



# *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.**

**G**OING 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](http://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](http://www.foodnews.org)