



CHECKING FOR BUGS

FOR PRODUCE IN THE UK ONLY

October 2018

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CHECKING METHODS

A. PRESUMED CLEAN

No need to check unless you see obvious signs of infestation. Exceptions:

- Grains, Nuts, Beans, Seeds & Pulses should be purchased from companies that have proper quality and storage control.
- Soft fruit should be briefly checked externally for soft spots or holes as these may indicate infestation.
- If using the peels of citrus fruits, check them for black or brown spots as these may be scale insects.
- If using leafy tops of fruits or veg, these should be checked as described in D (below).

B. WASH

Wash with food-safe detergent.

C. CHECK

Open and check for infestation.

D. WATER CHECK

1. The leaves or herbs should be separated and soaked in mildly salted warm water (1 tablespoon to a large bowl) for 3 to 5 minutes. The bowl should be either white or transparent to create a contrast between an insect and its surroundings. The proportion of water to leaves in the bowl should be approximately 50%, and the bowl should not be too full.
2. The pieces should be swirled vigorously in the water.
3. After soaking, remove the pieces carefully so as not to remove any bugs that may be floating on the water surface. Also, be careful that any water dripping from the pieces drips back into the bowl.
4. Carefully check the water surface and sides of the bowl for insects. Place a white plate below the water surface so that bugs will be seen against it. If unsure if a speck is dirt or an insect, remove it from the bowl and use a magnifying glass if necessary.
5. They may be used if the first wash is clear or after two consecutive clear washes.

OR
For large, smooth and light coloured leaves, e.g. **Lettuce** and **Cabbage**, each individual leaf should be separated and inspected in front of a light, endeavouring to open any folds. If any insects are found, they can be removed by hand. If the infestation is too great, the leaf should be discarded. Any leaf with damage or discoloration should be discarded.

Cabbage - Savoy
First scrub with an appropriate cleaning agent and then rinse each leaf. After the 'water check', each leaf should be visually inspected.

Corn On The Cob - Fresh
Whilst peeling the husk, check for bugs. If bugs are found, that cob must be discarded. If externally clean, perform a regular 'water check' using hot salty water.

Mushrooms - Portobello
First tap stem side down on a white plate and inspect the plate for bugs; discard if any bugs are found. OR scoop out the dark underside of the mushroom. Followed by the regular water check.

Spring Onions (Scallions, Salad Onions)
First remove the root and the 'V' section of the spring onion. Ensure the green section is firm and open at both ends. Split the white section all the way through, and check every layer of the white part for insects. Followed by the regular 'water check'.

Strawberries - Fresh
First remove the top of the strawberry, including part of the flesh and all folds and crevices. Then scrub them gently under water / in stream of water, one or two at a time. Followed by regular 'water check'.

E. SPECIAL CHECKING METHOD

Asparagus - Fresh White
Cut/Shave off tips and gills OR use the following method: If completely closed at the top perform the 'water check'. If open, it should be heated over a flame for five seconds and then tapped on a white plate. If insects emerge, the asparagus stalk should be discarded. If no insects appear, perform the 'water check'.

Broccoli - Fresh
Bang the broccoli head stem down and then on all sides, on a white plate while still whole. If anything appears, it is best to remove all the florets, and use only the stalks. If nothing appears, break the broccoli head down to florets and do the 'water check' in very warm/hot water. Rub the florets vigorously under water to loosen them up.

Celery
Cut off the bottom of the celery head so that the individual stalks are separate. Discard the leaves (or remove them and do a 'water check' on them). Each stalk should be cleaned with a vegetable brush under water. Check that the stalk and each side have been scrubbed. (If the curved edges of the stalk are too close to brush the inside, cut the stalk lengthways and brush the 2 pieces. OR peel the stalks).

Dates - Fresh (other) or Dried
Remove the pit, open it up wide and check for clusters of black eggs, white worms or any other infestation. Dates should be held up to the best available light to inspect for holes or black spots.

Figs - Dried
Remove the opening at the bottom of the fig together with a small amount of surrounding flesh. Open it up, turn inside out, and check for infestation in the best available light.

Figs - Fresh
Wash the figs thoroughly. Spot check (1 in 3 or 4). Look for infestation on the peel, remove the opening at the bottom of the fig together with a small amount of surrounding flesh, halve the fig, turn inside out, and check for infestation.

Leek
Remove the outer leaves. Split the leek almost in half, stopping just before the root. Allow the leeks to sit for a few moments in a bowl under running water in order to dislodge any dirt and possible infestation. Then, under running water, each leaf of each leek must be rubbed. This is best achieved by taking the leaf between your index finger and thumb (with your thumb on top) and running them the full length of the leaf. Check all areas to ensure that nothing has been missed.

F. AVOID

Heavily infested and very difficult to check.

NOTES:

- Products bearing a hechsher can only be presumed checked if written on the packaging or confirmed as such by the relevant kosher authority.
- Unless stated otherwise, the rules in this guide apply to fresh, frozen and tinned produce.
- Items stored for long periods, unsealed or in a warm environment should be checked.