

## Tips for keeping your reusable bags clean and safe

There are many good reasons to use **reusable bags** for your shopping, not least reducing the impact of single-use plastic and paper bags on our environment and waste stream. Converting to reusable bags takes a little planning, habit change, and effort to keep bags clean and safe for transporting foods.

### US Government Food Safety recommendations include:

- Reserving one bag for transporting raw meat/seafood and cooked food that might leak and one bag for transporting fruits and vegetables that may be consumed raw, thereby preventing cross contamination.
- Both bags should be easily washable and it is recommended that they be thrown into the laundry weekly or whenever leaks have occurred.
- Goods that are boxed or packaged in sealed containers can be safely transported in any bag, though the flat bottomed bags are able to fit boxed goods more easily.

### Tips on how to keep your reusable bags clean:

- Cotton/canvas and nylon bags: Put in the washer with hot water and soap, then machine dry.
- Woven or Nonwoven Polypropylene Bags (made from recycled plastic): Machine wash on gentle cycle with soap and warm/cold water or hand wash with soap and water, air dry.
- Nylon or Polyester Bags: Hand wash in warm water and soap. Turn inside out and air dry.
- Bamboo or Hemp Bags: Machine-wash on gentle cycle with soap and cold water, machine or air dry.
- Insulated Bags: Hand wash in warm water and soap or wipe with disinfecting wipes, especially along the seams, air dry.

