



PARTNER PRODUCE SAFETY HANDOUT



KEEP FRESH PRODUCE SAFE FOR EVERYONE!



Fresh fruits and vegetables are healthy and important for our communities. They can sometimes carry harmful germs or parasites that can make people sick. Washing produce the right way **helps reduce the risk of illness**, but no home washing method can remove every germ if the produce was contaminated before it reached you.



DO Follow These Steps!



Wash your hands with soap and water for at least **20 seconds** before and after handling produce.



Rinse produce under **cool**, running water.



Rub produce **gently** while rinsing. For firm produce, use a clean produce brush.



Remove outer leaves from lettuce or cabbage before washing.



Dry with a clean paper towel or cloth towel if needed.



Wash produce just before eating or preparing – not before storing.



DON'T Avoid These Mistakes!



Do not wash produce with soap or dish detergent.



Do not use bleach or household cleaners.



Don't rely on vinegar or baking soda to remove parasites. They are not proven to kill *Cyclospora*.



Don't wash produce until you're ready to use it.



Don't distribute or eat produce that has been recalled.



DID YOU KNOW?



The CDC is investigating outbreaks of *Cyclospora*, a parasite that can cause severe diarrhea, bloating, and stomach cramps. It spreads through contaminated fresh produce.



Who is at Higher Risk?

Young children, older adults, pregnant people, and those with weak immune systems.



WHEN IN DOUBT, THROW IT OUT!

If produce looks spoiled, smells bad, or is part of a recall, do not distribute or eat it.



COOK VEGETABLES SAFELY

Cooking is another way to lower your risk of illness.



Cook vegetables until they are steaming hot all the way through.



For extra safety—especially during an outbreak—cook vegetables to **165°F (74°C)** throughout. This can help destroy parasites like *Cyclospora*.

GOOD COOKING METHODS



STEAM



BOIL



ROAST



SAUTÉ



MICROWAVE

Fresh vegetables do not have an official USDA required internal cooking temperature. Cook for quality and safety.



SAFE PRODUCE STORAGE



Refrigerate fresh produce within 2 hours.



Keep your refrigerator at **40°F (4°C)** or below.



Keep fruits and vegetables separate from raw meat, poultry, and seafood.



Store produce in clean, perforated bags or containers to allow airflow.



PARTNER REMINDERS

- ✓ Store produce properly (see above).
- ✓ Prevent cross-contamination.

- ✓ Check for recalls regularly.
- ✓ When in doubt, keep it out!



Safe produce
= Healthy
communities!