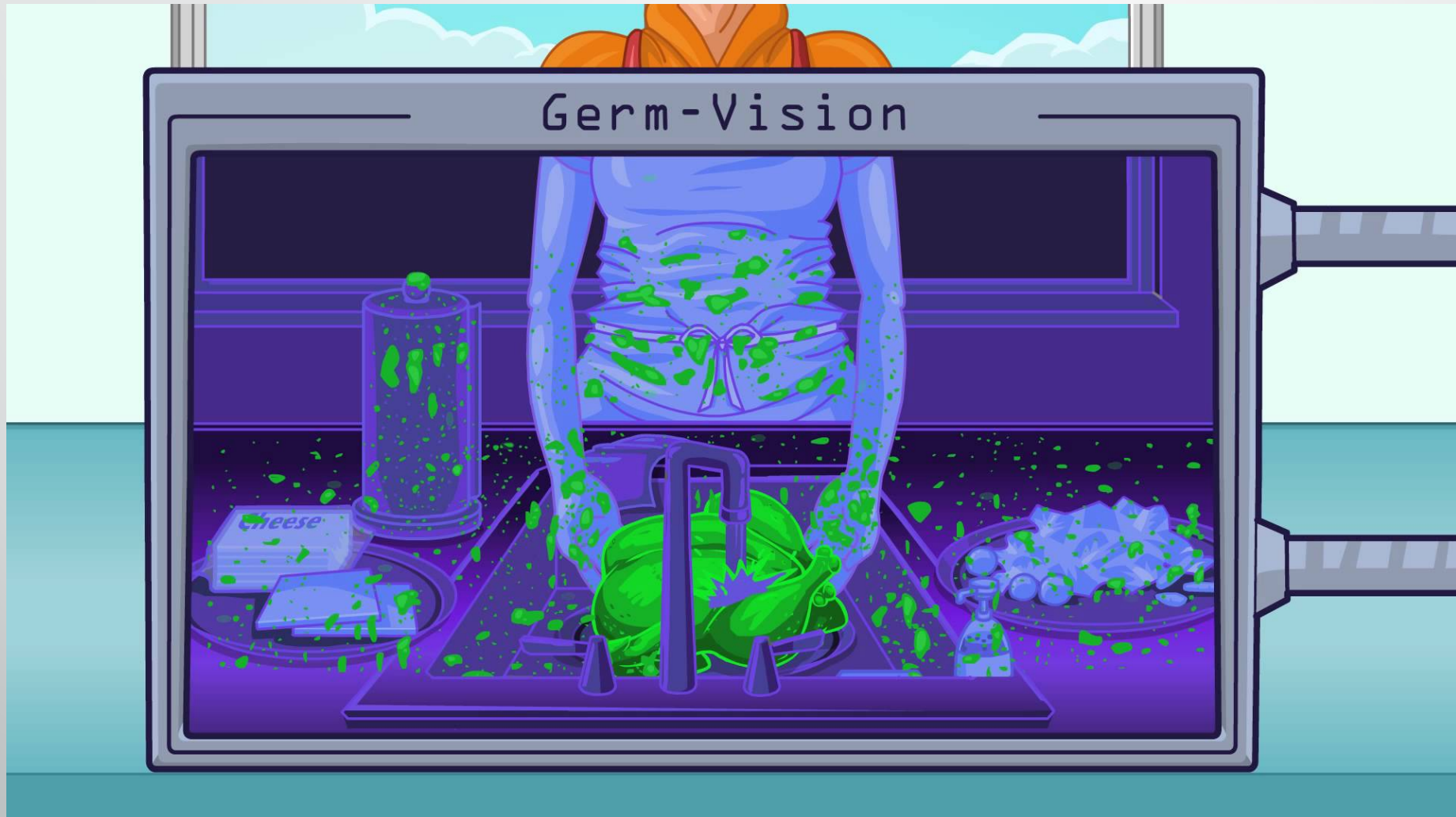




Food Safety

Worthington Resource Pantry

Food Safety



What is food safety?

- It is the scientific discipline describing the handling, preparation, and storage of food in ways that prevent foodborne illness.
- How does this apply to the WRP?
 - We store eggs, meat, produce, bread, and canned foods which can all be exposed to potentially harmful bacteria.
 - Most of these foods are temperature sensitive and should be stored below that temperature to inhibit bacterial growth.
 - Foodborne illnesses will affect vulnerable people harder than other groups (i.e. infants, pregnant women, the sick, and the elderly).

Recommendations

- We should wash our hands thoroughly before and after handling food.
- If we have any cuts or sores on our hands we should wear gloves suitable for handling food or avoid preparing food.
- Refrigerate and freeze food promptly.
- Home canned foods are the most common cause of botulism. Therefore, take caution when accepting these items.
- When foods are refrigerated past their use by date, bacteria can grow enough to spread illness.
- Frozen meat, poultry, and fish needs to be stored at temperatures that will keep it frozen.
- Milk should be stored at less than 41 degrees, and eggs stored at less than 45 degrees.

Recommendations

- Cut melons, tomatoes, and leafy greens need to be stored at less than 41 degrees. Most produce can be stored in a refrigerator but, avocados, banana, pears, and tomatoes ripen best at room temperature if they are whole and raw.
- Store whole citrus fruits, hard-rind squash, eggplant, and root vegetables such as potatoes, sweet potatoes, rutabagas, and onions in a cool area ~60-70 degrees.
- Once fruits and vegetables are cut, chopped or cooked, they should be placed in the refrigerator within two hours, or frozen in a plastic freezer container.
- Perishables like strawberries, lettuce, herbs, and mushrooms should be stored in the refrigerator at less than 41 degrees.

Common foods and their storing method

Food	Storing method
Apples	Shelf unless cut, then refrigerate
Avocados	Shelf unless cut, then refrigerate
Bananas	Shelf
Berries, cherries	Refrigeration and keep for 1-2 days
Citrus fruits	Shelf for 10 days
Grapes	Shelf for one day, refrigeration for 1 wk
Kiwi	Shelf until ripe
Melons	Shelf for 1-2 days uncut, if cut then refrigerate
Mangos	Shelf for 3-5 days; refrigeration for 1 wk; if cut they need to be refrigerated
Asparagus, green beans	Refrigeration and keep up to 3-4 days
Broccoli	Refrigeration and keep up to 3-5 days
Cauliflower	Refrigeration and keep up to 3-5 days
Cabbage	Refrigeration and keep up to 1-2 wks
Carrots, parsnips	Refrigeration and keep up to 3 wks
Celery	Refrigeration and keep up to 1-2 wks

Common foods and their storing method

Food	Storage method
Cucumbers	Refrigeration and keep up to 4-5 days
Greens	Refrigeration and keep up to 1-2 days
Corn on the cob	Refrigerate if raw 1-2 wks
Garlic	Shelf for 1 month and refrigerate if raw for 1-2 wks
Herbs, fresh	Refrigerate and keep up to 7-10 days
Leeks	Refrigerate and keep 1-2 wks
Lettuce, iceberg	Refrigerate and keep 1-2 wks
Lettuce, leaf	Refrigerate and keep 3-7 days
Mushrooms	Refrigerate and keep 2-3 days
Okra	Refrigerate and keep 2-3 days
Onions, dry spring or green	Shelf for 2-3 wks; raw, refrigerate 2 months
Parsley, cilantro	Refrigerate and keep 1 wk
Peppers, bell or chile	Refrigerate and keep 4-5 days
Potatoes	Shelf for 1-2 months; raw, refrigerate and keep 1-2 wks

Common foods and their storing method

Food	Storage method
Radishes	Raw, refrigerate and keep 10-14 days
Spinach	Raw, refrigerate and keep 1-2 days
Squash, summer winter	Raw, refrigerate and keep 4-5 days Shelf for 1 week; raw, refrigerate and keep 2 wks
tomatoes	Shelf until ripe; raw, refrigerate and keep 2-3 days

Product dating

- The date stamped on the product is used to determine how long to display the product for sale.
- It can also help the purchaser know the time limit to purchase or use the product at its best quality.
- It is not a safety date.
- If the product does pass this date it should be stored at no less than 40 degrees.

Types of product dating

- Sell by: this date depicts how long the store should display the product for sale. You should buy the product before the date expires.
- Best if used by (or before): this date is recommended for the best flavor or quality. It is not a purchase or safety date.
- Closed or coded dates: these are packing numbers for the use by the manufacturer.

Safety after the date expires

- If the product passes the use by date for home storage, the product should be safe, wholesome and of good quality if handled properly and kept at less than 40 degrees.
- If the product has an off odor, flavor or appearance you should not use the product because of spoilage.
- If foods are mishandled, outside of their specified storage temperatures, then the product may no longer be viable for consumption.
- Eggs should be fine between 3-5 weeks after purchase; the expiration date may encompass this timeframe but the eggs are still perfectly ok to use.