

# How to Properly Clean Produce

With all the toxic pesticides in use these days, it is surprising that we even keep eating fruits and vegetables, never mind being nudged to increase our daily intake! Organic produce is definitely always the way to go if you can find and afford it. Organic or not, it is important to clean produce well, and even when you are buying from the farmer's market. I'd like to share some tips on washing fruits and vegetables and in another post we'll look at best ways to store your food at home.

First off, only use cold water to wash the food, and don't use detergents. Use your fingers under the running water to clean off the surface of your produce, and be sure to really tackle crevices where pesticides, herbicides, and bacteria like to settle – like the top of the apple, or under the strawberry green. For thicker skinned items, such as potatoes, it is helpful to use a vegetable brush to banish hard-to-remove microbes. After you wash the food, using a clean cloth or paper towel will help remove even more bacteria.

For leafy greens, if they are not sold as pre-washed, then the best way to get them clean is to soak them in cool water for a few minutes. If you don't have a salad spinner to whisk them dry after draining, you can lay them on a clean towel to dry. Be sure to clean your salad spinner after every use with warm soapy water.

You can usually wait to clean your produce until you are ready to eat it to avoid damage. And be sure to store your veggies properly: tomatoes should be kept outside the fridge, as well as onions, potatoes, garlic, unless already cut.

Include a large percentage of produce in your diet, and be sure to properly clean it so you can feel the benefits of a healthy body gained through good nutrition.