

HOW TO EXTEND THE LIFE OF A HEAD OF LETTUCE (and generally most produce):

This will work for any produce that has a stem in which water can be absorbed. Remember the instructions for a live Christmas Tree? Cut off a small portion of the trunk to expose fresh trunk so it will absorb water. The same works for produce.

This should be done immediately after getting home with the lettuce, but will work at almost any time later.

First: Fill a sink 1/2 or 2/3 full of **TEPID** water. Tepid water is between the temp range of 90° - 110°. You can tell if it is **TEPID** when you put your hand under the water and only feel the water. You should feel no temp change from your normal body temp. Cold water will not be absorbed as easily, and hotter water will cook the Lettuce or other produce.

Remove the outer leaves you would normally remove, and look for any leaves with broken stems and remove them. Once the stem is broken the leaf will die and rot.

Take the head of Lettuce and look at the bottom of the stem. You will see it is dried and crusty. Take a sharp peeling knife (sharp is important to get a clean smooth cut, and also avoid cutting yourself) and trim off a thin slice of the stem to expose fresh wet stem.

Place the head of Lettuce in the sink of **TEPID** water for 10 - 20 minutes. The Lettuce will absorb as much water as it can hold in this period of time.

Remove the Lettuce from the water and drain. It does not need to be dry. You should also notice that the head has become crisper and resembles a freshly harvested head from your garden.

After draining the Lettuce place it in a plastic bag. This is to stop the flow of air across the leaves which dehydrates the produce quickly.

Put the head in the refrigerator. Avoid putting it in a crowded crisper drawer as this may cause breakage of the leaf stems and defeat your attempt to keep it fresh for a longer period.

Check the head in 3 or 4 days and if the leaves show limpness, repeat the process to refresh the head.

This procedure really does work and you will be amazed at how long you can make a head of lettuce last after it is harvested. I have had heads of leafy Lettuces (Romain, Red Leaf and Green Leaf) remain crisp and edible up to 30 days using this method. When I reached 30 days the wife got tired of my experiment and made a delicious salad with them.