



### Volcanic Eruptions: Advice on Food Safety

**Fruits and Vegetables with *Edible Peels*:** Tomatoes, cabbage, eggplant, lettuce, etc

- Firstly, wash your hands with soap and water.
- Wash all produce with tap water immediately before eating or using in a recipe.
- If available water is contaminated, use bottled water to wash all produce.
- Do not use boiled contaminated water for drinking or washing produce since the fluoride concentration in the water could be a health hazard.
- Fruits and vegetables heavily affected by fallen ash should be avoided.
- Dry with a clean cloth or paper towel to reduce the harmful bacteria that may be present on the surface of fresh produce.
- Fruits and vegetables can be washed by using the following dilution: 1 teaspoon baking soda to 2 cups of water; soak in the mixture for 5 to 10 minutes, then rinse with clean water. This will ensure that any dirt, pesticides, and general unwanted particles are removed. Lemon juice and white vinegar can be substituted for baking soda, eg. 1 tablespoon of vinegar or lemon juice to 6 cups of water.
- Clean produce before peeling to prevent ash, dirt and bacteria passing from the knife onto the fruit or vegetable.

**Fruits and Vegetables with *Inedible Peels*:** Breadfruit, bananas, avocados, grapefruit, lemons, limes, pumpkin, melon, squash etc.

- Use a vegetable brush to scrub fruits and vegetables with inedible peels to remove dirt and dust before using.
- Wash all produce, even if the peel is not eaten. Dirt and bacteria can be transferred from the peel to the inside of the fruit when it is sliced or peeled.

### Canned Fruits

- Canned and jar/bottled fruits and vegetables are best recommended for use during this period.
- Wash lids before opening, including canned beverages and soups so harmful particles do not fall into food.

### Remember to:

- Avoid fresh produce with mold, bruises or cuts.
- Avoid the use of soap to wash produce. Due to the porous surfaces on fresh produce, it can absorb the ingredients in soap, as well as it leaves a residue.
- Refrigerate fresh produce within two hours of peeling or cutting.
- Throw away leftover cut produce left at room temperature for more than two hours.
- Discard cooked vegetables after three to four days.