

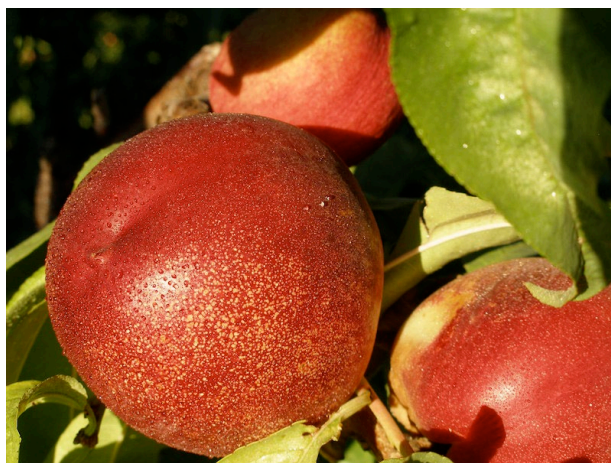
Summerfruit Retailer Guide: Selection, storage and handling

This leaflet provides information on how to select the best summer stonefruit and maximise shelf life and eating quality. Summerfruit are particularly sensitive to being stored between 2 and 8C - doing so may result in storage disorders and loss of shelf life.

Selection

Physical appearance

- Plums and nectarines come in a range of colours. Their colour dulls just before they are ready to eat.
- Apricots vary from yellow to orange and have a red 'blush'. Wait until they lose any green background before consuming.
- Stonefruit with a bright green background colour is immature. It will NOT ripen and will never be good to eat.
- Stonefruit should look good and be free of bruises.
- The sweetest nectarines have small light coloured spots (speckle) on the top half (shown right).



Speckled nectarines are the sweetest

Summerfruit are particularly sensitive to being stored between 2 and 8C. Doing so may result in storage disorders

Smell, taste and touch

- Fruit should have a delicate sweet fragrance.
- Test the fruit daily to check its eating quality. If it's very firm and acidic to taste, the fruit is immature. If it's dry or mealy, it has been stored at the incorrect temperature and won't be good to eat.
- Firmness is a personal preference. Some people like their summerfruit firm and crunchy, others prefer the fruit to be a bit riper. In general, summerfruit is best just as it starts to soften and should 'give' slightly when squeezed.



Transport in refrigerated vehicles (pantechs)

Storage and handling

Transport

- Transport in a refrigerated vehicle at 0° to 2° Celcius to maintain shelf life and quality.

Storage

- Store at 0° to 2° Celsius.
- Avoid storing Summerfruit between 2° and 8° Celsius: Fruit will not ripen naturally and may exhibit internal disorders upon ripening such as flesh browning, bleeding, rubberiness or mealiness (loss of juice).
- Fruit stored at higher temperatures (e.g. 20 °C+) will ripen faster so need to be consumed within 48 h.
- Fruit should not be stored beyond its normal storage life of between two and six weeks, depending on variety, maturity and storage conditions.

Handling

- Stonefruit bruises easily - minimise handling by displaying in the original trays. Avoid stacking fruit more than 2 deep when loose.
- Fruit which has been bruised by squeezing or dropping should be discarded.
- Brown Rot is a fungal disease usually found around the stem. Discard fruit with brown rot as it can transfer to other fruit.
- Only keep enough fruit for 2-3 days sales to avoid the quality deteriorating.



22-27°C DANGER
Too hot

15-22 °C Ripening fruit is best at room
temperature

8-15 °C Fruit ripens slowly

2-8 °C DANGER
Never store fruit between 2-8°C
– this causes fruit to become dry
and mealy

2 °C Keep fruit between 0-2°C for longer
storage to maintain quality

0°C DANGER
Never store below 0°C