

Food Safety at Produce Auctions

Missouri's produce growers go to great lengths to make sure their products are safe when they reach the auctions. They ask that buyers also do their part to ensure the product gets to the end user safely.

1. Handwashing – Proper handwashing for 20 seconds helps prevent the contamination of fresh produce from microorganisms such as *Salmonella*, *Listeria*, and *E. coli*. It also slows the spread of coronavirus. Hands should be washed:

- After using the toilet
- Before and after eating and smoking
- Before and after handling produce
- Any other time hands may become contaminated



2. No Pets on Auction Floor – Pets and other animals present an opportunity for contamination of produce and can be difficult to monitor and control.

3. No Eating Food on Auction Floor – Many produce auctions offer food for their buyers and other guests. It is important that this food, and any outside food or drink, be consumed only in designated areas and not on the auction floor. Buyers should wash their hands using proper procedures both before and after consuming food. Drinks should only be allowed in a closed container. Please also do not smoke or chew tobacco products on the auction floor.



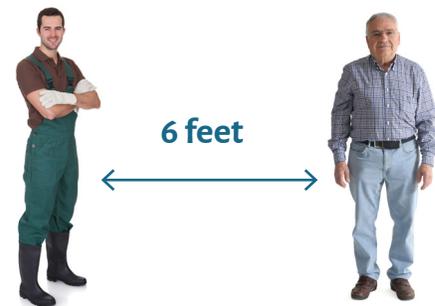
4. Avoid Handling Produce Prior to Buying – Buyers should avoid handling produce prior to buying. If it is absolutely necessary to handle produce to check for quality or ripeness, buyers should wash their hands both before and after.

5. Transporting Produce – An often overlooked potential source of produce contamination is the vehicle used to transport produce from the auction to its next destination. Utilize the following steps to minimize the risk of contamination when transporting produce:

- a. Use trucks or vehicles that have not been used to carry animals, raw manure, harmful chemicals or other contaminants. If you must use vehicles that have carried these items, then thoroughly wash, rinse and sanitize them before use with produce or other foods. A CLEAN tarp can also be used as a barrier between the vehicle and the produce.
- b. Pack produce carefully to prevent physical damage like bruises or cuts which can serve as entry points for microorganisms that cause disease or hasten spoilage.
- c. Keep produce refrigerated or cooled to preserve quality and slow the growth of harmful bacteria.

6. If Sick, Avoid Attending – When ill, buyers should not attend the auction and should instead send a representative to make purchases.

7. Social Distancing – To prevent the spread of coronavirus, maintain 6 feet between yourself and all other people in attendance, as much as possible.



Resources Used

Produce Safety Alliance Grower Training Manual

University of Georgia, Clemson, and Virginia Tech Guide Sheet:

https://www.fcs.uga.edu/docs/9_Transporting_Produce_Safely.pdf

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