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# STAR-K Kosher Classroom

# CHECKING FOR BUGS

## FOR PRODUCE IN THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA ONLY

November 2016

| Item | Method |
|---|---|
| Alfalfa Sprouts | A |
| Artichoke | B |
| Artichoke Bottoms | A |
| Asparagus | I |
| Asparagus, White | A |
| Barley | E |
| Basil | G |
| Beans | A |
| Bean Sprouts | A |
| Beets | A |
| Blackberries | B |
| Bok Choy | G |
| Broccoli | G |
| Brussels Sprouts | B |
| Butternut Squash | A |
| Cabbage | G |
| Cabbage, Red | G |
| Carob | H |
| Carrots | A |
| Cauliflower | G |
| Celery Stalks | D |
| Cherries | A |
| Chives | G |
| Cilantro | G |
| Collard Greens | G |
| Corn on the Cob | C |
| Cucumbers | A |
| Dates | H |
| Dill | G |
| Dried Spices | A |
| Edible Flowers | B |
| Eggplants | A |
| Endive | G |
| Endive, Belgian | D |
| Escarole | G |
| Fennel Bulb | H |
| Figs | H |
| Flour | A |
| Garlic | C |
| Grapes | D |
| Green Beans | A |
| Kale | G |
| Kohlrabi Bulb | A |
| Kohlrabi Leaves | G |
| Leeks | H |
| Lettuce | G |
| Mint Leaves | G |
| Mushrooms, Button | D |
| Mushrooms, Morel | B |
| Mushrooms, Oyster | B |
| Mushrooms, Portobello | D |
| Mustard Leaves | G |
| Nuts | A |
| Onions | A |
| Oregano | G |
| Parsley | G |
| Parsnips | A |
| Peas | A |
| Peppers | A |
| Pineapple | J |
| Potatoes | A |
| Radishes | A |
| Raisins | A |
| Raspberries | B |
| Rice | A |
| Rosemary | G |
| Rutabagas | A |
| Sage | G |
| Scallions | H |
| Spinach | G |
| Strawberries | F |
| Tomatoes | A |
| Turnips | A |
| Watercress | G |
| Zucchini | A |

# CHECKING METHODS

## A. NO CHECKING REQUIRED

Make sure everything is properly sealed and stored in a cool dry area. Improper storage can lead to infestation issues.
**Note:** Raisins, grains, and nuts should be purchased from companies that have proper quality control and storage practices.

## B. NOT RECOMMENDED

Checking requires specialized training or is not practical.

## C. REMOVE PEEL & RINSE

## D. RINSE WELL

1. Wash the produce under a direct stream of water.
2. No further checking is necessary.

## E. SOAKING METHOD

1. Place all the barley you wish to use in a white bowl.
2. Fill the bowl with water, a few inches over the top of the barley.
3. Allow to sit for 15-20 minutes.
4. If there are insects present, they will float to the top.
Note: barley infestations can vary by season and locale. Please check with our office if checking is currently required.

## F. SOAP WASH ONLY

1. Pre-rinse all the strawberries with plain water
2. Prepare a basin of detergent solution, using at least two tablespoons of detergent per gallon of water.
3. Agitate the strawberries in the solution for 10-15 seconds.
4. Let the strawberries soak for at least one minute in the solution.
5. Rinse off each berry.
6. It is advisable to remove the tops.
7. No further checking is required.

## G. THRIP CLOTH METHOD

1. Wash produce well.
   (**Note:** For broccoli and cauliflower, whole heads should be broken down into smaller pieces and warm water should be used to soak/wash them.)
2. Prepare a basin with water and a non-bleach and non-toxic dishwasher detergent solution. The water should feel slippery.
3. Agitate the produce in the solution for 15 seconds.
   (**Note:** For broccoli and cauliflower, soak for 30 seconds BEFORE agitating.)
4. Remove the produce from the basin and shake off excess water over the basin.
5. Pour water through the thrip cloth.
6. Check the thrip cloth over a light box for any insects.
7. If insects are found, repeat steps 1-6. This can be done up to three times.
If insects are still found on the third try, the produce should not be used. **Note:** If one does not have a thrip cloth, the water may be checked for infestation by placing a white basin over a light box.

## H. VISUAL CHECK

Do an internal and external inspection for any signs of infestation.
**Note for Leeks & Scallions:** Check inside tube and between leaves, as well as the outside for leaf-miner trails.

## I. VISUAL CHECK & THRIP CLOTH

Remove triangular side leaves and use the thrip cloth method on the tops. **Note:** Many people find peeling asparagus completely like a carrot yields a tasty kosher result with no further checking required.

## J. PEEL PROPERLY

Mites are being found in the crown and outer rind, and also the inside the blossom cups and crevices if the pineapple is not peeled properly. The pineapple should be peeled until only yellow fruit is visible. The fruit and cutting board should be rinsed after peeling since the insects often crawl onto the cutting board. The crown and rind should not be used on decorative platters since the insects can transfer to other fruit.