



Written by:  
Joyce McGarry, Extension Educator

# Safe Handling of Fresh Fruits and Vegetables



## Check:

- Never buy damaged or bruised fresh fruits and vegetables.
- Only buy cut fruits and vegetables, such as packaged salads and pre-cut melons, that are refrigerated.

## Clean:

- Wash hands with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds before and after handling fresh fruits and vegetables.
- Wash all surfaces and utensils, such as cutting boards, counter tops or knives, with hot water and soap before and after preparing fresh fruits and vegetables.
- Rinse all fresh fruits and vegetables under running tap water, including those with skins and rinds that you will not be eating.
- While rinsing under running tap water, rub or scrub firm-skinned fruits and vegetables with a clean vegetable brush.
- Never use detergent or bleach to wash fresh fruits or vegetables since these products are not consumable.



## Separate:

- When shopping, separate fresh fruits and vegetables from household chemicals and raw foods, such as meat, poultry and seafood.
- Store fresh fruits and vegetables separately from raw meat, poultry or seafood in the refrigerator.
- Always wash kitchen utensils and cutting boards with hot soapy water between preparation of fresh fruits and vegetables and raw meats, poultry and seafood.

## Cook:

- Remove and throw away bruised or damaged portions of fruits and vegetables before cooking or eating raw.
- Throw away any fruit or vegetable that will not be cooked if it has touched raw meat, poultry or seafood.

## Chill:

- Refrigerate all cut, peeled or cooked fresh fruits and vegetables within two hours of preparation.

## Throw Away:

- Throw away fresh cut-up, peeled or cooked fruits and vegetables that have not been refrigerated within two hours.

Find out more about Michigan Fresh at  
[msue.anr.msu.edu/program/info/mi\\_fresh](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/program/info/mi_fresh).



Adapted from Partnership for Food Safety Education. (2004). *FightBac! Six steps to safer fruits and vegetables*. Retrieved from [www.fightbac.org](http://www.fightbac.org).

Lawn or garden questions?

Visit [migarden.msu.edu](http://migarden.msu.edu).  
Call toll-free 1-888-678-3464.

MSU is an affirmative-action, equal-opportunity employer, committed to achieving excellence through a diverse workforce and inclusive culture that encourages all people to reach their full potential. Michigan State University Extension programs and materials are open to all without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, religion, age, height, weight, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital status, family status or veteran status. Issued in furtherance of MSU Extension work, acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Jeffrey W. Dwyer, Director, MSU Extension, East Lansing, MI 48824. This information is for educational purposes only. Reference to commercial products or trade names does not imply endorsement by MSU Extension or bias against those not mentioned. WCAG 2.0