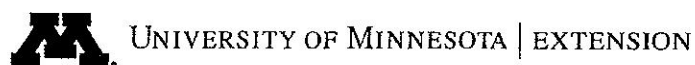


Vegetable	What to look for	How to store
Jicama	Firm, well formed tubers, free of blemishes. Size does not affect flavor, but larger roots do tend to have a coarse texture.	Like most other root crops, jicama will store for relatively long periods of time in the refrigerator. However, conversion of starch to sugar will result if stored for excessive periods and should be avoided.
Mushrooms	Fresh mushrooms should be firm, fresh and plump and have no bruises. Size is a matter of preference. Avoid spotted or slimy mushrooms.	Store fresh mushrooms, unwashed, in the refrigerator for up to 2 days. A paper bag or damp cloth bag lets them breathe so they stay firmer longer.
Onions	Green onions with crisp, bright green tops and clean, white bottoms. Choose firm, dry onions with brittle outer skin, avoiding those with sprouting green shoots or dark spots.	Keep dry onions in a cool, dry, well-ventilated place for up to several months (shallots for up to 1 month). Fresh green onions and leeks should be tightly wrapped and refrigerated up to 5 days.
Peas/Pea pods	Small, plump, bright green pods that are firm, crisp and well filled. Avoid shriveled pods or those with brown spots.	Store, tightly wrapped, in refrigerator for 2 to 3 days.
Peppers	Fresh peppers, whether sweet or hot, should have bright color and good shape for the variety. Should be relatively heavy with firm walls. Avoid shriveled, bruised or broken peppers.	Refrigerate in a covered container or plastic bag for up to 5 days.
Potatoes	Buy potatoes that are free of sprouts and green areas on the skin. Avoid ones that are soft, moldy or shriveled. They should be firm and have a shape that is typical for their variety.	Store in a well-ventilated, cool, dark place, but not in the refrigerator. Bright lights cause them to develop green patches that will have a bitter flavor. Just before using, scrub well and remove any green parts or sprouted potatoes.
Root Vegetables (Parsnips, Rutabagas, Turnips)	Choose vegetables that are smooth-skinned and heavy for their size. Sometimes parsnips, rutabagas and turnips are covered with a wax coating to extend storage - cut off this coating before cooking.	Refrigerate for a week or more.
Salad Greens	Crisp, deeply colored leaves, free of brown spots, yellowed leaves and decay.	Store in a plastic bag in refrigerator and best used within 3-5 days.
Summer Squash: Zucchini, Pattypan, Yellow Squash, Spaghetti Squash	Look for squash that are tender and well developed, firm and fresh-appearing. The skin is glossy instead of dull and it is neither hard or tough.	Store in the refrigerator, tightly wrapped, up to 5 days. Fresh from-the-garden squash may be stored up to 2 weeks. Just before using, wash well and remove stem end.
Sweet Potatoes, Yams	Choose small to medium, smooth-skinned potatoes that are firm, uniformly colored and free of soft spots.	Store in a cool place, not in the refrigerator, up to 1 week. Just before using, scrub well or peel and trim ends.
Tomatoes	Smooth, well formed, firm, not hard.	Let ripen in a brown paper bag then use within 3 days. Store only ripe tomatoes in the refrigerator.
Winter Squash: Acorn, Buttercup, Butternut, Hubbard, Turban	Buy squash with a hard, tough rind. Look for squash that is heavy for its size. Avoid cracked or bruised squash.	Store whole squash in a cool, dry place up to 2 months; do not refrigerate. Just before using, wash well, cut in half and remove seeds. Store cut squash wrapped in plastic up to 4 days in refrigerator.

Sources: UWEX Wisconsin Nutrition Education Program/ How Food Affects You 1998; The American Dietetic Association's Complete Food and Nutrition Guide 1996; <http://msig.med.utah.edu/runninggates/nutrition/SelectingVegs.cfm> and <http://www.ams.usda.gov/howtobuy/fveg.htm>



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