

An Introduction to Working in the Produce Aisle

1) IDENTIFICATION:

Be sure of the identity of each item before you place it on the shelf. The produce must match the shelf sign and be placed below that sign. This ensures that:

- Organic and non-organic do not get mixed up or touch each other.
- Similar items are not confused (for example, white or Yukon potatoes, Spartan or Cortland apples, tangelos or oranges, etc.)
- Produce is displayed with appropriate temperature and humidity.

2) DISPLAYING PRODUCE:

Make it look nice. Handle with care.

Produce sold from boxes: Neatly cut off lids. When possible, mound the produce instead of stacking boxes, displaying more produce and less cardboard.

Produce delivered on trays in boxes: Discard the box and stack the trays (except for items in the deeper lower bins).

Long vegetables: Display parallel to aisle, allowing entire item to be seen. Lettuces and other greens look pretty standing up, but it is hard for shoppers to find where one head ends and another begins. There are exceptions. Where a particular part is chiefly used, have that part be displayed most prominently, facing the shopper. Some examples are: Bunched root vegetables and leeks, have the root face the shopper. For fennel, have the bulb face the shopper.

Basil: Display with roots facing shopper, so that shopper may easily remove the bunch from the display box. Shake excess soil, if any, into compost first.

3) ROTATION:

Place new produce behind, or beneath current display. If new produce is riper than what is currently displayed, as occasionally happens

with tomatoes, bananas, or other items, do not rotate. All items, even potatoes, onions, etc. need to be rotated.

4) TRIMMING AND CULLING:

Trimming: Do not use knives to trim greens in our very busy produce aisle. You should still remove wilted or yellow leaves as you display them. Pluck an occasional yellow stem from the parsley, or yellow leaf from the radishes. Remove broken bits from the broccoli bins. Discard all loose lettuce leaves. These removed leaves and bits should be composted.



Culling: Remove significantly bruised or wilted fruits and vegetables from display. This can be tricky, since quality is in the eye of the beholder. You do not want to prevent good food from being restocked because bruised or wilted produce is crowding the display, but on the other hand, you do not want to "give away the store". Consult with staff or other squad workers if you are unsure.

5) SOUP KITCHEN AND COMPOST

Soup kitchen: If you would not buy an item, but would eat it if you already owned it, you should pack it in a banana box for the soup kitchen. The soup kitchens cannot use the trimmings from greens, but can accept unsellable heads of lettuce or bunches of greens. If you bag them first, you may give the soup kitchen, good, but no longer bunched greens, such as kale leaves from broken bunches. Let's be user friendly. Do not include items that may ruin the items around them, such as over-ripe tomatoes or loose strawberries. Small items, such as mushrooms, beans, or bits of ginger, should be bagged first. Pack the items thoughtfully. Separately pack the over-ripe bananas and store them unrefrigerated in the basement. Otherwise refrigerate the

soup kitchen boxes as frequently as possible.

Compost: Consists of inedible produce only. (No grains, bread, or eggs.) We don't want any compost given to the soup kitchen, but don't compost good food either. Unsure? Get a second opinion from staff or other members. Use gray plastic buckets and cover them with lids. The lids are marked either "R", or "W" and fit buckets labeled "R" or "W". Put fully loaded buckets in back yard, and bring an empty bucket with lid to area marked for it in receiving area. Compost buckets in the backyard should be fully sealed.

6) ORGANIC INTEGRITY:

Our displays are designed to prevent organic and conventional items from touching. Our displays prevent the melting ice and misting water on conventional produce from dripping onto the organic. To ensure the maintenance of this integrity, be absolutely certain not to mix organic and conventional items together. The food, the boxes, labels, twist ties and shelf signs are all there to guide you. Be absolutely certain, or do not unpack the item. Ask for support if needed.

If you cause or encounter an error, get advice on which of these options to follow:

a) Remove twist tie or label from organic item and sell it as conventional, if we are currently selling both.

b) Give compromised organic item to the soup kitchen.

c) Remove food to the basement produce cooler. Put in a carefully labeled box for staff to decide on option "a" or "b", and leave a note on the box. We will choose to lose money and not integrity. This is not just a good idea, it's also the law.

