

# PRODUCE WASHING GUIDELINES

Fresh produce that will not be cooked thoroughly prior to being served, and is either packaged or served to the customer in a ready-to-eat form, must be properly washed before serving. Proper washing is important because bacteria that cause Disease, such as E. coli and Salmonella, can be present on unwashed fruits and vegetables.

Follow these guidelines to help prevent your customers from getting foodborne illness.

- Wash ready-to-eat produce with cold running water and agitation in a sanitized food preparation sink.
- Do not soak ready-to-eat produce items together in a common bucket or sink unless you have previously washed each individual produce item under running water before soaking. One contaminated item may contaminate all the other items that share the same water.
- Make sure to avoid bare hand contact with washed, ready-to-eat produce by using an appropriate barrier such as gloves when cutting or prepping.
- All fruit that will be cut, such as bananas and melons, must be washed first. This is to avoid bringing contamination from the inedible peel or rind down into the edible parts of the fruit. *NOTE: Cut melon must also be maintained at 41° F or less.*
- When washing a fruit or vegetable that has a very rough surface, such as a cantaloupe, make sure to apply extra agitation. For example, scrub the outside with a clean and sanitized produce brush.
- The use of special produce washes or sanitizers is not required.
- Fruits or vegetables that are to be used as a drink or plate garnish, such as lemons, limes, celery, kale, edible flowers, orange slices, etc., are also considered a ready-to-eat produce item and must be properly washed.
- Remember to remove any stickers on the outside of the item before washing, so that dirt and other contamination under the sticker can be removed by washing.



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