

## GROCERY SHOPPING CHECKLIST

### **BEFORE SHOPPING FOR GROCERIES:**

- Plan to return home right after buying groceries - so you can get cold foods (especially eggs) into the refrigerator or freezer
- Organize coupons
- Eat before you go shopping - shopping on an empty stomach usually causes you to buy more than you intended
- Make a list of items you need, organized by types of foods

### **Take:**

- List
- Coupons
- Bags (reusable cloth, plastic and/or paper)
- Ice chest/cooler with ice in it - to put perishable items in if the store is a long way from your home and/or you are unexpectedly delayed

### **WHILE SHOPPING FOR GROCERIES:**

- Check the sell date on perishable items
- Look for cheaper items above and below eye level

### **Don't assume items are cheaper just because:**

- They're a larger size
- They're displayed separately and/or differently
- Don't use coupons unless you're sure you'll use the item

### **Dairy:**

- Eggs - buy pasteurized eggs - reduced risk of salmonella poisoning

### **Fish:**

- Plan to eat fish within 3 days
- Make sure the display ice is fresh
- Choose fish closest to the ice (on the bottom)
- For whole fish, the eyes should be clear
- Scales should be shiny and cling to the skin
- Don't buy fish that smells excessively fishy - probably not fresh
- Don't buy fish that smells like ammonia

## **Fruit - See Produce**

### **Meat:**

- Make sure meat is well - wrapped
- Be wary of meat, especially poultry, that is marinated - sometimes markets marinate older meat to hide its oldness

### **Produce:**

- Look for produce that hasn't been waxed
- If bagged: weigh it to ensure it is close to the listed weight

### **Strawberries:**

- Try to buy strawberries not too long before eating
- Don't buy strawberries that aren't ripe - they won't ripen any more
- Buy strawberries with the green leaf cap in place

## **Vegetables - See Produce**

### **Watermelons:**

- Check that the stem is in place - if the stem is gone, it's probably overripe - if the stem is a dark color, it's probably ripe - if the stem is green, it's probably not ripe
- Thump it and listen for a solid sound
- Consider buying a seedless variety

## **AFTER RETURNING HOME:**

### **ASAP:**

- Put milk, eggs, other perishables in the refrigerator right away

### **Fruits:**

- Don't store citrus fruits with lettuce or broccoli - they'll cause the lettuce to wilt

### **Meat:**

- Ground beef: If the inside of the beef is brown while the outside is pink, be aware that the store is probably wrapping fresh meat around older meat - consider taking it back to the store

**Strawberries:**

- Try to eat them soon after buying
- Don't rinse them or remove the green leaf cap until right before you eat or serve them
- Keep in the refrigerator at 34 - 36 ° F

**Watermelons:**

- Don't put in the refrigerator
- Place in a cool, dark place