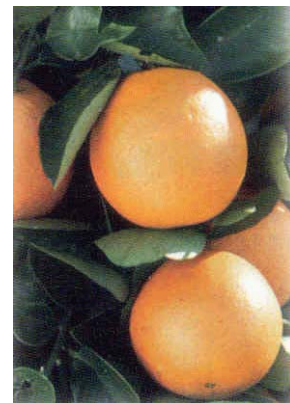


Citrus: Safe Handling Practices for Consumers¹

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Fresh citrus is rich in many nutrients and has not been traced to any cases of foodborne illness. However, fresh unpasteurized orange juice has been associated with several outbreaks of foodborne illnesses. This document describes steps that you can take to reduce your risk of foodborne illness from fresh citrus and home made citrus juice.



Where You Shop:

- Buy citrus that is **not** bruised or damaged (cuts, scrapes, etc.). Examine the stem end for areas where the peel may have been torn during harvest. Any wounds provide hiding places for microbial contamination.
- Be sure freshly squeezed citrus juices is covered and kept cold.
- Those who are more susceptible to sicknesses (depressed natural immunity) should consume only pasteurized citrus juice and not unpasteurized juice.

At Home:

- Refrigerate fresh citrus products within two hours of peeling or cutting.
- Leftover cut citrus and freshly squeezed juice should be discarded after two hours at room temperature.

During Preparation:

- Wash hands with hot soapy water before and after:
 - handling fresh produce
 - handling raw meat, poultry, or seafood
 - using the bathroom
 - changing diapers
 - handling pets
- Wash citrus with cool tap water just before preparing or eating. **Don't use soap or detergents** (they may contain materials not approved for food contact).

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- Scrub citrus with a clean produce brush before making juice or putting slices into tea or other drinks. Rinse fruit well with cool tap water.
- Cut away bruised or damaged areas before preparing or eating.
- Wash cutting boards, dishes, utensils, and counter tops often. Use hot soapy water and rinse well. **Sanitize** them after contact with fresh produce, or raw meat, poultry, or seafood (see box).
- Sanitize kitchen sink, counter tops and other food contact surfaces often to prevent a build up of microbes.
- Don't cross contaminate! Use clean cutting boards and utensils for fresh produce.
- If you can, use separate cutting boards for raw meat, poultry, and seafood.
- Do not consume ice that has come in contact with fresh produce or other raw products.
- Use a cooler with ice or ice gel packs when you take perishable foods outdoors. This includes cut fresh fruits and vegetables.

To sanitize cutting boards, dishes, and utensils:
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Mix one teaspoon chlorine bleach in one quart water.
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Pour the mixture onto all surfaces or submerge appropriate items into the above solution and let sit at least one minute.

Rinse surfaces well with hot running water.

Counter tops can be sanitized by using the above solution mix, sanitizing sprays or wipes as an additional safety measure.



For More Information:

Visit the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) website at: <http://www.fda.gov> or call FDA Consumer Inquiries at 1-888-SAFEFOOD (a toll-free number).