

Fruit and vegetable – Postharvest Handling Tips

fact sheet

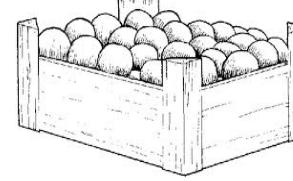
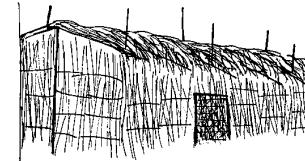
Food can spoil due to the effects of:

1. Bacteria, fungi and molds,
2. Pests such as Insects and rodents, and
3. Plant enzymes

What can you do?

The keys to good storage are to

1. Start with a healthy product,
 - a. Choose healthy produce,
 - b. protect the product, and
 - c. reduce physical damage
2. Reduce product temperature and moisture content.

Step	Options	Example
Harvest	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Harvest early in the morning or late at night• Harvest fruit when mature but not ripe• Use harvest bags	
Handling	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Minimize handling the fruit• Handle fruit gently• Place harvested fruit on mats	 <p>Use stackable containers with ventilation</p>
Sorting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Remove moldy, cut, bruised or damaged fruit• Sort in a shaded area in the field	
Packing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Package in ventilated crates• Package in trays - single layer• Cushion multilayer with vegetation	
Grading	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grade (size and color) for different buyers	
Storing and cooling	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Store in dry cool place – indoors, shade• Cool with evaporative cooling or underground	 <p>e.g., Straw house with evaporative cooling</p>



Keep produce cool (in the shade), even if displayed in the open air.

For more information visit: International Programs: <http://ip.ucdavis.edu>

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