

Don't do these things when buying vegetables and fruits.

Here are some common mistakes people make when buying vegetables and fruits at stores or farmers' markets.

Buying produce is now really easy, but if fruits or vegetables are not stored properly or sold out of season, it can affect their taste and quality.



By paying attention to a few things, the vegetables and fruits you buy will be safer and fresher, and you'll also avoid wasting money on spoiled produce. **Below are some common mistakes people make when buying vegetables and fruits at stores or farmers' markets.**

Agricultural products are stored at room temperature.

Do not buy any pre-cut produce that is not refrigerated. The FDA advises: "*When buying pre-cut, packaged produce—such as half a watermelon or bagged lettuce—only choose products that are refrigerated or have ice packs .*"

The product is damaged.

Bruised fruits and vegetables clearly affect not only their appearance but also their quality. This creates an ideal environment for bacteria to hide and spread rapidly throughout the produce. Furthermore, spoiled produce is less nutritious and harder to eat.



Do not separate the food items.

Cross-contamination can occur even before you leave the store, so ensure food is securely packaged and kept away from meat. The FDA recommends: "*Pack fresh fruits and vegetables separately from raw meat, poultry, and seafood when bringing them home from the market .*"

Buy out-of-season produce.

Pay attention to which fruits and vegetables are in season at your local market. Remember, not all fresh produce is available year-round. Selling some produce out of season incurs significant transportation costs for retailers, which are passed on to consumers as higher food prices. Seasonal fruits and vegetables are generally of higher quality and more affordable.



Packaged fruits and vegetables

Always check prices, as pre-packaged produce can be much more expensive than buying fresh at the store. Compare the prices of loose produce and pre-packaged produce. Compared to pre-packaged options, buying loose, whole produce is often more economical. Choosing your own produce also allows you to select higher-quality fruits and vegetables.

Speaking of packaged produce, be extremely wary of packaged salads due to the high risk of E. coli contamination. While consumers expect convenience and safety, the reality is that packaged, washed greens remain one of the most dangerous items in the grocery store due to the risk of contamination throughout the entire supply chain.

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