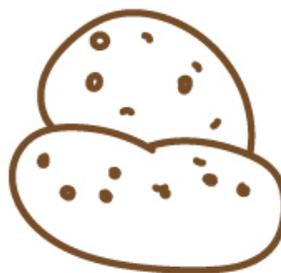
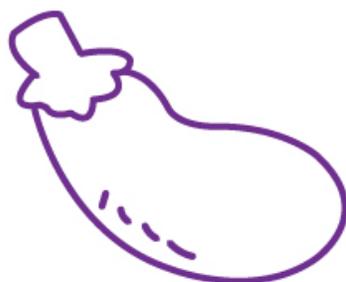
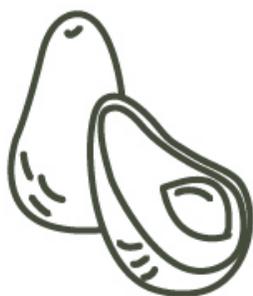


Stretching your supply between grocery visits: WHICH PRODUCE LASTS LONGEST?



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PRODUCE — FROM QUICKEST TO LONGEST TO SPOIL



When frequent trips to the grocery store are not ideal, shoppers might want to focus on produce that lasts the longest, and the chart on produce ripening from the LSU AgCenter can help.

However, proper storage and freezing can help lengthen the life of fresh fruits and vegetables that are quicker to spoil.

“A lot of fresh produce lasts a long time if stored properly,” said Sandra May, LSU AgCenter registered dietician in the School of Nutrition and Food Sciences. “When people buy fresh foods, in general, they usually eat them in the first week, but things like apples and carrots can last a long time in the crisper.”

It’s important to understand that storing certain foods together can hasten spoiling, she said. For example, some fruits and vegetables, such as apples and avocados, give off ethylene gas when they ripen, which can affect nearby foods.

May recommends buying fruits and vegetables in different stages of ripeness to avoid repetition.

“When you purchase fresh fruit, you may not want to eat four nectarines four days in a row, so you can buy some that are a little firmer and have no bruises and eat the riper ones first,” she said.

Another tip is to buy unripe fruits and vegetables to stretch their lifespan in the kitchen.

“Bananas can last about a week if you buy them green, even though they ripen very quickly,” May said. “This also applies to things like avocados.”

However, if foods are reaching the point of no return, May suggests freezing them.

“Once you see foods start deteriorating a little bit, it might be time to cut them up and put them in the freezer in an airtight container,” she said.

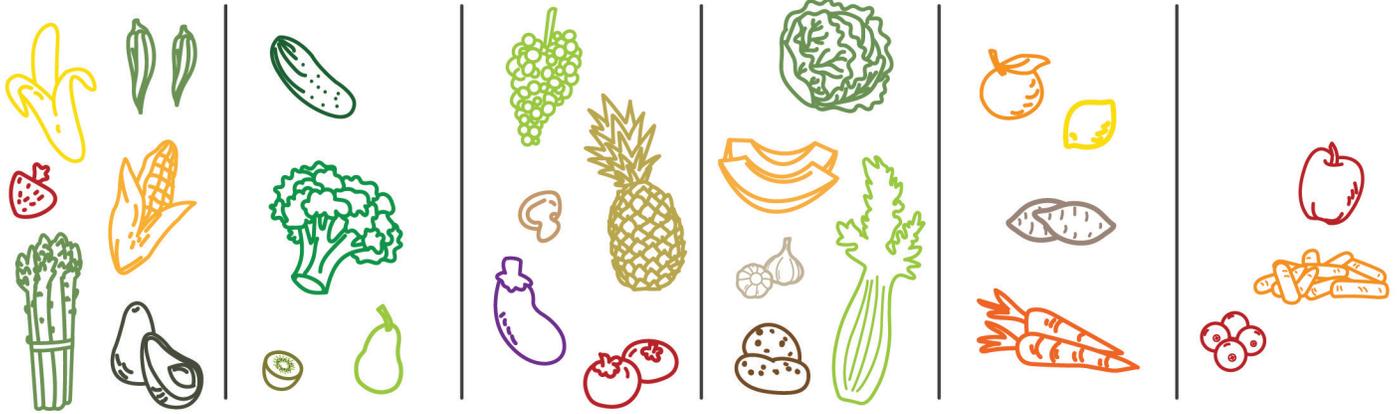
May said fruits such as strawberries and grapes can make a tasty frozen treat as is or chopped. Other foods, however, require special preparation to maintain freshness when freezing.

“Some things, like broccoli and cauliflower, need to be blanched before freezing — basically steam or dip them in boiling water for a couple of minutes and let them cool in an ice bath — that way they’re not limp and come out looking as fresh as when you cooked them.”

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PRODUCE — FROM QUICKEST TO LONGEST TO SPOIL

*All foods stored in refrigerator unless otherwise noted.



**AROUND
3 DAYS**

**AROUND
5 DAYS**

**AROUND
7 DAYS**

**2 WEEKS
OR LESS**

**3 WEEKS
OR LESS**

**4 TO 8
WEEKS**

Corn on the cob
Greens
Strawberries
Okra
Bananas
Honeydew
Watermelon
Asparagus
Avocados (after ripe)
Blackberries
Raspberries

Peaches
Nectarines
Plums
Pears
Broccoli
Cauliflower
Kale
Cherry tomatoes
Kiwi
Cucumbers
Apricots
Summer squash

Eggplant
Mushrooms
Cherries
Tomatoes (on
countertop after ripe)
Grapes
Zucchini
Green onions
Pineapple
Blueberries

Cabbage
Celery
Potatoes
Garlic
Cantaloupe

Carrots
Sweet potatoes
(on counter)
Citrus

Baby carrots
Apples
Cranberries



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