



NourishNet
A FOOD RECOVERY TOOLBOX



Best Practices for Food Storage



Knowing the best place to store your food will help it last longer, taste better, and preserve its nutritional value.

Refrigerator Storage

- The **top and middle shelves** have the most consistent temperature: store dairy, eggs, and prepared food.
- The **bottom shelf** is coldest: store meat and cheese.
- The **door** is the warmest: store less-perishable food like condiments and beverages.
- **First in, First out:** put new items towards the back fridge or pantry.
- Create an “eat first” area in the fridge.
- **Labeling food** with the date it was made or opened can be especially helpful in a busy household, masking tape is a good choice.



Extend Shelf Life of Refrigerated Fruits and Vegetables

Many refrigerators have produce drawers of have **adjustable humidity** settings:

High Humidity

For **wilt-prone** produce:

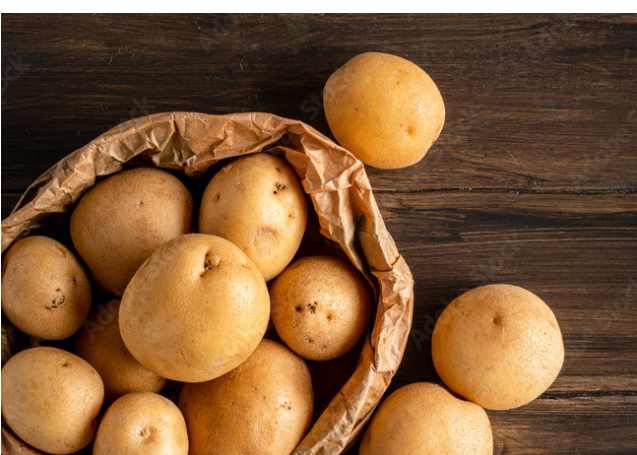
- Leafy Greens: lettuce, spinach
- Thin-Skinned: cucumbers, broccoli, fresh herbs

Place a damp paper towel in the container to extend the shelf life of leafy greens or sliced produce.

Low Humidity

For **rot-prone** produce:

- Apples, Pears
- Avocados
- Honeydew Melons
- Peaches, Plums



Separate Certain Produce

Some fruits such as apples, bananas, and pears release ethylene gas while ripening that can spoil nearby foods. Keep them separate at room temperature until ripe, then refrigerate. If you prefer cold fruit, store them separately in the fridge from the start.

Freezer-Friendly Items

If you have a freezer, save extra food by freezing it for later and reduce waste. Remove as much air as possible and wrap tightly before placing in freezer.

- **Berries:** Freeze in a single layer on a tray, then transfer to bags
- **Bread:** Slice before freezing
- **Butter:** Wrap in foil or freezer paper
- **Cut Fruit:** Add a little lemon juice to prevent browning
- **Hard Cheese:** Grate or cut into small portions before freezing
- **Meat:** Divide into meal-sized portions
- **Cooked Rice or Pasta:** Portion and freeze
- **Vegetables:** Blanch before freezing
- **Cooked Meals:** Cool completely before freezing
- **Milk:** Leave room for expansion
- **Eggs:** Beat and freeze in portions



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More information about storing food can be found at cswd.net/foodwaste

Pantry Storage Tips

Store potatoes, onions, and garlic separately in cool, dry, well-ventilated areas. Potatoes should be stored in a the dark. Pantry items include dry pasta, rice, beans, unopened condiments, and canned foods.