk while storing in the refrigerator. Corn starts losing flavor immediately after it is picked so eat it as soon as possible.

Cucumbers

Store cucumbers unwashed and uncut in a plastic bag in the refrigerator for about week.

Eggplant

Store eggplant in the refrigerator and use within a few days.

Chard

Chard should be stored in a plastic bag in the refrigerator for up to three days.

Spinach

Spinach is best stored in a plastic bag in the refrigerator for up to three days.

Lettuce

Lettuce should be stored dry, in a plastic bag for up to five days, depending on the variety.

Mushrooms

Uncut mushrooms should keep for up to a week. Cut mushrooms keep for about three days.

Onions

Onions have a long shelf life. If kept in a cool dry place they can keep for over a month. Cut onions should be wrapped in plastic in the refrigerator for about four days. If you refrigerate onions for about one hour before cutting them it will reduce eye irritation.

Leeks and other Green Onions

Green Onions do not keep as long as dry onions. Store them in a plastic bag in the refrigerator for about five days.

Bell Peppers

All bell peppers, green, red, yellow, orange or purple should be stored in a plastic bag in the refrigerator for approximately a week.

Potatoes

Store in a cool dry place and they will keep for at least a few weeks.

Squash

Summer squashes such as zucchini and yellow squash should be stored in a plastic bag in the refrigerator for up to five days. Winter squashes such as butternut, buttercup, delicate can be stored in a cool dry place for at least a month.

Tomatoes

They are botanically a fruit, but are used like a vegetable. When ripe they will yield slightly to pressure and be fully red. Once they are ripe, they should be used right away or kept in the refrigerator or they will over ripen in a day or two. To slow down the ripening process, store in the refrigerator.