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Store Veggies Properly

During the growing and harvesting season, use fresh vegetables as much as possible. The added cleaning, cutting and cooking time is a small price to pay for the extra flavor and goodness. Minnesota Extension Nutritionist Mary Darling says store vegetables properly to maintain garden freshness. Even with ideal storage conditions, most fresh vegetables retain top quality only for a few days. So plan to use them properly.

Green, leafy vegetables wilt quickly and change flavor as water evaporates. Corn, beans and peas lose sweetness within several hours as the sugar converts to starch. Green beans fresh from the garden are a special treat and when available you should not miss the opportunity to enjoy their sweet flavor.

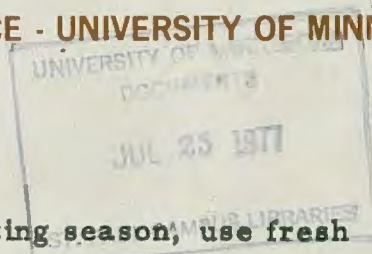
Most fresh green vegetables keep well and stay crisp if put in covered containers or plastic bags and stored in the refrigerator. If you wash lettuce, celery and other leafy vegetables before storing, drain thoroughly because too much water hastens decay. Remove the tops from beets, carrots and radishes before storing.

Store corn unhusked and uncovered in refrigerator for one or two days.
Store green peas uncovered in refrigerator for one or two days.

Cauliflower, celery, cucumbers, green or wax beans, and peppers should be stored in plastic bags or crisper of refrigerator. Use within one week. Beets, cabbage, carrots, parsnips and radishes can be stored in plastic bags or crisper of refrigerator and used within two weeks.

Store ripe tomatoes uncovered in the refrigerator. Keep unripe tomatoes at room temperature away from direct sunlight until ripe and then refrigerate.

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