

Produce Handling Checklists - Keep it Fresh



Restaurant Level Receiving Tips

- Check for Avendra Approved Grower Shipper labels/brand for high risk items.
- Put away orders immediately to maintain the cold chain. A 5 degree change in temperature could result in substantial change in quality and shelf life.
- Check to confirm that you received the specific items ordered by product type, variety, size and quantity.
- Check to confirm that you received the desired quality and the right stage of ripeness, firmness and overall freshness
- Remove any damaged or decayed product before storing.
- If an available product does not meet these standards, do you have a desired substitution?

Restaurant Level Cold Box Design and Dry Storage Tips

- Keep the storage area hygienic; have a program of periodic maintenance and housekeeping.
- Throw away any old products to protect new products.
- Have a storage area for empty boxes and cartons.
- Use flaps on cold room door to reduce temperature fluctuations.
- Use storage racks or stackable containers to minimize damage to products.
- Use a thermometer and check the temperature variations in the storage room.
- Store the most cold temperature-demanding products in front of the cold air stream.
- Use paper over-wraps or covers to protect sensitive products from too cold air.
- Control water loss by plastic films (polyethylene bags with holes) rather than with water; microorganisms love moisture!
Use ethylene absorbent if cold box temperature is more than 41 °F (5 °C).
- For dry storage, avoid light and temperature fluctuations; have adequate air movement.

Restaurant Level Produce Preparation Tips

- Let ripe fruits reach room temperature to improve flavor.
- If fruits need further ripening, ripen at 60-70 °F to obtain best firmness and flavor quality.
- Refresh/rehydrate leafy vegetables with misting or dipping in clean water.
- If using a product with some decay, make sure flavor is not tainted after you remove the decay.