



A CONSUMER'S GUIDE TO

Leafy Greens Food Safety

By the time leafy green vegetables reach your kitchen, California farmers and handlers have taken many actions to assure their safety including regular government inspections. Even with a rigorous food safety program in place, it is important for consumers to take steps to maintain safety all the way to the table. Practicing safe-handling methods in the kitchen can reduce the risk of foodborne illness and keep your family healthy.

Check ✓

- Make sure that the leafy greens you buy are fresh and not damaged.
- Do not buy packaged salads and leafy greens that are not refrigerated at the store.

Chill ❄️

- Check that packaged leafy greens like salads are refrigerated at the store before buying.
- Refrigerate all cut or cooked leafy greens within two hours.
- Throw away leafy greens that have not been refrigerated within two hours of cutting, peeling or cooking.

Clean 💧

- Wash hands with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds before and after handling fresh leafy greens.
- Clean all surfaces and utensils with hot water and soap that will be and have been in contact with fresh leafy greens before and after food preparation.
- Never use detergent or bleach to wash leafy greens.
- Rinse leafy greens under cool running tap water. Packaged leafy greens labelled “ready-to-eat”, “washed” or “triple washed” need not be washed.
- Remove and throw away damaged portions of leafy greens when preparing to cook them or before eating them raw.

Separate ↔

- Separate leafy greens from household chemicals and raw foods such as meat, poultry and seafood in your shopping cart and in bags at checkout.
- Keep leafy greens separate from raw meat, poultry or seafood in your refrigerator.
- Don't use the same cutting board used to cut raw meat, poultry or seafood without cleaning with hot water and soap before and after preparing leafy greens.

Cook 🍳

- Cook or throw away leafy greens that have touched raw meat, poultry, seafood or their juices.

Throw Away 🗑️

- When in doubt, throw away leafy greens that have been sitting in your fridge for a long time or have been in contact with raw meat, poultry or seafood.