

ARUGULA

Arugula is best used fresh, as it is very perishable, but will last a few days in the refrigerator. Wash Arugula and let air dry or use a salad spinner. Place in an open plastic bag and keep in the crisper drawer of your refrigerator. A paper towel placed in the bag will help keep excess moisture to a minimum.

BASIL

Basil can be stored upright in a jar of water at room temperature, but be sure to change the water every few days. It should last for a couple of weeks. If you'd like to save some for use when not in season, Basil can be dried or frozen.

BEETS

Trim the greens back to about 2-inches from the beet and store them in a bag in the refrigerator crisper drawer where they should last for a week or so. The beet greens can be stored in a separate plastic bag and used within two days. Excess beets can be canned or pickled.

BOK CHOI

Bok Choi should be wrapped with a damp paper towel and stored in the crisper drawer of the refrigerator where it should stay fresh for one week.

BROCCOLI

Broccoli should be stored unwashed in a plastic bag in the crisper drawer of the refrigerator and used within 5 days. Broccoli can be preserved for use later in cooking by blanching and freezing.

BRUSSELS SPROUTS

Brussels Sprouts should be stored in a plastic bag in the crisper drawer of the refrigerator. Plan to use within the week. Brussels Sprouts may also be preserved by blanching and freezing.

CABBAGE

Whole heads of cabbage should be stored in a sealed plastic bag or tightly wrapped with plastic wrap in the crisper drawer of the refrigerator and should last up to two weeks.

CANTALOUPE

Store cantaloupe uncut in a cool dark place. Cantaloupe will continue to ripen at room temperature. Once cut, keep melons in the refrigerator covered with plastic wrap or sealed in an airtight container.

CARROTS

Trim carrot tops back to about 2-inches in length, rinse and drain carrots before storing them in a sealed plastic bag in the crisper drawer of the refrigerator where they can stay anywhere from two weeks to a couple of months. May need to sprinkle with water from time to time to keep carrots hydrated. Do not store near apples or pears. Carrots may be blanched and frozen to use out of season in soups, stews and various other recipes.

CAULIFLOWER

Cauliflower is best kept unwashed and refrigerated in a plastic bag for up to five days. To preserve cauliflower for use in cooking later, it can be blanched and frozen.

CILANTRO

Cilantro stores best when placed upright in a jar of water in the fridge. Another option is to wrap in a paper towel and store in a perforated plastic bag in the crisper drawer of the refrigerator. Cilantro can also be frozen to save for use later in cooking.

CUCUMBERS

Cucumbers can be stored unwashed (loose or bagged) in the crisper drawer of the refrigerator. Excess cucumbers can be pickled.

DILL

Dill is usually stored in the vegetable crisper drawer of the refrigerator. If leaves become wilted, place stems in a jar of water and cover with a plastic bag to revive. Dill sprigs may be frozen to use later in cooking.

EGGPLANT

Eggplant are delicate and very perishable. Keep them in a cool, dry and dark place in the pantry or place in a plastic bag and store in the crisper drawer of the refrigerator.

GARLIC

Garlic bulbs should last for several months when kept in a cool, dry dark place with good air circulation. Peeled or chopped garlic should be refrigerated in a closed container and used within 4 or 5 days.

GREEN BEANS

Green beans should be washed and refrigerated whole (unsnapped) in a plastic bag with a paper towel. Green beans may also be blanched and frozen or pickled.

KOHLRABI

Remove Kohlrabi leaves and store bulb in a plastic bag in the refrigerator for a week or so. Leaves can be stored separate from the bulb in the refrigerator for a few days. The bulb can also be blanched and frozen for later use in cooking.

LEEKs

Leeks will last for about a week if green tops are trimmed and bulbs are refrigerated unwashed in a plastic bag to contain odor and moisture. Wash thoroughly before using. Leeks may be frozen to use in soups and casseroles at a later date.

LETTUCE

Lettuce should stay fresh if washed and air dried (may use salad spinner) before placing it in a perforated plastic bag wrapped in a damp paper towel in the refrigerator crisper drawer. Alternately, a damp paper towel may be wrapped around the stem end and place in an airtight plastic container.

MUSTARD GREENS

Mustard greens may be stored up to one week unwashed in a tightly sealed plastic bag in the crisper drawer of the refrigerator. Excess greens may be blanched and frozen to preserve for later use in cooking.

OKRA

Okra should be refrigerated unwashed in the vegetable crisper in an open or perforated plastic bag with a paper towel to absorb any excess moisture which will cause okra to begin to deteriorate within a few days. Okra may be blanched and frozen or pickled.

ONION (SLICING)

Store whole onions in a cool, dry place with good air circulation for up to two months. Do not store potatoes near onions. Once cut, tightly wrap any unused onion in plastic, refrigerate and use within four days.

ONION (BUNCHING)

Green onions can be rolled up in a slightly damp paper towel, placed in an open plastic bag and stored in the refrigerator to keep fresh for about one week. Another method is to stand onions up in a jar with enough water to cover the roots and then cover onions and jar with a plastic bag and store in the refrigerator.

OREGANO

Oregano stores well in the vegetable crisper section of the refrigerator. If leaves become wilted they can be revived by placing the stems in a jar of water and covering with a plastic bag. Oregano may also be dried to preserve for future use.

PARSLEY

To keep parsley fresh, place the stems in a jar of water and cover the leaves with a plastic bag. It can be kept in the refrigerator or out on the counter. Just be sure to change the water every couple of days. Parsley may be dried to preserve for future use.

PEAS

Most peas may be kept unwashed in perforated plastic bags in the refrigerator for several days. Peas may also be canned or frozen for future use.

PEPPERS

Peppers, both hot and sweet, may be stored in an open plastic bag in the refrigerator crisper drawer where they will keep for up to a week. Peppers are ethylene sensitive, so they should not be stored near ethylene-producing produce such as pears and apples. An abundance of peppers may be preserved for later use by freezing, canning or pickling.

POTATOES

Potatoes, including sweet potatoes, prefer to be stored in a cool, dark and well-ventilated area cool where they should last from weeks to months depending upon storage conditions and potato variety. They can be stored in a paper bag, burlap sack or perforated plastic bags. Lengthy exposure to light can cause them to turn green and bitter. New potatoes should be used within one week of purchase. Don't store onions and potatoes together as the gases they each give off will cause the other to decay.

RADISHES

To keep radishes crisp and hydrated, trim radish leaves off before storing in a plastic bag where they should last about two weeks in the crisper drawer of the refrigerator. Another option is to trim leaves and place radishes in a jar of water in the refrigerator.

ROSEMARY

Use fresh sprigs promptly or keep fresh in a plastic bag in the refrigerator for a few days. Rosemary may be dried or frozen to preserve for future cooking.

SHALLOTS

Whole shallots should be stored in a cool, dry place with good air circulation and will keep for up to one month. Cut shallots should be tightly wrapped in plastic and refrigerated for use within four days.

SPINACH

Spinach should be washed very thoroughly in cold water until clean. Pat dry with paper towels or use a salad spinner, and then wrap loosely with paper towels and store in a plastic bag where it should stay fresh in the crisper drawer of the refrigerator for up to one week.

SQUASH (Summer)

Summer squash has thin skin and edible seeds and includes varieties such as Patty Pan, Yellow squash and Zucchini. Summer squash stores best in open plastic bags in the crisper drawer of the refrigerator. Summer squash will dehydrate pretty rapidly, so plan to use within the week. Plan to use any damaged/blemished squash first as they will deteriorate the fastest. Summer squash can also be saved for later inclusion in recipes by freezing.

SQUASH (Winter)

Winter squash has a hard outer shell and a longer shelf life than summer squash and includes varieties such as Acorn, Butternut and Spaghetti squash. Winter squash should be stored at around 50°F and away from light in a well ventilated area. Under the right conditions it will keep for up to three months. Cut squash should be wrapped tightly with plastic wrap and refrigerated.

SWISS CHARD

Place unwashed chard in a plastic bag and store in the crisper drawer of the refrigerator where it should stay fresh for about 4 to 7 days. Swiss Chard may also be frozen for later use in cooking.

TOMATOES

Whole tomatoes are best stored uncovered out on the counter. Very ripe tomatoes can be refrigerated if need be. Less ripe tomatoes can be ripened quickly by closing them up in a paper bag. Sliced tomatoes may be covered with plastic wrap and stored in the refrigerator for a day or two. Do not store tomatoes near your eggplant or cucumbers. Tomatoes may also be preserved by canning, drying or freezing.

TURNIP

Turnips should be stored unwashed with tops trimmed in a plastic bag in the crisper drawer of the refrigerator where they should last for 1 to 2 weeks. The trimmed turnip greens can be stored separate from the root by wrapping them in a perforated plastic bag and keeping in the refrigerator for 3 or 4 days.

WATERMELON

Watermelon should be stored whole in a cool dark place. Cut melons should be covered with plastic wrap and kept in the refrigerator.

** Note: Freezing produce changes the texture, but not the taste of most produce leaving it more suited for inclusion in recipes that require cooking, such as soups and casseroles.*

If you're interested in learning to preserve produce for enjoying year round, there are many helpful sites to get you started. Two of our favorites are:

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Center for Home Food Preservation
www.uga.edu/nchfp/

Ball Blue
www.freshpreserving.com

We hope this helps you keep your produce garden-fresh for as long as possible!