

## Tips for Receiving, Storing, and Preparation

### ***Receiving Tips***

- If the product does not meet your standards of freshness, refuse to accept it.
- Check that refrigerated items arrive at proper temperatures.
- Mark each item with the date it was received and note the “best if used by” date.
- Check degree of ripeness of produce.

### ***Storing Tips:***

- Follow “First-in and First-out” rule for storing produce.
- Store produce with “best if used by” date visible.
- Allow sufficient space between and around items for air circulation.
- Produce requiring the lowest temperature is stored in the back and on the lowest shelf.
- Separate ethylene-producing fruits and vegetables from ethylene-sensitive produce.
- Record refrigerator temperatures at least twice a day.
- Store refrigerated produce between 32-36°F with a relative humidity between 85-95%.
- Stone fruits, avocados, melons, kiwifruit, tomatoes, and pears will not ripen in a refrigerator.

### ***Preparation Tips:***

- Check for ripeness and determine readiness to serve.
- Discard any wilted or discolored product.
- Cut produce in the appropriate size for your students.
- For fruits that discolor, dip in orange or diluted lemon juice.
- Use work simplification techniques:
  - Use carts to move produce.
  - Set up work stations with everything in arm’s reach.
- Don’t forget to compost!