

## Farm Operation – Harvesting

*Produce quality and food safety are prime concerns.*



1. Produce should be harvested at the right stage of maturity ensuring the best taste and quality.
2. Farmers must strictly observe the withholding period or pre-harvest interval specified on the pesticide label to avoid harvested produce tainted with pesticide residue.
3. Farmers should be cautious in the process to avoid personal injury such as cuts and bruises.
4. To maintain quality after harvest, farmers should handle produce carefully to avoid bruising or damaging them, for injury may cause decay and reduce storage life.
5. Harvested produce should be healthy and intact, with no symptoms relating to plant disease, pest infestation, or physical signs of damage.
6. To protect produce from water loss and slow down quality decline, farmers should in general try to harvest during the coolest part of the day - either early morning or late afternoon.



### About “GAP- CROP”

The GAP-CROP provides guidelines on local sustainable production of safe, healthy vegetables and fruits. It focuses on reducing the risk of chemical contamination (e.g. by pesticide and heavy metal) at farm level. This article is the ninth of a series of 12 Codes of Practice (COP) making up the GAP-CROP. Farmers may voluntarily follow this COP, identify potential problems in their farms, take appropriate control/mitigation measures, and monitor the effectiveness of such measures.





7. Farmers should immediately move harvested produce out of direct sunlight and keep them cool in the shade.

8. Farmers may apply pre-cooling (quickly reducing the temperature of produce at the time of their harvest) to maintain produce quality more effectively.

9. If harvested produce needs to be washed, excessive water should be removed (e.g. by draining and evaporation) before packing or storing. Water used for the washing must not be contaminated.

10. Containers and tools for harvesting should be kept clean and free from contamination. Farmers must not use these containers for temporarily holding agricultural chemicals.



**Next COP:**  
Farm Operation –  
Post-Harvesting

*For more information on GAP-CROP,  
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