



## HOW TO STORE FRESH LOCAL FOOD

***Keep everything in its happy place!***

*When the storage advice calls for plastic bags, you can always substitute plastic or glass storage containers for plastic bags. Store everything unwashed, uncut, and unpeeled. Wash and prep just before using.*

*Get full details on how to max out your fresh local food's taste and nutrition, plus info on crisper drawers, ethylene gas, and more, at [blog.seasonalroots.com/how-to-store-fresh-vegetables](http://blog.seasonalroots.com/how-to-store-fresh-vegetables).*

**APPLES:** Can be stored on the counter or in the pantry for a few days. To prolong freshness, store on a shelf in the fridge or in a well-ventilated crisper, where they can last for a couple weeks. No need to bag them.

**APRICOTS:** Store on a shelf in the fridge or in a well-ventilated crisper, where they can last for a couple weeks.

**ARTICHOKES:** Store in the vegetable crisper.

**ASPARAGUS:** Store in a plastic bag in the vegetable crisper.

**AVOCADOS:** Regionally grown winter avocados from Florida can be stored on the counter or in the pantry for a few days. To prolong freshness, store on a shelf in the fridge or in a well-ventilated crisper. Do not bag them.

**BEANS, GREEN OR LIMA:** Wrap in a paper towel in a loosely closed bag in the vegetable crisper.

**BEETS:** Remove any greens and store them separately like other greens. Store beets in the vegetable crisper.

**BERRIES:** Store in single layers divided by paper towels, inside a loosely closed bag or perforated container in the fruit crisper.

**BREAD:** Store in an air tight container on the counter or in the pantry. In warm weather, if you can't eat it within a few days, store it, sliced, in the freezer. (The fridge tends to dry bread out.) Defrost slices on the counter or briefly in the toaster and they'll still be moist.

**BROCCOLI:** Place in a plastic bag in the vegetable crisper. Eat quickly; broccoli is surprisingly delicate.

**BRUSSELS SPROUTS:** Quite resilient! You can store them on or off the stalk in the vegetable crisper. If you cut them off the stalk, leave all the outer leaves intact for an extra layer of protection and seal them in a bag. When it's time to cook them, remove any leaves that don't look good.

**CABBAGE:** Store in a plastic bag in the vegetable crisper and it will last for weeks.

**CANTALOUPE:** Can be stored on the counter or in the pantry or on a shelf in the fridge.

**CARROTS:** Remove any greens and store them separately like other greens. Wrap carrots in paper towels in a plastic bag in the vegetable crisper. If carrots get soft, just drop them in cold water for a few minutes.

**CAULIFLOWER:** Wrap in paper towels and store in a plastic bag stem-side down in the vegetable crisper. Keep the head intact until use.

**CELERIAC:** Store in the vegetable crisper.

**CELERY:** Store in a plastic bag in the vegetable crisper. If it gets soft, trim the ends of the stalks and place in a glass of cool water, or soak the whole stalk in cold water, and that should perk it up.

**CHERRIES:** Cherries must, must, <em>must</em> be kept cold! Refrigerate in a plastic bag in the fruit crisper.

**CITRUS:** Regionally grown winter citrus from Florida tastes best when stored and eaten at room temperature, so store on the counter or in the pantry. But if you can't eat it within a few days, pop it in the fruit crisper.

**CORN:** Store in the vegetable crisper in its husks but eat within a couple days. It can be roasted or grilled in its husks, too!

**CUCUMBERS:** Can be stored on the counter or in the pantry for a day or two. Otherwise, wrap individually in paper towels and store in a plastic bag in the vegetable crisper.

**EGGPLANT:** Can be stored on the counter or in the pantry. If you can't eat it within a few days, seal it in a plastic bag in the crisper or on a shelf in the fridge, but eat within a week.

**FIGS:** Store in fruit crisper.

**GARLIC:** The kind that has a dry, papery outer skin and no greens can stay on the counter or in the pantry, or it can also be stored in the vegetable crisper.

**GINGER ROOT:** Store on the counter or in the pantry.

**GRAPES:** Seal in a plastic bag and store in the vegetable crisper, not the fruit crisper.

**GREENS:** Includes everything that is mostly green and leafy, from kale, bok choy, lettuce, and spinach, to spring onions, spring garlic, and leeks; also greens cut from the tops of root vegetables. Go through them and immediately discard any leaves that are beyond wilted. Store greens unwashed, wrapped in paper towels, inside a sealed plastic bag, in the vegetable crisper. Use them as soon as you can. They can be a bit delicate. Just make sure you wash before eating!

**HERBS:** Trim the ends of the stems (like flowers) and place in a glass of cool water on the counter until ready to use. This method will also help perk up any herb or greens, including celery, that may have wilted en route. To keep them going longer, you can put any herb except basil in the fridge, glass and all, with a plastic bag over it. But leave basil on the counter -- the cold temps inside the fridge will quickly turn it black. You can still cook with it, but for fresh uses it gets pretty unappealing.

**HORSERADISH ROOT:** Store in the vegetable crisper.

**JICAMA:** Can be stored in a cool, dark corner of the pantry or countertop. You can also store them in the vegetable crisper.

**KOHLRABI:** Store in the vegetable crisper.

**MANGOS:** Regionally grown winter mangos from Florida can be stored on the counter or in the pantry for a few days. To prolong freshness, store on a shelf in the fridge or in a well-ventilated crisper. No need to bag them.

**MELON, HONEYDEW:** Can be stored on the counter or in the pantry or on a shelf in the fridge.

**MUSHROOMS:** Wrap in a paper towel and refrigerate in a breathable container (perforated plastic or a paper bag) in the vegetable crisper.

**NECTARINES:** If at all possible, do not refrigerate. It can produce mealy, tasteless fruit. Ripen on the counter and eat when ready.

**OKRA:** Place in a plastic bag in the vegetable crisper.

**ONIONS:** Store in a cool, dark corner of the pantry or countertop. You can also store them on a shelf in the fridge for longterm storage of a couple weeks or more. Never store them in plastic.

**PARSNIPS:** Remove any greens and store them separately like other greens. Wrap parsnips in paper towels in a plastic bag in the vegetable crisper. If parsnips get soft, just drop them in cold water for a few minutes.

**PEAS, SNOW OR ENGLISH:** Wrap peas that come in their pods in a paper towel and refrigerate in a breathable container (perforated plastic or a paper bag) in the vegetable crisper.

**PEACHES:** If at all possible, do not refrigerate. It can produce mealy, tasteless fruit. Ripen on the counter and eat when ready. If they're not quite ripe and you're in a hurry, they will ripen faster in a bag. But keep an eye on them -- they may ripen very fast that way!

**PEARS:** Can be stored unwashed on the counter for a few days. To prolong freshness, store on a shelf in the fridge or in a well-ventilated crisper, where they can last for a couple weeks. No need to bag them. Wash just before eating. If they're not quite ripe and you're in a hurry, they will ripen faster in a bag.

**PEPPERS, HOT OR SWEET:** Store in a paper bag in the vegetable crisper, where they'll keep for a week.

**PLUMS:** Can be stored on the counter or in the pantry for a day or two, or on a shelf in the fridge or in a well-ventilated crisper. If they aren't quite ripe, they will ripen faster if you bag them.

**POTATOES:** Store in a cool, dark corner of the pantry or countertop. You can also store them in the vegetable crisper for longterm storage of a couple weeks or more. Never store them in plastic or in the same area as produce that releases ethylene gas -- potatoes are highly sensitive!

**RADISHES:** Remove any greens and store them separately like other greens. Wrap radishes in paper towels in a plastic bag in the vegetable crisper.

**ROMANESCO:** Wrap in paper towels and store in a plastic bag stem-side down in the vegetable crisper. Keep the head intact until use.

**RHUBARB:** Store in a plastic bag in the vegetable crisper.

**RUTABAGAS:** Store in the vegetable crisper.

**SPROUTS:** Wrap in paper towels in a plastic bag in the vegetable crisper.

**SQUASH, SUMMER:** Yellow squash and zucchini can be stored on the counter. If you can't eat it within a few days, seal it in a plastic bag in the crisper or on a shelf in the fridge, but eat within a week.

**SQUASH, WINTER:** Hard winter squashes, like acorn, butternut, and pumpkin, can hang out in the pantry or on the counter out of direct sunlight. If you store them in the fridge, keep them on a shelf, not in a crisper. They're very hardy and can last a long, long time in the fridge. Big pumpkins do not need to be refrigerated at all.

**SWEET POTATOES:** Store in a cool, dark corner of the pantry or countertop. You can store them on a shelf in the fridge or the vegetable crisper, but be aware that fridge storage can sometimes alter their taste and flavor while cooking -- but not always, so it's okay in a pinch.

**TOMATOES:** Best on the counter, or in a sunny window if they need to ripen a bit more. But if you can't get to them before they turn too ripe, you can store them on a shelf in the fridge. Just let them return to room temp before eating them raw -- the cold can reduce the flavor, but most of it usually returns if you let it warm up.

**TURNIPS:** Remove any greens and store them separately like other greens. Store turnips in the vegetable crisper.

**WATERMELON:** Store on the counter or in the pantry. Can also be stored on a shelf in the fridge. Never store it in the same area as produce that releases ethylene gas -- watermelon is highly sensitive!