How to check a produce delivery: a receiving checklist.



THE SHORT ANSWER

Before the driver leaves, check the delivery against the order, weigh a sample of the kilo items, open every crate, and look for heat, bruising, wilting and rot. Note anything wrong on the delivery note and send your supplier a photo straight away.

Why the first ten minutes matter

A delivery is easiest to put right while the driver is still in your kitchen. Once the crates are in the cold room and the driver has gone, a short weight becomes your word against theirs, and bruised tomatoes could have been bruised by anyone.

A good receiving check takes about ten minutes for a normal restaurant order. It does not need to be formal. It needs to happen every time, done by someone who knows what was ordered.

Before the delivery arrives

- ☐ **Have the order to hand.** Print it, or keep it open on the phone of the person receiving. If you ordered in the Wapishi shop, the order is in your account.
- ☐ **Clear the space.** A clean table or a free shelf near the door, and room in the cold room for the chilled items.
- ☐ **Check the scale.** Put a known weight on it, such as a sealed 1 kg pack of sugar. A scale that reads light or heavy makes every check meaningless.
- ☐ **Name the receiver.** One person per shift who is allowed to refuse an item.

The receiving checklist

Work through it in this order. The first three steps catch most problems.

01 **Count against the order.** Every line: is it there, is it the right item, is it the right quantity? Watch for substitutions, such as green capsicum (hoho) instead of red, or white onions instead of red.

02 **Weigh the kilo items.** Weigh a sample, and always weigh the expensive ones. Weigh produce without the crate, or weigh an empty crate first and take it off.

03 **Count the piece and bunch items.** Count cabbages, pineapples and apples. For greens, check that bunches look like the size you agreed.

04 **Feel the temperature.** Greens and herbs should feel cool, not warm. Warm, sweating greens in a closed bag will not last.

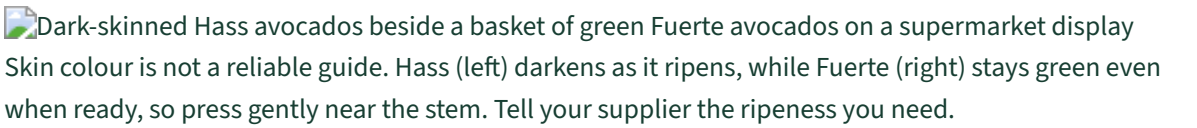
05 **Open every crate.** Look under the top layer. Bruising, mould and wet patches hide at the bottom.

06 **Cut one sample.** For avocados, mangoes and pawpaw, cut one to check the inside.

07 **Write it down.** Note any shortfall, substitution or rejected item on the delivery note before you sign, and ask the driver to see it.

What good looks like, item by item

ITEM	ACCEPT	QUESTION IT
Sukuma, spinach, managu, terere	Firm, deep green leaves, cool to the touch	Yellow edges, slimy stems, warm or wet bunches
Dhania, mint	Upright, fragrant, no black leaves	Wilted, dark or slimy at the base
Tomatoes	The ripeness you ordered, firm, unbroken skin	Split skins, soft patches, leaking at the bottom of the crate
Onions	Dry, papery skins, firm necks	Soft necks, sprouting, damp or mouldy skins
Potatoes	Firm, clean, no green patches	Green skin, sprouts, cuts or soft spots
Capsicum (hoho)	Glossy, firm, heavy for its size	Wrinkled skin, soft patches, black spots
Cabbage	Heavy, tight head, fresh outer leaves	Light for its size, split head, slimy outer leaves
Avocados, mangoes	The ripeness you ordered, no deep bruises	Sunken patches, cracked skin, grey or stringy flesh in a sample
Bananas	Bunch intact, ripeness as ordered	Split skins, black and soft through


Dark-skinned Hass avocados beside a basket of green Fuerte avocados on a supermarket display
Skin colour is not a reliable guide. Hass (left) darkens as it ripens, while Fuerte (right) stays green even when ready, so press gently near the stem. Tell your supplier the ripeness you need.

> “Ripeness as ordered” matters. Firm avocados that will be ready on Saturday are a good delivery for a weekend menu and a bad one for tonight. Tell your supplier which you need.

When something is wrong

Most problems are honest mistakes: a crate packed for another order, a short bunch, a scale that drifted. They are fixed fastest when the report is clear.

- [ ] **Photograph it with the delivery note.** One photo of the item and one of the note, before anything is moved.

- [ ] **Say exactly what is wrong.** “Tomatoes: ordered 10 kg, received 8.6 kg” is fixed in minutes. “Tomatoes not okay” starts a conversation.
- [ ] **Tell the supplier the same day.** Send it while the driver is there if you can.
- [ ] **Keep the item.** Do not throw away rejected produce until the supplier has agreed what happens next.

With Wapishi, send the photos and the order details on WhatsApp to 0769 912 227. If this is your first order and you want to judge quality before committing, ask for a free sample pack first.

Make it a habit, not a fight

Suppliers notice which kitchens check. A kitchen that weighs, counts and reports calmly gets fewer short deliveries, because everyone in the chain knows mistakes will be seen. Keep a simple log: date, supplier, what was short or rejected. After a month it tells you which items and which days need more attention.

Prices are only half of what you pay for. Compare this week’s prices with what actually arrives on your scale, and you will know what produce really costs your kitchen.

Quick answers

Should I check a delivery while the driver is waiting?

Yes. A ten-minute check with the driver present is the only time a short weight or a damaged crate is easy to prove. Agree a receiving window with your supplier so the driver expects it.

Do I need to weigh every item?

No. Weigh a sample of the items sold by the kilo, especially the expensive ones, and count anything sold by the piece or bunch.

What if produce looks fine outside but is bad inside?

Cut one sample of items such as avocados, mangoes and pawpaw. If you find a problem after the driver has gone, photograph it and tell your supplier the same day.

Who should receive deliveries?

One named person per shift who knows the order, has access to the scale and is allowed to refuse items. Deliveries signed by whoever is nearest are where shortfalls slip through.

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