



## USE SAFE FOOD HANDLING PRACTICES

# Food Safety and COVID-19

### WASHING FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

- The use of dish soap, detergent or bleach to rinse, soak and wash fresh produce is NOT recommended. These products are not intended to be eaten.
- Before use, rinse well under running water only the fruits and vegetables you plan to prepare or eat at that time.
- [Handling fresh fruits and vegetables safely](#) - University of Minnesota Extension
- [Is Coronavirus a Concern on Fresh Produce?](#) - North Carolina State University Extension
- [Fight BAC! Like a produce pro; Coronavirus Resource Page](#) - Partnership for Food Safety Education



### GROCERIES

- When you go to the grocery store, use hand sanitizer or wipes to wipe surfaces, have a plan and a list.
- Keep social distance and only touch what you will buy.
- Once home, do NOT store groceries outside, in cars or garages.
- Bring groceries inside, unpack and store normally, followed by handwashing with soap and water.
- Currently, there is no evidence that food or food packaging is a source of virus transmission.
- [Safe food handling basics](#) - University of Minnesota Extension
- [Is COVID-19 A Concern At Grocery Stores?](#) - North Carolina State University Extension
- [Shopping and Handling Groceries](#) - North Carolina State University Extension

### DELIVERY, TAKEOUT AND STORING FOODS AND LEFTOVERS

- [Refrigerator tips to keep your family safe and your food fresh](#) - University of Minnesota Extension
- [Storing and reheating leftovers](#) - University of Minnesota Extension
- [Food Safety for Delivery and Pick-up Services](#) - Minnesota Departments of Agriculture and Health

## CLEANING, SANITIZING AND DISINFECTING; CRITICAL STEPS TO KEEP SURFACES SAFE

Julie Garden-Robinson, North Dakota State University Extension food and nutrition specialist, shares this important information about [exercising caution with disinfecting in the time of COVID-19](#).

- Cleaning is removing dirt, food and some illness-causing germs from surfaces.
  - Cleaning does not kill germs but helps remove them.
  - You need to clean surfaces before you can reduce the amount of germs, then you can sanitize or disinfect.
- Sanitizing is the removal of germs from surfaces.
- A typical sanitizing solution for home kitchen surfaces is 1 tablespoon of bleach per gallon of water.
  - More bleach isn't better and can be dangerous.
  - Read and follow the manufacturer's directions for the product you use since bleach concentration levels can vary.
  - Most bleach advises cool to warm (75 to 120 degrees) water, NOT hot water.
  - Do NOT mix with other chemicals. Wear disposable gloves, discard after use and wash your hands.
- Disinfect high touch surfaces such as doorknobs, light switches, handles, desks, toilets and sinks.
  - To disinfect surfaces, the [CDC provides a general recommendation](#) of 5 tablespoons (1/3 cup) of EPA-registered bleach per gallon of water, or 4 teaspoons per quart.
- [A clean kitchen is required for food safety](#) - University of Minnesota Extension

## HAND SANITIZERS

- Do NOT make hand sanitizer at home! This is a new recommendation from the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).
- If made incorrectly, hand sanitizer can be ineffective, and there have been reports of skin burns from homemade hand sanitizer.
- The FDA lacks verifiable information on the methods being used to prepare hand sanitizer at home and whether they are safe for use on human skin.
- The previous recommendation to make hand sanitizer at home was due to a shortage however, more facilities are producing it and the shortage will catch up.
- [Hand Sanitizers and COVID-19](#) - U.S. Food and Drug Administration

## REUSABLE SHOPPING BAGS

- If stores still allow reusable shopping bags and you use them, make sure to clean and disinfect them after each use.
- Clean both inside and outside with soapy water and rinse.
- Follow with wiping or spraying all surfaces with diluted, disinfecting bleach solution (4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water) or purchased ready-to-use disinfectant.
- Allow bags to air dry.
- [Cleaning and Disinfecting Reusable Bags](#) - North Carolina State University Extension

## QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS?

Send a message to [exfdsafe@umn.edu](mailto:exfdsafe@umn.edu)

Find additional resources at <https://extension.umn.edu/news/food-safety-home>