

Quick Tips

- » Head to the Farmers' Markets early to avoid produce that has been sitting out all day long.
- » Buy loose produce rather than packaged; you will have more control over what you select.
- » Bag fresh produce separately from meat, poultry and seafood products.
- » Be sure to ask whether the juice has been pasteurized or processed to kill bacteria.
- » Buy only refrigerated eggs.
- » Refrigerate foods promptly.
- » Always look for the Safe Food Handling label on meat packages.
- » Wash fruits and vegetables thoroughly under running water just before eating.
- » When in doubt, **ask**.

Contact Information

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Additional information on Farmers' Markets can be found at: <http://www.foodsafety.gov>

To find a Farmers' Market near you:
<http://search.ams.usda.gov/farmersmarkets/Default.aspx>



Farmers' Markets Food Safety Tips

*U.S. Army Public Health Command
Veterinary Service Soldiers proudly support
the Healthy Base Initiative by providing food
safety oversight to installation-sponsored
Farmers' Markets.*

Farmers' Markets

On-installation Farmers' Markets are inspected by U.S. Army Public Health Command (USAPHC) Veterinary Service Soldiers. Farmers' Markets off installation may have their own food safety rules and must comply with government regulations as well.

These food safety tips apply to all Farmers' Markets whether on- or off-installation. These tips are basic guidelines that consumers should follow to ensure the farm-fresh food is safe.



Produce Safety

Buying Tips:

- » Head to the Farmers' Market early to avoid produce that has been sitting out all day long.
- » Buy loose produce rather than packaged; you will have more control over what you select.
- » Do not purchase produce with mold, bruises or cuts.
- » Bag fresh produce separately from meat, poultry and seafood products.
- » Buy only the amount of produce you will use within a week.
- » Wash your hands before and after handling fresh produce.
- » When selecting fresh-cut produce choose items that are refrigerated or surrounded by ice.

Storing Tips:

- » Refrigerate fresh produce within 2 hours of cutting or peeling.
- » Refrigerate all produce that is purchased pre-cut or peeled.
- » Promptly store all fresh produce that needs refrigeration.

Preparation Tips:

- » Wash fruits and vegetables thoroughly under running water just before eating, cutting or cooking. Scrub firm produce, such as melons and cucumbers, with a clean produce brush.

- » Washing fruits and vegetables with soap or detergent or using commercial produce washes is NOT recommended.
- » Dry fresh produce with a clean cloth or paper towel after washing to further reduce bacteria that may be present.
- » Even if you plan to peel produce before eating, it is important to wash it first. Any bacteria present on the outside of the produce can be transferred to the inside when you cut or peel the item.
- » Cook raw sprouts to significantly reduce the risk of a foodborne illness.
- » Do not use the same cutting board for raw meats and produce to avoid cross-contamination.
- » Cut away all damaged or bruised areas before preparing or eating. Remove outer leaves of lettuce.

Juices and Cider Safety Most juices sold in the United States are pasteurized (heat-treated) to kill harmful bacteria. Check the label to ensure juice or cider has been pasteurized or processed to kill bacteria. Untreated juice or ciders are required to carry the following warning label: *Warning: This product has not been pasteurized and therefore may contain harmful bacteria that can cause serious illness in children, the elderly, and persons with weakened immune systems.*

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) does not require this warning label for juice or cider that is fresh-squeezed and sold by the glass at orchards, Farmers' Markets, roadside stands, or in some restaurants or juice bars. If you stop at a roadside stand or farmers' market where samples of cider or apple juice are

available, be sure to ask whether the juice has been pasteurized.

Buying Tips:

- » Look for warning labels.
- » When in doubt, **ask**.

Milk and Cheese Safety

Only buy pasteurized milk and cheese. When in doubt, ask.

- » Go directly home from the market and refrigerate your purchases as soon as possible. If traveling longer than 30 minutes, place your dairy products in a cooler with ice.
- » Examine containers for leaks or other damage.
- » Ensure products are cold when you select them.
- » Check "sell by" dates. The "sell by" date is the last date a product should be offered for sale. This date allows you a reasonable length of time to use the food at home. Some products may also include "best if used by" information. This is the last day the manufacturer expects the product to be good to eat or drink.
- » Due to potentially harmful bacteria, the FDA advises pregnant women, the elderly, and people with weakened immune systems to refrain from eating soft cheeses such as Feta, Brie, Camembert, Blue-veined, and Mexican-style cheeses.

Egg Safety

Buy only refrigerated eggs and keep them refrigerated. Go directly home from the market and refrigerate your purchases as soon as possible. If

traveling longer than 30 minutes, place your eggs in a cooler with ice.

Make sure the eggs are clean and the shells are not cracked.

Meat Safety

Buying Tips:

- » Always look for the Safe Food Handling label on packages. The label indicates that the meat has been processed safely and will give you tips for proper food handling and cooking.
- » Make sure the meat is tightly wrapped.
- » Pick up the meat last and ask to have it bagged separately from other groceries.
- » Make sure that the meat is properly chilled at the market. Meat should be kept in closed coolers with adequate amounts of ice to maintain cool temperatures.

Be sure to keep meat separate from your other purchases so that the juices from raw meat (which may contain harmful bacteria) do not come in contact with produce and other foods.

Honey Safety

Honey isn't safe for children less than a year old. It can contain the *Clostridium botulinum* organism that could cause serious illness or death.

