

Quality Fresh Produce Q&A

1. *Where can I get training about proper handling and storage of fresh fruits and vegetables?*

Answer: I recommend that you contact one of the organizations or universities listed on the *Retail and Grocer Resources for Fresh Produce* sheet, and ask them to recommend some materials or training available to food retailers. You can also contact one of the regional programs, or State and Federal resources for information. Safe food handling information may be available from your County.

2. *Can you help me find a distributor that will work with a store my size?*

Answer: It's outside of my job responsibilities and it also presents a conflict of interest to make such recommendations. However, there are a number of helpful organizations listed on the *Retail and Grocer Resources for Fresh Produce* sheet, and many are able to provide business support.

3. *My store is too small to accommodate new displays. Can you provide some solutions?*

Answer: I'd be glad to make some suggestions. If you want more ideas on how to market fresh produce, there are a number of helpful organizations listed on the *Retail and Grocer Resources for Fresh Produce* sheet that have pictures of creative store produce displays.

4. *I don't know how to create a display using fresh fruits and vegetables. Can you show me how?*

Answer: It's best if I show you where to find some good resources by using the *Retail and Grocer Resources for Fresh Produce* sheet so you can learn from retail professionals who have experience creating store displays.

5. *Will WIC provide signs to help me advertise fresh fruits and vegetables?*

Answer: As a WIC authorized vendor you can order free colorful posters and signs that let customers know you sell fresh fruits and vegetables. I have some samples with me that I can show you, and I'll explain how to order them by using the *WIC Vendor Materials Form*.

6. *I don't want to stock what my customers will not buy. How can I find out what they want?*

Answer: The answer might be as simple as having a conversation with them when they come in to shop and asking what fresh fruits and vegetables they would buy. Then let them know you will be carrying their favorites so they'll know to come and shop when the fresh fruits and vegetables are available. It might be helpful to reference the *Seasonal Produce Guide* and learn which fruits and vegetables are available at different times of the year.

7. *Does WIC provide recipe cards or recipe books that we can give to customers to encourage the purchase of fresh fruits and vegetables?*

Answer: There are some great recipes online that use WIC foods as their ingredients. I can also recommend some of the organizations listed on the *Retail and Grocer Resources for Fresh Produce* sheet that have recipes online.

8. *Are other stores in my area selling fresh fruits and vegetables?*

Answer: That's a good question and this is a great opportunity to get out and meet some of the other WIC vendors in your neighborhood and learn how they're able to successfully offer fresh produce.

9. *I'm afraid that I will lose money if I start carrying more fresh fruits and vegetables.*

Answer: There are no guarantees, but if you are providing all the foods that meet the WIC minimum stocking requirements, then the WIC shoppers are able to use more of their WIC checks to purchase WIC foods and they won't have to go to a different store to find fresh fruits and vegetables.

10. *Why is it important that my fresh fruits and vegetables are handled and stored properly?*

Answer: Raw produce can cause foodborne illnesses, including Hepatitis A. (<http://www.fda.gov/Food/ResourcesForYou/Consumers/ucm103263.htm> and http://www.ama-assn.org/ama1/pub/upload/mm/36/2004_food_table_vira.pdf)