FRESH PREP. MORE CONTROL.

The Fresh Prep Buyer's Guide

How to choose produce prep equipment that fits your volume, your crew, and your counter space

2026 EDITION



nemco® | FOOD EQUIPMENT

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Why operators are revisiting in-house prep

Pre-cut produce earned its place in a lot of kitchens. Cutting lettuce, onions, and tomatoes by hand is slow work. It ties up a person and a board for a long stretch of the morning, and two cooks rarely cut the same way. Buying produce already cut took that job off a crew that was already stretched thin.

Recent conversations about produce sourcing have operators taking a second look at that trade. When produce arrives cut, someone else has already decided how much of each head to trim, what size to cut it, and when to make the cut. Prepping in-house brings those decisions back into your kitchen.

What comes back with them is control: over quality, over consistency from one shift to the next, over waste, and over how the prep day runs.

The sticking point has always been labor. A cutter that clears a case of lettuce in minutes, or a slicer that holds its blade alignment without adjustment, turns fresh prep into something a crew can fit inside the schedule it already keeps.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This guide works through a purchase in order. Start with your own operation, compare the equipment types, and then match the two.

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Reading this with a colleague? Section 4 and the checklist are the pages to work through together.

What to assess before you buy

Before you compare models, take stock of your own kitchen. Four things decide which equipment fits: how much produce you prep, how often you prep it, who does the work, and where the work happens. The answers here carry straight into section 4, so it pays to write them down.

VOLUME

- Which three produce items does your kitchen go through fastest?
- Which of those do you buy pre-cut today?
- How much of each do you use on a typical day, and on your busiest one?
- Could a new menu item, location, or daypart push that volume up?

PREP FREQUENCY

- Do you prep once a day in a batch, or several times a day to keep pace with service?
- Would you rather cut closer to service, so produce looks its best on the plate and the line?
- Does one item need different cuts across the menu, such as diced onion in one dish and sliced in another?

STAFFING

- Who handles prep now, and how much of the shift does it take?
- How often does the prep crew change, and how long does it take to train someone new?
- Will the person who runs the unit also change the blades and break it down?
- If the cutting took less time, where would that time go?

COUNTER SPACE

- Where will the unit live: on the counter, on the wall, or on a shelf until prep starts?
- Can it sit over a pan or container, so cut product drops straight in?
- Is there room nearby to break it down and clean it during the shift?
- What else needs that counter during service?



What each type of equipment solves

Produce prep equipment falls into four groups: cutters, choppers, slicers, and tomato slicers. Each group answers a different problem, and a kitchen that preps several items will often need more than one.

CUTTERS

Built for one high-volume item, cut the same way every time

When lettuce is the biggest single item on your prep list, a dedicated cutter handles it in minutes and at the same size every time.



Easy LettuceKutter™ 55650

- Cuts a case of cored lettuce in less than three minutes (coring the heads stays a separate step)
- Scalloped blade edges cut cleanly with no crushing or bruising, so lettuce holds its color longer
- Cut options: 1/2-, 3/4-, 1-, and 2-inch squares; 1 x 2-inch rectangles; and 3/8- and 1/2-inch slices
- Interlocked blades avoid flexing, and the replaceable blades need no tensioning
- The only lettuce cutter on the market whose blade and pusher come apart for cleaning without tools
- An optional support board (55491) fits over 20- and 32-gallon lettuce keeper containers

CHOPPERS

Built for variety, with several cuts from one unit

Choppers earn their counter space in kitchens that prep a mix of vegetables. One unit handles several cuts, and changing the cut means swapping a blade assembly.



Easy Chopper 3™ 57500

Nemco's recommended chopper for most kitchens: one unit chops, slices, and wedges.

- A 4 1/4-inch square cutting area for large vegetables, which cuts down on pre-cutting
- Chop models at 1/4, 3/8, 1/2, or 1 inch and slice models at 1/4, 3/8, or 1/2 inch, plus 4-, 6-, and 8-section wedger kits
- Color-coded push blocks and blade assemblies, matched to cut size, reduce mix-ups at changeover
- A patented cleaning gasket pulls out by its two tabs
- Blade assemblies sit apart from the guide rods, so a crew member can change them without removing the bumpers
- The base clears a 1/6- or 1/3-size, six-inch-deep food pan or a two-quart round pan
- Handles fresh herbs such as cilantro, basil, and parsley



The original Easy Chopper™ 55500

The smaller, lower-cost choice when the Easy Chopper 3 is more than a kitchen needs.

- A 3 1/2-inch square cutting area
- Chop models at 1/4, 3/8, 1/2, or 1 inch, plus 4-, 6-, and 8-section wedger kits
- Once peeled, chops an onion in less than 15 seconds

SLICERS

Built for even slices at the thickness your menu calls for

Slicers suit the items your menu serves in rounds or strips. An even thickness keeps portions consistent and plates looking the same from one cook to the next.



Easy Slicer™ Vegetable Slicer 55200AN

- Set the slice anywhere from 1/16 to 1/2 inch on a calibrated gauge with one thumbscrew
- Fixed cut sizes are also available
- Optional shredding plates fit all units
- A mounting base (55816, sold separately) holds the workstation steady and lifts off for cleaning and storage



Easy Onion Slicer 2 56750

- Factory pre-tensioned blades never need tightening
- Two tiers of scalloped blades hold slice thickness consistent
- One slice thickness per model: 3/16, 1/4, 3/8, or 1/2 inch, for onions up to 4 inches in diameter
- Also slices celery, potatoes, pickles, firm tomatoes, and citrus



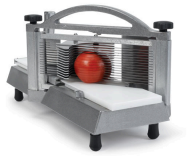
Green Onion Slicer Plus 55250A

- Mounts on the wall, which keeps it off the counter
- Makes 3/16-inch slices in one stroke
- Legs support a 1/3-size pan, 4 inches deep
- Blades replace individually
- Also slices mushrooms, cucumbers, olives, and green peppers

TOMATO SLICERS

Built for clean slices from soft produce

Tomatoes show a dull or misaligned blade before anything else on the prep list does. A dedicated tomato slicer keeps the slice clean and the thickness even, and the two below differ mainly in the tomatoes they hold.



Easy Tomato Slicer 2™ 56600

- A pre-tensioned cartridge blade assembly stays aligned and tight without adjustment
- Cleanly slices even over-ripe tomatoes
- One thickness per model: 3/16, 1/4, or 3/8 inch, for tomatoes up to 4 1/2 inches wide
- A scalloped blade option is available on all models
- Life-tested on 25,000 pounds of tomatoes and still cutting



Roma PLUS Tomato Slicer 56610A-1, 56610A-2

- A dual-profile cradle holds Romas and standard tomatoes
- Stainless scalloped blades pierce the tomato with no crushing or squeezing
- The cartridge blade assembly pops in and out with two pins
- Suction-cup feet hold it to the counter, and it is compact enough to move between stations
- One slice thickness per model: 3/16 or 1/4 inch



Pair it with the **Easy Scooper™ (55874-2)**, which removes tomato stems in one motion.

How to match equipment to your operation

Start with the produce you prep most. That item usually decides the first piece of equipment, and your answers from section 2 decide which model.

Start with what you prep most

IF YOUR KITCHEN PREPS A LOT OF…		START WITH	WHY IT FITS
Head lettuce or romaine for salads, wraps, and sandwiches		**Easy LettuceKutter™**	Cuts a case of cored lettuce in less than three minutes, in squares, rectangles, or slices
Onions, peppers, celery, and mixed vegetables in several cuts		**Easy Chopper 3™**	Chops, slices, and wedges on one unit by swapping blade assemblies
Sliced onions		**Easy Onion Slicer 2**	Pre-tensioned blades, four models with one thickness each, for onions up to 4 inches
Standard tomatoes for sandwiches, salads, and subs		**Easy Tomato Slicer 2™**	Cartridge blades stay aligned without adjustment, three models with one thickness each
Roma tomatoes, or a mix of Romas and standard tomatoes		**Roma PLUS Tomato Slicer**	One cradle holds both shapes
Green onions, mushrooms, and garnish items		**Green Onion Slicer Plus**	Makes 3/16-inch slices in one stroke from a wall mount
A range of fruits and vegetables at different thicknesses		**Easy Slicer™ Vegetable Slicer**	One thumbscrew sets the slice from 1/16 to 1/2 inch
Fresh herbs		**Easy Chopper 3™**	Cuts cilantro, basil, parsley, and more

If two rows describe your kitchen, that is normal. A sandwich line might run a tomato slicer and an onion slicer side by side, while a salad program leans on the lettuce cutter and a chopper.

Then let your operation narrow the choice

IF VOLUME IS THE PRESSURE

High volume on a single item makes the strongest case for a dedicated cutter. The Easy LettuceKutter cuts a case of cored lettuce in less than three minutes, and the optional support board (55491) sets it over a 20- or 32-gallon lettuce keeper so the cut lettuce drops straight into the container. That takes the trip from board to bin out of the job.

IF YOUR CREW CHANGES OFTEN

When new people rotate through prep, the equipment has to be hard to set up wrong. The Easy Chopper 3 color-codes its push blocks and blade assemblies by cut size, so a new hire can match them at a glance. The pre-tensioned blades on the Easy Tomato Slicer 2 and the Easy Onion Slicer 2 never need adjusting, which helps keep the slice consistent whoever is on shift, and Nemco designed the onion slicer so even a newer employee can change its blades.

Breakdown matters as much as setup. The Easy LettuceKutter's blade and pusher come apart without tools, the Easy Chopper 3's cleaning gasket pulls out by two tabs, and the Roma PLUS cartridge releases with two pins. Equipment that comes apart that readily fits inside a normal cleaning routine instead of waiting for a slow day.

IF COUNTER SPACE IS TIGHT

Look up, and look underneath. The Green Onion Slicer Plus mounts on the wall. The Easy Chopper 3 clears a six-inch-deep 1/6- or 1/3-size pan, so cut product lands in the pan without a second transfer. The Roma PLUS is compact and portable, with suction-cup feet that hold it to the counter at whichever station needs it that shift.

IF YOU RUN MORE THAN ONE LOCATION

Consistency across locations comes down to the cut. A fixed blade assembly gives every unit the same cut size, so a 1-inch square in one kitchen matches the 1-inch square in the next, which helps keep portions even from store to store. On the Easy LettuceKutter, interlocked blades avoid flexing, which helps keep the square uniform through the whole case. When you spec equipment for several units, spec the model and the blade assembly together.

Bring the case to your team

If someone else signs off on this purchase, they will want to know what changes in the kitchen. Your answers from section 2 cover most of it. Bring these to the conversation:

- The produce you buy pre-cut today, and the items you would bring in-house first
- Who will run the equipment, on which shift, and what the crew will do with the time the cutting no longer takes
- Where each unit will live, and how it fits the cleaning routine
- What the warranty covers and excludes, and what replacement blades and assemblies cost (your Nemco rep can price the parts)
- A demonstration or a trial. Nemco runs test kitchens in Phoenix, Arizona, and Ohio, many Nemco reps give on-site demonstrations, and you can ask about trial opportunities.



THREE THINGS WORTH KNOWING

1 A case of cored lettuce in less than three minutes.

The Easy LettuceKutter cuts at that pace, which moves lettuce from the longest job on the list to one of the shortest.

2 Scalloped blades cut cleanly, with no crushing or bruising.

Lettuce cut that way holds its color longer, which can mean less of it ends up in the bin at the end of the week.

3 The time saved on cutting goes back into prep.

A crew that finishes the cut sooner has more time for washing and peeling before produce reaches the line.

SELECTION CHECKLIST

Use this checklist before you buy

Work through it with whoever shares the decision. Anything you cannot check off makes a good first question for your Nemco rep.

YOUR OPERATION

- ☐ Our three highest-volume produce items: _____
- ☐ Items we buy pre-cut today: _____
- ☐ Typical daily volume of each, and busiest-day volume: _____
- ☐ We prep: ☐ once a day ☐ several times a day ☐ by daypart
- ☐ Who runs prep, and on which shift: _____
- ☐ Where the equipment will live: ☐ counter ☐ wall ☐ stored between uses

THE EQUIPMENT

- ☐ It handles our highest-volume item at the cut sizes our menu uses
- ☐ One unit covers the cut sizes we need, by swapping blade assemblies
- ☐ Its blades stay aligned without adjustment, or we have a plan for adjusting them
- ☐ A new crew member can change the blades without help
- ☐ It breaks down for cleaning without tools
- ☐ It fits over the pan or container we already use
- ☐ Replacement blades and assemblies are available, and we know what they cost
- ☐ We have seen durability or life-test information for it

THE DECISION

- ☐ We know what the limited lifetime warranty covers, and what it excludes (page 10)
- ☐ We have seen it run, through a demonstration, a test kitchen visit, or a trial
- ☐ The person who signs off has the answers from page 8
- ☐ We have a quote from our Nemco rep or foodservice equipment dealer

LIMITED LIFETIME WARRANTY

What the limited lifetime warranty covers

Nemco now backs its food preparation products with a limited lifetime warranty. For a buyer, that means the structure and working mechanism of the unit stay covered for the life of the product. Here is what it includes, in plain terms.



WHAT IT COVERS

- Structural and mechanical components, against defects in materials and workmanship under normal use
- For the lifetime of the product, starting the day the original user puts it into service
- Bushings and bearings, for two years from that same day
- Nemco repairs or replaces a covered part, at its discretion

WHAT IT DOES NOT COVER

- Blades, which wear with use. Every cutter, chopper, and slicer in this guide takes replaceable blades or blade assemblies, so plan for them in your parts budget.
- Other wear-and-tear items
- Damage from misuse, abuse, improper installation, unauthorized modification, or improper maintenance
- Labor, freight, and service costs, unless the law requires otherwise. The warranty covers parts.

WHO IT COVERS

- The original user. The warranty does not transfer if the equipment changes hands.
- Equipment used in the United States

MAKING A CLAIM

Call Nemco's Customer Experience Team with your company name, address, phone number, model number, serial number if the unit has one, and a description of the problem.

Read the full warranty terms →

NEXT STEP

Talk to a Nemco rep about your operation

Bring your checklist. A Nemco sales rep can work through your volume, your crew, and your counter space with you, recommend the units and blade assemblies that fit, and put together a quote. If you would like to see the equipment first, ask about a demonstration at one of Nemco's test kitchens (Phoenix, Arizona, or Ohio), an on-site demo, or a trial.

Find Your Nemco Rep

Opens Nemco's rep locator on nemco.com

Prefer to call? Reach Nemco at **800.782.6761**. You can also order through your foodservice equipment dealer.

