

## Storing Fresh Tomatoes

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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

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

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



## 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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## 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 Herbs

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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 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.

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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 Collards

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Storage method/time	Tips
Refrigerator crisper:	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.



## 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 Minuet Collard Greens

#### Ingredients:

- 1 pound collard greens, chopped
- Mediterranean Dressing
- 1 tsp lemon juice
- 1 medium clove garlic, pressed or chopped
- 1 TBS extra virgin olive oil
- sea salt and black pepper to taste
- 1-1/2 TBS sunflower seeds
- 1/2 red onion, sliced (add to steamers with collard greens)
- 6 kalamata olives, sliced
- 3 TBS pumpkin seeds
- 5 drops tamari soy sauce
- dash of cayenne pepper

#### Directions:

1. Fill bottom of steamer with 2 inches of water.
2. While steam is building up, slice collard greens leaves into 1/2-inch slices and cut again crosswise. Cut stems into 1/4-inch slices. Press or chop garlic and let sit for at least 5 minutes to bring out more of its health-promoting properties.
3. Steam collard greens for no more than 5 minutes.
4. Transfer to a bowl. For more flavor, toss collard greens with the remaining ingredients and any of the optional ingredients you desire while they are still hot. (Mediterranean Dressing does not need to be made separately).

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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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## 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.

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