

CSA PRODUCE BOX TIPS

What should I do with the produce in my CSA Box when I get home?

Herbs such as basil, thyme, dill, cilantro, and rosemary should be put in an open jar or glass with water added and set on your kitchen countertop. Treat them like fresh flowers. If the herbs start to wilt, change the water and store on the top shelf in the refrigerator. Basil will brown if refrigerated. Wash the herbs only when you are ready to use them.

Greens such as arugula, bok choy, chard, kale, collards, mizuna, and any type of lettuce should not be washed until you are ready to use them. Put them in a plastic bag and squeeze out as much air as possible and store in your vegetable crisper.

Sunflower greens and pea shoots should be taken out of bags and wrapped loosely in paper towels. Put sunflower greens and pea shoots back in bags, leaving the bags open and store in the vegetable crisper. Lightly rinse them off prior to use.

Strawberries should not be washed until you are ready to use them. Refrigerate them as soon as possible. Leave the stems in place. Put them in a sealable plastic container or bag lined with a paper towel. Carefully place them, so they do not get squashed or bruised.

Melons can be left out of the refrigerator until you are ready to cut them up. Remember to always wash your melons before cutting to remove all dirt and bacteria from the rind.



Root Vegetables such as beets, fennel, carrots, and kohlrabi, cut the greens off about 1" - 2" from the base of the vegetable and store the greens as stated above. If you don't do this step, the greens will pull moisture from the vegetable and dry it out. Put the vegetables in a plastic bag and place in your refrigerator. Do not wash until ready to use.

Other Vegetables such as tomatoes, garlic, peppers, onions, cucumbers, and persimmons can sit out on your countertop. A bowl or basket makes a nice display.

Potatoes, winter squash, and eggplant should be stored in a dark, cool spot in your kitchen. Wrap your eggplant with plastic wrap or place in a bag, if possible. It is best to prepare eggplant soon after purchase to avoid spoilage.

Ethylene is an organic gas emitted by all fruits and vegetables that promotes decay. Follow the guidelines above to preserve the freshness of your fruits and vegetables.

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Greens, Glorious Greens



Greens are considered a super food because they provide substantial amounts of vitamins and minerals with relatively few calories. Dark leafy greens are an excellent source of several minerals such as iron, calcium, potassium, and magnesium. They are an excellent source of vitamins K, C, E, and many of the B vitamins. In addition, leafy greens provide phyto-nutrients including beta-carotene and lutein and are high in dietary fiber.

Your CSA boxes are going to be full of greens that you may not be familiar with. Salad greens are most often served raw as a base for salads and include arugula, mizuna, red oak leaf, green oak leaf, and loose-leaf lettuce. Dark leafy greens are hearty and good raw or cooked to soften the leaves and stems. Examples of dark leafy greens are: bok choy, spinach, chard, collards, mustard greens, beet greens, kale, and kohlrabi tops.

It takes one pound of raw dark leafy greens to equal one cup of cooked greens. If you have an abundance of dark leafy greens and are unable to consume all of them before they go bad, steam them over boiling water. Once they are cooled, divide the cooked greens into portion sizes appropriate for your family and freeze them in bags with all the air squeezed out. If you are making omelets, soup, stew, quiche, potatoes, or a casserole, just thaw out a bag when you need it. Freezing is a good way to enjoy seasonal greens all year round. Making pesto is a good way to use up a large amount greens. Supplement greens for basil in the recipe. Our pesto recipe on page 60 is versatile for arugula, mizuna, or just about any dark leafy green. Fresh pesto will last 3 to 5 days in the refrigerator. You can also divide it into portions and freeze it.

