

Environmental Working Group's
SHOPPER'S GUIDE TO

PESTICIDES in PRODUCE



DIRTY DOZEN CLEANEST 12

Buy These Organic Lowest in Pesticides

WORST

Peaches
Apples
Sweet Bell Peppers
Celery
Nectarines
Strawberries
Cherries
Lettuce
Grapes (Imported)
Pears
Spinach
Potatoes

Onions
Avocado
Sweet Corn (Frozen)
Pineapples
Mango
Sweet Peas (Frozen)
Asparagus
Kiwi
Bananas
Cabbage
Broccoli
Eggplant

BEST

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Why Should You Care About Pesticides?

There is growing consensus in the scientific community that small doses of pesticides and other chemicals can adversely affect people, especially during vulnerable periods of fetal development and childhood when exposures can have long lasting effects. Because the toxic effects of pesticides are worrisome, not well understood, or in some cases completely unstudied, shoppers are wise to minimize exposure to pesticides whenever possible.

What's the Difference?

An EWG simulation of thousands of consumers eating high and low pesticide diets shows that people can lower their pesticide exposure by almost 90 percent by avoiding the top twelve most contaminated fruits and vegetables and eating the least contaminated instead. Eating the 12 most contaminated fruits and vegetables will expose a person to about 14 pesticides per day, on average. Eating the 12 least contaminated will expose a person to less than 2 pesticides per day. Less dramatic comparisons will produce less dramatic reductions, but without doubt using the Guide provides people with a way to make choices that lower pesticide exposure in the diet.

Will Washing and Peeling Help?

Nearly all of the data used to create these lists already considers how people typically wash and prepare produce (for example, apples are washed before testing, bananas are peeled). While washing and rinsing fresh produce may reduce levels of some pesticides, it does not eliminate them. Peeling also reduces exposures, but valuable nutrients often go down the drain with the peel. The best option is to eat a varied diet, wash all produce, and choose organic when possible to reduce exposure to potentially harmful chemicals.

How Was This Guide Developed?

The produce ranking was developed by analysts at the not-for-profit Environmental Working Group (EWG) based on the results of nearly 51,000 tests for pesticides on produce collected by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration between 2000 and 2005. A detailed description of the criteria used in developing the rankings as well as a full list of fresh fruits and vegetables that have been tested is available at www.foodnews.org.

Selected resources for local, seasonal and organic foods and information.

Close to Home

Vancouver Food coop
<http://www.vancouverfood.coop/>

Vancouver Farmer's Market
<http://www.vancouverfarmersmarket.com/>

Local Harvest
Real food, real farmers, real community
<http://www.localharvest.org/>

Foodroutes.org
<http://www.foodroutes.org/>
A great resource to connect with local food sources and learn about why this is important

The Center for Eco-dynamic Agriculture
www.eco-dynamic.org
This is our new website for eco-dynamic agriculture

National

Union of Concerned Scientists
<http://www.ucsusa.org/>
They are working hard on food issues. Their website has a lot of information and great links. Click on "Food" from their home page.

Organic Consumers Association
<http://www.organicconsumers.org/>
A non-profit advocacy group campaigning for Health, Justice, Sustainability, Peace and Democracy. Campaigning to keep organic standards strong



Seasons of Availability for Regional Crops

Fruit/Veg.	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Apples	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	• New	•	•	•	•
Artichokes							•	•	•			
Apricot						•	•					
Asian Pear	•	•							•	•	•	•
Asparagus					•	•	•					
Beans, Green							•	•	•			
Bell Peppers							•	•	•	•		
Blueberries						•	•	•				
Broccoli							•	•	•	•		
Brussels Sprouts	•	•							•	•	•	
Cabbage	•						•	•	•	•	•	•
Carrots						•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Cauliflower	•	•					•	•	•	•	•	
Cherries						•	•					
Corn								•	•	•		
Cucumbers							•	•	•			
Eggplant								•	•			
Figs								•	•	•		
Garlic	•	•						• New	•	•	•	•
Grapes									•	•		
Kale	•	•	•	•				•	•	•	•	•
Hardy Kiwi	•	•							•	•	•	•
Mushrooms	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Nectarines							•	•	•			
Onions, Dry	•	•	•	•	•	•	• New	•	•	•	•	•
Onions, Green						•	•	•	•	•		
Parsnip	•	•	•							•	•	•
Peaches							•	•	•			
Pears	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	• New	•	•	•	•
Plums							•	•	•			
Potatoes	•	•	•	•	•	•	• New	•	•	•	•	•
Raspberries						•	•	•	•	•		
Rhubarb				•	•	•	•	•				
Shell Peas				•	•	•	•					
Snow Peas				•	•	•	•					
Spinach					•	•	•	•	•	•		
Squash Zucc.						•	•	•	•			
Strawberries						•	•	•	•			
Tomatoes							•	•	•	•		
Watermelon								•	•	•		
Winter Squash	•	•						•	•	•	•	•

Key

CSAs/Home Garden		Grocery Stores/Co-ops	•
Farmers' Markets/CSAs		New Season Begins	New

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