The Periodic Table of Produce

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>Apples</th>
<th>Ch</th>
<th>Cherries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Av</td>
<td>Avocados</td>
<td>Co</td>
<td>Coconut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>Lemons/Limes</td>
<td>Pp</td>
<td>Papayas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pl</td>
<td>Plums</td>
<td>Ar</td>
<td>Artichokes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- R = Store in refrigerator
- CDV = Store in a cool dry, well ventilated place
- RT = Store at room temperature

A few useful things to know about produce storage and this chart:
- For best results, start by choosing produce that is plump, colorful, and free of blemishes.
- The table shows the average maximum shelf life. Food may be edible after this time, but it's taste, texture, and nutritional value may be compromised. (Note: The chemicals and pesticides used in conventional agriculture can slow the decay of produce; organic produce tends to have a slightly shorter shelf life.)
- Unless otherwise indicated, produce should be stored unwashed and untrimmed. But with root vegetables, leafy tops can steal moisture from the roots, so if the vegetables won’t be used within 3 or 4 days, all but 1 to 2 inches of stem should be removed.
- Where “plastic” is indicated, plastic bags (tightly sealed) or airtight containers may be used. "Vented bags" refers to the perforated bag some produce comes in, a bag open at the top, or a plastic bag poked with about 20 holes.
- A paper towel inside a container can help control moisture. Use a dry one to absorb water or a damp one to add it.
- Ideally, refrigerated items should go in the crisper drawers.
- Keep fruits and vegetables in separate drawers. Many fruits emit ethylene, which can accelerate ripening.
- Items stored at room temperature should be kept out of direct sunlight.
- Promptly discard any rotten or moldy produce; it can contaminate the good stuff.

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