

# Chapter 4 Shopping & Storing

## Fresh and Safe All the Way

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### 4.1 Keep food safety in mind when shopping for food

**1. Place non-perishable items in the shopping cart first and then place refrigerator and freezer foods in the shopping cart last.**

- Place raw meat, poultry, and seafood in separate bags from other foods in your shopping cart and grocery bag. This prevents raw juices from leaking onto other foods to decrease cross contamination.

**2. Fresh food carriers and containers.**

- Bring reusable ice packs and a cooler to transport perishable food on the way home from the market.



- Use only food grade containers to pack lunch to school or work. Look for plastic containers that are BPA free, stainless steel, or food grade silicone containers.

**4.2 How to buy fresh and safe food.**

1. Buy canned food and jars that are **intact** and safe. Do not buy canned food or jars that have any of the following characteristics: dent, leak, bulge, rust, crack, loose or bulging lids.
2. Check the bulk bin aisle for a more economical price on grains, seeds, and nuts.
3. Do not buy food containers or packages that have the outer seal or wrapper torn or missing.
4. Buy fruits and vegetables that have intact skin and a pleasant aroma. Do not buy fruits and vegetables that have bruises, damage, or mold.
5. Buy fish that has shiny and firm skin, bright, clear, bulging eyes, bright red gills, and the odor of fresh clean ocean. Do not buy fish that has hole in the skin, flesh separating from the bone, dull eyes, milky liquid, or a “smelly fishy” odor.



*Bright, clear, bulging eyes*



*Bright red gill*

6. Buy seafood that is packaged tightly and/or on ice.
7. Buy meat or poultry that is fresh, cold, and packaged tightly. Raw meat should have a natural bright red color. Raw poultry should have a natural poultry flesh color. Do not buy meat and poultry that is past the “sell by” or “expiration date.” Do not buy raw meat or poultry that is very brown, gray, or has a foul odor as that indicates the protein has begun to oxidize and turn bad.
8. Buy packaged meats that have the Safe Food Handling label.
9. Buy eggs that are clean and intact. Open the carton to check if any eggs are cracked.
10. Buy milk, cheese, and yogurt before the “use by” or “sell by” date.
11. Buy tofu before the “use by” or “sell by” date.

### 4.3. Farmers market, Chinatown markets, Supermarkets, Big box stores

#### 1. Farmers market

- Great place to buy local foods in season for a great price.
- Hawaii farmers grow and provide a variety of fresh fruits, vegetables, meat, seafood, and cheese. Vendors also offer a variety of local style condiments, dressings, seasonings, dishes, and pupus.
- Local means fresh and nutritious.
- Get there early for the best selection.
- Get to know your local farmer - ask farmers and vendors how to prepare and cook the food if you are not familiar with it.
- Support local businesses.

#### 2. Chinatown markets

- Great place to buy produce, meat, poultry, and seafood at a reasonable cost.
- Great place to buy Asian cooking equipment, sauces, and seasonings.

#### 3. Supermarkets

- Take advantage of specials, sales, and coupons when planning your menu.
- Check the local section in the grocery store for fresh seasonal foods.
- Buy what you can use and eat within a week.

#### 4. Big box stores

- Great place to buy essentials like stocks, broths, wine for cooking, canned food, bread, eggs, milk, yogurt, cheese, nuts, frozen fruits and vegetables, and frozen shrimp.

- Food comes in large quantities. Keep the value of the money spent. Use what you can within a week and freeze foods (meat, poultry, bread, nuts, etc.) to use later.

#### 4.4 Keep food safe on the way home.

1. On your way home, **place groceries in the back seat** instead of the trunk. Temperatures in the trunk can reach over 90 °F allowing harmful bacteria to multiply rapidly.
2. If it will take longer than an hour to get home, **place your perishable food in a cooler.**
3. When you get home, place the perishable food items in the refrigerator or freezer as soon as possible.

#### 4.5 Storing and keeping food safe at home

##### 1. Perishable foods should be kept at a safe temperature

- Meat, poultry, seafood, dairy, and eggs are most perishable.
- Perishable foods should be stored at or below 40° F. – that is the temperature your refrigerator should be kept at.
- Freezer foods should be stored at or below 0° F.
- Perishable food should not be left at room temperature for longer than 2 hours, including:
  - time spent in your shopping cart all the way until it reaches the refrigerator or freezer at home
  - time spent on the counter before and after cooking
- Once food reaches the temperature danger zone between 40° F – 140° F, harmful bacteria can multiply and result in a **foodborne illness**.

***A Foodborne Illness is an illness that results from eating food that is unsafe or has been contaminated. Symptoms of foodborne illness include nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, fever, and fatigue and can occur between 1 hour and up to 3 weeks after eating unsafe food.***

**2. Store canned and other non-perishable foods in a cool, dry place.**

- Use high-acid canned foods (i.e. tomatoes, fruits) within 18 months.
- Use low-acid canned foods (meat, vegetables) within 2-5 years.
- Check the “best buy” or “use by” date on the can or container. The date refers to the best time to eat the food or food product for optimal quality, texture, color, or flavor.

**3. When in doubt, throw it out.**

- Remember if any canned or jar foods show any unsafe signs (dent, leak, bulge, rust, cracked, loose or bulging lids) or has a foul odor, spurts out liquid, or foams when opening then throw it out.
- Do not taste food to check if the food is safe since some harmful bacteria, parasites, and viruses are tasteless.
- Eating even a small amount of food that is unsafe can result in sickness and even death.

**4. Store fruits and vegetables in the refrigerator crisper drawer to maintain freshness.**

- Allow these fruits to **ripen at room temperature** before refrigerating: avocado, banana, cantaloupe, honeydew melon, kiwi, mango, papaya, nectarines, papaya, passion fruit, peach, pear, persimmon, pineapple, star fruit
- Store these fruits **in the refrigerator** right away as these fruits will not ripen after harvested: apple, blackberry, blueberry, cherry, grape, grapefruit, lemon, lime, litchi, orange, pomegranate, raspberry, strawberry, tangerine, watermelon
- **Thoroughly wash all fruits and vegetables right before you use them.** Do not wash berries and then store in the refrigerator as they will become moldy quickly.
- Wash herbs and package them with a paper towel in a plastic bag to help maintain freshness and make it readily available when you need it.
- Some plastic containers have a “corrugated” bottom to allow moisture and liquids to drip on the bottom of the container instead of soaking and deteriorating the produce. This increases the shelf life of produce in the refrigerator.



**5. Store meat, poultry, and seafood on the bottom shelf and coldest part of the refrigerator.**

- This helps to prevent any raw juices from leaking onto other foods and keep the temperature of these protein foods at or below 40° F.

**6. Store eggs in the coldest part of the refrigerator to help maintain temperature at or below 40 degrees Fahrenheit.**

- Eggs are very porous and can quickly lose moisture and absorb other flavors in the refrigerator.
- Keep eggs in the original carton to decrease moisture loss and absorption of other flavors in the refrigerator.
- Keep eggs in the original position (pointed end down) to help protect the air compartment in the shell.