



The **ORGANIC** Shopping List

**It's sad but true:
Some produce items are
more subject to pesticide
contamination than
others. Learn which
fruits and vegetables
make up the "dirty
dozen"—and why
you should buy them
organically.**

GOING ORGANIC is always a good thing, but looking for that green-and-white organic label is more important in some instances than others. Take fresh produce, for example. Everyone from the federal government to us here at *ET* are constantly telling you to load your plate with fresh fruits and veggies for their nutritional value. Unfortunately, some produce items are especially polluted with pesticide and other chemical residues. The Environmental Working Group, a DC-based watchdog organization, has a Shopper's Guide to Pesticides in Produce (www.foodnews.org), which ranks vegetables and fruits based on the results of almost 51,000 tests conducted by federal agencies between 2000 and 2005. To learn which items made EWG's "Dirty Dozen" list, turn the page.

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PEACHES

The bad news: More than 86% of the samples tested carried residues of multiple pesticides; one sample contained traces of nine separate chemicals

The good news: Provides vitamins C and A, niacin, potassium and fiber



APPLES

The bad news: Tested positive for 50 different chemicals

The good news: Contains boron and vitamins A and C, in addition to between 4 and 5 mg of fiber per apple; also contains phytonutrients that include *quercetin*, linked to reductions in cholesterol and cancer risk, and to improvements in lung function



SWEET BELL PEPPERS

The bad news: One sample was contaminated with 11 different pesticides; more than 81% of all samples carried residues

The good news: Has high levels of vitamin C and beta-carotene, and significant amounts of vitamin B6, fiber and other nutrients; also contains *lycopene*, a phytonutrient associated with reduced risk of prostate and other cancers



CELERY

The bad news: More than 94% of all samples had pesticide residues

The good news: Contains a number of minerals including calcium, magnesium, phosphorus, potassium and manganese; modern studies support Traditional Chinese Medicine use for blood pressure regulation



NECTARINES

The bad news: Had the single highest percentage of samples testing positive at 97.3%

The good news: Contains *lutein*, a phytonutrient linked to healthy skin and reduced risk for a vision disorder called macular degeneration; also provides vitamins A and C



STRAWBERRIES

The bad news: Over 92% of all samples carried traces of 38 different pesticides

The good news: Provides high levels of vitamin C and fiber; also contains *anthocyanins*, which are potent antioxidants, and *ellagic acid*, which has shown anti-cancer effects



CHERRIES

The bad news: Almost 76% of all samples were contaminated with two or more chemicals
The good news: Provides vitamin C and fiber in addition to anti-inflammatory phytonutrients; may help protect against gout



LETTUCE

The bad news: Subject to contamination by 57 pesticides
The good news: Nutrients vary by variety—the darker, the better (sorry, iceberg); romaine lettuce is low in calories and high in nutrition, making it a first-rate diet aid



GRAPES (IMPORTED)

The bad news: More than 84% of all samples carried chemical traces
The good news: Best known as a source of *resveratrol*, a phytonutrient that boosts heart health by protecting cholesterol from oxidation and inhibiting the formation of artery-clogging clots



PEARS

The bad news: Carried traces of 33 different pesticides
The good news: Contains soluble fiber, the kind that helps to lower cholesterol levels, along with vitamin C and copper



SPINACH

The bad news: Some samples were contaminated with six separate chemicals
The good news: A true health superstar, with significant amounts of vitamins A, B2, C and K along with folate, iron, magnesium and manganese; also contains cancer-fighting phytonutrients



POTATOES

The bad news: 81% carried detectable levels of contamination
The good news: Provides a considerable amount of vitamin C along with copper, fiber, manganese, potassium and vitamin B6

Source: Environmental Working Group; for a complete report, visit www.foodnews.org