

Storing Your Vegetables~

Fresh, local vegetables are great, but they won't be at their best without proper storage. To help you keep your weekly bounty as nutritious, gorgeous, & delicious as possible, we've compiled this alphabetical storage guide for your convenience. Hang it on your refrigerator for quick, easy reference.

Storing vegetables at home does not have to be a science. Many of the vegetables we refer to here may keep longer than the recommended storage time, but may decline in quality after that. Just keep tabs on the vegetables in your refrigerator, including those items in the very back, and incorporate them into your meals while they are still full of vitality. And always remember to store your produce as soon as possible after pickup to keep it at its freshest and finest.



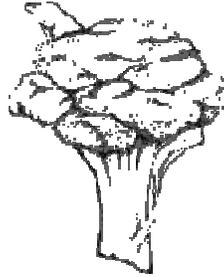
Basil

Basil should always be stored dry to prevent the leaves from turning black. A warm-weather crop, fresh basil is also sensitive to cold temperatures. Basil that is to be used within five days should be wrapped in a dry paper towel and kept in an airtight container at about 50 degrees (you can wash it just before use). [See herb article](#) at bottom for more.



Beets

If your beets still have greens attached, cut them off, leaving an inch of stem. These greens should be kept unwashed and refrigerated in a closed plastic bag. Store the beet roots, with the rootlets (or "tails") attached, unwashed, in a plastic bag in the crisper bin of your refrigerator. They will keep for several weeks, but their sweetness diminishes with time. So try to use them within a week. Beet Greens... see [Cooking Greens](#) Bell Peppers... see [Sweet Peppers and Chilies](#)



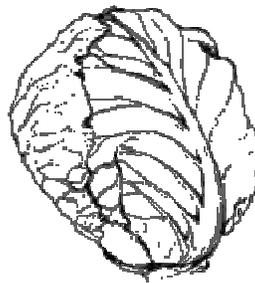
Broccoli

Wrap broccoli loosely in a plastic bag and keep it in the vegetable bin of your refrigerator. Don't use an airtight bag because broccoli continues to respire after being harvested and needs some room to breathe. It keeps for over a week but is firmest and tastiest if used within a few days.



Brussels Sprouts

Brussels sprouts keep longer if they are left attached to the stalk, but if there's not enough refrigerator room you can snap them off and store them unwashed in a closed plastic bag in the veggie bin. Even on the stalk they should be wrapped in plastic to slow respiration. The flavor is sweetest right after harvest, so try to use them within a week.



Cabbage

Cabbage is cleverly self-packaged. Just stick dry, unwashed cabbage in the refrigerator, preferably in the vegetable bin. The outer leaves may eventually get floppy or yellowish, but they can be removed and discarded to reveal fresh inner leaves. Cabbage can keep for more than a month. Once cut, wrap it in a sealed plastic bag and continue to refrigerate; it will keep for several weeks.



Carrots

Remove tops, leaving about an inch of stems. Refrigerate dry, unwashed carrots in a plastic bag for two weeks or more. Cantaloupe... see [Melons](#)



Cauliflower

Wrap dry, unwashed cauliflower loosely in plastic and store it in the refrigerator. It will keep for up to a week but will taste sweetest if used within a few days.



Celeriac

Store unwashed celeriac in a plastic bag in the refrigerator where it will keep for several weeks.



Celery

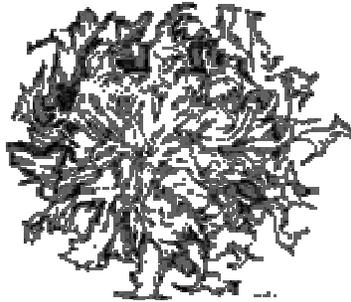
Wrap unwashed celery tightly in a plastic bag and place it in the coldest part of the refrigerator where it can keep for up to two weeks. If you want your celery to stay really crisp, refrigerate it upright in a container filled with an inch of water.



Chard

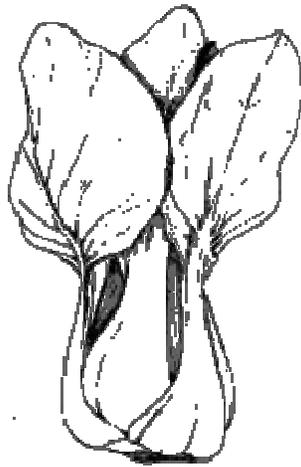
Cut beet and turnip greens from their roots; store roots separately. Keep dry, unwashed greens in a sealed plastic bag in your refrigerator. Thicker greens can be kept up to two weeks, but tender ones like spinach and beet greens should be eaten within a week.

Celery Root... see [Celeriac](#)



Chicories:
Endive, Escarole and Radicchio

Keep unwashed chicories in a perforated plastic bag in the crisper for up to a week.



Choi

Refrigerate unwashed choy in a plastic container or in a loosely wrapped plastic bag. Choy is best when used within several days. Chili Peppers... see [Sweet Peppers and Chilies](#)
Collard Greens... see [Cooking Greens](#)



Cooking Greens

Cut beet and turnip greens from their roots; store roots separately. Keep dry, unwashed greens in a sealed plastic bag in your refrigerator. Thicker greens can be kept up to two weeks, but tender ones like spinach and beet greens should be eaten within a week.



Cucumbers

Most cucumbers found in supermarkets have endured a journey of hundreds of miles from where they were grown. To keep them from drying out on their long trip, their skins are usually waxed. We don't like the idea of feeding shareholders wax, so we leave your locally grown cucumbers in their natural, wax-free state. These farm-fresh cucumbers dehydrate faster than the waxy kind, so be sure to get them into the refrigerator right away. If you store unwashed cucumbers in a sealed plastic bag in the vegetable crisper bin, they'll hold for at least a week. Keep cucumbers tucked far away from tomatoes, apples, and citrus—which give off ethylene gas that accelerates cucumber deterioration. Corn... see [Sweet Corn](#)



Daikon

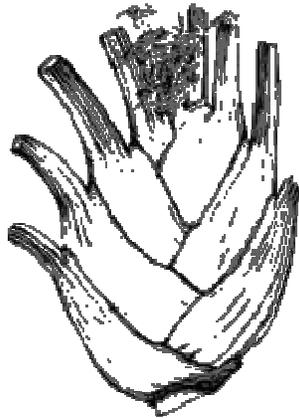
If the greens are still attached, remove & refrigerate daikon radishes in a plastic bag and use within a week. Wrap the unwashed roots in a separate plastic bag and place them in the refrigerator where they will keep for up to 2 weeks.



Eggplant

Eggplant prefers to be kept at about 50 degrees, which is warmer than most refrigerators and cooler than most kitchen counters. Wrap unwashed eggplant in a towel (not plastic)

to absorb any moisture, and keep it in the hydrator drawer of your refrigerator. Used within a week it should still be fresh and mild. Endive and Escarole... see [Chicories](#)



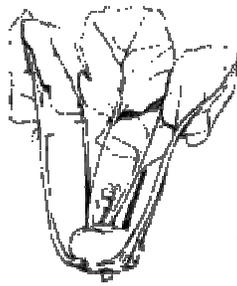
Fennel

Cut off the stalks where they emerge from the bulb, and if you want to use the feathery foliage as an herb, place the dry stalks upright in a glass filled with two inches of water. Cover the glass loosely with a plastic bag and store in the refrigerator for few days. The unwashed bulb may be kept in a plastic bag in the refrigerator for at least a week.



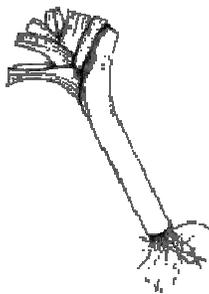
Garlic and Garlic Scapes

Like onions, garlic can be eaten fresh or dried. Dried garlic can be kept for several months in a dark, dry, well-ventilated place at a cool room temperature. Fresh green garlic must be kept in a plastic bag in the refrigerator and should be used quickly because any accumulated moisture in the bag will cause it to spoil. Store unwashed garlic scapes in a loosely wrapped plastic bag in the refrigerator for up to 2 weeks. Green Peppers... see [Sweet Peppers and Chilies](#) Herbs... see the [article](#) at the bottom. Honeydew... see [Melons](#) Hot Peppers... see [Sweet Peppers and Chilies](#)



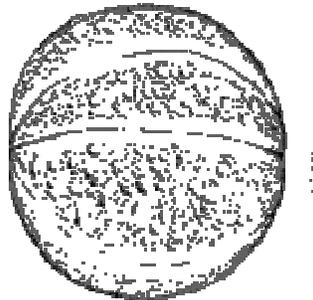
Kohlrabi

If you plan to use it soon, the whole kohlrabi, stem, leaves and all, can be wrapped in a plastic bag and kept in the refrigerator. Otherwise, remove the greens from the bulb and plan to use them within a week. The bulb can be put in yet another plastic bag for use within two weeks.



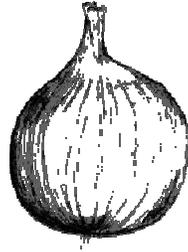
Leeks

Loosely wrap unwashed leeks in a plastic bag and store them in the crisper drawer of your refrigerator where they will keep for a week. Lettuce... see [Salad Greens](#)



Melons

If your muskmelon, honeydew, or butterscotch melon seems a bit short of ripe, keep it at room temperature for a few days or until there is a sweet smell coming from the stem end. Once the melon ripens, then store it in the refrigerator. Handle watermelons carefully. When harvested at their peak ripeness, they can crack or split easily if bumped or roughly handled. Refrigerate watermelons right away. (Watermelons do not ripen off the vine and do not impart a ripe smell.) Cut melon should be covered in plastic wrap, and chunks or slices should be kept in an air-tight container. Eat melons within a week.



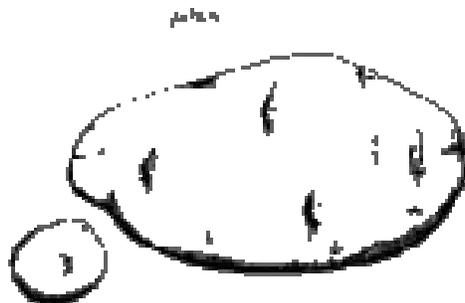
Onions

Sweet Mild Onions should be kept in a plastic bag in the refrigerator, but beware the fatal moisture accumulation that causes them to spoil. Eat them within 2 weeks. Red and Yellow Storage Onions may be kept in any cool, dark, dry place with adequate air circulation for several months if they were cured. (Be sure to store onions and potatoes in separate places. Moisture given off by potatoes can cause onions to spoil.) Uncured storage onions should be stored like sweet mild onions. Scallions should be stored unwashed and wrapped loosely in a plastic bag. Put them in the refrigerator where they will keep for a week. To keep scallions longer, chop off about three-quarters of the tender green tips; the end closest to the root is less perishable. Mesclun... see [Salad Greens](#)



Parsnips

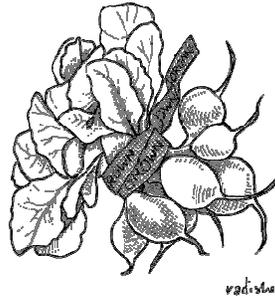
Refrigerate unwashed parsnips in a loosely-wrapped or perforated plastic bag. Stored in the crisper drawer of your refrigerator, they can keep up to two weeks.



Potatoes

Keep unwashed potatoes in a cool, dark, dry place—such as a loosely closed paper bag in a cupboard. They will keep for two weeks at room temperature, longer if you can provide their ideal temperature of 40–50 degrees. Moisture causes potatoes to spoil, light turns

them green, and proximity to onions causes them to sprout. Don't put them in the refrigerator, as low temperatures convert the starch to sugars. However, new potatoes—which are young and thin-skinned—may be refrigerated if you don't plan to eat them within a few days. Do try to use new potatoes soon because their delicate flavor wanes with time. Peppers... see [Sweet Peppers and Chilies](#) Pumpkins... see [Winter Squash](#). Radicchio... see [Chicories](#)



Radishes and Spring Turnips

Remove radish or turnip leaves if they are still attached. Store the unwashed greens in a loosely wrapped plastic bag in the crisper bin of your refrigerator. Because of their high water content, turnips and radishes deteriorate quickly. Store them dry and unwashed in a plastic bag in the refrigerator. Young turnips and most radishes should keep for a week. Black radishes will keep slightly longer.



Rutabagas

Keep in a plastic bag in the refrigerator, unwashed, for up to a month.



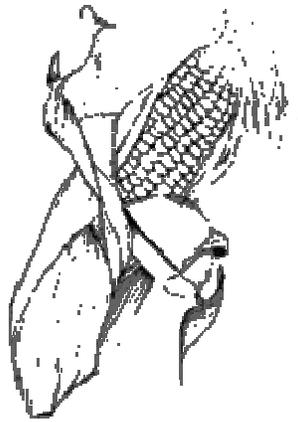
Salad Greens

Unwashed lettuce or mesclun may be stored in a plastic bag in the refrigerator. To store lettuce or mesclun that you have already washed and dried, roll the leaves loosely in a kitchen towel, put the towel in a plastic bag, and place the package in the vegetable crisper. (Wet greens will spoil quickly so make sure they are truly dry before refrigerating.) If you have a salad spinner, wash and spin the greens before refrigerating them. Eat mesclun mix within four days, and use lettuce within a week.



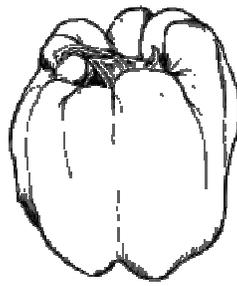
Summer Squash including Zucchini

Our unwaxed farm-fresh zucchini and summer squash respire through their skins, so they need to be refrigerated as soon as possible. Store them unwashed in a perforated plastic bag in the vegetable bin, or refrigerate them in a sealed Tupperware container that you've lined with a kitchen towel. In the refrigerator they keep for about a week and a half. Scallions... see [Onions](#) Spinach... see [Cooking Greens](#) Spring Turnips... see [Radishes and Spring Turnips](#) Squash... see [Summer](#) or [Winter](#) Squash.



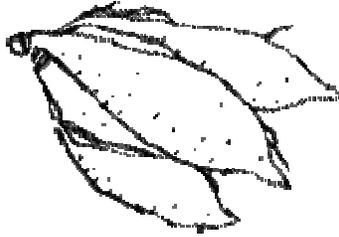
Sweet Corn

Eat it now! But if you must put off eating corn, leave the husks on and refrigerate the ear in a plastic bag for as little time as possible.



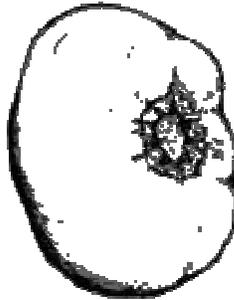
Sweet Peppers and Chilies

Place whole, unwashed peppers in a sealed plastic bag and refrigerate for a week or more. Beware of any excess moisture in the bag that could cause peppers to spoil. Red, orange, and yellow peppers are fully ripe and need to be eaten sooner. Peppers store best at 50°F.



Sweet Potatoes

Keep unwashed sweet potatoes in a cool, dark, place—such as a loosely closed paper bag in a cupboard—and use them within two weeks. Do not store sweet potatoes in the refrigerator. Cold temperatures can darken the potatoes and will adversely affect their taste. Sweet potatoes, while rugged in appearance, do not keep as long as regular potatoes, because their fairly thin skins make them subject to spoilage. At normal room temperature, sweet potatoes should be used within a week.



Tomatoes

If your tomatoes smell fragrant and yield slightly when squeezed, they are ready to use. If not, store them for a few days at room temperature until they are ripe. Putting dry tomatoes in a brown paper bag may accelerate the ripening process, but a sun-free spot on your counter will work just as well. Except as a last ditch effort to keep tomatoes from spoiling, avoid refrigerating them --cold temperatures deplete their flavor & texture. Tomatoes may be dried for long-term storage, or they may be canned or frozen in sauces or salsas. Tetragonia... see [Cooking Greens](#) Turnip Greens... see [Cooking Greens](#) Turnips... see [Radishes and Spring Turnips](#) Watermelon... see [Melons](#)



Winter Squash

Store in a cool, dry, dark place with good ventilation, like a porch or garage, but make sure they do not freeze. Under the best conditions, they should keep for several months, depending on the variety. (Delicata, sweet dumpling, pie pumpkins, buttercup, and red kuri have a shorter storage life than other varieties.) You can also make them into a beautiful arrangement on your table - they won't keep quite as long, but then again you might be inspired to eat them more quickly. Once cut, you can wrap them in plastic and store them in the refrigerator for 5 to 7 days. Zucchini... see [Summer Squash](#)

Herbs

Storing Fresh Herbs

Bunches of fresh herbs can be set into small jars with 1 to 2 inches of water, covered loosely with plastic wrap, and refrigerated for up to two weeks. (Basil should be stored in jars on the counter, not in the refrigerator.) Roll dry and unwashed smaller sprigs or loose herbs into a towel, place in a plastic bag and store in your refrigerator crisper for up to a week. See [Fennel, Garlic,](#) and [Basil](#) under separate entries.

Long-Term Preservation

Herbs are best when used fresh, and they deserve to be eaten fresh; but you may not be able to use all that you'll receive, and you may want to preserve some for colder months. Drying and freezing are two ways to preserve herbs alone, without other ingredients. Herbs may also be preserved in sauces, pesto, jelly & other condiments.

Drying Herbs:

Herbs that dry most effectively are basil, cilantro, dill, fennel, oregano, sage, parsley, savory and thyme. Store dried herbs in an airtight glass jar or plastic container. Crush just before using. One teaspoon dried herbs is equivalent to 1 tablespoon fresh herbs.

The simplest way to dry herbs is to spread them on a tray and place them in the oven at its lowest setting with the door ajar. Stir periodically. When the leaves crumble when pinched, they are dry.

You may also hang bouquets of herbs to dry:

Tie stalks of herbs into skimpy bunches with cotton string and place each bunch upside down inside a large paper bag well punctured with air holes. Tie the neck of the bag tightly and hang the bag with leaves facing downward in a warm, well ventilated place. Check daily until dry, about 2 weeks. Optimum conditions for drying herbs are temperatures about 85 degrees with humidity below 60 percent.

When completely dry, remove the leaves from the stems and store in a sealed glass jar, away from heat and light, for up to a year.

Freezing Herbs

Frozen herbs are just as easy to use as dried herbs. These frozen herb cubes are ideal for flavoring soups, sauces, gravies, stews and casseroles. Just add a cube at the point specified by the recipe. The ice will evaporate during cooking, leaving the herb to flavor the dish. One frozen herb cube is equivalent to 1 tablespoon fresh or about 1 teaspoon of dried herb.

Wash herbs gently in cool water and drain. Chop the leaves fairly coarsely (don't freeze stalks or flowers or herbs with particularly delicate leaves like cilantro or basil).

Spoon 1 tablespoon chopped herbs into each compartment of an ice cube tray, add about 1 inch of water to each and freeze solid. (To avoid mixing herb flavors, freeze only one kind of herb in each tray.)

Remove herb cubes from trays and bundle all of one kind in a plastic freezer bag. Remove as much air as possible & seal bag. Date & label bag and store in the freezer for up to a year.

A Note on Heirloom Tomatoes:

Some of you may wonder, "What are heirloom tomatoes?", "What are tomatoes that aren't heirlooms?", "What's a determinate tomato?" and "What's a non-determinate tomato?". Well, now, here are some answers:

Heirloom tomatoes are varieties which come from seeds which have been passed down through generations and also known as "antiques" by some. Heirloom tomatoes are grown more for taste, their strong point, than for yields, uniformity, durability, storage, and shippability. Hybrids (the counter to heirlooms) have been bred for these latter qualities. Most tomatoes that you purchase in a grocery store are hybrids. The tomatoes you receive from us in the paper bags are hybrids also. Our hybrids have excellent taste because they are vine ripened (thanks to our local relationship). Our heirloom tomatoes, which we don't bag but do try to cushion within the pockets of leafy vegetables in your boxes, often have distinctive shapes, tastes and colors (purples, oranges, & yellows). However, they sometimes look just like regular (hybrid) tomatoes. They're usually very

fragile. To sum it up, heirlooms vs. hybrids represent a taste, durability, and yield trade-off. We grow both hoping to satisfy your various tomato cravings.

So what about the determinate vs. non-determinate. Determinate tomato plants only grow a certain height (usually less than four feet high). Non-determinates will keep growing and their height is more a factor of weather. All of *our* heirlooms are non-determinates and all of our hybrids are determinates. However, not all heirlooms are non-determinates and neither are all hybrids determinates.

Heirloom tomatoes on our farm enjoy such distinctive names as *Cherokee Purple*, *Persimmons*, *Pineapple*, *Brandywine*, and *Viva Lindsey's Kentucky Wedding*. ***Once again, our heirloom tomato crop looks pretty good this season! More and more are beginning to ripen. Look for more in your box!***