

## Product Handling Checklist

- Refrigerator temperature is at 2°C (36°F)
- Check product quality and best before dates upon delivery
- Room temperature non-refrigerated product should be stored off the ground
- Refrigerated product needs to be put away immediately into the refrigerator upon delivery or products will breakdown rapidly and not be useable
- For fresh cut product remove the bags of product out of the cardboard shipping cartons to maximize storage and allow adequate air circulation in refrigerator to keep product properly cooled
- Please do not store other student nutrition products in the fridge unless there is extra space once all NFVP refrigerated items are stored

## Recommendations to Reduce Food Waste

- Follow serving size guidelines when preparing and distributing weekly produce to students.
- Consider using leftover produce in preparation of other foods (i.e., broccoli in salads, tomatoes in salsa, soup, pasta sauce).
- Stay up to date on supplies and infrastructure needed to properly store and distribute produce (i.e., Fridge, serving bowls & covers, tongs, knives, cutting boards and portioning containers such as cups, bags, etc.)
- Follow the recommended “Handling Tips” outlined in each school menu. For example, pre-sliced items (carrot sticks, pineapple chunks etc.) spoil faster than whole items and therefore are recommended to be served first to decrease waste.
- Share extra produce not consumed within the week of delivery, if safe and appropriate to do so, with students or staff to enjoy and taste at home. Connect with the NFVP Lead regarding donations to a local community kitchen or organization.
- Review best before dates and use FIFO (First In First Out) rotation for any long shelf life products carried over from previous weeks. This could include Dips and Apple Sauce Cups that have a longer shelf life as identified by the Best Before/Use By Dates printed on the packaging.
- Communicate with the NFVP Lead to:
  - Advise of quality concerns when produce is received by your school so issues can be resolved in a timely manner (i.e., if a product arrives frozen, there may be an issue with temperature control during transport and a resolution with delivery personnel and suppliers can be achieved).
  - Request a reduction in produce quantities (percentage reduction preference) if excess produce is a consistent issue.
  - Provide accurate student enrolment numbers when completing the annual program registration survey and communicate enrolment changes in a timely manner. This will help to prevent overage.

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