



FOOD SAVING

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SAVE IT OR LOSE IT

As a nation we are all somewhat guilty of wasting things, food in particular. Be honest, how many times have you opened the fridge and rummaged about only to find something possibly green and almost unidentifiable lurking in the salad drawer.

Those days are gone if you want to get through this whole shop closure/restricted buying phase that we are going through just now.

Every piece of fruit, veg and food in general should be used in its best advantage and stored carefully for future use if you are not going to eat it right away.

Alas not all veggies are created equal when it comes to shelf life. You have to be canny and keep everything in the right place to get the most value out of it.

This little bookette is all about making the most of your food. Keeping it in the right place and knowing how long it will last.





ON THE SIDE

So what can we keep on the sideboard, on top of the kitchen units or table.
Basically what can be out in the open.

HERBS IN POTS

APPLES

ORANGES

LEMONS

LIMES

GRAPEFRUIT

PEARS

PLUMS

MELONS

PINEAPPLE

IMPORTANT!

Keep bananas
away from other
fruit, they make
everything around
them rot rather
quickly



IN THE DARK

These are the guys who like the dark side of life. Somewhere cool and not so mysterious that you can never find them again. Let's try under the kitchen sink, in the cellar, the garage (in a box away from the car of course), in a dark cupboard or in the shed. As long as it is somewhere cool, dry and dark these guys will be happy.

POTATOES

SWEET POTATOES

BUTTERNUT SQUASH AND ALL IT'S RELATIVES

ONIONS

GARLIC



IMPORTANT!

Onions and garlic like their own space. Don't store them alongside the potatoes or you will find both will start to go off quicker. Put the onions and garlic in one place and the potatoes and all the others can be in a gang somewhere else. This can just be in two separate cardboard boxes just so long as they are not cohabitating.





FRIDGE VEGGIES

These are your veggies who will happily live in the fridge as long as you don't forget about them. Those boxes at the bottom of the fridge are actually for veggies and fruit. I actually have a friend who has one of his filled with chocolate!

CARROTS

CELERY

AUBERGINES

COURGETTES

CAULIFLOWER

BROCCOLI

PEAS AND BEANS

SALAD GREENS

SPRING ONIONS

Line your salad drawers with kitchen roll to absorb moisture.

Salad leaves will last longer if attached not chopped up and keep in bags

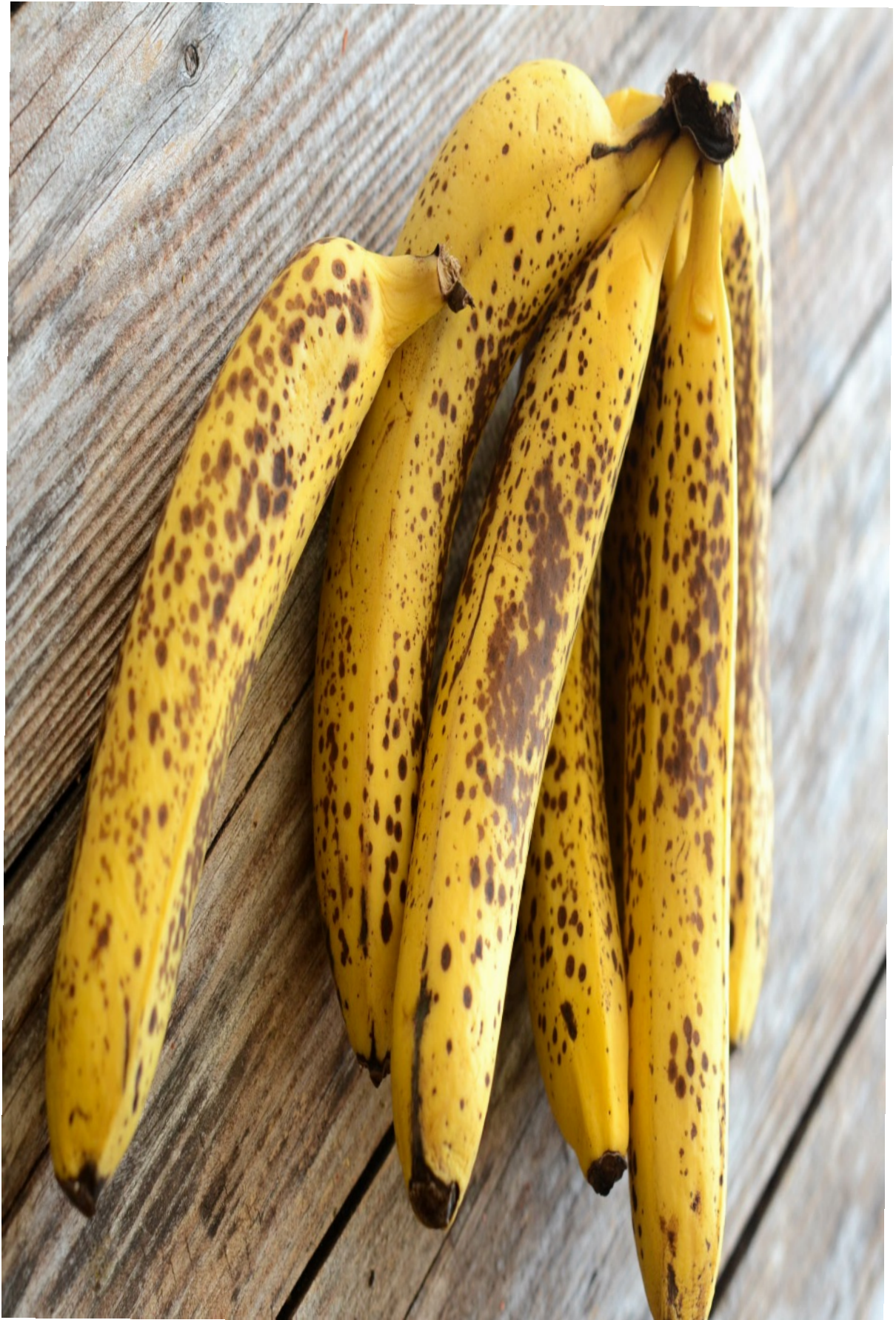
Keep celery whole

Although cauliflower and broccoli keep a bit longer in their whole state that can take up a lot of valuable fridge space. Chop them into florets and also chop up the stems (they make great soup etc) and store in sealed bags/boxes.



TOMATOES

Although they taste better outside the fridge they last longer inside it. Remove an hour before using to bring up to room temperature and improve flavour



FREEZER FRIENDS

Life in the freezer is tough, there is freezer burn ready to strike the unwrapped and the dreaded forgotten-in-freezer syndrome.

Here are some basics on freezer storage;

FLAT PACK Think IKEA furniture here and flatten your food. By that I mean when you buy something in a plastic box take it out and put in a plastic zip lock freezer bag if possible to save space.

You will be amazed how much space you can save in the freezer by flat packing as much as possible.

Soups, stews, sauces and even milk can be stored in well sealed bags.

Lay them flat on a baking tray till they have frozen solid then just stack 'em up!

**WATERY VEG DOESN'T
FREEZE WELL**

Celery and cucumbers do not like the freezer.



FROZEN BANANAS

Peel and chop and you are ready to make ice-cream and smoothies any day of the week. The spottier the better as those are sweetest. Never waste a banana again!

BLANCH FIRST

For peas, beans, sprouts, cabbage and other veggies blanch first in boiling water for 1 minute then plunge into icy cold water. Dry thoroughly before freezing in sealed bags. Get rid of as much air as possible when sealing.



FRUIT FREEZING

BERRIES

Don't let any strawberries, raspberries, blueberries etc go off in the fridge. They are too precious to lose.

Instead lay them flat on a baking sheet and freeze till solid. Then store in freezer bags and lay out flat to save space in the freezer.

COLOUR CHANGERS

Slices of apple will go brown very quickly. To stop this happening put a teaspoonful of lemon juice into a small dish of water and dip each apple slice into this before setting out on the baking tray to freeze then bag.

The same rule applies to avocado, use lemon to stop it browning.

COOK FIRST

For apples and pears that are on their way out it is best to peel and stew them before freezing. This way you will get a really nice fruit puree that you can either add honey or sugar to as a sweet sauce or add some spices and seasoning as a savoury sauce.

Remember to freeze in bag and store flat and label clearly. Fruit purees have a tendency to look all the same.



FROZEN WINE

Freeze any leftover wine (what's that?) In ice cube trays so you can pop out a cube to use in cooking stews and the like.

FREEZE EGGS

Yes eggs can be frozen. Crack eggs into individual ice cube trays and freeze till you want to use in a recipe. Make sure you use a bendy ice cube tray so you can pop them out easily.

BUTTER

Butter freezes well so stock up. Make your own flavoured butters and wrap in parchment and pop into labelled freezer bag. Whack off a slice whenever you need it for garlic bread and any cooking then pop straight back in the freezer

SAY CHEESE

Freeze cheese by grating it first then packing it into a freezer bag and sealing.

BREAD

Bread freezes well but takes up a lot of space. Slice it and bag it!

COFFEE AND TEA

Made too much? Then freeze in ice cube trays and pop into freezer bags to use as chillers for your iced drinks

CITRUS FRUITS

Slice up those lemons, limes and oranges into slices or quarters and flat freeze on baking tray then pop into bags. They are the perfect addition to drinks and do double duty as an ice cube!



HERBS

Yes, my culinary favourites get a page all to themselves, and why not. Herbs are the soldiers of the kitchen bringing flavour to the most mundane of dishes. Treat these little guys with respect and they will last longer and serve you well.

The Tough Guys

Hardy herbs like Rosemary, Thyme and Sage are best wrapped in a damp piece of kitchen paper and then rolled in a sausage shape. Put a little batch of these herby sausages into a ziplock bag and pop them into the fridge. They should keep like this for about 2 weeks.

The softies

These are your more delicate herbs like chives, parsley, coriander, dill, tarragon, basil and anything else that is soft stemmed and fragile. Cut the bases off these little guys just as you would trim the stems on a bunch of flowers. Then pop them into a small glass or jar with about 2cm of water in the bottom. Cover the foliage loosely with a plastic bag and keep on a shelf in the fridge where you won't knock them over.

Supermarket Live Herbs in Pots

These guys will last a LOT longer if you use them correctly. Don't just grab its off them or attack with the scissors when you require a few leaves of basil or whatever. Instead carefully reach into the base of the plant and gently pull up a stem by the roots. Use the stem and leaves for flavour. If it is for a garnish on a finished dish or a salad then just put the stalk trimmings in a little bag in the fridge to use in soups etc to add flavour.

FREEZING HERBS

IN WATER

Use an ice cube tray and pack each compartment with chopped herbs. Top with a little water and press to submerge herbs, don't over do it though.

Freeze till solid then pop them out and freeze in labelled bags for each herb.



IN OIL

As above chop herbs and put in ice cube tray and top with oil. Now the oil will not set so this must be kept in a plastic bag and kept level at all times.

Neat trick - use those nifty pill containers that come in a strip like an ice cube tray but with a click down lid.



PRESERVES

JAMS AND JELLIES

These are usually safe unopened in a cupboard for up to a year. Check the lid and if pressed and it makes a popping sound it means there is air in there and it needs to be used immediately.

Once opened store your jams and jellies in the fridge and use up within about a month

CURDS

These contain eggs so must be stored in fridge and used within a couple of weeks. Obviously store bought varieties have preservatives so

CHUTNEY AND RELISH

Store in a cupboard and they will usually keep for up to a year unopened.

Once opened store them in the fridge and use up within a month.

PICKLES

These will keep for about a year in the cupboard.

Once opened store in fridge and use within a month.

LEFTOVERS

COOKED FOOD

Cooked food that is left over after a meal should be cooled as quickly as possible then packaged and frozen.

Again I use the flat pack system of putting everything from soups to stews in plastic zip lock bags and laying them on a baking tray till frozen solid then stacking in freezer.

RICE

Cooked rice freezes well. Again flat pack. Defrost by sitting bag in hot water before use. Add a little boiling water then heat to very hot.



**LABEL AND DATE
EVERYTHING!**

CAKES & BAKES

Wrap these well in baking parchment then foil and then into the good old freezer bag or cling film. Cake will keep for 3 months or more. Defrost thoroughly.

GOING NUTS!



SHELF LIFE

Nuts have a shorter shelf life than people tend to think. Once you have opened a pack of nuts store them in a sealed bag in the freezer to stop them from going rancid. They will last a lot longer this way. You will be able to add them to your cooking and baking for months to come.

REVIVING NUTS

Try toasting nuts in a dry pan to revive them a bit when they have lost a little flavour. Watch them like a hawk though as they burn very quickly. As soon as they release that gorgeous nutty aroma and go just a little golden they are ready. Get them out of the hot pan immediately or they will continue to cook and burn.