

Food Safety

is a shared responsibility

Germs can get into our food at any point in the food chain - from the time it is produced to the moment it is put on our table to eat.

All of us are part of this food chain. We handle and consume food in one way or another. As such, the assurance of food safety is a shared responsibility.

AVA is our food safety champion

As the national food safety authority, AVA regulates the safety of food, from production or point of import to just before they enter the retail chain.

It has put in place a comprehensive and integrated food safety system that includes accreditation of source farms, import control, inspection, sampling and analysis as well as source tracing to ensure that all food that comes into Singapore comply with our stringent food safety standards and requirements.

The role of the food industry

Food manufacturers, importers and distributors in Singapore have to maintain a high standard of food safety by complying with the stringent requirements of AVA.

Responsible food industry players also incorporate food safety assurance programmes and hygienic practices in their operations.

The role of consumers

As a consumer, you have direct control over the safety of the food you consume. You can practice food safety by learning of food safety risks and safe food practices to avoid these risks.

By taking appropriate actions, you can play a part in protecting your own well-being and the well-being of your family.



**TOGETHER,
LET'S KEEP
FOOD SAFE!**



5 Maxwell Road, #04-00 Tower B, MND Complex, Singapore 069110
Tel: 6325 7625 Fax: 6220 6068 Website: www.ava.gov.sg

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Fruits & Vegetables





Keep Fruits and Vegetables Safe!

Fruits and vegetables are a rich source of vitamins and minerals that offer many health and nutritional benefits. The following tips on buying, handling and storing will help you and your family enjoy maximum benefits from eating fruits and vegetables.



Buying fruits and vegetables

- o Buy from reliable sources where you can be assured of quality.
- o Choose fresh and clean produce. Select fruits with aromatic smell and vegetables with crispy, fresh leaves, as well as tender and fleshy stems.
- o Avoid fruits and vegetables that are bruised, shriveled, blemished, spongy, or mouldy.
- o Packed produce can be stored immediately. The package will also help retain freshness as well as minimise contamination and damage from poor handling.
- o Place fruits and vegetables at the top of the grocery bags to prevent bruising.
- o Transport fruits and vegetables back home quickly. Keep them away from direct sunlight, heat or a hot environment (e.g. inside the car) to prevent wilting.
- o Buy only what you can eat within a few days.



Handling fruits and vegetables

- o Remove the soiled portions of vegetables, cut off the base and wash away any residual soil in a basin of tap water.
- o Soak the vegetables in fresh tap water for 15 minutes. Special detergents or washes are not needed.
- o Before cutting and cooking, rinse the vegetables once more under a tap or in a basin of fresh tap water.
- o For harder items like potatoes, scrub the skin gently with a brush.
- o To preserve the nutritional value, avoid cutting and shredding fruits and vegetables too early during preparation as they may lose some of their nutrients when exposed to air.



Storing fruits and vegetables

- o Store fruits (except bananas) and vegetables in the refrigerator as soon as possible.
- o Do not mix fruits with vegetables in the same storage compartment as fruits produce ethylene gas during their ripening process. Ethylene gas can cause yellowing of green vegetables.
- o Remove any soil off vegetables (especially root vegetables) before storage.
- o Pack vegetables in plastic bags or containers before storing them in the vegetable compartment (crisper or hydrator) of the refrigerator.
- o Store hardy root vegetables and raw fruits that need ripening at room temperature.

A Buying and Storage Guide for Common Vegetables

| LEAFY VEGETABLES | QUALITIES TO LOOK OUT FOR | STORAGE LIFE |
|--------------------------|---|--------------|
| Baicai | Dark green, thick broad leaves | Up to 7 days |
| Bayam (Chinese spinach) | Tender stems and leaves | Up to 5 days |
| Caixin | Big leaf with glossy look. Flowering caixin should have flowers that have not bloomed | Up to 7 days |
| Ceylon spinach | Tender and fleshy stems with broad leaves | Up to 7 days |
| Chinese white cabbage | Compact and firm head with flat midribs; Free from black specks | Up to 3 days |
| Gailan (Kai Lan) | Powdery waxy thick leaves | Up to 7 days |
| Kangkong (Water spinach) | Tender stem without side shoots | Up to 7 days |
| Lettuce | Crisp and firm. Free from tip burn | Up to 7 days |
| Peking cabbage | Crisp and light green/ yellow leaves | 5 - 7 days |
| Spinach | Dark green, wrinkly but crisp leaves | Up to 7 days |
| Xiaobaicai | Big leaf with green and thickened leaf stalks | Up to 7 days |

| NON-LEAFY VEGETABLES | QUALITIES TO LOOK OUT FOR | STORAGE LIFE |
|----------------------|--|---------------|
| Bean | Green and firm | 2 - 5 days |
| Broccoli | Compact green head with no discolouration of bud clusters | 2 - 3 days |
| Capsicum | Ripe, uniform colour, firm | Up to 7 days |
| Cauliflower | Compact head with no black spots | Up to 7 days |
| Chilli | Ripe, uniform colour, firm; free from black spots | Up to 3 weeks |
| Cucumber | Light green, firm and smooth | 2 - 5 days |
| Egg plant (Brinjal) | Uniform colour, firm, well shaped | 2 - 3 days |
| Head Lettuce | Compact green head; free from reddish brown spots and tip burn | Up to 7 days |
| Okra (Lady's finger) | Well shaped, tender with tip readily broken when snapped | 2 - 3 days |
| Tomato | Ripe, firm, regular shape, uniform colour | Up to 7 days |

*Store in vegetable compartment/ crisper of refrigerator.