



When to Choose Organic

SPENDING MONEY ON PRODUCE is investing in your health because fruits and vegetables are packed with vitamins, minerals and antioxidants that your body needs to fight disease, grow and operate at its peak. Eating more fruits and vegetables—organic or not—is better than eating none at all. While many would love to be able to buy organic produce all the time, it can be expensive.

Each year, the Environmental Working Group (EWG), a nonprofit organization, publishes a Shopper's Guide to Pesticides that identifies fruits and vegetables with the highest and lowest pesticide residues. Pesticides can be absorbed into fruits and vegetables, leaving trace residues. Research has shown that higher exposure to pesticides may increase the risk of health consequences.

EWG'S 2024 CLEAN 15

These fruits and vegetables had the **lowest amounts** of pesticide residues, according to EWG's analysis of the most recent USDA data, starting with the least contaminated. If budget is a concern, you can feel good about buying these 15 fruits and vegetables conventionally grown.



CLEANEST

- 1 Avocados
- 2 Sweet corn
- 3 Pineapple
- 4 Onions
- 5 Papaya
- 6 Sweet peas (frozen)
- 7 Asparagus
- 8 Honeydew melon
- 9 Kiwi
- 10 Cabbage
- 11 Watermelon
- 12 Mushrooms
- 13 Mangoes
- 14 Sweet potatoes
- 15 Carrots

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Healthy Hydration



Summer Sipping

The summer sun is blazing, temperatures are soaring and it's the season to stay cool and hydrated! While plain water is always the best choice, sometimes we crave a little extra flavor. This is where infused water steps in, offering a refreshing, healthy and delicious alternative to sugary drinks.

Flavor Infused Ice-Cubes:

Making flavor-infused ice cubes ahead of time gives you a quick option for flavoring water at home. For strawberry infused ice cubes, start with an empty ice cube tray and fill half-way with water. Add some thinly sliced strawberries and fill any remaining space with water. When frozen, these cubes will keep for several months.

Containers: Almost anything will work if it holds water. Since infused water is enticing to look at, you may want to use a clear container so the beauty of the fruits, vegetables and herbs can also be enjoyed while you drink.

Flavored Water Recipes to Try:

Berry Bubbly Water

6-8 cups sparkling water,
1 cup raspberries and
1 cup blackberries.
Add ice cubes and chill
as desired.



Watermelon Rosemary Energizer

6-8 cups water, 1 cup cubed seedless watermelon and 2 sprigs of fresh rosemary. Add ice cubes and chill.

INSIDE:

- Time for a Cup
- Will It Ripen or Rot?
- Recipes
- Food Funny

When to Choose Organic

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EWG'S DIRTY DOZEN

Of the 46 items included in EWG's analysis, these 12 fruits and vegetables were **most contaminated** with pesticides. If buying all organic food is outside of your budget, focus on swapping out only the items that are most likely to contain the highest levels of pesticides.

- 1 Strawberries
- 2 Spinach
- 3 Kale, collard and mustard greens
- 4 Grapes
- 5 Peaches
- 6 Pears
- 7 Nectarines
- 8 Apples
- 9 Bell and hot peppers
- 10 Cherries
- 11 Blueberries
- 12 Green beans

SHOULD I ONLY BUY ORGANIC FRUITS AND VEGETABLES?

The short answer is no. The most important thing you can do for your overall health is eat more fruits and vegetables, no matter if they're conventional or organic. If you choose to buy organic produce, you may want to prioritize items on the Dirty Dozen list, since they

are higher in pesticide residues. However, the bottom line is that more produce is better, so don't let these lists dissuade you from including bountiful amounts of fruits and vegetables in your eating pattern. If buying all organic produce is an economic burden for your family, keep this in mind:

- Buy conventional produce that's the least likely to contain pesticide residues (AKA Clean 15).
- Save your dollars for organic produce that tends to have the highest amounts of pesticide residue (AKA Dirty Dozen).
- Buy produce in season because seasonal food is fresher, tastier and more nutritious than food consumed out of season. Even though we all like to eat strawberries year-round, the best time to eat them is when they can be purchased directly from a local grower shortly after harvest. Seasonal fruits and vegetables produced on local farms are often fresher, as they do not require long distances for transport. Also, unlike out of season produce which is harvested early in order to be shipped and distributed to your local retail store, crops picked at their peak of ripeness are better tasting and full of flavor. What's more, studies have shown that fruits and vegetables contain more nutrients when allowed to ripen naturally on their parent plant.

—*Eating Well, EWG.org, Center for Yoga and Health, Seasonalfoodguide.org*



KIDS' HEALTH & SAFETY

Time for a Cup

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT A BABY is offered a cup when they begin eating solid food, usually around 6 months of age. Choose a sippy cup or training cup with a lid that has a free-flowing spout or remove the no spills gadget. A sippy cup can serve as a good transition cup when moving from breast or bottle to an open cup. A small cup will be easier for little mouths and hands to manage.

Offer 1-3 ounces of breast milk, infant formula or water in the cup. Offer more if baby wants more. **Do not offer juice or sweetened beverages.** At first you may need to help baby hold the cup and taste what's in it. There will be spills. Be patient, have a towel ready and remember baby is *learning* how to drink from a cup.

A CUP AT MEALTIMES

A good time to practice with the cup is when baby is eating solid foods, so offer the cup at all meal times. Sit baby in a highchair. Feed some food with a spoon. Offer a few sips from the cup. Let baby see you and others drink from a cup. Baby will learn by watching and practicing.

Drinking from a cup is the first step in weaning from the breast or bottle. When baby is about 10 months, gradually use the cup more often. Offer meals and snacks at regular times each day with a sippy cup available. Do not allow baby to play or walk around with a sippy cup, use it at snack and meal times only.

WEANING TO A CUP PROTECTS TEETH

Keep weaning from a bottle easy by not using the bottle for extended periods of time. Always put it away after each feeding. Don't let baby crawl or walk around with a bottle and offer only breast milk, formula or water in the bottle, do not put juice or sweet drinks in the bottle. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends weaning from the bottle and drinking from a cup between 12 and 24 months. At 12 months whole milk can replace the breast milk or formula in the cup.



A cup is healthier than a bottle for an older baby's teeth. For breastfed babies, continue to nurse and offer a cup between feedings. Both bottle and breastfed babies are susceptible to tooth decay if they are falling asleep with breastmilk, formula or other liquid, *other than water*, in their mouth.

Sippy cups are intended to help transition a child to a real cup, so help baby practice drinking from a cup with *no* lid. Use a bib and a splat mat, help hold the cup for baby while he sips, practice with the cup frequently and expect spills.

Comfort a crying baby with love, hugs, a blanket or a toy and not a breast, bottle or sippy cup. Learning to drink from a cup takes time. Be patient, persistent and trust that baby will gradually start drinking like a big kid.

— Catherine Stafford
Director Child Health & Nutrition
CocoKids

Roasted Summer Vegetable Tacos

Zucchini, thinly sliced	1 medium
Yellow squash, thinly sliced	1 medium
Onion, thinly sliced	1
Olive oil	2 tsp
Salt	1/8 tsp
Pepper	1/4 tsp
Corn tortillas, made from nixtamalized or whole corn (6-inch)	8
Refried beans (16 oz can)	1
Salsa verde	1/2 cup
Queso fresco, crumbled	1/2 cup
Tomatoes, chopped	2

1. Preheat oven to 400°F. Toss together zucchini, squash, onion, olive oil, salt and pepper on a large, rimmed baking sheet. Spread into a single layer. Bake for 15–20 minutes or until vegetables are crisp-tender.
2. Heat tortillas in a large skillet over medium-high heat for 30 seconds on each side.
3. Warm the beans and spread over tortillas. Top with vegetables, salsa, cheese and tomatoes.

Yield: 6 servings

Meets requirement for meat/meat alternate, vegetable and whole grain-rich

Nut Berry Yogurt Bowl

Greek yogurt, plain	1/2 cup
Nut butter	2 Tbsp
Mixed berries, frozen or fresh	1/2 cup

Stir together yogurt and nut butter, mix in berries. Let sit until berries are soft (if frozen), stir again and enjoy.

Yield: 1 serving

Meets requirement for meat/meat alternate and fruit



Kickin' it in the Kitchen

WILL IT RIPEN OR ROT?

DO YOU WONDER whether the fruit you just purchased will continue to ripen or if it is at its peak? These are the two categories of fruit that will help you know:

Climacteric Fruits can continue to ripen after harvest and they are often picked before fully ripe so they can be transported long distances to reach the produce aisle. They tend to be delicate in their fully ripened state and more susceptible to damage during transport.

Common Climacteric Fruits include bananas, avocados, tomatoes, peaches, mangoes, kiwis, apricots, plums and papaya. Apples, pears, melons and many tropical fruits also will continue to ripen after being harvested.

Non-climacteric Fruits must mature and ripen while still attached to the bush or tree. They may get softer after harvest, but this is due more to the fruit degrading rather than ripening.

Common Non-Climacteric fruits will not continue to ripen after harvest, so make sure you buy only these at their peak: Cherries, strawberries, watermelon, pomegranate, oranges, grapes, pineapples and blueberries.

Senescence is the scientific term for the deterioration resulting in browning, mealy texture, water loss and shriveling. To prevent spoilage as much as possible, store unwashed fruits separately in a cool location (freeze for longer term storage).

—The Spruce Eats



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Food Q. Why would the orange stop in the midst of the road?
Funny A. It ran out of juice!