

Mixed Fruits and Vegetables

Mixed Fruits and Vegetable Loads

While there are many commodities that fall into the perishable classification, fruits and vegetables represent the single largest category. Different kinds of produce shipped together in one container should have compatible:

- Temperature needs
- Ethylene sensitivity
- Relative humidity needs
- Modified or controlled atmosphere requirements, if used.
- Odors or chemical treatments
- Airflow characteristics

Although fruits/vegetables may share common characteristics when it comes to transportation, there are significant differences among their requirements. Commodity-specific information about recommended container settings, the benefit of modified or controlled atmosphere mixtures and shelf life projections can be found in the Commodity Profiles tables on pages 29-35.

These tables can be used to:

1. Determine the recommended container temperature setting and maximum transit or shelf life. The temperature and time range indicated is dependent upon many factors such as variety, geographical location, harvesting conditions, etc. Note that the optimum transit temperature is not necessarily the recommended container setting. This is due to the fact that different refrigeration units have different performance capabilities and care must be taken to avoid chilling or freezing injury to the product.
2. Determine the optimal fresh air exchange setting. Too much air exchange can affect temperature control within the reefer. Not enough air exchange can cause ethylene damage to the product. Selecting the right setting will result in maximum product quality at destination, into the marketplace and ultimately to the consumer.

3. When using FreshChoice™, determine the optimal humidity setting. Maintaining proper humidity levels along with proper refrigeration will maintain product quality better than refrigeration alone.
4. Determine product temperature and ethylene compatibility for mixed loads by using the columns on "Recommended Container Temperature Set Point," "Ethylene Production Rate" and "Sensitivity to Ethylene Action" in the Commodity Profile section.
5. Determine if a product will benefit from modified or controlled atmosphere. Consult the "Benefit From Modified/Controlled Atmosphere" column in the Commodity Profile section.

