

UNITED GROCERY OUTLET AND GROCERY OUTLET

PRODUCE OPERATIONS AND TRAINING MANUAL

The United Grocery Outlet Produce Department stands for **Quality, Price and Value**. We pride ourselves in bringing the finest and freshest produce available and price ourselves very competitively.

The Produce Department is a demanding area of our store. An active interest must be taken by the Store Manager to insure that quality, bloom and freshness of all varieties is maintained. Only a colorful, well-merchandised department can capture maximum sales. Our perishable business is a key driver to our stores overall standard and our customer's perception of other products carried in our store.

Interested, well-trained employees are needed to handle the department. Knowledge of this seasonable and highly perishable department will further add to achieve maximum sales and gross profit.

The following is what it takes to have a top Produce Department in your store:

- * A Store Manager that takes an active interest.
- * Well-trained, interested employees to handle the department.
- * The Highest quality and a full variety of produce available.
- * A store that likes to **SELL and PROMOTE VALUE**.

To qualify as an outstanding produce department you must maintain a high standard. The respect that you gain by running a well-run produce area is carried into the rest of the store and a well-managed building. There is always something exciting in produce; a new item, new size, new price, new source of supply.

**In effect, there is always something to SELL in the
Produce Department.**

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I. INTRODUCTION

TO THE STORE MANAGER

The Produce Department is very important to your overall store image, not to mention sales and profits. A colorful, well merchandised department can capture and maximize impulse sales. On the other hand, a mediocre department loses potential sales and adversely affects total store image, traffic and sales. Seldom does a customer cite a good produce department as a reason why she shops at a particular store, but quite often a poor produce department is given as a reason for NOT shopping at a particular store. Stores that have outstanding produce departments are stores where the store manager takes an active interest and understands the impact that this area can drive.

TO THE PRODUCE MANAGER

The purpose of this manual is not to detail the entire day's work for the produce manager, i.e. what to do at 8 a.m., 9 a.m., etc. We are not your typical grocery store chain. You will not be told what items must be next to each other, how many rows per item for your rack. You will have a price list to follow with options to adjust retails according to local competition. Verify prices on each invoice as prices may change. Since we have stores in 5 states, many miles from each other, things that sell well at one store may not at another. Because you have more control over your produce operation than a chain produce manager, you must be a better manager than your chain counterparts. The contents of this manual will enable you to run successful UGO and GO produce departments. Please keep this manual in your department in good condition for reference and training new employees.

II STATEMENT OF POLICY STANDARDS, EXPECTATIONS

A POLICY

- 1 **Tare** will be taken on all pre-packed items. This will include weight of tray, film and label.
- 2 All produce managers will have readily available for sale all **advertised items** for the duration of the ad.
- 3 All produce managers will give every customer **courteous, honest service**.
- 4 All produce managers will take **accurate inventories** as scheduled.
- 5 All produce managers will ensure that all sales are transacted per **company policy** at the registers.
- 6 All produce managers will ensure that UGO/GO receives what it pays for and is billed and retailed as quoted by all **vendors**.

B STANDARDS, EXPECTATIONS

- 1 All produce departments should be culled and setup, **ready for business** no later than 10 a.m. daily and remain full with adequate product on display during all hours store is open for business.
- 2 All produce departments should offer for sale to our customers **freshest quality produce** available at all times.
- 3 All produce departments should maintain **clean, sanitary conditions** at all times on the floor and in the prep areas.
- 4 All produce departments should handle **reworks** according to **quality/quantity**.
- 5 All produce departments should be **adequately filled** before produce personnel leave store to handle evening business.

B STANDARDS, EXPECTATIONS (con't)

- 6 All produce departments **must meet or exceed** budgeted sales, expense budgets, distribution and profit **goals**.
- 7 All produce departments must operate within budgeted goals relating to **labor and supply expenses**.
- 8 **Positioning** of culled produce should be in a secondary position within the department.



III OPERATIONS

A Morning set-up

1. Pictured below are two graphics showing an organized produce prep area. Each store should be ready to do business daily with a good close down the day prior that allows you to support working on the floor your largest percent of the morning. Ensure that you have the tools needed to clean, cut, wrap, and ensure we have our produce area in good working conditions. What you accept off the floor is defiantly a reflection of how your operation is being managed. Order supplies as needed but do not house supply items that you can not use within a 30 day period.





- 2 Upon entering the store each morning, after clocking in, the produce department must be culled and pulled together to satisfy our opening and ready to do business standard.
3. Starting at the first position of the rack, the produce manager then culls and straightens the entire rack, then the tables. After completion, the entire department will be fresh and presentable for the early customers. From this point you can fill areas that are low, by priority – fill lowest areas first.
- 4 Key Items to attend to during culling activity:
 - a Bruised, soft, discolored, over-ripe fruit; wilted, discolored leaves on vegetables; discolored potatoes and green potatoes

- b Leaf Lettuce – shave the butts from the product and set in room temperature water to freshen. **The water must be room temperature.** Once you complete the culling of the department you can return this product to the sales floor. This process will increase your rate of sale and minimize your departments shrink.

III OPERATIONS (con't)

B Restocking Procedures

- 1 Make note of what you have available in the back up cooler and other product you may have in the stockroom to fill your produce counter. Take as much merchandise as can be safely handled to the sales floor on each trip. Fill stock cart as full as you can. Do not make 10 trips to the floor with 1 box on the cart.
- 2 Finish stocking the first cart you take to the floor before bringing another cart out. This saves congestion on the floor and helps make shopping easier for the customers.
 - a Carry necessary tools, i.e. price label gun, crate opener, etc. with you to the sales floor. Avoid walking to the backroom empty handed thereby wasting time and energy because you forgot something. Man hour productivity is a key variable in determining your overall department's success. The added time you have to work on the floor with your customers, means increased sales.
- 3 Park your stock cart as close to the rack as possible to eliminate extra effort of reaching.
- 4 Check to be sure the sign and price are correct before putting up the product. Identify SALE items with appropriate signage.
- 5 Product stocked out of the box that is smaller or of lesser quality than the remainder of the product should not be put up but handled with reworks/markdowns. If you know it will not sell, do not stock it and come back and cull it the next day.
- 6 Keep empty boxes, supplies, and hardware as neatly out of the customer's way as possible. The work area should remain neat and safe at all times.

III OPERATIONS (con't)

C Rotation

- 1 Pull old product to the front. Do not pull the older product and place new product behind existing inventory.
- 2 Clean empty area; pick up leaves, onion skins, stems, labels, etc.
- 3 Put new product on the rack, checking condition. Put salable old product on top of new making sure the display is neat. This will allow your store to maximize produce margins.



► ▼ ◀ DON'T HESITATE.... ROTATE ► ▼ ◀

III OPERATIONS (con't)

C Rotation (cont')

THE ONE SINGLE ITEM THAT WILL HURT GROSS PROFIT DOLLARS IN A PRODUCE DEPARTMENT IS POOR ROTATION.

- 4 Complete rotation is the only way to insure first-in first-out. This is accomplished by pulling the old product off the rack, restocking with new, and then putting the reconditioned on top. If this same technique is followed for all products, whether tomatoes, melons, pears, lettuce, or other items, it is more convenient for customers to select the most mature and ripe produce you have to offer.

Rotation must become second nature to all produce department employees.

DON'T HESITATE.... ROTATE

- 5 What is likely to happen if produce is not rotated ??
- a Products in display cases will show signs of age resulting in loss of sales, as well as loss of profits.
 - b Customers will buy the top item, and you will probably lose a portion of what you did not rotate from the bottom.
 - c Customer will lose confidence in your department's and store's freshness.
 - d Shrink will dramatically increase and your stores gross profits will be below company averages.
 - e Dehydration is another cause for rotation. Proper rotation will help reduce dehydrating product.

III OPERATIONS (con't)

D Rework / Markdown Procedures

- 1 Reworks must be done as *timely* as possible and returned to the sales floor by noon daily.
- 2 “Reduced for quick sale” displays *should be avoided* unless necessary due to large amount of reworks. If a reduced display is put on the floor, get rid of it as soon as empty and absolutely get rid of what has not sold by the next day. Do not allow this to be the front feature in your produce department.



*Use a consistent fixture to pull together produce-only items that still maintain value with short life. This product should not be in a predominant area within the department. Educate your customer where to find this and keep it in the same position within your store. Use the QUICK SALE signage to call attention to this product.

III OPERATIONS (con't)

D Rework / Markdown Procedures (con't)

- 3 Only salable merchandise that is still of value to the customer should be reworked. Hopefully, if you are heavy on an item you can lower the price to sell while it is still in good condition. When markdowns are necessary, *determine the value and price accordingly*. Bear in mind the cost of supplies and your time when determining what should be marked down and what should be thrown away. Over-ripe bananas should be taped, bagged or trayed and displayed on banana table. All other items can be trayed or bagged and placed alongside regular display as long as clearly marked "reduced" and then only a few packages at a time.

E Policing of the Sales Floor

- 1 Definition of policing – The continual check of the department conditions to include freshness, signage, eye appeal and cleanliness.
- 2 Throughout the day, each and every time you are on the sales floor you should make a visual check of the department. You cannot fill the rack once and never touch it again the entire day. Customers will give the rack an unarranged appearance as they make their selections. Each time you pass through the department straighten the rack as you go by. The customer who enters your department at 2 p.m. should see the same neat display that the 10 a.m. customers saw.
 - a Key items to watch for while policing are:
Crooked signs; Leaves; Water or Ice on the Floor;
Level Display; Neat rows and Misplaced product.

III OPERATIONS (con't)

F Truck Receiving

- 1 Check invoice to make sure each item you are billed for is there. Check bill out percentage.
- 2 Check quality – Report any poor quality immediately.
- 3 Get highly perishable items (strawberries, corn, grapes, and iced vegetables) into the cooler immediately.
- 4 Make sure bananas are uncovered by pulling plastic away from product.
- 5 Code date and rotate cooler prior to truck arrival.
- 6 Enter invoice on purchase log. Driver to sign each delivery

G Case cleaning, housekeeping

- 1 Routine weekly housekeeping should include cleaning of mirrors and wiping case and table fronts. Plastic signs in sign kit should be wiped clean.
- 2 Case cleaning should take place quarterly. A good program is to divide the case into thirds and clean 1/3 per month. Example: 72 foot rack, clean 24 feet each month.
- 3 Case cleaning should be accomplished as follows:
 - a Pull all products from section to be cleaned.
 - b Remove and clean foam mat.
 - c Remove and clean display racks.
 - d Remove and clean pans covering interior of the case.
 - e Clean and flush interior of the case, making sure all drains are free of debris and working properly.
 - f Vacuum dry bins for dirt, onion hulls, leaves, etc.

IV PRODUCE SALES PLANNING

The Produce Person is held accountable by his Store Manager to achieve maximum sales and a budgeted gross profit in his department. The effective Produce Manager will approach this responsibility as though he were running a separate business. His/her department stands by itself and his/her ability to manager can be measured and judged by its performance.

Since it is a separate business, the planning activities of the Produce Department should parallel those of the total store. These planning activities include sales, forecasting, gross profit control, inventory control, expense controls and merchandising/presentation techniques of all kinds.

In order to control the inventory and schedule the help, the Produce Manager has to know about how much business to expect. The Produce Person should forecast his sales just as the Store Manager does. The Produce Person must know how much total business the Store Manager expects to do. In addition to the things affecting total store sales, special considerations influence produce sales. Supply conditions affecting high volume items, seasonal fluctuations, commodity prices, and availability of homegrown merchandise must be considered.

When forecasting dollar sales the Produce Person should try to establish trends and relationships. To do this the Produce Person should keep charts showing not only her weekly dollar sales, but also her percentage of sales to total sales.

The promotion plan each week will also need to be read and put into action. It is our program that the Store Manager and Produce Manager are to read and sign off that it has been read. It should be in Produce work area on a clipboard with at least last four weeks and then filed in folder in Produce Manager work area.

IV PRODUCE SALES PLANNING (con't)

A Pricing Strategy \$\$\$

- 1 Perform competitive price check. Know what is going on in your local market. Become very price conscious by checking your competition.
- 2 Maintain and increase distribution.
- 3 Make a profit.

B Signage and Price Changes

- 1 All produce items whether on rack, tables or other display must have a sign.
- 2 All signs must have the same price as up front at the registers.
- 3 Make price changes promptly each week. Do not wait until mid-day, do it early in the morning.
- 4 After making price changes for the new week, run a price look up tape to verify. Use your McCarntey pricing sheets to validate your stores pricing.
- 5 Stop and start advertised specials according to the ad dates.
- 6 If your store has a sign kit use the "chalk" print signs and make any necessary signs needed to support 100% within your produce area. If you do not have the "chalk" print signs keep a consistent row of signs above the appropriate produce item to call attention to the item as well as the price. "As advertised" sale should be used for ad items. Special displays should have large descriptive signs to catch the customer's eye and call attention to the special value.
- 7 Use label gun to maximum. Any item that can be marked should be marked for customer convenience.

EXAMPLE OF GOOD SIGNAGE



V PRODUCT PRESENTATION

SELLING is critical. While we have the finest product at the lowest price in town, maximum sales and resulting gross profit will be compromised if we fail with the product presentation. Eighty five to 90% of all produce sales are made on impulse. From these figures, it becomes crystal clear that only the merchant who offers the most attractive, appetizing array of fresh produce can even begin to approach successful selling.

Good management of inventory, improved methods of product handling, the constant search to improve production and personnel schedules will result in genuine labor savings. However, there are no shortcuts to the job of product presentation. Properly done, product must be pampered, handled with loving care, and babied.

V **PRODUCT PRESENTATION (con't)**

A Department Layout

Good merchandising includes layout or setup of department.
Important points of good layout are:

- 1 Keep Family Group Together
 - a All fruits together divided into hard fruit – apples, pears and citrus and soft fruit – grapes, melons, stone fruit and berries.
 - b Salad vegetables together.
 - c Cooking vegetables together.
 - d Potatoes and onions together.
- 2 Keep top 5 power items (bananas, lettuce, tomatoes, cabbage and potatoes) spread out through the department. Do not put them all together for “one stop shopping”. Keep them apart to pull customer through the entire department.
- 3 Color Contrast – Make every effort to break color between items – no two items of the same color next to each other.
- 4 Neat Full Rows – All displays should be separated by dividers or stacked so rows are neat in appearance.
- 5 Rack Continuity – Avoid hills and valleys. Entire rack should give level appearance across the top of the display. Avoid one item being a foot higher than the item next to it. Use mirrors to full effect. Always be sure back of rack is full where bottom of mirror and rack meet.
- 6 Tables – Should also be level. Avoid junked up look. Depending on size of table, 2 to 3 items per table is maximum. Keep trash such as peanut shells, papers, etc. off the tables. This includes tie-in grocery displays in the produce department.
- 7 Fullness – For a customer to get the message we want our departments to convey it is not necessary to be jammed to the ceiling. A well-stocked department can be 2 layers or less early week when traffic is slow and more layers stacked for the weekend. If you run short on an item, do not leave an

empty spot. Spread out on the adjacent item to maintain a level, full appearance.

V PRODUCT PRESENTATION (con't)

B Space Allocation

- 1 To be properly merchandised, each item must be allocated the proper amount of space. If the display on a particular item is too small it will lose sales appeal or be very hard to keep full. If display is too large it will cause produce to stay on display too long, get old and cause shrink.
- 2 To be properly merchandised, you must know what items are your best sellers. Lettuce, tomatoes, cabbage, potatoes, onions, and bananas must have a large space. Slower sellers like kiwi and garlic need a small space. To increase variety you can make use of split rows of slow movers. Example: Row of ½ kiwi fruit and ½ of coconuts.
- 3 Space allocation will vary according to price. If you normally have one row of 2 lb. carrots and they go on sale you probably need 2 rows. In the reverse if lettuce gets exceptionally high “market price” you probably need to cut. Down the size of the lettuce space. A properly merchandised rack will have changes in space allocation almost weekly.
- 4 Proper space allocation also requires that you be aware of seasonal changes. New items just coming in to season will start with high retail – start with small spread – increase spread as retail goes down. At the end of the season when product begins to lose shelf life, cut down space. Example: In the spring (March – April) you start noticing onions and potatoes sprouting after being on display one or two days. This is when you need to cut down on space. Example: In fall (August – September) you start noticing peaches, plums and nectarines seem to go bad faster – cut the display size.

C Proper Mix

- 1 A very important key to good merchandising is product mix. Each week we have a sales plan and advertised items. The purpose of the ad items is to draw customers into our store and into our produce departments.

V PRODUCT PRESENTATION (con't)

C Proper Mix (con't)

- 2 Once Customers are in our store we must merchandise properly to achieve both maximum sales and profits.
- 3 If we sell only low profit sales items, our overall profit will be low. Our policy is not to hide sale items – build full displays to increase sales dollars, therefore we must also sell profit items.
- 4 Methods of achieving mix are:
 - a Tie-in Items - If head lettuce is featured, all salad related items will sell too. Make sure all salad items are full and appealing. Do not spend all your time filling 5% profit lettuce while 40% profit tomatoes run down to empty. Build a waterfall or spillover display on the unadvertised items not the lettuce. Assuming retails are reasonable call customers' attention to peppers, cucumbers, etc. to push salad items
 - b Special Buys - If you make a good purchase or receive product from the warehouse that enables you to make good profit at an attractive retail, push that item. Work with your store manager to position the product in a high traffic area within the store.
 - c Display Location – Certain spots in your department are “hot spots”. Merchandise sells faster in these locations than others. Put profit items in “hot spots”.

V PRODUCT PRESENTATION (con't)

C Proper Mix (con't)

4 (con't) Methods of achieving mix are:

- d Alternative Purchases – If you have a 50 lb. bag of potatoes on sale at a low profit but can bag 5 lb. and 10 lb. bags and make better profit, build attractive retail display of 5 lb. and 10 lb. that is bigger than the 50 lb. display. Put 5# and 10# first in traffic flow so customer sees it before the 50 lb. display.
- e Price up – If you have whole watermelon on sale at a low profit always be sure to keep cut display iced, full and offer variety, i.e. quarter, one-half and slices at higher profit.

VI. Ordering, Shrink Control

A Ordering Guidelines

- 1 Writing of the order is the single most important job that you perform. A Produce Manager's retail skill is challenged when results are tied to presentation, turn and profits. If an order is not well executed all other efforts will be wasted and variety/profit problems will occur.
- 2 You must allow sufficient time to write the order and project out your inventory needs. With your order you should only be ordering produce items via your McCartney supplier. From time to time, you may use your approved secondary supplier. Check with your District Manager.
- 3 All stores receive at least three deliveries a week. Each truck should contain sufficient product to last until the next delivery. If you continually have product in the cooler or the backroom left from the previous truck, product that never made it out to the sales floor before the next truck arrives, you ordered too much. Keeping product too long will increase shrink. You will always be selling old product with short shelf life. Do not order something to come in Monday if you know you will not need it until Thursday.

VI. Ordering, Shrink Control (con't)

A Ordering Guidelines (con't)

- 4 You must know your daily produce sales. Most store's sales for Thursday, Friday and Saturday combined exceed the total of Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday combined. Obviously you need more products late in the week than early in the week. Plan, project and order based on your stores individual needs. Be aware of ad items, and shifts in your business trends based on the lift you see in your first of the month business.

- 5 Watch your key items closely. The following 15 items account for 75% of your sales and profits. These key items must be ordered in correct amounts to achieve maximum sales and profits.
 1. Bananas
 2. Potatoes
 3. Lettuce
 4. Tomatoes
 5. Cabbage
 6. Onions
 7. Grapes
 8. Apples
 9. Carrots
 10. Celery
 11. Broccoli (depending on retail)
 12. Cauliflower (depending on retail)
 13. Strawberries (in season)
 14. Soft Fruit (in season)
 15. Oranges (in season)

- 6 Our stores are open on Sunday; therefore, we need to be in the produce business on Sunday also. Our Sunday business produces our highest dollar per hour of sales and should be considered a key day in your selling week.

VI. Ordering, Shrink Control (con't)

B Ordering Steps (con't)

Keeping the guidelines in mind, the following steps should be taken when ordering.

- 1 Check stock on hand – How much is in the cooler?
Backroom? How full is the display?
- 2 Project what you will need on this order to last until the next order.
- 3 Consider time of month – First of the month business is much better than the end of the month
- 4 Consider retail. Is item advertised? Has item recently gone up or down in price?

C Ordering, Record Keeping

- 1 Keeping records or notes of how a particular item sold when advertised at a given price can be helpful. Making notes as to whether or not you ran short, ran out, or over-ordered should be kept to help you in ordering the next time that item is on sale.

D Shrink Control – General

Excessive shrink which contributes to poor profit is caused by:

Poor Ordering – see above

Poor Rotation – see Operations, Re-stocking (page #6)

Poor handling – see Receiving (page #13)

VI. Ordering, Shrink Control (con't)

E Shrink Control – Product Preparation

- 1 Definition of Trimming – Preparing items by cutting away as little of the product as possible to make products suitable for display, maximizing freshness and eye control.
- 2 Proper preparation of product is an important method of shrink control. Trimming too much causes lost weight. Not trimming enough may cause poor appearance which leaves product unsaleable on rack and leads to reworks. Following are proper procedures for trimming:
 - a Trim leafy lettuces (romaine, endive, escarole, boston, bibb, red leaf, and leaf) by removing bruised or decayed leaves. Cut thin slice off butt end.
 - b Trim cabbage, savoy cabbage, and red cabbage by removing decayed or yellow leaves and shave butt end lightly, only removing a thin slice. Take off only leaves necessary, leave head full as possible.
 - c Trim celery cabbage and celery, by cutting a thin slice off butt end, remove damaged or decayed stalks, and trim tops to remove excess leaves.

F QUALITY GUIDELINES OF PRODUCE CHART

Following is a chart with specific guidelines to control the freshness and quality of produce.

PRODUCE QUALITY CONTROL

ITEM	DISPLA Y LIFE	DEGRE ES	QUALITY CHARACTERISTICS
APPLES	3 DAYS	32-35	COLORFUL, UNIFORM, BRUISE-FREE
APRICOTS	1 DAY	32-35	PLUMP, FIRM
ARTICHOKES	3 DAYS	32-35	BRIGHT COLOR, FIRM
ASPARAGUS	2 DAYS	32-35	WILT-FREE, UNIFORM
AVOCADOS			
UNRIPE	BY SIGHT	65-75	SMOOTH, BRUISE-FREE
RIPE	2 DAYS	40-50	SMOOTH, BRUISE-FREE
BANANAS			
UNRIPE	BY SIGHT	65-75	UNIFORM, MOLD-FREE, BRIGHT COLOR
RIPE	2 DAYS	55-60	UNIFORM, MOLD-FREE, BRIGHT COLOR
BEANS	2 DAYS	45-50	CRISP, RUST-FREE, IMMATURE, UNIFORM

BEETS	2 DAYS	32-35	SMALL, SMOOTH, FIRM
BERRIES	1 DAY	32-35	BRIGHT, CLEAR, PLUMP
BROCCOLI	3 DAYS	32-35	CLOSED BUDS, CLEAR, DARK GREEN
BRUSSEL SPROUTS	3 DAYS	32-35	HARD, CLEAN, GOOD COLOR
CABBAGE	3 DAYS	32-35	HARD, HEAVY, BRIGHT COLOR
CARROTS	5 DAYS	32-35	FIRM, UNIFORM, WELL-COLORED
CAULIFLOWER	3 DAYS	32-35	WHITE, CLEAN, COMPACT CURDS
CELERY	2 DAYS	32-35	MEDIUM SIZE, CRISP, COLORFUL
CHERRIES	1 DAY	32-35	BRIGHT, PLUMP
COLLARDS	1 DAY	32-35	FRESH, IMMATURE, COLOR
CORN	2 DAYS	32-35	BRIGHT, PLUMP, MILKY KERNELS
CRANBERRIES	5 DAYS	40-50	HIGH LUSTER, FIRM, PLUMP
CUCUMBERS	3 DAYS	40-50	GREEN, WELL-SHAPED, FIRM

DATES	BY SIGHT	32-35	GOLDEN BROWN, SLIGHTLY MOIST
EGGPLANT	3 DAYS	40-50	HEAVY RICH COLOR, PLUMP, SCAR-FREE
ENDIVE & ESCAROLE	2 DAYS	32-35	FRESH, IMMATURE, COLORFUL
FIGS	BY SIGHT	32-35	FAIRLY SOFT, UNIFORM
GRAPEFRUIT	3 DAYS	32-60	SPRINGY TOUCH, HEAVY
GRAPES	2 DAYS	32-35	PLUMP, MATURE, FRESH
KALE	1 DAY	32-35	FRESH, IMMATURE, COLORFUL
LEEEKS	3 DAYS	32-35	FRESH, UNIFORM, CLEAN
LEMONS	3 DAYS	40-50	BRIGHT, HEAVY, FINE TEXTURE
LETTUCE	1 DAY	32-35	CLEAN, CRISP, TENDER
LIMES	3 DAYS	45-50	FIRM, GREEN, HEAVY
MANGOES	BY SIGHT	55-60	SMOOTH, SPECKLED, SOLID

MELONS

UNRIPE	BY SIGHT	55-60	MATURE, FINE TEXTURE
RIPE	2 DAYS	40-50	MATURE, FINE TEXTURE

MUSHROOMS	1 DAY	32-35	CLEAN, WHITE, WILT-FREE
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NECTARINES

UNRIPE	BY SIGHT	65-75	PLUMP, WELL-COLORED, FIRM
RIPE	1 DAY	32-35	PLUMP, WELL-COLORED, FIRM

OKRA	3 DAYS	40-50	CLEAN, 2-4", FRESH
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ONIONS

DRY	5 DAYS	65-70	HARD, BRIGHT, DRY
GREEN	2 DAYS	32-35	GREEN, FRESH, CLEAN, UNIFORM

ORANGES	3 DAYS	32-35	FIRM, HEAVY FOR SIZE
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PARSNIPS	5 DAYS	32-35	SMOOTH, CLEAN, MEDIUM SIZE
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PEACHES

UNRIPE	BY SIGHT	65-75	BRIGHT, FRESH, YELLOW BACKGROUND
RIPE	1 DAY	32-35	BRIGHT, FRESH, YELLOW BACKGROUND

PEAS	2 DAYS	32-35	TENDER, YOUNG, SWEET
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PEARS

UNRIPE	BY SIGHT	60-70	FIRM, UNBROKEN SKIN, WILT-FREE
RIPE	1 DAY	32-35	FIRM, UNBROKEN SKIN, WILT-FREE

PEPPERS 3 DAYS 40-50 FRESH, GREEN CALYX, FIRM

PERSIMMONS 3 DAYS 32-35 PLUMP, RIPE, SOFT TO TOUCH

PINEAPPLE

UNRIPE	BY SIGHT	65-75	GOLDEN YELLOW, "PINEY" AROMA
RIPE	3 DAYS	40-50	GOLDEN YELLOW, "PINEY" AROMA

PLUMS &
PRUNES 1 DAY 32-35 FULL-COLORED, PLUMP, SLIGHTLY
SOFT

POTATOES 5 DAYS 65-75 SMOOTH, SOUND, FIRM

PUMPKINS BY
SIGHT 65-75 HARD, BLEMISH-FREE

RADISHES

CELLO	3 DAYS	32-35	MILD, BRIGHT, SMOOTH
GREEN TOP	1 DAY	32-35	MILD, BRIGHT, GREEN TOPS

RHUBARB 2 DAYS 32-35 CRISP, BRIGHT, STOUT

SHALLOTS	2 DAYS	32-35	GREEN, FRESH TOPS
SPINACH	3 DAYS	32-35	FRESH, IMMATURE, COLORFUL
SQUASH			
SUMMER	3 DAYS	40-50	CRISP, HEAVY, TENDER
WINTER	5 DAYS	55-60	HARD, BLEMISH-FREE
SWEET POTATOES	3 DAYS	55-60	BRIGHT, SOLID, WELL-SHAPED
TANGERINES	1 DAY	32-35	DEEP COLOR, FIRM, HEAVY
TOMATOES	3 DAYS	40-50	PLUMP, BRUISE-FREE, FIRM, UNIFORM RED COLOR
WATERMELONS			
CUT	1 DAY	32-35	MATURE, RED COLOR, FIRM
WHOLE	5 DAYS	50-60	MATURE, WELL-SHAPED

VII Customer Service

- A Definition of customer service – Being mindful of the customer in performing every task; it means more than simply not being rude or discourteous. The customer is our “boss”. Without customers we

have no job. Treating the customer in a courteous, attentive, appreciative manner is of the utmost importance.

B Customer service general:

- 1 Answer questions promptly and courteously. If you do not know the answer, find someone who does.
- 2 Greet each customer with a smile and “hello”. Call by name if known.

C Customer service specific:

- 1 If a customer requests something you do not have, make every effort to get it.
- 2 If a customer needs a smaller quantity of an item than we have available, break open a package to satisfy the customer’s request.
 - a Examples: Customer only wants 2 or 3 white potatoes and we carry only 5# or 10# bags. Open the bag and offer the 2 or 3 bigger potatoes in the bag.
 - b Walk up to the customer struggling with a 50# bag of potatoes and help them.
 - C Help the customer having a hard time opening a plastic bag.

You have now completed a self directed training process to support your store's produce sales/margin and success. If you have any questions that may not have been addressed in this booklet feel free to connect with your District Manager. Again Thank you for your commitment to having one of the best operated PRODUCE areas within the group.

SIGN OFF SHEET

Signature required after study of **Produce Training Manual**.

Store Manager

Produce Person

Date completed manual