



Broccoli Information Sheet

Purchasing Specifications

Specifications should state grade, type, size, and quantity. High quality broccoli has either a dark or bright green to purplish color with closed flower buds. Heads should be firm to hand pressure and compact. Stalks should be cleanly cut to the appropriate length for a particular grade standard or for crowns or florets. No more than 10% should have defects that make the broccoli unusable, and no more than 1% should be affected by decay.

U.S. Grades

All U.S. Fancy Grades have an absolute range for diameter only, which is primarily what sets the grade apart from the others. Other U.S. Grades allow for the diameters and lengths to be specified by the customer. The broccoli shall be free from decay and damage caused by overmaturity, discoloration of bud clusters or leaves, freezing, wilting, dirt or other foreign material, disease, insects, or mechanical or other means. The bud clusters should be fairly compact.

U.S. Grade	Min. to Max Diameter	Approximate Count per box
U.S. Fancy Bunched	Not less than 2 1/2"	6 to 8 1/2"
U.S. Fancy Crowns	2 1/2" to 5"	2 1/2 to 5"
U.S. Florets	3/4" to 3"	1 to 3 1/2"
U.S. No. 1 Bunched	No requirement	5 to 9"
U.S. No. 1 Crowns	No requirement	3 1/2 to 6"
U.S. No. 1 Florets	1 to 4"	1 1/2 to 4 1/2"
U.S. No. 2 Bunched	No requirement	No requirement
U.S. No. 2 Crowns	No requirement	No requirement
U.S. No. 2 Florets	No requirement	No requirement

Domestic Harvest

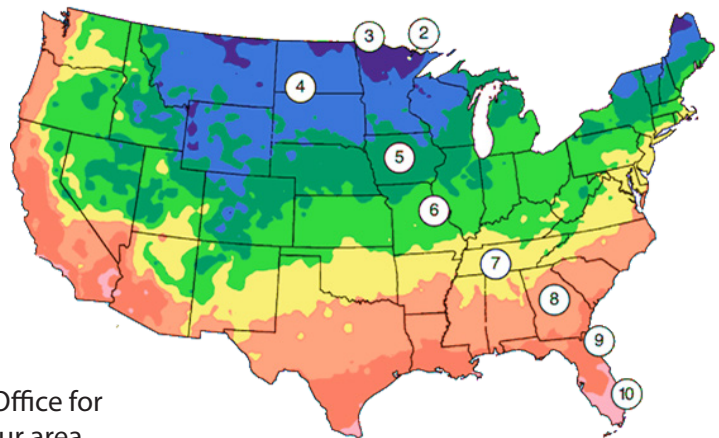
2, 3, 4: August - September

5, 6: July - November

7, 8: October - December

9, 10: November - April

Available in California year round.



Check with your county or state Cooperative Extension Office for specific information regarding broccoli production in your area.



Broccoli Information Sheet, continued

Receiving Guidelines

Desirable Characteristics



- Acceptable color and shape.
- Color should be between a medium green to dark purple, with brightly colored stalks.

Product Defects



Enlarged Buds



Yellowing



Bruising



Decay Butt



Decay

- There should be no flowering visible in the florets.

Storing and Handling Guidelines

- Store broccoli ideally at 32 °F with a relative humidity of 95%. Under these conditions, broccoli is acceptable for up to 4 weeks. Broccoli stored at refrigeration temperatures between 39 to 41 °F will have approximate shelf life of 5 days. Do not store broccoli in dry storage.
- Store unprocessed broccoli loosely covered to allow respiration.
- Store broccoli away from ethylene gas producing fruits and vegetables. Ethylene causes the florets to yellow and reduces the shelf life of broccoli.
- Wash broccoli under cold, running water just prior to use.
 - Broccoli quickly becomes limp and moldy in refrigeration if stored wet.
 - Use cut florets within 2 days.
- Broccoli may produce a sulfurous odor, characteristic of the vegetable. This is not a reason to discard.
- Steam broccoli in a single layer in a 2-inch perforated steam-table pan until al dente. Placing too much broccoli in a pan will result in the product on the bottom turning an olive green color.
- Cut broccoli into florets, blanch for two minutes, cool to 41 °F, package, and freeze for up to three months.

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For more information, please contact helpdesk@theicn.org.

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