

# Produce Handling Guidelines



Product	PERISHABILITY	RECOMMENDED HUMIDITY (%)	RECOMMENDED TEMPERATURE (°C/°F)	SENSITIVE TO CHILLING INJURY	ETHYLENE SENSITIVITY
Apple	●	90 - 95	0°		PRODUCER
Apricot	●	90 - 95	0°		PRODUCER SENSITIVE
Artichokes	●	95 - 100	2°		
Asparagus	●	95 - 100	0 - 2°	YES	SENSITIVE
Avocado (HARD)	●	90 - 95	10°	YES	SENSITIVE
Avocado (RIPE)	●	90 - 95	7°	YES	PRODUCER
Banana (GREEN)	●	90 - 95	13 - 15°	YES	SENSITIVE
Banana (RIPE)	●	90 - 95	13 - 15°	YES	PRODUCER
Basil	●	95 - 100	10°	YES	SENSITIVE
Beans	●	95 - 98	4 - 7°	YES	SENSITIVE
Beet	●	95 - 100	0°		
Bell Pepper	●	95 - 98	7°	YES	
Blackberry	●	90 - 95	0°		
Blueberry	●	90 - 95	0°		
Bok Choy	●	95 - 100	0°		SENSITIVE
Broccoli/Brocolini	●	95 - 100	0°		SENSITIVE
Brussels Sprouts	●	95 - 100	0°		SENSITIVE
Cabbage	●	95 - 100	0°		SENSITIVE
Cantaloupe	●	85 - 90	2 - 5°	YES	PRODUCER SENSITIVE
Carrots	●	95 - 98	0°		SENSITIVE
Cauliflower	●	95 - 98	0°		SENSITIVE
Celery	●	98 - 100	2°		SENSITIVE
Cherry	●	90 - 95	0°		
Chillies (FRESH)	●	90 - 95	8°	YES	SENSITIVE
Coconut	●	90	2°		
Corn	●	95 - 100	2°		
Cucumber	●	95 - 98	8°	YES	SENSITIVE
Eggplant	●	90 - 95	10°	YES	SENSITIVE
Fennel	●	90 - 95	0 - 2°		
Garlic	●	60 - 70	0 - 4°		
Ginger	●	65	6°	YES	
Grape	●	90 - 95	0°	YES	
Grapefruit	●	85 - 90	10°	YES	
Herbs (NOT BASIL)	●	95 - 100	3°		SENSITIVE
Honeydew	●	85 - 90	7 - 10°	YES	PRODUCER SENSITIVE
Kiwi Fruit	●	90 - 95	0°		PRODUCER
Leeks	●	95 - 98	0°		SENSITIVE
Lemon	●	85 - 90	8°	YES	SENSITIVE
Lettuce (GREEN, ARUGULA, ICEBERG, ETC.)	●	95 - 98	1°		SENSITIVE
Lime	●	85 - 90	12°	YES	SENSITIVE
Lychee	●	95 - 100	5°	YES	SENSITIVE
Mango (GREEN)	●	90 - 95	13°	YES	SENSITIVE
Mushrooms	●	95 - 98	2°		
Nectarine/Peach	●	90 - 95	0°		PRODUCER SENSITIVE
Onions	●	60 - 70	0°		
Orange/Mandarin	●	85 - 95	5°	YES	SENSITIVE
Papaya (GREEN)	●	90 - 95	12°	YES	PRODUCER
Parsnip /Turnip	●	95 - 100	0°		
Pear	●	90 - 95	0°		PRODUCER SENSITIVE
Peas	●	95 - 100	0°		SENSITIVE
Pineapple	●	85 - 90	10°	YES	
Plum	●	90 - 95	0°		PRODUCER SENSITIVE
Pomegranate	●	90 - 95	5 - 8°		
Potato	●	85 - 90	7° - 10°	YES	SENSITIVE
Pumpkin	●	85 - 90	13°	YES	
Radish	●	95 - 100	0°		
Raspberry	●	90 - 95	0°		
Rhubarb	●	95 - 100	2°		SENSITIVE
Shallots/Spring Onions	●	95 - 100	0°		
Snow Peas/Snap Peas	●	95 - 98	0°		SENSITIVE
Spinach	●	98 - 100	0°		SENSITIVE
Sprouts (ALFALFA & BEAN)	●	95 - 100	2°		
Squash (HARD SHELL INCL. ACORN & BUTTERNUT)	●	60	13°	YES	
Squash (SOFT SHELL INCL. SPAGHETTI & PASTY PAN)	●	95	5 - 10°	YES	SENSITIVE (MODERATELY)
Strawberry	●	95 - 100	0°		
Sweet Potato	●	85 - 90	13 - 16°	YES	SENSITIVE
Tomato (GREEN)	●	90 - 95	13°	YES	SENSITIVE
Tomato (RIPE)	●	90 - 95	7°	YES	PRODUCER
Watermelon	●	85 - 90	10°	YES	SENSITIVE
Zucchini	●	95 - 98	7°	YES	SENSITIVE

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION:** Please note that while all responsible care has been taken in preparing this produce handling guide, The Heart and Stroke Foundation and The Ministry of Health Services accept no liability resulting from the interpretation or use of the information set out in this guide. Storage conditions listed are for short-term storage. Where long-term storage is anticipated other conditions may be more appropriate, especially for products indicated as sensitive to chilling injury. Specific information not included in this guide should be sought for long-term storage. For some products which are often handled at an intermediate stage, separate storage conditions are listed for ripe and unripe produce. Storage conditions listed are for short-term storage, and these conditions are not always appropriate for product ripening. Specific information not included in this guide should be sought for optimum ripening conditions. Optimum storage conditions can vary between varieties, intended market outlet can be influenced by pre-harvest conditions. Temperatures listed are product, not air temperatures. For additional copies of this full chart, please contact 1-888-987-8810.

**KEY TO PRODUCT PERISHABILITY**

● VERY HIGH    ● HIGH    ● MODERATE    ● LOW

**PERISHABILITY** refers to the expected life of a product once it has been harvested. The quality of a product with high perishability will degrade more quickly than the quality of a product with low perishability.

**HUMIDITY** is the ideal humidity at which to transport and store specific produce items. Generally, those items that are susceptible to mold should be stored at lower humidity, whereas those susceptible to wilt should be stored at higher humidity.

**TEMPERATURE** is the ideal temperature at which to transport and store specific produce items.

**CHILLING INJURY** occurs when produce is transported or stored below its recommended temperature, resulting in a decrease in quality and shelf life. It is not the same as freezing injury, as chilling injury can affect produce at temperatures well above 0°C.

**ETHYLENE** is a natural plant hormone that accelerates the ripening of fruits and vegetables. Produce quality quickly deteriorates when overripe. Produce that is sensitive to ethylene should not be stored next to produce that produces ethylene.