

# Serving Up Food Safety



From the Food Safety Education  
Program  
Texas A&M AgriLife Extension  
Service

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## Do You Know? Retail Food Establishments

### What type of retail food businesses need a retail food permit?

A facility must have a retail food establishment permit if any food or beverage preparation is conducted or if the facility offers any type of time/temperature control for safety (TCS) food. A permit is not required if a facility only offers prepackaged non-TCS food, such as bottled drinks or snacks, or offers whole, uncut produce.

### What are the Texas Food Establishment Rules (TFER)?

The TFER is a comprehensive set of rules for the regulation of retail food establishments. These rules are based on the current FDA Model Food Code. In these rules, food establishments include: restaurants, grocery stores, mobile food vendors, temporary food establishments, roadside food vendors and others.

### Do local city/county health departments need to adopt the TFER?

Yes, these are the minimum standards for all retail food establishments in the state, whether they are under city, county, public health district, or state jurisdiction. A model city ordinance and a model county order are available at:

<https://www.dshs.state.tx.us/foodestablishments/model-ordinances.aspx>

Source and for more information: <https://www.dshs.state.tx.us/foodestablishments/faq.aspx>



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## Keep leafy greens greener: Extending life, safety, and crispness

Salad greens are among the most perishable produce items and keeping them crisp and fresh until they are used can be a challenge. Salad greens are delicate and have a relatively short lifespan and it takes some effort to keep them safe, crisp, and attractive.

It is important to purchase the freshest possible greens from a trusted location or approved source. This could be a local grocery store, or your back-yard garden. Either way, growing/harvesting quality produce or purchasing from a reliable vendor or grocery store not only helps ensure you are getting the freshest possible product, it also helps ensure you are getting the maximum nutritional benefit from that product and are better protected from the possibility of foodborne illness.

When preparing greens, whether it be peeling the leaves from a head of iceberg lettuce or chopping up arugula or romaine, wash the produce under cold running tap water to remove any lingering dirt or debris. This also helps reduce the presence of any pathogens that may be present.

Both the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Food and Drug Administration recommend washing produce under cold running water to get the best results. Consumers and retailers should not wash produce with detergent or soap.

Once rinsed, gently shake, or agitate the leaves and thoroughly pat them dry between paper towels or spin-dry them in a salad spinner. It is recommended to help preserve greens by placing them in a perforated or regular plastic bag or hard-sided container then store them in the refrigerator crisper. If you have a salad spinner, you can wash the greens in there, spin off the excess moisture, then place the spinner in the crisper for storage. For maximum crispness, it is recommended not to wash the greens until ready to be consumed. Placing the greens in a plastic container or other hard-sided box also provides the added benefit of protecting the greens from being crushed or bruised by other foods in the same area.

It is not recommended to rewash produce that is pre-washed and packaged. At the store, you may find produce like bagged salads labeled 'pre-washed' or 'ready-to-eat'. If you see this label, then you can safely use the produce without further washing.

For more information:

<https://www.fda.gov/media/77178/download#:~:text=Wash%20all%20produce%20thoroughly%20under,produce%20wash%20is%20not%20recommended.>

