

The current COVID-19 virus presents special food handling concerns. While it is not thought that COVID-19 is foodborne, it takes multiple food handlers get products to market and that may expose fresh produce and packaged goods to the virus. It's important to continue to eat produce because fruits and vegetables contain the nutrients and antioxidants necessary for a properly functioning immune system. We believe that a strong immune system is your best defense. Here's a few tips to keep your viral exposure low and continue eating fresh fruits and vegetables:

- USE YOUR OWN shopping bags at the store and wash them at home—cloth bags are best.
- WIPE DOWN all packages, cans, and containers.
 - Create a 'clean space' and a 'dirty space' on a table or countertop.
 - Use a disinfectant wipe, cloth with soap and water, or other cleaner to wipe packaged products, then place in 'clean space'.
 - Wipe down 'dirty space' when finished
- Put produce bags in the sink all together
 - Take produce from bags, one at time to clean
 - May put hard/sturdy vegetables in colander for a hot water 'bath'---see below.
- COVID-19 and other viruses are destroyed at 160 F. Common cooking methods achieve much higher temperatures and so are effective at killing these viruses.
- AVOID all raw meat and raw fish; COVID-19 is thought to have originated in animal flesh.
 - Thoroughly cook all animal proteins like chicken, beef, fish, pork, game meats, etc.
 - Avoid sushi and sashimi---choose thoroughly cooked fish and seafood instead.
- WASH thick skinned fruits and vegetables with soap and water. Rinse well.
- Use a FRUIT AND VEGETABLE soap on delicate produce like herbs, berries, and lettuces.
- HOT WATER 'BATH': Pour boiling water over tomatoes, cucumbers, jicama, brussel sprouts, grapes, apples, pears, avocados and bananas other sturdy veggies and fruits.
 - Herbs like parsley tolerate a bit of boiling water.
- COOK fruits into compotes to use on cereal, oatmeal, yogurt, waffles, pancakes or add to smoothies. Put rinsed fruit into saucepan with 1-2 Tbsp. of water. Cover and simmer until fruit is soft and bubbling or 160 F. Store in refrigerator up to a week. No added sugar is needed!
 - Berries and pears
 - Pears and apples
 - Oranges and banana
- GRILL romaine, cabbage, carrots, zucchini, onions, asparagus, etc. on stovetop or outdoor grill.
- BLANCH veggies--keeps them crisp! Celery, carrots, green beans, peppers all blanch well.
 - To blanch, fill a medium saucepan with water and bring to a boil.
 - Prepare an ice bath using a large bowl filled with water and ice. It should be very cold.
 - Blanch vegetables in boiling water for 2 minutes.
 - Immediately remove with a slotted spoon or tongs and place in water bath.

- Remove veggies from water bath in about 2 minutes. I like to pat them dry before refrigerating.
 - Use blanched veggies to dip, in stir fry, steam or saute. They will cook quickly.
- MAKE SAUCES with herbs to dress up meats, vegetables, pasta and other starches.
 - Chimichurri, pesto, aioli, Magic Sauce
 - See recipes attached
- CANNED AND PACKAGED FOODS should be wiped down before storing or opening.

RESOURCES:

[Force of Nature: https://www.forceofnatureclean.com/](https://www.forceofnatureclean.com/)

Hypochlorous acid, EPA approved for coronavirus; pet and child friendly; uses water and vial of salt and vinegar + electricity to create