

Washing Fruit and Vegetables Standard Operating Procedure

Purpose:

- To prevent cross-contamination and risk of foodborne illness by ensuring that all fruit and vegetables are handled and washed correctly.

Scope:

- This procedure applies to Food Service staff who wash and prepare fruit and vegetables.

Key Words:

- Cross-Contamination, Foodborne illness, Washing, Handling, Fruit, Vegetables

Instructions:

1. Train Food Service staff on using the procedures in this SOP. Refer to the [Hand Washing SOP](#), the [Cleaning and Sanitizing Grab and Go Cart SOP](#), and the [Using and Calibrating Thermometers SOP](#).
2. Follow State or local health department requirements.
3. Wear single-use gloves when washing fruits and vegetables.
4. Remove all stickers.
5. Wash produce under cold, running water. Avoid hot water to prevent thermal shock, which can cause bacteria to enter the produce.
 - a. Agitation:
 - i. For delicate items (e.g., berries), rinse in a bowl or colander, changing the water frequently.
 - ii. For farm-grown leafy greens or hearty produce, soak to loosen foreign particles and reduce the risk of foodborne illness. This can be done in a

clean, sanitized container such as a large bowl, bus tub, deep hotel pan, or food storage container (e.g., Lexan or Cambro), or in the sink. Only fill up a sink for washing if you have a dedicated vegetable sink that has been washed, rinsed, and sanitized. Let the dirt fall to the bottom, then repeat this process until the produce is clean and the water is free from debris.

- b. Scrubbing:
 - i. Use a designated, clean vegetable brush for firm items (e.g., potatoes, cucumbers, melons).
 - c. Special Items:
 - i. Remove outer leaves of lettuce or cabbage. Wash produce with rinds (melons, citrus) even if you plan to peel them.
 - d. Packaged Produce:
 - i. Items labeled "pre-washed" or "ready-to-eat" do not need to be re-washed.
- 6. Air-dry or dry with a salad spinner (if applicable).
 - 7. Label, date, and store appropriately based on the type of produce.
 - a. Always cover and refrigerate fresh-cut items.

MONITORING:

During all hours of operation, Food Service staff will:

- 1. Visually monitor to ensure that fruits and vegetables are properly washed, labeled, and dated.
- 2. Check the quality, temperature, and dates of Fruits and Vegetables in the designated storage.

CORRECTIVE ACTION:

- 1. Retrain any Food Service Staff found not following the procedures in this SOP.
- 2. Label and date any cut fruit and vegetables.
- 3. Discard past-date and poor-quality fruit and vegetables.

VERIFICATION AND RECORD KEEPING:

The Kitchen Lead will review, initial, and date the Food Safety Checklist daily. The Food Safety Checklist must be kept on file for a minimum of three years.

DATE IMPLEMENTED: _____ BY: _____

DATE REVIEWED: _____ BY: _____

DATE REVISED: _____ BY: _____