



## Keeping Food Safe

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Food safety means preventing the spread of bacteria when buying, preparing, and storing foods. Food that hasn't been handled properly can cause foodborne illnesses.

Most people think about food safety when preparing food, but food safety really starts at the grocery store.

The food safety guidelines that you follow in the kitchen

can also be applied at the grocery store.

- ★ Clean
- ★ Separate
- ★ Cook
- ★ Chill



Read on to see how you can keep foods safe from the market to home.

## Supermarket Safety

- Choose refrigerated and frozen foods last.
- Look for "sell-by" date on perishable items. If the "sell-by" date has expired, do not buy the product.
- Do not buy an item if it will expire before you plan to use it.
- Buy fresh deli meats in quantities that can be used within 3 to 5 days.
- Check food packages for holes or tears. Refrigerated foods should be cold. Frozen foods need to be frozen solid.
- Make sure fresh produce is not bruised or damaged before buying.
- Wrap raw meats, poultry, and fish products in plastic bags before putting them in your cart. This helps prevent cross-contamination.

## Supermarket Safety (continued)

- Do not buy or use fish or meat that has a strong or strange odor. Even if the expiration date is okay, pass on any fresh food that has a strange smell or that looks unusual.
- Keep fresh produce away from raw meats and poultry in your grocery cart, during check out, and in grocery bags.
- When buying fresh-cut produce, such as bagged lettuce or cut pineapple, choose only items that are refrigerated or completely surrounded by ice.
- Buy products labeled “keep refrigerated” only if they are stored in the refrigerator case and feel cold to the touch.
- Check eggs before buying them. Make sure that none of the eggs are cracked and that they are all clean. Eggs should be grade A or AA.
- Do not purchase unpasteurized milk, ciders, or juices—they can contain harmful bacteria.
- Place perishable foods in the coldest part of your car (not in the trunk) or in a cooler if it will take more than thirty minutes to get home. Go straight home from the grocery store and never leave food in a hot car.
- Unload groceries as soon as you get home. Store perishable foods in the refrigerator or freezer, and canned goods in a cool, dry place.

## Handling Rotisserie Chicken Safely



Make your rotisserie chicken the last item on your grocery list. Be sure the chicken is actually hot, if you

choose one from the heated section, or cold if you pick one up from the refrigerated section. After purchasing:

- Bring the chicken straight home.
- Eat it or refrigerate it within two hours, or within an hour if the outside temperature is 90 or above.

- If you do choose to refrigerate the rotisserie chicken, remove the meat and store it in a shallow container or a plate so it can cool quickly.
- Once cooled, put the meat into sealable container until you are ready to use.
- Use within four days or freeze the chicken pieces for up to four months.

**Remember:**  
*Bacteria grow at temperatures between 40 degrees and 140 degrees.*