The Lime is Ripe

Produce Picking Guide
Years of buying farm-fresh produce from all over the world and in our backyard has given our produce buyers unique insight into choosing only the very best fruits and vegetables for your cooking and eating pleasure. Following, they share what they call their “Produce Manifesto” - a comprehensive guide to choosing and using the vast variety of fresh Foodie produce we offer.
Ethylene is a chemical compound that hastens the ripening or deterioration of produce sensitive to its effects. Many fruits produce ethylene. To extend the freshness of your produce, avoid long-term storage of ethylene-producing produce next to ethylene-sensitive produce.

Fruits that produce ethylene include:
- apples
- apricots
- avocados
- bananas (ripening)
- cantaloupe and honeydew melons
- kiwifruit
- mangoes
- pears
- plums
- tomatoes

Fruits and vegetables that are sensitive to ethylene include:
- bananas (unripe)
- Belgian endive
- broccoli
- Brussels sprouts
- cabbage
- carrots
- cauliflower
- cucumbers
- eggplant
- green beans
- honeydew
- lettuce and greens
- okra
- parsley
- peas
- peppers
- spinach
- squash
- sweet potatoes
- watercress
- watermelon

### Odor produced by: Will be absorbed by:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fruits</th>
<th>Vegetables</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>apples</td>
<td>cabbage, carrots, celery, figs. onions, meat, eggs, dairy products</td>
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<tr>
<td>avocados</td>
<td>pineapples</td>
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<tr>
<td>carrots</td>
<td>celery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>onions (dry)</td>
<td>apples, celery, pears</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>onions (green)</td>
<td>grapes, mushrooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pears</td>
<td>cabbage, carrots, celery, onions, potatoes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>potatoes</td>
<td>apples, pears</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>green peppers</td>
<td>pineapples</td>
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<tr>
<td>citrus</td>
<td>meat, eggs, dairy products</td>
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</table>

Some fruits and vegetables produce odor, while others absorb odor. Always consult this chart and store these separately.
Apples  
Ethylene-producing/Odor-producing
Best When — firm, bright skinned and well-colored.
Store — in coldest part of the refrigerator for seven to ten days.
Unrefrigerated apples may turn soft and mealy. Apples produce ethylene. Avoid long-term storage next to ethylene-sensitive produce, such as Belgian endive, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, cucumbers, eggplant, green beans, lettuce and greens, okra, parsley, peas, peppers, spinach, squash, sweet potatoes, watercress and watermelon. Odors produced by apples can also be absorbed by other foods. Avoid long-term storage next to cabbage, carrots, celery, figs, onions, meat, eggs and dairy products.

### Comparing Apples to Apples — a Quick Look

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Uses</th>
<th>Availability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jonamac</td>
<td>Great McIntosh flavor, but not as sour; crisp</td>
<td>Fresh eating, applesauce</td>
<td>Limited; great off the tree, but they don’t keep well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honeycrisp</td>
<td>Sweet like honey with a touch of tart, and very crisp</td>
<td>Fresh eating, cooking, salads</td>
<td>Limited, but can be stored for months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ginger Gold</td>
<td>Sweet yet spicy; fine-textured and firm</td>
<td>Slices stay white in salads; holds shape when baked</td>
<td>Limited; shelf life of 10 – 14 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paula Red</td>
<td>Full; tart with great crunch</td>
<td>Fresh eating, sauces, pies</td>
<td>Limited — but they don’t store well, so eat fast!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Apple and Pancetta Slaw

**Serves:** 8  
**Prep Time:** 30 min.  
**Cooking Time:** 10 min.

**Ingredients:**
- 1 head green cabbage, shredded
- 2 Granny Smith apples, julienned
- 2 Honeycrisp apples, julienned
- 3 tbsp. kosher salt

**Dressing:**
- 1 tbsp. olive oil
- 1/4 lb. pancetta, diced
- 1 sweet onion, thinly sliced
- 2 tbsp. whole-grain mustard
- 1 c. brown sugar
- 1-1/2 c. apple cider vinegar

**Directions:**
Mix cabbage, apples and salt together in a large bowl. Place sauté pan over high heat; add oil and pancetta. Once pancetta starts to render, add onions and cook for 2 minutes. Add mustard and sugar and cook until sugar starts to caramelize. Pour vinegar into pan and stir thoroughly, cooking for about 1 minute. Pour dressing over cabbage and apple mixture and stir well. Chill and serve.

### Falling Far from the Tree

In addition to new-crop apples, which make a brief appearance in our fresh bins, and the many other popular varieties we have year-round (reference our famous sweetness chart), the following apples deserve recognition as varieties we carry that are often hard to find elsewhere. We know. We’ve tried. Lucky for you, our produce department is just a few aisles away!

**Stayman** — an apple connoisseur’s delight, the Stayman has a distinctive sweet-tart flavor, snappy bite and satisfying texture. Our chefs give it high praise for its robust taste and firm, crisp flesh that’s got applesauce written all over it.

**Cortland** — nicknamed “the salad apple,” perhaps because this snow-white apple has a fresh fragrance that dwarfs all others in a salad. Or perhaps because the nickname council was having a slow day. It’s also great on kabobs for grilling.

**Empire** — this sweet apple has a crisp texture and bright white flesh. It’s an ideal lunch-box apple, partly because little, overactive hands won’t bruise it easily. To little kids it shouts, “Eat me.” Which is odd, because apples don’t talk.
### Apricots
**Ethylene-producing**
- **Best When** — fresh and plump with good color. Avoid brown spots or bruises. Those that are soft, mushy, shriveled, dull in color or too green. Also avoid rock-hard fruit. Apricots will ripen after harvest.
- **To select a ripe apricot** — look for a slight softening on the ridge. To ripen at home, store in a paper bag or warm area until soft on the ridge.
- **Store** — refrigerated when ripe. Avoid long-term storage next to ethylene-sensitive produce. (See Ethylene-sensitive Produce.) Avoid freezing apricots. Freeze damage can occur after one light freezing.

### Asian Pear
- **Best When** — firm and well shaped with a clear, rich color. Avoid pears with bruises and soft spots. Can be ripened at room temperature.
- **Store** — refrigerated when ripe.

### Avocados
**Ethylene-producing**
- **Best When** — solid with a full neck. If using immediately, choose a ripe avocado that gives to gentle pressure in your palm. Haas avocados have a bumpy skin and turn nearly black when ripe. Ripe green varieties will have a dull-looking skin with a velvety feel, but should not turn black. Avoid avocados that are hard or glistening with dark, sunken or soft spots. Avoid cracked or broken skin. To ripen at home, put avocado in a paper bag or warm place in the kitchen. Check daily for ripeness.
- **Store** — refrigerated (45 – 55°F), when ripe, but not on rack to avoid bruising. Unripe avocados should not be stored in refrigerator. Odors produced by avocados can be absorbed by pineapples, so keep them separate. Avocados are also susceptible to chilling and freeze damage.
Bananas
*Ethylene-producing when ripe, Ethylene-sensitive when unripe*

Best When — plump and well filled with a bright color and fresh stem area. Avoid cuts, splits, multiple bruises and mushy areas, or those dried out at the stem. A dull gray or smoky-color peel means they have most likely been stored in cold temperatures and may not ripen properly. Bananas ripen after harvest. One that is mostly yellow with a green tip will ripen in about two to three days in a paper bag or at room temperature.

Store — unrefrigerated. When refrigerated, the ripening process is halted. Though still edible, the skin will turn black. Bananas are susceptible to chill injury and freeze damage.

Blackberries

Best When — plump and fresh looking with good shape and color. Avoid those that are starting to soften, look shriveled, moldy or come in containers stained with juice. Berries do not ripen or get any sweeter after harvest.

Store — refrigerated in original container and use within one to two days. Do not wash until ready to use.

Blueberries

Best When — plump and fresh looking with a silvery sheen called the "bloom.” Berries do not ripen after harvest and blueberries with a reddish tint at the stem end may not be fully ripe. Avoid shriveled or decayed berries and containers wet with juice. Blueberries exposed to higher than recommended temperatures will appear rough textured. Avoid these, too.

Store — refrigerated in original container and use within one to two days. Do not wash until ready to use.

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**Chilled Custard Berry Trifle**

Serves: 8 – 10 Prep Time: 2 – 3 hours chilling Cooking Time: 10 min.

**Ingredients:**
- 4 egg yolks
- 1/3 c. sugar
- 2 tsp. cornstarch
- 2 c. half and half
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 6 c. mixed berries, such as blackberries, strawberries, raspberries, blueberries (stems removed)
- 3 tbsp. orange juice
- 2 tbsp. sugar
- 1 tsp. lemon zest
- 1 loaf of pound cake, cut into 1/2-inch cubes or slices
- Whipped topping
- Sliced almonds, toasted, optional

**Directions:**
Whisk together egg yolks, sugar and cornstarch in a medium bowl. In a small saucepan, heat cream over medium-low heat until almost boiling. Gradually add the hot cream to the egg mixture, whisking constantly. Return mixture to saucepan and cook over medium-low heat until thickened, about 4 to 5 minutes. Keep whisking. Remove from heat and stir in vanilla. Pour into a clean bowl and cover with plastic wrap, placing wrap directly on surface to prevent a skin from forming. Refrigerate for 2 to 3 hours.

Rinse berries and pat dry with a paper towel. In a large bowl, combine berries, orange juice, sugar and lemon zest, and toss lightly. In a large serving bowl, arrange half of the pound cake in the bottom. Spoon half of the berry mixture over. Pour half of the chilled custard over the fruit. Repeat with the remaining pound cake, berry mixture and custard. Garnish with whipped topping and toasted almonds.

**Note:** Can be made up to 1 day in advance. Cover tightly and refrigerate. Garnish with whipped topping and almonds just before serving.
Breadfruit

Best When — smooth and yellow; free of bruises and soft spots.

Store — at room temperature.

Additional Notes — a breadfruit is a nutritious, starchy melon which can be substituted for potatoes when not ripe, and for bananas when ripe.

Cantaloupe Ethylene-producing

Best When — completely covered with a light colored, course netting. For a ripe melon, choose one with a yellowish color under the netting, a slight give — especially at the blossom end — and a clean indentation at the stem end with no signs of the vine. Ripe cantaloupes will also emit a pleasant cantaloupe aroma. Avoid those with part of the stem attached, large areas without netting, soft spots, bruising and cracks. Also avoid those that make a sloshy sound when shaken, are too yellow and/or have a wet stem end. Cantaloupes may be ripened at room temperature for a few days if desired.

Store — refrigerated (45 – 55°F), when ripe or cut. Remember, melons are freeze sensitive.

Carambola (Star Fruit)

Best When — bright yellow with shiny skin and a good shape. Should be elliptical or oval in shape with five ridges. Ripe Carambola will be full yellow in color without any green. Brown on the edges is normal. Unripe Carambola can be ripened at room temperature.

Store — refrigerated, when fully ripe. Susceptible to chilling and freeze damage when stored below 40°F. Do not cut until ready to use.

Casaba (Melon)

Best When — golden yellow with a slight give at the blossom end. Should be heavy. Avoid soft or watery spots, shriveled skin, cracks and any rot.

Store — age at room temperature for a few days, if desired, then refrigerate (45 – 55°F). Always refrigerate when cut.

Cherimoyas

Best When — plump, uniformly green and slightly soft. Avoid brown, bruised, mushy fruit. Can be ripened at room temperature until they begin to turn brown. Do not let them get too brown.

Store — refrigerated, when ripe. Do not wash until you are ready to use.

Can be stored in refrigerator for five to seven days or frozen for up to eight weeks.

Additional Notes — a cherimoya is a sweet, creamy, subtropical fruit that combines the flavors of pineapple, papaya, passionfruit, banana, mango and lemon into one. To eat, cut in half lengthwise and scoop out flesh. Add to fruit salads, or purée and use as a mousse or pie filling.

Cherries

Best When — plump, firm, shiny and well colored with green, fresh stems. Cherries do not ripen after harvest so select full-colored fruit. Avoid those that are bruised, soft, shriveled or mushy.

Also avoid those with splits, cracks or dried and shriveled stems.

Store — loosely wrapped in a plastic bag in the refrigerator for one to three days. Do not wash until ready to use. Very odor sensitive.

Coconuts

Best When — solid and heavy with milk sloshing around inside when shaken. Avoid those that don’t slosh, as well as lightweight coconuts with any holes, moisture, cracks or mold, especially around the "eyes."

Store — refrigerated, until ready to use.

Crab Apple

Best When — bright green, orange or red, firm and unblemished.

Store — refrigerated.

Additional Notes — tart and often used to make jelly, wine, apple butter and other foods.

Cranberries

Best When — bright and plump, firm and dry. Also look for good color and uniform size. Avoid those that are shriveled, crushed, soft or bruised.

Store — refrigerated.
Crenshaw (Melon)
**Best When** — show little or no green (except in September). Should be heavy and have a fragrant stem cut. Avoid those with soft or watery spots, shriveled skin, cracks and any rot.
**Store** — at room temperature for a few days, if desired, then refrigerate (45 – 55°F). Always refrigerate when cut.

Dates
**Best When** — plump, soft, golden brown with smooth, glossy skin. Avoid those that are shriveled, dull looking, moldy, sticky or have any fermented odor.
**Store** — refrigerated and wrapped or in a sealed container to prevent them from absorbing odors. Remember, dates are susceptible to freezing damage.

Feijoas (Pineapple Guava)
**Best When** — oval shaped with deep green or green-yellow skin that is relatively blemish free.
**Store** — refrigerated and use promptly.
**Additional Notes** — most often eaten peeled and raw, but also used to make sauces, jellies, jams and desserts.

Figs
**Best When** — fairly soft with a rich color and a fresh smell. Avoid those that are bruised, shriveled, mushy or have any signs of rot. Also avoid those with a sour or fermented odor. Figs should not seem wet or have juice seeping from them. Also avoid those that are too hard.
**Store** — at room temperature to soften. If soft, refrigerate covered and use in one to three days.

Ginger root
**Best When** — "hands" are large and fat with smooth skin, a slight sheen and fresh ginger smell. Avoid shriveled root and those with rot or mold. Also avoid numerous knobs and a musty odor.
**Store** — loosely wrapped in the refrigerator. Can be frozen.

Grapefruit
**Best When** — plump and heavy with firm skin. Most scarring on skin does not affect fruit. Avoid those that are puffy and soft, lightweight or browning, or have soft, discolored or moldy spots. Also avoid grapefruit with a pointed end, a soft peel or water-soaked areas.
**Grapefruit does not get any riper once it has been picked.**
**Store** — at room temperature or refrigerated (45 – 55°F). Avoid storage below 40°F.

Grapes
**Best When** — fresh and bright with green pliable stems. Look for plump, well-developed grapes that are firmly attached to the stem. Black and red varieties should be deeply colored; green varieties should have a light green-yellow tint. Avoid brown shriveled stems, soft, squashed grapes and stems with too many loose grapes. Also avoid those that show signs of leaking juice. A slight powdery appearance (bloom) on the fruit is natural.
**Store** — refrigerated in a plastic bag, in the coldest part of the refrigerator. Do not rinse until ready to use. Grapes do not get any sweeter or ripen after harvest so consume promptly.

Guava
**Best When** — fresh looking with green or yellow skin, and white, deep pink or red flesh. To eat fresh, select a guava that yields to gentle pressure. For cooking jams, preserves or sauces, choose a firm one.
**Store** — at room temperature to ripen.

Honeydew *Ethylene-producing & Ethylene-sensitive*
**Best When** — creamy white or yellow colored, with a slight give when pressed and heavy for its size. A ripe honeydew will have a dusty velvety feel when you run your hand over the skin. Avoid those that are too white, green or hard. Also avoid those that are completely smooth. Avoid soft or watery spots, shriveled skin, cracks and any rot.
**Honeydew melons continue to ripen after harvest.**
**Store** — at room temperature for a few days, if desired, then refrigerate (45 – 55°F). Always refrigerate when cut.
Loquat (Japanese Plum)
Best When — fresh looking with thin, downy skin that is pale or orange. Should yield to gentle pressure when ripe. Avoid obvious blemishes.
Store — refrigerated when ripe.
Additional Notes — the loquat has a delicate, sweetly tart cherry-like flavor and is often used in chicken or duck dishes.

Lychee
Best When — firm, brown and fresh looking. Avoid those with any sign of decay or a pronounced blemish near the stem.
Store — refrigerated.
Additional Notes — the lychee is juicy, creamy and delicately sweet. It is usually eaten as a snack like nuts or grapes.

Mangoes (Ethylene-producing)
Best When — plump, fresh looking and smooth skinned. The skin may be green, yellow, red or a combination of all three colors. Ripe mangoes give to gentle pressure and smell sweet. Most varieties change colors as they ripen — a mostly yellow or red color, being a good indication of ripeness. However, some varieties can be ripe while still green. Avoid mangoes that are bright green or rock hard, as well as overly soft, shriveled or with large black spots and bruises. Small dark speckles are not a problem if the fruit is otherwise in good condition. Mangoes will ripen after harvest. Squeeze for a slight give and pleasant aroma to determine ripeness.
Store — at room temperature (70 – 75°F) to ripen or place in a paper bag to hasten process. Refrigerate ripe mangoes to slow further ripening, but use promptly.

Mangosteen
Best When — rind is a rich, reddish brown, free from bruises, blemishes or pitting. When ripe, is plump and yields to gentle pressure.
Store — at room temperature (70 – 75°F) to ripen and refrigerated when ripe.
Additional Notes — the mangosteen is no relation to the mango. It is more like a tangerine, with a refreshingly juicy, sweet/tart taste.

Kiwifruit (Chinese Gooseberry) Ethylene-producing
Best When — firm, light brown, plump and fresh looking. Ripe kiwifruit should give to gentle palm pressure. Avoid rock hard, mushy, bruised or shriveled fruit. To ripen at home, place in a paper bag at room temperature and check daily for a gentle give.
Store — refrigerated in the coldest part of the refrigerator when ripe.

Kumquats
Best When — firm and fresh looking with bright, shiny color. Should appear glossy and relatively unblemished. Any leaves should be fresh and green. Avoid mold rot and dry leaves.
Store — loosely wrapped in the refrigerator. Use in two to four days.
Additional Notes — the kumquat’s skin is sweet and its flesh tart. The entire fruit is eaten raw when very ripe or more often candied and pickled whole. or used in marmalades and preserves.

Lady Apple
Best When — blemish free and light in color. When ripe, will be about the size of an apricot with a characteristic crisp texture.
Store — refrigerated or in a cool place.
Additional Notes — the lady apple is sweet/tart and often used as a garnish.

Lemons
Best When — fine textured, thin skinned and heavy with good, deep yellow color. Avoid lemons that are shriveled, hard skinned or soft and spongy and any with mold. The stem end is where signs of aging or decay show up first.
Store — refrigerated (45 – 55°F) for five to seven days.
Additional Notes — lemons absorb odors well.

Limes
Best When — plump, fresh, glossy looking and heavy with a bright, thin skin. Avoid shriveled, soft limes and those with dry, woody skins. Also avoid mold and bruises. Keep limes away from sunlight, as this will cause yellowing and faster deterioration.
Store — refrigerated (45 – 55°F) for five to seven days.
Nectarines
Best When — firm, plump and well-formed with smooth, unblemished skin. Look for good, bright color without a green tint or green at the stem end. A ripe nectarine will give slightly along the seam and will have a pleasant, peachy fragrance. Avoid nectarines that are hard, shriveled or have a dull color. Also avoid overly soft nectarines and those with bruises, blemishes and/or dark spots. Nectarines will ripen after harvest.
Store — in a warm place or paper bag. Check for ripeness daily. Store ripe nectarines in the refrigerator. Consume in three to five days.

Oranges Odor-producing
Best When — firm, heavy and plump with bright color and smooth, tight skin. Color alone is not an indication of a good orange, as some oranges remain green after harvest. Avoid loose skin in all varieties except tangerines, which should have loose skin. Avoid all that are dull, shriveled, soft, spongy or bruised. Also avoid those that are lightweight with soft spots, mold or any other signs of decay.
Store — refrigerated for a week or more. California oranges store best (between 45 – 55°F), while Florida oranges prefer colder temperatures (33 – 40°F).

Papaya
Best When — smooth skinned, medium sized and well shaped with some yellow and green color. A ripe papaya is at least 3/4 yellow or yellow-orange and will yield to gentle pressure. Avoid soft spots, bruises, broken skin and dark brown or black spots. Also avoid shriveled and overly soft papaya, or those that are hard and green. Papaya will ripen after harvest.
Store — at room temperature until papaya gives to gentle pressure and has a pleasant papaya aroma. Store in a paper bag to shorten ripening time. Check daily. Refrigerate ripe papaya. Use promptly.

Passion fruit (Granadilla)
Best When — skin is tough, deep purple and wrinkled in appearance. Should be similar to an egg in size and shape.
Store — refrigerated.

Pawpaw (Papaw)
Best When — firm, creamy and yellow. Avoid ones that bear any indication of deformity or deterioration.
Store — at room temperature until ripe and then refrigerate.
Additional Notes — The pawpaw is a member of the cherimoya family. It has a custard-like texture and a sweet flavor reminiscent of bananas and pears.

Peaches
Best When — firm and bright, gives to gentle pressure and has a pleasant aroma. Should have a yellowish or creamy tint color with little or no green. Avoid shriveled, soft peaches and those with bruises. Also avoid those that are very hard or look too green. Peaches will ripen, getting softer and juicer after harvest. Ripen in a warm area or paper bag. Check daily for ripeness.
Store — in the coldest part of the refrigerator when ripe. But not too cold — peaches are susceptible to freezing damage. Consume in two to four days.

Pears (Anjou, Bartlett, Bosc, Comice, Seckel, Red) Ethylene-producing
Best When — bright and fresh looking with no bruises or external damage. Pears are harvested before they ripen and other than Bartletts do not dramatically change color when ripe. Test for ripeness by pressing gently near the stem, if it gives to gentle pressure it is sweet, juicy and ready to eat. Waiting until pears are soft around the middle may indicate over ripeness. Ripen pears in a warm place in a fruit bowl or in a paper bag. Check daily for ripeness.
Store — in the coldest part of the refrigerator when ripe.

Persian Melons
Best When — netting is full and light-colored and stem cut is fragrant. A slight give is a good sign. Avoid those with green or dark netting, obvious bruises, soft and or watery spots, and cracks. Also avoid those with a sloshy sound when shaken or with a wet stem end.
Store — at room temperature for a few days, if desired. Then refrigerate (45 – 55°F). Always refrigerate when cut.
Persimmons
Best When — smooth and plump with bright glossy skin and the stem cap attached. For immediate consumption, look for one that is a bit soft and even shriveled. Avoid those that are decayed, bruised or overly hard. A persimmon will ripen after harvest.
Store — at room temperature or in a paper bag and check daily for ripeness.

Pineapple
Best When — fresh looking with green, crisp leaves. Should be a good size, heavy and plump with smooth, flat “eyes.” Color is not a fail-safe indicator of ripeness, nor is pulling out a leaf. Avoid pineapples with bruises, soft spots and dry-looking leaves, or moldy, dark, watery eyes. Smell the end of a pineapple, avoiding those with an unpleasant smell. Pineapple will not ripen or gain sugar after harvested. However, it will begin to ferment and the flavor changes, which some people mistake for ripening.
Store — refrigerated (45 – 55°F), especially when cut.

Plantain
Best When — clean, green and free from signs of deterioration. May be purchased at varying levels of ripeness — green to yellow-black in color. Plantains become sweeter as they ripen.
Store — at room temperature.

Plumcot
Best When — plump with a rich, deep purple skin. Select those without blemishes.
Store — at room temperature until ripe, then refrigerate.
Additional Notes — a plumcot is a cross between a plum and apricot.

Plums Ethylene-producing
Best When — plump and fairly firm to slightly soft. Avoid fruit with bruises, cracks, splits and soft spots. Also avoid shriveled fruit that is overly soft or that is too hard. Plums will ripen after harvest. A ripe plum will yield to gentle pressure.
Store — unripe plums at room temperature or in a paper bag. Check daily for softness. Store ripe plums in the coldest part of the refrigerator. Consume in three to five days.

Pomegranates
Best When — large and heavy with good color and free of cracks or splits. Large fruit will have fully developed juicy seeds. The skin can range in color from bright yellow to deep red. Avoid dry, shriveled and tired-looking fruit.
Store — refrigerated.

Prickly Pear (Barberry Fig, Indian Fig, Cactus Pear)
Best When — skin is bright red, indicating flesh will be yellow. Should feel firm but not rock hard.
Store — refrigerated when ripe.

Quince
Best When — large and firm with pale yellow skin that is smooth and has a woolly texture. Avoid fruit with bruises or cuts.
Store — in a cool, dry place or the refrigerator.

Very Berry Dessert
Compliments of Chef Karla Contreras

Ingredients:
• 1 pkg. ready-to-bake puff pastry sheets
• 1 bottle La Lechera® condensed milk
• 1 pint of your favorite fresh berries

Directions:
Let puff pastry thaw out if possible; if not, place in microwave for 1 minute. Cut 6 squares and bake following package directions. When ready, top puff pastry squares with condensed milk and berries. Sprinkle powdered sugar and serve.
Raspberries
Best When — plump, fresh looking with good shape and rich, full color. Purchase those that are dry and are free from bruises or mold. Avoid those that are starting to soften, look shriveled, moldy or are packaged in containers stained with juice. Berries will not ripen or get any sweeter after harvest.
Store — refrigerated and use promptly. Use within one to two days in original container. Do not wash until you are ready to use. Remember, berries are susceptible to freeze damage.

Rhubarb
Best When — fresh looking and firm with medium-thick, straight stalks. Choose bright, glossy stems that are crisp and pinkish-red in color. Avoid stalks that look wilted, flabby or rubbery.
Store — refrigerated.

Santa Claus Melon
Best When — color is green and gold, but not too green. Should be heavy with a slight give. Stem cut may be moderately fragrant. Avoid soft or watery spots, shriveled skin, cracks and any rot.
Store — at room temperature for a few days, if desired, then refrigerate (45 – 55°F). Always refrigerate when cut.

Star Apple
Best When — clean with a smooth surface and a dull purple or light green color. Avoid those with bruises or deformed fruit.
Store — refrigerated.
Additional Notes — when cut, the star apple has a core that takes on a star shape. The skin and rind are inedible. In Jamaica, the flesh is often mixed with orange juice, sugar, nutmeg and sherry, and eaten as dessert.

Strawberries from Dawn ’til Dusk
Got a refrigerator full of berries? Not for long! Following are delightful ways to incorporate the best of berries into your diet all day long!

Breakfast:
Tried and true, strawberries are delicious sliced on your favorite cereal. They also make a tasty sauce for waffles, jam for toast, a sweet addition to muffins and breads, and an essential ingredient in any fruit salad.

Lunch:
Strawberries were made for light noon meals. Slice berries on a fresh green salad for a juicy sweet surprise. Use as the base for a refreshing smoothie, add to chicken salad, or simply eat whole.

Snack:
For a snack with a pleasing bite, strawberries make a unique addition to salsas served with chips or pita. They also hold their own on a fruit and veggie tray, and add sweet color to a board of cheese and crackers.

Dinner:
An original way to use strawberries is as an ingredient in a barbecue sauce for meat, poultry or fish (see recipe on the next page). Strawberries also add fresh flavor to marinates, a sweet tang to chutneys and make a more than memorable soup.

Dessert:
Naturally, strawberries define dessert. From the main ingredient in pies, cakes and parfaits, to the feature of the included recipes for tartlets or trifle, we recommend strawberries to satisfy the sweet tooth!

Drinks:
Frozen strawberries make cool ice cubes for fancy drinks or cocktails. They also add rich color and flavor to any frozen drink or punch recipe.
Strawberry Barbecue Sauce
Serves: 4 Prep Time: 5 min. Cooking Time: 5 min.

Ingredients:
• 2 c. fresh (stems removed) or frozen unsweetened strawberries
• 1 clove garlic
• 1/4 c. chopped red or sweet white onion
• 1 tsp. fresh ginger, grated
• 2 tbsp. fresh, chopped cilantro
• 1/4 c. strawberry jam
• 2 tbsp. lemon juice
• 1/2 c. ketchup
• Dash cayenne powder or Tabasco® Sauce
• Freshly grated pepper

Directions: Combine strawberries, garlic and onions in a blender. Add the remaining ingredients and continue to blend until smooth. Season to taste. Set aside a small amount for use as a dipping sauce when serving. Brush remaining sauce on meats before cooking or grilling.

Tomatoes Ethylene-producing
Best When — firm (not hard) and plump with a tight skin. Look for clean, evenly colored tomatoes without blemish. Avoid those that are spongy, soft or split, or have a dried out calyx at the stem. Tomatoes continue to ripen after harvest. To eat today, choose full-colored, evenly red, ripe-looking tomatoes. For later use, select a tomato that is lighter red or green colored.

Store — at room temperature. Never refrigerate: they will lose flavor, become watery inside and the seeds can become bitter. If an unripe tomato is stored in the refrigerator it may never ripen properly, even if taken out to ripen.

Additional Notes — place unripe tomatoes in a warm spot or in a paper bag until ready to eat. To speed the process, place a high ethylene-producing fruit, such as a banana or apple, in the bag. To test for ripeness, gently squeeze the tomato in your palm. A ripe tomato will yield slightly to gentle pressure. A Roma tomato may be slightly firmer when ripe as they contain less juice.

Tamarind (Indian Date)
Best When — seed pod is cinnamon-brown, fresh, tender and three to eight inches long. The pod should be flat, and free from bruises or deformities.

Store — refrigerated.

Additional Notes — tamarind pulp concentrate is a popular flavoring in East Indian and Middle Eastern cuisines and used to season chutneys and curries. It is also made into syrup.

Strawberries
Best When — bright red, plump, well shaped and full colored with a natural sheen and fresh green cap. Strawberries do not get any riper or sweeter after harvest, so the more color the better. Those that are full red will be the sweetest. Avoid shriveled, dried out-looking berries with a dry brown cap. Also avoid soft berries with brown spots or too many bruises, green immature berries or those with too much white. Finally, avoid cartons that appear stained or moist, as this may indicate fruit damage.

Store — removed from container and loosely covered with plastic wrap in coldest part of the refrigerator. Use in one to three days. Wash with caps on when ready to use.

Additional Notes — allowing berries to reach room temperature can improve flavor.
Ugli Fruit

Best When — heavy and fresh looking with good color. Should be free from bruises, browning and softness. The skin typically has a rough, mottled peel with light green blemishes that turn orange when the fruit is fully ripe.

Store — at room temperature or in refrigerator.

Additional Notes — the ugli fruit is a Jamaican hybrid of a tangerine, grapefruit and possibly a pommelo.

Watermelon Ethylene-sensitive

Best When — skin is relatively smooth with a velvety bloom on the rind. Look for a yellow or light-colored spot where it rested on the ground while growing (ground spot). The ends of the watermelon should be well-rounded and full. Avoid shiny fruit with a white or greenish ground spot. Also avoid those with cuts, scars or bruises, or a white streak running the length of the melon. Watermelons do not ripen after they are picked.

Store — at room temperature and use promptly. Cut watermelon should be covered with plastic wrap, refrigerated and also used promptly.

Additional Notes — if you are buying cut melon, look for firm flesh with good color and black or dark brown seeds. Avoid a watery melon. If it is a melon with seeds, avoid those with white, immature seeds, with a sugary look around the seeds, or with seeds that are beginning to separate from the flesh.
Crisp and Clean

Three Steps to Keep Vegetables
Fresh, Moist and in Top Form

Step 1
• Remove all yellow, heavily wilted and discolored parts.
• Do NOT trim the roots on radishes, carrots, green onions or spinach.
• Do NOT remove leaves or stalks from the base of celery, lettuce or cabbage.

Step 2
• Soak vegetables in tepid water (70 – 90°F) for two to four minutes.
• Iceberg lettuce should be placed core down in a tray or sink with about two inches of warm water. Do not soak the lettuce.

Step 3
• Shake off or drain all water from vegetables and place in clean plastic bags or containers, with small holes for drainage.
• Pack vegetables loosely.
• Place in cooler or refrigerator for a minimum of six hours.

Alfalfa Sprouts
Best When — dry and fresh looking; no extra moisture.
Store — refrigerated for five to ten days. Highly perishable.

Artichokes
Best When — fresh looking, with plump, compact green heads that are heavy with tightly closed leaves. If rubbed together, they should produce a crisp feel and squeaky sound. Should be olive green and relatively blemish free. Avoid those with leaves that are spreading.
Store — in a closed container or plastic bag in the refrigerator at 32°F for four days. Keep dry, as artichokes can mold easily when wet.

Arugula Ethylene-sensitive
Best When — fresh with a good, green color and small-to-medium-sized leaves.
Store — in coldest part of the refrigerator in a plastic bag for one to two days.

Asparagus White or Green
Best When — firm with straight stalks and tips that are well formed, smooth and tightly closed. Should appear fresh and have a rich color.
Store — in coldest part of the refrigerator. Use quickly. If you must keep asparagus for two or three days, wrap ends with a damp paper towel and store in a plastic bag.
Additional Notes — freshen up slightly wilted stalks by putting them in cool water before serving.

Babycorn
Best When — fresh, crisp and pale yellow to creamy white in color.
Ears should be 1-1/2 to 4 inches in length.
Store — refrigerated and use promptly.
Bamboo Shoots
**Best When** — shoots have a good, fresh green color; young and tender.
**Store** — refrigerated up to two weeks.

Bean Sprouts
**Best When** — firm and crisp with a creamy color.
**Store** — wrapped in plastic in the refrigerator crisper for up to three days; highly perishable.

Beans
**Best When** — fresh and young looking with a bright color. Should be firm with crisp, evenly colored pods: not thick, tough or fibrous. Avoid dry, hard, woody beans and those that are wilted or flabby. Generally, smaller beans will be most tender.
**Store** — in a plastic bag in the refrigerator crisper. Do not wash until just before use. Use within two to four days.

Beets
**Best When** — smooth, firm, well-shaped yet slender with a good, deep, rich red color. Select small- to medium-sized beets for best flavor. Avoid soft, spongy, rough, shriveled or bruised beets. Beet tops should be fresh looking and not shriveled.
**Store** — remove tops with greens, and refrigerate. Refrigerate beets separately in a plastic bag.

Belgian Endive **Ethylene-sensitive**
(See Endive)

Bibb Lettuce **Ethylene-sensitive**
**Best When** — crisp with no signs of decay or browning. Avoid slimy leaves.
**Store** — in coldest area in the refrigerator away from fans to keep dehydration to a minimum. Can be placed in a plastic bag to maximize humidity. Use within three days.

Bitter Melon *(Balsam Pear)*
**Best When** — medium sized (6 to 8 inches long), free of bruises or signs of deterioration. Should be clear green with a wrinkled surface.
**Store** — refrigerated.
**Additional Notes** — bitter melon is technically a fruit, but is used as a vegetable in Asian cooking. When first picked, it has a delicate, sour flavor; when ripe it is bitter and acrid.

Bok Choy *(Chinese Cabbage)*
**Best When** — crisp and firm with no signs of wilting or damage from excess moisture.
**Store** — refrigerated in a plastic container. Do not wash until ready to use.

Broccoli **Ethylene-sensitive**
**Best When** — heads are compact with a dark green, sage or purple-green color. Flower clusters should be firm, compact and tightly closed with tender, fresh, brightly colored stalks. Avoid heads with buds that are open, yellow or beginning to flower, and stalks with soft, slippery spots and yellow leaves. Avoid bunches that are wilted, shriveled, or have a pungent odor.
**Store** — in the coldest part of the refrigerator and use in three to four days.

Brussels Sprouts **Ethylene-sensitive**
**Best When** — heads are compact, small and firm with tight fitting, bright green leaves. Avoid yellow or wilted leaves and large puffy heads, those with black spots and holes in the leaves, or sprouts with a strong odor.
**Store** — wrapped in the refrigerator for up to two days. Do not wash until ready to use.

Butter Lettuce **Ethylene-sensitive**
Butter lettuce should be fresh looking with a soft and waxy look. Avoid browning and wilted leaves.
Cabbage  *Ethylene-sensitive*
*Best When* — firm and heavy with a bright purple or green color. Avoid heads with numerous loose or wilted outer leaves and a puffy appearance, or with brown or yellowing leaves.
*Store* — refrigerated for five to seven days. Can be rinsed before storage and placed in a plastic bag, or in the crisper.

Celeriac  *(Celery Root, Celery Knob)*
*Best When* — plump and heavy with small root knobs. Avoid shriveled or soft roots.
*Store* — trim the stalk and leaves, and store in refrigerator.
*Additional Notes* — celeriac tastes like a cross between celery and parsley. It can be shredded raw in salads or used to flavor soups, stews and sauces. It may also be baked, sautéed or braised.

Cactus Leaves  *(Nopales)*
*Best When* — crisp and tender with bright, light green leaves and few blemishes.
*Store* — refrigerated.

Cardoon
*Best When* — young and tender with a small shank and fresh, crisp bunches. Avoid those with any signs of wilting or decay, or pronounced blemishes.
*Store* — refrigerated.
*Additional Notes* — tasting like a cross between artichoke, celery and salsify (oyster plant), the cardoon is popular in France, Spain and Italy, and can be braised, baked or boiled.

Carrots  *Odor-producing/Ethylene-sensitive*
*Best When* — small, firm, and well-shaped with a fresh, smooth plump appearance and deep color. Avoid limp carrots that are rubbery and wilted. Also avoid carrots with cracks and any signs of shrivel or sprouting. Look at the stem end and avoid black or deeply discolored ends as well as those with large green areas on top. If the carrots have tops they should be green and fresh looking.
*Store* — in coldest part of the refrigerator for up to one week. Remove tops before storing. Can be rinsed and stored in a plastic bag in high-humidity environments.

Cauliflower  *Ethylene-sensitive*
*Best When* — firm and compact with white or creamy white curds. Jacket leaves should be fresh and green. Avoid heads with loose, spread out sections, brown spots or bruises.
*Store* — in the coldest part of the refrigerator in a plastic bag.
Use in three to five days.

Celery
*Best When* — solid and rigid, with medium to light green, well-shaped stalks. Avoid pithy or woody-looking stalks and those with a hollow or discolored center. Avoid limp stalks with yellow or wilted leaves.
*Store* — in plastic bag in the coldest part of refrigerator. May be rinsed before storing and will keep for a week or more.

Chard  *(Swiss)*
*(See Greens)*

Chayote  *(Vegetable Pear, Chayote Squash, Mirliton)*
*Best When* — rich green in color with a hard surface. Avoid misshapen or otherwise deteriorated Chayote.
*Store* — refrigerated up to a month.
*Additional Notes* — chayote may be used in any way summer squash is used. It may also be added raw to salad. Its mild flavoring demands assertive seasoning.

Chervil
*Best When* — green in color with no yellow leaves or wilting.
*Store* — refrigerated.
*Additional Notes* — salad chervil looks like parsley and should be selected and handled similarly. Parsnip chervil is a root vegetable, which should be selected and handled like a turnip.
Daikon (Japanese White Radish)
Best When — clean, crisp, firm and well shaped; 8 to 10 inches long.
Store — refrigerated.

Dandelion Greens Ethylene-sensitive
Best When — crisp and tender with bright green leaves — not too deep green. Avoid wilted leaves, and those that are yellowing.
Store — refrigerated in a plastic bag.

Eggplant Ethylene-sensitive
Best When — firm yet yielding to gentle pressure, with a dark purple-black glossy skin that is uniform in color and a fresh, green cap. Should be plump and heavy. Avoid those that are shriveled, spongy or have dark spots. Also avoid any with pronounced scars, cuts and bruises.
Store — refrigerated and use as soon as possible.

Endive (Belgium Endive, French Endive, Curly Endive) Ethylene-sensitive
Best When — fresh and tender with healthy-colored leaves. Avoid green-leafed varieties that have turned yellow. Avoid limp or wilted leaves, or those with obvious insect damage.
Store — wrapped in plastic and refrigerated for one to two days.

Endive
Best When — fresh looking and clean. Avoid dry or brown leaves. frayed brown edges or small reddish-brown spots.
Store — refrigerated in a plastic bag. Endive can be washed before storing and kept three to five days. Chicory should not be washed until ready to use and should be kept only a couple of days.

Enoki Mushroom
Best When — fresh looking, creamy white in color. Avoid any that are slimy.
Store — refrigerated and use promptly.

Escarole Ethylene-sensitive
(see Endive)

Escarole
Best When — fresh and green with long, thin pods. 18 inches or less. Should be very flexible.
Store — in vented plastic bag in refrigerator for up to five days.

Fennel (Anise, Finocchio)
Best When — fresh, crisp and green with feather-like leaves. Look for a fat, white-green stalk with a rounded white bulb that is medium sized and firm. Avoid fennel with bruises or cracks.
Store — refrigerated and wrapped in plastic. Use in one to three days.
Fiddlehead Fern

Best When — young, clean and fresh with a clear green color. Look for those that are 2 to 8 inches long with the tip still rolled. These will have the most delicate flavor. Avoid any with pronounced deformity or blemish or wilting, and those with milky or colored juices.

Store — refrigerated and wrapped in plastic. Use in one to two days. Do not wash until ready to use.

Garlic

Best When — good sized and full with big cloves. Bulbs should be firm, heavy, dry and have a paper-like, crackling skin. Avoid bulbs with soft cloves, sprouts or any signs of mildew.

Store — in a cool, dry place away from foods which may pick up its aroma.

Green Onions (Scallions) Odor-producing

Best When — tops are young, tender, bright and fresh looking with clean white root ends and medium-sized necks. Bulbs less than 1/2-inch in diameter tend to be sweeter than larger bulbs. Avoid brown or slimy tops, and wilted or discolored onions.

Store — in a plastic bag in the coldest part of the refrigerator. Use as soon as possible.

Greens (Collard, Mustard, Chard, Kale, Turnip) Ethylene-sensitive

Best When — fresh and tender with rich, deep, green-colored leaves. Mustard greens may be light green or slightly bronzed in color. Avoid coarse stems and leaves with outward blemishes, wilted or yellowed leaves, and leaves with small holes indicating insect damage.

Store — wrapped and unwashed in refrigerator crisper until ready to use. Use in one to three days.

Herbs (All Fresh Varieties)

Best When — fresh, green and brightly colored. Pinch a leaf to check for a fresh scent. Avoid herbs that are wilted or dry, yellow or brown, or those that have begun to flower.

Store — refrigerated in a plastic bag. Placing stems in water or wrapping them in a wet paper towel can extend the shelf life. Use in a few days.

Horseradish Root (German Mustard)

Best When — root is firm and light colored, plump and crisp, with no signs of shriveling or decay. Avoid dry roots with any soft spots and/or signs of sprouting.

Store — refrigerated, and wrapped tightly in plastic or in an airtight container. Use in a few days.

Iceberg Lettuce Ethylene-sensitive

Best When — green and fresh with clean, bright, light- to medium-colored green leaves wrapped tightly around the head. Head should be heavy for its size. Avoid brown or wilted leaves and a dark-colored core end.

Store — in an airtight storage container or sealed plastic bag in the refrigerator for up to one week.

Jerusalem Artichoke/Sunchoke

Best When — root is firm without any signs of deterioration. Avoid softness, shriveling, moisture and any signs of mold or sprouting.

Store — refrigerated in crisper drawer.

Jicama

Best When — root is small and well-formed, plump, crisp, and free of bruises. Avoid large woody roots, shriveled or soft roots, and any signs of sprouting, moisture or mold.

Store — unwashed and refrigerated in a plastic bag.

Kohlrabi

Best When — globes are the size of large eggs. Larger sizes may be woody or tough. Tops should be green, young and fresh looking. Avoid kohlrabi with growth cracks and blemishes, and wilted tops.

Store — refrigerated in crisper drawer for three to five days.

Leaf Lettuce and Romaine

Best When — leaves are closely bunched, fresh looking and well colored. Avoid browning and wilted leaves or any signs of rust.

Store — patted with a paper towel to remove all moisture, placed in a plastic bag and refrigerated up to three days in the crisper.
Leeks
Best When — well shaped, small- to medium-sized with fresh green tops and several inches of white skin. Avoid leeks with wilted, browning or yellowing greens, or with split bulbs.
Store — unwashed and refrigerated in a plastic bag for three to four days.

Lettuce (Packaged) Ethylene-sensitive
Best When — purchased in advance of the “purchase by” date. These bags are often shelved in back. Squeeze bag to check for air leaks. Avoid bags with brown, wilted, discolored leaves, as well as those with wet or slimy leaves.
Store — unused portions in the bag by squeezing air from the bag, rolling down the top and securing it with a rubber band or “chip clip.” Highly perishable. Refrigerate immediately.

Mâche (Corn Salad)
Best When — fresh looking with deep blue-green-colored leaves. Avoid any that appear wilted, dry or rotting.
Store — blotted dry, wrapped and refrigerated for one to two days.
Additional Notes — mâche has a tangy, nut-like flavor, making a unique addition to any salad.

Mushroom (Cultivated)
Best When — plump, firm, smooth and light brown or white, with the veil underneath the cap still attached to the stem. Should have tightly closed caps that curl over the edge of the gills. (the dark fluted areas under the cap). Avoid blemished, bruised or slimy mushrooms.
Store — in the coldest part of the refrigerator in a paper bag or wrapped in a paper towel. Do not store in a plastic bag as this can make mushrooms slimy. Do not rinse until ready to use and never soak. Handle mushrooms gently as they bruise easily. Highly perishable. Use as soon as possible.
Additional Notes — the wider the veil the more flavorful the mushroom. For extra flavor, choose mushrooms with the veil open or drawn away from the stem.

Mushrooms (Wild e.g., Shiitake, Chantrelle, Enoke, Oyster)
Best When — fresh and firm looking with no signs of wilt, rot, bruising or moisture.
Store — in the coldest part of the refrigerator in a paper bag or wrapped in a paper towel. Do not store in a plastic bag as this can make mushrooms slimy. Do not rinse until ready to use and never soak. Handle mushrooms gently as they bruise easily. Highly perishable. Use as soon as possible.

Mustard Greens Ethylene-sensitive
(See Greens)

Nappa Cabbage (Nappa, Sui Choy, Chow Choy, Won Bok)
Best When — heads are medium sized with fresh crisp leaves and plump stems. Avoid those with very large or firm heads, as they may have exceptionally strong or pungent flavor.
Store — refrigerated up to three days.

Okra Ethylene-sensitive
Best When — pods are 2 to 4 inches in length, bright green and unblemished. Larger ones may be tough or woody. Avoid okra that is dull or faded, soft, dry or shriveled, with blackening or discoloration. Also avoid pods with stiff tips, as these may be tough and fibrous.
Store — refrigerated in the crisper or in a plastic bag for two to four days.

Did You Know? Mushrooms Are:
• Free from cholesterol, fat and sodium
• Low in calories
• High in riboflavin, which promotes healthy skin and good vision
• Rich in niacin, which aids the digestive and nervous systems
• Higher in potassium than bananas!
Peppers  
*Best When* — firm, fresh and heavy with a tight skin and good, glossy color. (Tinges of red on a green bell pepper are fine.) Large peppers are often better for stuffing. Avoid peppers that are soft or pale with thin, loose-feeling skin, as well as those with a dull appearance. Avoid bruised, shriveled or wilted peppers, and those with brown, black or soft spots, or decay at the stem end.  
*Store* — in a plastic bag in warmer part of refrigerator (45 – 55°F). When cut, wrap in plastic before refrigerating. Temperatures below 45°F can cause chill damage and above 50°F will hasten breakdown. Keep away from high ethylene-producing fruits, like apples. Use in four to six days.

### Honey-Roasted Red Potatoes

**Serves:** 4  
**Prep Time:** 10 min.  
**Cooking Time:** 35 min.  

**Ingredients:**
- 1-1/2 lbs. petite red potatoes, halved  
- 3 tbsp. butter or margarine, melted  
- 1 tbsp. honey  
- 1 tsp. dry mustard  
- Coarse salt and ground pepper to taste

**Directions:**
Preheat oven to 375°F. Lightly coat an 11” x 7” baking dish with nonstick cooking spray. Wash potatoes and cut in halves. Lay potatoes in a single layer in prepared dish. In a small bowl, combine melted butter, honey, mustard, salt and pepper; drizzle over potatoes. Bake for 35 minutes or until tender, stirring halfway through cooking time.
Peppers (Chili)
Best When — plump and firm with thick, glossy flesh and a rich color. Avoid those that look wilted, have soft spots, shriveled skin or any signs of deterioration.
Store — refrigerated and wrapped loosely in a plastic bag.

Potatoes (New)
Best When — fresh looking, well shaped and firm with a slightly waxy texture. Avoid those with black spots and any signs of bruising or shriveling, as well as those with a spongy feel or signs of sprouting.
Store — in a cool, dry, dark place. Do not store in the refrigerator or with onions.

Potatoes (Baking) Odor-producing
Best When — dry, well shaped, reasonably smooth and firm without black spots or sprouts. Avoid those with cuts, bruises or any signs of shrivel. Also avoid potatoes with green.
Store — in a cool, dry, dark place. Do not store in the refrigerator or with onions.

Pumpkins
Best When — clean with a rich orange color. Avoid those that are cracked, scarred, moist or show any signs of breakdown.
Store — at room temperature.

Radishes
Best When — heads are medium sized, smooth and bright in color. Should be firm and well shaped with smooth, glossy skin. Tops, if attached, should be fresh looking and bright colored. Avoid spongy radishes with soft or black spots, any signs of wilting, sprouting cracks or other signs of decay.
Store — with tops removed in the coldest part of the refrigerator. May be stored in a plastic bag to increase humidity. Use in two to four days.

Rapini (Rapé, Broccoli Raab)
Best When — bulb is young, tender and smooth with fresh green leaves.
Store — wrapped in a plastic bag and refrigerated up to five days.
Additional Notes — rapini has a pungent, bitter flavor that is found in many Italian dishes. It is fried, braised and steamed, and often added to soups and salads.

Romaine Ethylene-sensitive
(See Leaf Lettuce)

Rutabagas and Turnips
Best When — firm, smooth and heavy. Avoid large ones, which may be woody, as well as those with punctures or deep scars. Bunched turnips should have fresh, crisp-looking greens.
Store — in a cool humid place. Turnips can be refrigerated. Turnip greens should be refrigerated and used right away.

Salad (Packaged) Ethylene-sensitive
(See Lettuce (Packaged))

Salsify (Oyster Plant)
Best When — root is firm and gray-white in color with a full, fresh-looking, grassy top. Avoid salsify with any signs of deterioration.
Store — refrigerated.

Shallots (Fresh)
Best When — firm and dry with well-rounded bulbs about 3/4-inch in diameter. Outer skin should be smooth and dry without shriveling. Avoid spongy bulbs and those that are sprouting.
Store — refrigerated in a tightly closed paper bag. Keep cool and dry.

Shallots (Dry)
Best When — cloves are plump, firm and heavy. Skin should have a dry, papery texture with a light sheen and gray to reddish-brown color.
Store — in a cool, dark, well-ventilated place away from potatoes.
**Snow Peas** *(Sugar Peas, China Peas)*

Best When — pods are bright green, crisp, flat and translucent.  
Avoid those with brown spots or other signs of decay.  
Store — refrigerated in a plastic bag to increase the humidity.

**Sorrel**

Best When — leaves are small, light green, crisp, fresh looking and free from blemishes. Some varieties will have stems that are light green or red. Avoid wilted leaves, any signs of yellowing and woody stems.  
Store — unwashed and wrapped in the refrigerator. Use within a few days.  
Additional Notes — all sorrel varieties have some degree of acidity or sourness. The more acidic types are used to flavor cream soups, breads, and omelets, or puréed to accompany meats.

**Soybean**

Best When — pods are flat, crisp, fresh and green.  
Store — refrigerated.

**Spinach** *Ethylene-sensitive*

Best When — fresh, clean and crisp looking with large dark green leaves.  
Avoid wilted yellowish, or otherwise discolored leaves, as well as any signs of rot or bruising. Avoid spinach with signs of insect damage.  
Store — in the coldest part of the refrigerator in a plastic bag. Use in two to three days.

**Squash** *(Summer, e.g., Italian, Yellow, Crockneck, etc.)* *Ethylene-sensitive*

Best When — small to medium sized but heavy with a tender, glossy, fresh-looking rind. Avoid overly spongy, shriveled squash, those with damaged or watery areas and those with soft spots. Handle carefully to avoid bruising.  
Store — in the refrigerator at 45 – 55°F. Use as soon as possible. May be stored in a plastic bag to help prevent dehydration.

**Squash** *(Winter, e.g., Acorn, Butternut, Spaghetti, etc.)* *Ethylene-sensitive*

Best When — rind is hard and tough and squash is heavy for its size.  
Avoid those with soft spots or bruising, as well as those that are discolored or have other signs of deterioration.  
Store — at room temperature.

**Sugar Cane**

Best When — stalks are firm, hard and free of deformity or signs of deterioration.  
Store — in a cool, dry place.

**Sweet Potatoes and Yams** *Ethylene-sensitive*

Best When — small to medium sized, tapering at both ends. Should be plump, firm and well shaped with smooth skin and an even color. Avoid those with bruises, growth cracks and damp areas, as well as those that are discolored, shriveled or have any signs of sprouting. Handle carefully as they can bruise easily.  
Store — in a dark, humid place. Do not refrigerate. Can be kept for a week or two.

**Tamarillo** *(Tree Tomato)*

Best When — skin is clear and reddish-purple; feels firm and heavy for its size. Avoid those with bruises or soft spots.  
Store — ripen at room temperature and then refrigerate, wrapped tightly in a plastic bag, for up to ten days.  
Additional Notes — can be eaten fresh or cooked in both sweet and savory dishes. Sugar reduces its tartness and enhances its flavor.

**Taro Root** *(Dasheen)*

Best When — root is firm, plump and crisp. Avoid those with bruises, moisture, shrivel, mold or sprouts.  
Store — refrigerated in a plastic bag up to four days.  
Additional Notes — the color of taro root can range from green to purple to violet when cooked. The richness of the color is directly proportional to the richness of its nut-like flavor. It is a main ingredient in Hawaiian Poi.
Tofu (Soybean Curd)
Best When — firm and fresh looking with a creamy color.
Store — refrigerated.

Tomatillo
Best When — husks are dry, clean and bright green to yellow colored. Avoid those that are bruised or have other signs of decay.
Store — refrigerated.

Tomatoes
(See Tomatoes in Fruit section)

Topepos
Best When — skin is smooth and firm with a rich, even color. Avoid any with obvious signs of deterioration.
Store — refrigerated.
Additional Notes — a Topepo is a cross between a sweet pepper and a tomato.

Truffles
Best When — light in color, fresh looking and cool to the touch. Remember, they are naturally less evenly shaped than many mushroom varieties.
Store — refrigerated but NOT in a plastic bag. Do not wash until ready to use. Cover with a damp towel to maintain moisture.

Turnips
(See Rutabagas)

Vegetable Marrow (Chinese Squash, Marrow Squash)
Best When — young and tender looking with glossy skin. Avoid those with bruises or pronounced blemish.
Store — refrigerated.

Verdolaga (Purslane, Fatweed)
Best When — leaves are small and green with crisp, fresh-looking, pliable stems. Avoid those with wilted or scarred leaves.
Store — refrigerated.

Wasabi root
Best When — firm, plump and fresh looking without signs of decay. Avoid dry, shriveled roots with any soft spots. Leaf sprouting is not ideal, but limited sprouting is acceptable as long as the root is firm. Remember, roots naturally appear gnarled and warty.
Store — refrigerated and use within a few days.

Water Chestnut (Chinese Water Chestnut, Waternut)
Best When — fresh looking and crisp. Avoid those that are shriveled and dry looking.
Store — in a non-water-tight jar.

Watercress Ethylene-sensitive
Best When — bunches look fresh, bright and clean. Avoid those with wilted or discolored leaves.
Store — refrigerated in a plastic bag. Sort out any bad sprigs before storing.

Winter Melon
Best When — rind is clear and fresh looking with finely textured meat.
Store — refrigerated.
Additional Notes — winter melon has a taste reminiscent of zucchini and is popular in Asian stir-fries and soups.

Yucca root (Manioc, Cassava, Casava)
Best When — root is clean with a creamy-colored center. Should be free from blemish or other signs of deterioration.
Store — refrigerated.
Selection and storage information, courtesy of USA Pears.