

Food Storage Guide

Store food **to stay fresh longer**



When storing **vegetables in water**, remember to replace the water every few days

Always store **cut fruits and vegetables** in the fridge

Milk, eggs and butter should be stored on a shelf towards the back of the fridge—the fridge door is too warm for them

Keep **onions** stored away from potatoes—they make them sprout faster

Ripe bananas give off a gas that makes the fruit around them ripen faster—store them away from other fruit



Keep **meats** in the coldest part of the fridge—usually the lower shelf or the meat drawer

For longer storage, keep **bread** in the freezer—putting it in the fridge makes it stale faster

Remove **rubber bands and twist ties** from vegetables before storing

Remove the **green tops** of carrots, beets and radishes before storing, leaving about an inch stem

Packaging

Examples of breathable bags and containers:



- Bags with holes (perforated, mesh). You can make your own by poking holes in a produce bag. Better yet, use reusable mesh produce bags!
- Containers with holes (aerated)
- Open or loosely closed produce bags
- Uncovered or loosely covered containers
- Paper bags
- Cloth bags
- Baskets

Examples of airtight bags and containers:



- Closed produce bags
- Containers with closed lids



What do food date labels really mean?

Food date labels are set by manufacturers to indicate when food is at its best quality, not when food is no longer safe to eat. Except for infant formula, date labels are not required by federal regulation.

Sell By: Recommends to the store when to sell the food by, so it still has a shelf life when you take it home. You can still eat food after the sell by date.

Best Before/Best By: Means that the food will be at its best flavor or quality before that date. It does not mean that the food is no longer safe to eat.

Use By: Means that the food may start to lose quality after that date. It does not mean that the food is no longer safe to eat. Infant formula is the only exception—it should not be used after the “Use By” date.

For resources to help you waste less food, visit

seattle.gov/util/reducereuse

Food Storage Chart

Refrigerator Low-humidity drawer (FRUITS)

Store loose or in breathable bags



Stone Fruits
(ripe) peaches, nectarines, plums, apricots



Tropical Fruits
(ripe) kiwis, mangoes, papayas



Citrus
oranges, lemons, limes, grapefruit



Apples



Pears (ripe)



Avocados (ripe)

High-humidity drawer (VEGETABLES) Refrigerator

Store in airtight bags or containers



Cabbage



Celery



Bok choy



Brussels sprouts



Cauliflower



Carrots



Artichokes



Green onions



Peppers



Beets



Green beans



Broccoli



Greens



Cucumbers



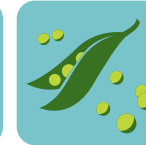
Zucchini



Herbs
(other than basil)



Radishes



Peas

Store in breathable or loosely sealed bags

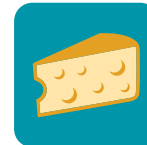
Refrigerator (SHELF)

Store in airtight bags or containers

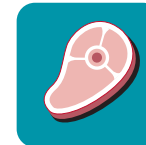


Cherries

Store in wax or parchment paper



Cheese



Meat

Store in original or airtight packaging

Store loose



Melons (ripe)



Pineapples (ripe)



Butter



Eggs



Milk

Store in original packaging

Store in breathable bags or containers



Berries



Mushrooms



Grapes

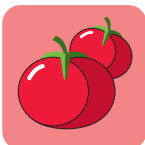


Asparagus
(trim a half-inch off stalk before storing)

Store in a jar of water (1" deep) covered loosely with a bag

Counter Out of direct sunlight

Store loose



Tomatoes



Bananas



Fruits that need to ripen
(melons, pears, tropical and stone fruits, avocados)



Basil

Store in a glass of water, covered loosely with a bag

Pantry or Cupboard

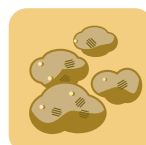
Store in breathable bags or containers



Garlic



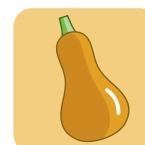
Onions



Potatoes



Bread



Winter squash



Eggplant

Store loose