Fruits and vegetables are still breathing even after they’ve been pulled out of the earth or off the tree or vine. In general, warmth speeds up respiration and cold slows it down—that’s why refrigeration makes some foods last longer.

1. Take produce out of plastic bags. Airtight wrappings suffocate fresh produce and speed up the decay process.
2. Don’t wash produce until you’re ready to eat it. Moisture encourages decomposition and mould growth.
3. Don’t rip off fruit stems. Once living cells are broken, microorganisms start to grow. Keep produce whole as long as possible.
4. Eat the most perishable items first—raspberries last a few days; potatoes can hang around for about a month.
5. Seep up the ripening process by putting the item (a peach, for example) in a paper bag with a banana.

In the average Canadian household, one in four produce items gets thrown in the garbage. That’s like throwing away $600 a year! By sharpening your food storage skills, you’ll save both food and money.

**Did you know?**

All fruits and veggies give off ethylene, a colourless, odourless, gaseous hormone that, among other things, stimulates ripening.

**REORGANIZE YOUR CRISPER**

Some produce is cold-sensitive, so refrigeration accelerates spoilage. Once a cold-sensitive gas-emitter (e.g. banana or avocado) is ripe, it can be refrigerated, but only for a little while.

**REFRIGERATOR**

**Drawer 1**

- Apples
- Apricots
- Cantaloupes
- Figs
- Honeydews

**Drawer 2**

- Bananas (ripe)
- Broccoli
- Brussel sprouts
- Cabbages
- Carrots
- Cauliflower
- Cucumbers
- Eggplants
- Kiwis
- Leafy greens
- Parsley
- Peas
- Peppers
- Summer squash
- Sweet potatoes
- Watermelons

**Bowl on the counter**

- Avocados
- Bananas (unripe)
- Nectarines
- Peaches
- Pears
- Plums
- Tomatoes

**Keep in the cupboard**

- Garlic
- Onions
- Potatoes
- Winter squash

For more information, go to queenofgreen.ca.