

University of California
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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

cal^{fresh} Nutrition Education

UC FOOD SAFETY CE UPDATE

Volume 62



Farmers' Market Food Safety

All grocery stores have fresh fruits and vegetables, so why make a special trip to the farmers' market?



- ★ Get fresh local fruits, vegetables and other foods.
- ★ Try new produce-often you can taste before buying.
- ★ Support local farmers.
- ★ Family outing.

Even locally grown food can be contaminated with *Salmonella*, *E. coli* and other pathogens. To ensure the safety of you and your family, it is important to know how to handle and prepare your produce and dairy safely. Please read and follow the basic guidelines below.

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Source:

www.foodsafety.gov
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Keeping Produce Safe

- Shop early in the day for the best selection.
- Wash fruits and vegetables thoroughly under running water before eating, cutting, or cooking. Dry with a clean cloth or paper towel to eliminate bacteria.
- Wash produce even if you plan to peel it before eating. Bacteria present on the outside of foods, such as melons, can be transferred to the inside when you cut or peel them.
- Refrigerate cut or peeled fruits and vegetables within two hours.
- Avoid produce with mold, bruises or cuts, as these are great places for bacteria to hide and spread rapidly to other places on the fruit.

Produce can become contaminated from exposure to bacteria naturally found in the soil or water where the produce grows, or during the food storage and preparation process. In fact, 46% of foodborne illnesses are attributed to produce. The incidence of produce-related foodborne illness is high because produce is often consumed raw, so there is no final step to kill pathogens.

Keeping Milk, Cheese, and Eggs Safe

- Buy only pasteurized milk products. Raw milk can harbor dangerous microorganisms, such as *Salmonella*, *E. coli*, and *Listeria*, that can pose serious health risks to you and your family.



made from unpasteurized milk are one common source of *Listeria*. If you buy soft cheese, including feta, Brie, Camembert, blue-veined cheeses, Queso blanco, Queso fresco, and panela, check the label to make sure it's made from pasteurized or treated milk.

- Pregnant women, adults, young children, and people with weakened immune systems are at higher risk for illness caused by *Listeria*. Soft cheeses
- Eggs should be properly chilled at 45°F.
- Make sure eggs are clean and the shells are not cracked.

Keeping Juices and Cider Safe

Buy only juice or cider that has been pasteurized to kill harmful bacteria. Pregnant women, children, older adults, and people with weakened immune systems should be especially careful. When in doubt, ask!

Keeping Prepared Food Safe

Many farmers' markets sell prepared foods. Remember, foods that should be served hot should be kept hot, and cold foods should be kept cold (under 40°F). If you buy perishable items, they should not remain unrefrigerated for over two hours, and only one hour in hot weather—90°F or above.

Storing Your Farmers' Market Purchases Properly

- When you get home from the farmers' market, make sure to store your food items properly. Produce stored in the refrigerator should not be stored near or under raw meat, seafood, poultry, or eggs. Produce stored at room temperature should be kept away from non-food items like household chemicals.
- Uncut produce can usually be kept on the counter. As soon as it is peeled or sliced, it becomes a perishable food. Store any leftovers in a covered container in the refrigerator within two hours of peeling or slicing.
- Check the temperature of your refrigerator. Fresh meats and dairy products, along with perishable fruits and vegetables, need to be stored below 41°F.

