

# Fruit and vegetable – Postharvest Handling Tips


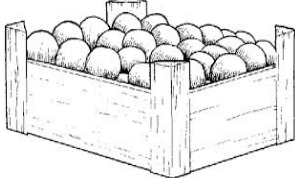
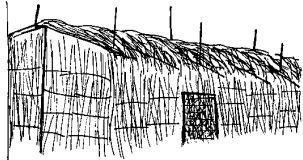
Food can spoil due to the effects of:

1. Bacteria, fungi and molds,
2. Pests such as Insects and rodents, and
3. Plant enzymes

## What can you do?

The keys to good storage are to

1. Start with a healthy product,
  - a. Choose healthy produce,
  - b. protect the product, and
  - c. reduce physical damage
2. Reduce product temperature and moisture content.

Step	Options	Example
Harvest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Harvest early in the morning or late at night</li> <li>• Harvest fruit when mature but not ripe</li> <li>• Use harvest bags</li> </ul>	
Handling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimize handling the fruit</li> <li>• Handle fruit gently</li> <li>• Place harvested fruit on mats</li> </ul>	
Sorting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remove moldy, cut, bruised or damaged fruit</li> <li>• Sort in a shaded area in the field</li> </ul>	
Packing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Package in ventilated crates</li> <li>• Package in trays - single layer</li> <li>• Cushion multilayer with vegetation</li> </ul>	Use stackable containers with ventilation
Grading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grade (size and color) for different buyers</li> </ul>	
Storing and cooling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Store in dry cool place – indoors, shade</li> <li>• Cool with evaporative cooling or underground</li> </ul>	e.g., Straw house with evaporative cooling



**Keep produce cool (in the shade), even if displayed in the open air.**

**For more information visit:** International Programs: <http://ip.ucdavis.edu>

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