



Path to Health

How to spend your organic money?

The US based nonprofit organization Environmental Working Group (www.ewg.org) has developed a list of common fruits and vegetables ranked according to the amount of pesticide residue. This list is based on tests by the US Department of Agriculture and the Food and Drug Administration. Peaches which carry the heaviest load, are given a rank of “100”, while onions have the lowest load of “ 1.”

“DIRTY DOZEN”

Must-buy organic foods

Fruit

- Peaches (100)
- Apples (96)
- Strawberries (85)
- Nectarines (84)
- Cherries (75)
- Grapes, imported (68) (Chili being the worst offender)
- Pears (65)

Vegetables

- Bell peppers (86)
- Celery (85)
- Spinach (60)
- Lettuce (69)
- Potatoes (58)

Other organic foods worth considering:

- Milk
- Beef
- Poultry

There are over 4000 varieties of drugs such as synthetic hormones and antibiotics that are fed to animals which are slaughtered for meat, or used for dairy and eggs. These foods have been

linked to increased antibacterial resistance in humans, endocrine disrupters, damage to the flora in the GI tract which can lead to an imbalance in the good: bad bacteria ratio (dysbiosis).

CONSISTENTLY CLEAN

No need to go organic with these foods:

Fruit

- Bananas (16)
- Kiwi (14)
- Mangos (9)
- Papaya (21)
- Pineapples (7)

Vegetables

- Asparagus (11)
- Avocado (1)
- Broccoli (18)
- Cauliflower (39)
- Corn (2)
- Eggplant (19)
- Onions (1)
- Peas (11)

For a full listing visit www.foodnews.org

How to protect yourself from “non-organic” pesticides:

Produce

- Buy fresh, local vegetables and fruits in season. When long storage and long-distance shipping are not required, fewer pesticides are used. Find your local farmers market at www.farmersmarketscanada.ca or www.farmersmarketontario.com.
- Trim tops and the very outer portions of celery, lettuce, cabbages, and other leafy vegetables that may contain the bulk of pesticide residues.
- Peel and cook when appropriate, even though some nutrients and fiber are lost in the process.
- Eat a *wide variety* of fruits and vegetables. This would limit exposure to any one type of pesticide residue.
- Purchase only fruits and vegetables that are subject to US and Canadian regulations. Imports from other countries aren't as stringent about their pesticide guidelines.
- Wash and Scrub produce thoroughly .With conventional foods, you can't avoid pesticides that are absorbed through a plant's roots. However, much of the residue from sprayed

chemicals is blocked by the plant's skin. Therefore, vigorous washing can help remove the remnants.

A number of companies also offer non-toxic wash products, which can be sprayed on produce and rinsed, a process manufacturers claim removes more residue than water alone. These sprays also help remove fertilizers, dirt, fungi, waxes and germs from pickers. One such brand is called Veggie Wash, or you can make your own.

VEGGIE WASH

1 tablespoons organic lemon juice
10 drops grapefruit seed extract
2 tablespoons baking soda
1 cup filtered water
3/4 cup white vinegar

1. Mix well in a sprayer bottle.
2. Shake before use.
3. Spray produce (except mushrooms, because they absorb and retain water) and let sit for 5-10 minutes.
4. Rinse well

Meats and Poultry

Trim the fat from meat, and fat and skin from poultry and fish. Toxins are concentrated in fat tissue. Better yet, eat less fat! Because most food pollutants dissolve in fats, eating less fat, especially animal fat, automatically reduces dangers of toxins. *Avoid:* fatty meats, gravy lard, meat drippings, and deep-fried foods.

Seafood

Take precautions with fish. Small fish are safer than big fish, because they are lower on the food chain and will contain less heavy metals such as mercury as well as other chemicals. For a complete list of fish to avoid and fish to consume visit www.seachoice.org and you can download Canada's Safe Fish Sea Guide.