

EDITOR'S NOTE

Dear Reader,

Our food supply is in a sorry state.

Modern farming techniques are polluting our environment and our bodies with the overuse of pesticides, herbicides, fungicides, antibiotics and hormones. Our soils are depleted of nutrients and lacking in beneficial microbes, resulting in crops that have a fraction of the nutrient content that they used to.

In addition, genetically engineered and overly-processed foods, artificial ingredients, additives and preservatives are more common than not, and all of these things can make choosing which foods to buy a scary, frustrating, and paralyzing task.

But it doesn't have to be that way.

You can combat this fractured food system epidemic by growing your own food or buying organic food from a local farmer. These two actions will have a tremendous impact on your nutrition, your health, and the environment. (In the appendix of this guide we give you resources to help you find a farmer's market or a community support agriculture (CSA) program.)

But even though buying local foods is the best thing to do, the truth of it is that many of us cannot grow our own foods, source local food, or buy organic 100% of the time. It's inevitable that most of us will end up at the supermarket to buy some, or even a majority of the food we eat.

That's just the reality of the modern world we live in.

But let's face it, supermarkets are set up to make you buy more of low quality and cheap-to-produce foods.

Ever notice how in every supermarket the produce section and the dairy section are at opposite ends of the store, with the dairy in the back? That's intentional.

You almost always buy produce and dairy when you go shopping, so having them separated forces you to walk through the entire store and see more products that you will be tempted to buy.

To make matters worse, food packaging is carefully crafted to get our attention and sell the product. Food producers use specific color, images and graphics designed to attract your attention, and then slap on carefully chosen label claims that can be confusing and even downright deceptive.

Take eggs, for instance. I'm sure you've seen the brands that features a green pasture and red barn on their logo, but is that really what the farm the eggs came from looks like? Most likely not.

And then there are the labels: cage-free, vegetarian fed, omega-3, free-range, organic, and natural. What do they mean, *really*? And are any of them better than to choose than others? (The answer is yes).

That's what this guide is for.

You'll get a clear explanation of exactly what many of the common labels and marketing claims you see at the supermarket really mean.

You'll discover what to pay attention to and what is nothing more than overblown marketing hype.

You'll learn specific brands to look for, what foods are worth buying organic, the most harmful food additives to watch out for, and so much more.

Trying to choose the best foods for you and your family can be overwhelming, but it doesn't have to be. *How to Survive the Supermarket* is here to help.

There's a lot of information within this guide. Take your time and read through each section carefully. With each trip to the grocery store you'll have more confidence in understanding the labels on the products you buy, and you'll be able to make the best food choices for you and your family.

To living (and shopping) well,
Jasmine LeMaster and the Living Well team

PS: For a quick summary of each of our recommendations by department, check out the Quick Reference Guide at the very end. You can easily print it out and take it to the supermarket with you, if you don't want to take the entire guide.

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LABELLING INFORMATION

ORGANIC, NON-GMO AND NATURAL: WHAT DO THEY MEAN?

Living Well recommendation: Don't blindly trust a product that is labelled as "natural". Look at the ingredients list and see what the product actually contains. Choose foods labeled organic or "grown without pesticides" whenever possible. If you can't find an organic version of a product, and it has high potential to be genetically modified (this includes all processed foods), look for a version that is labeled non-GMO.

NATURAL

A recent Consumer Reports survey found that up to 64 percent of consumers think that a food labelled "natural" is non-GMO. They are wrong.

Unlike organic, there is no governmental standard or certification program to label foods as "natural", except for meat. For produce and processed foods, the use of the word "natural" means basically nothing.

The USDA requires that any meat labelled "natural" cannot contain any artificial ingredients and must be minimally processed. However, they don't give any guidelines on what "minimally processed" means.

The FDA does have an informal policy on what they consider to be appropriate use of the word natural but they can't strictly enforce it. They consider the term "natural" to mean that nothing artificial or synthetic has been included or added to the food. But this does not include chemicals like pesticides and herbicides. And currently, GMO foods can still be labelled "natural."

If HR 1599 (the so-called DARK Act) passes, the FDA will have two years to define what “natural” means and when it may be included on a label. It is likely that the FDA will decide that GMO foods can be labelled as natural.

NON-GMO

Foods and products that are labelled as non-GMO mean that no known genetically-modified ingredients or organisms are contained in the food. Of course there is always a risk of cross-contamination and there is never a 100% guarantee that a product is not accidentally contaminated with GMOs.

However, a product that is labelled as non-GMO or has the non-GMO Project verified seal should have documentation and quality control procedures in place to help ensure that no GM foods or ingredients are used. **Look for the NON-GMO Project seal.**



Some of the most common genetically modified crops include:

- **Alfalfa**
- **Canola** (90% of U.S. crop)
- **Corn** (88% of U.S. crop in 2011)
- **Cotton** (90% of U.S. crop in 2011)
- **Papaya** (most of Hawaiian crop; approximately 988 acres)
- **Soy** (94% of U.S. crop in 2011)
- **Sugar Beets** (95% of U.S. crop in 2010)
- **Zucchini and Yellow Summer Squash** (25,000 acres)

Many ingredients in processed foods are derived from GM crops. These ingredients are often made wholly or partially of GMOs, so look for them on labels. Even if the bulk of the item you are buying is non-GMO, the presence of any of these is reason enough to avoid it:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| • aspartame (also called Amino-Sweet, NutraSweet, Equal Spoonful, Canderel, BeneVia, E951) | • cellulose |
| • baking powder | • citric acid |
| • canola oil (rapeseed oil) | • cobalamin (vitamin B12) |
| • caramel color | • colorose |
| | • condensed milk |
| | • confectioners' sugar |
| | • corn flour |

- corn masa
- cornmeal
- corn oil
- corn sugar
- corn syrup
- cornstarch
- cottonseed oil cyclodextrin
- cysteine
- dextrin
- dextrose
- diacetyl
- diglyceride
- erythritol
- Equal
- food starch
- fructose
- glucose
- glutamate
- glutamic acid
- glycerides
- glycerin
- glycerol
- glycerol monooleate
- glycine
- hemicellulose
- high fructose corn syrup (HFCS)
- hydrogenated starch
- hydrolyzed vegetable protein
- inositol
- inverse syrup
- inversol
- invert sugar
- isoflavones
- lactic acid
- lecithin
- leucine
- lysine
- maltitol
- malt
- malt syrup
- malt extract
- maltodextrin
- maltose
- mannitol
- methylcellulose
- milk powder
- milo starch
- modified food starch
- modified starch
- mono- and diglycerides
- monosodium glutamate (MSG)
- NutraSweet
- oleic acid
- phenylalanine
- phytic acid
- protein isolate
- shoyu
- sorbitol
- soy flour
- soy isolates
- soy lecithin
- soy milk
- soy oil
- soy protein
- soy protein isolate
- soy sauce
- starch
- stearic acid
- sugar (unless specified as cane sugar)
- tamari
- tempeh
- teriyaki marinades
- textured vegetable protein
- threonine
- tocopherols (vitamin E)
- tofu
- trehalose
- triglyceride
- vegetable fat
- vegetable oil
- vitamin E
- whey
- whey powder
- xanthan gum

Important! Non-GMO does not mean that the food is organic. Non-GMO foods may still be grown with pesticides and herbicides, and sewage sludge may be used as a fertilizer.

ORGANIC

The pesticides and herbicides used in conventional farming have been linked to a myriad of health concerns. Studies have shown they have potential reproductive toxicity, endocrine and hormone disruption effects, and may even cause cancer. In fact, The World Health Organization has classified glyphosate, the most frequently used herbicide, as a “probable human carcinogen.”

GMO crops have also been linked to the rise in autoimmune disease and other health concerns, including cancer, potentially because they are more likely to be drenched in pesticides. By choosing organic, you can avoid many of these risks. One study found that just one week of eating organic can lower your body’s levels of pesticides and herbicides substantially.

The USDA has a certification program in place that food producers must follow in order for the foods to be labelled as organic.

REQUIREMENTS FOR ORGANIC AGRICULTURE (PRODUCE, FRUITS AND VEGETABLES):

- No sewage sludge or biosolids can be added to the soil.
- Cover crops are used to protect the soil from wind and water erosion.
- Crops are rotated every year to increase nutrients in the soil and suppress insect and plant disease levels.
- Seeds cannot be genetically modified or treated with fungicide.
- No synthetic pesticides or herbicides can be used *
- Organic crops are kept separate from conventional crops so they do not become cross contaminated with pesticides or herbicides.

REQUIREMENTS FOR ORGANIC LIVESTOCK (MEAT, POULTRY AND EGGS):

- Produced without genetic engineering, ionizing radiation, or sewage sludge.

- Managed in a manner that conserves natural resources and biodiversity.
- Allowed year-round access to the outdoors except under specific conditions (e.g., inclement weather).
- Raised on certified organic land meeting all organic crop production standards.
- Raised per animal health and welfare standards which includes:
 - Access to the outdoors - Shade - Clean, dry bedding
 - Shelter - Space for exercise - Fresh air - Clean drinking water - Direct sunlight
- Fed 100 percent certified organic feed, except for trace minerals and vitamins.
- The feed must be non-GMO.
- No antibiotics, added growth hormones, mammalian or avian byproducts, or other prohibited feed ingredients are used.

Beware “Organic” labelled seafood.

Currently, the USDA does not regulate seafood under the National Organic Program. So if you find seafood marked as organic, it may or may not be up to USDA standards.

★ There are a select few synthetic substances that are allowed to be used in organic farming. Most are not allowed to come into contact with the crops or livestock, and the ones that are must be used under very specific guidelines. However, *natural* pesticides can still be used in organic farming, and some natural pesticides have been found to be just as harmful as synthetic pesticides. If you can find food labelled “grown without pesticides” you will know you’re getting truly pesticide-free food.

WHAT YOU’LL SEE ON LABELS:

“100% Organic”: Every single ingredient in the product is certified organic. This includes processing aids.

“Organic”: At least 95% of the ingredients are certified organic. 5% of the ingredients can be non-organic.

“Made with Organic Ingredients”: At least 70% of the ingredients must be certified organic.

LOOK FOR:

The USDA organic seal. That means the product is 95% to 100% organic. Not all organic products will have the USDA seal but it is an easy way to spot a certified organic product. If it does not have the USDA seal, look for a seal of the organic certification organization.



The Certified Naturally Grown seal: This seal was created for farmers that don't want to go through the governmental certification process. The standards are based on the USDA Organic program, with a few differences. Just like USDA organic, most synthetic pesticides and fertilizers are prohibited, as well as antibiotics, growth hormones, and GMOs. However, there are fewer record keeping requirements, and farms are certified by other farmers. The CNS seal goes beyond the USDA organic certification by establishing minimum outdoor and indoor space requirements for chickens and livestock.



MORE SEALS AND LOGOS

THE GOOD:

Demeter Certified Biodynamic



This is a great label to look for. To become Demeter Biodynamic certified, a farm product first must meet all of the USDA Organic standards. The Demeter certification goes above and beyond USDA organic requirements as well, by prohibiting plant hormones, synthetic amino acids in poultry feed, tail cutting and tooth filing of piglets, and antibiotic use in poultry eggs and chicks. Additionally, at least half of the animals' feed must come from the farm and animals must be treated humanely. Farms must strive for complete self-sufficiency.

Food Justice Certified



The Food Justice Certified seal is a legitimate, meaningful label to look for. The standards for this seal ensure fair trade and social responsibility throughout the whole supply chain of the product, from the farm to the processors to the retailers.

Rainforest Alliance Certified



The Rainforest Alliance label means that the product comes from a farm that adheres to specific environmental and social standards, including ecosystem conservation, water conservation, soil management and conservation, and fair treatment and good working conditions for workers. The seal has additional standards for beef products, including prohibition of growth hormones, preventative antibiotics, and animal by-products in the feed.

Cruelty-Free: The Leaping Bunny

The Leaping Bunny logo shows that the product is considered “cruelty-free” by the Coalition for Consumer Information on Cosmetics, a coalition of animal protection groups. That means none of the ingredients have been tested on animals. This seal can be found on personal care items, cosmetics, and cleaning supplies.



THE BAD:

Treated with Radiation



This symbol means foods have been irradiated (treated with radiation) to reduce levels of pathogens on the food. Though the FDA says irradiated foods are safe, the science that is based on is questionable. Additionally, radiation

can dramatically reduce the vitamin content of the food by up to 90%. Irradiated foods must be labelled, with the exception of spices and processed foods.

THE SKETCHY:

“Kids Eat Right” Seal: Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics



The very first product to bear this “seal” was Kraft processed American cheese slices, a product about as fake as a politician’s smile. After much backlash, the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics tried to say that it wasn’t an endorsement of the product, but a showing that Kraft supported the Kids Eat Right Program. So it seems any product can spout this “seal” by showing support (\$\$) to the Kids Eat Right Program. Don’t let it fool you.

“Heart-Check” Seal: American Heart Association



To be eligible for the heart-check seal, foods must not exceed limits set by the AHA for total fat, saturated fat, trans fat, cholesterol, and sodium, and must also have 10% or more of the Daily Value for at least one of 6 nutrients (vitamin A, vitamin C, iron, calcium, protein or dietary fiber).

Since we now know that saturated fat and cholesterol are not the heart villains they were once made out to be, these requirements are outdated. In addition, some processed foods like soy-milk, egg substitutes, and breads have the seal while many fresh foods don’t, because companies have to pay an administrative fee to enter the program.

“Whole Grains” Stamp: Whole Grains Council

All grain products can be inflammatory and contribute to blood sugar spikes and weight gain, so should be consumed infrequently. But if you’re going to eat grains, you really



should make sure they are 100% whole grains. Even better if they are gluten free. Look for the 100% stamp on breads, rolls, and pasta, but don't be fooled by the "Whole grain" seal on baked goods and junk foods like Cheetos and cookies. They can still be loaded with other unhealthy ingredients.

HOW TO READ THE NUTRITION FACTS LABEL

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 4 oz (113g) Servings Per Container Varies	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 220	Calories from Fat 130
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 14g	22%
Saturated Fat 6g	30%
Trans Fat 1g	
Cholesterol 75mg	25%
Sodium 75mg	3%
Total Carbohydrate 0g	0%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Sugars 0g	
Protein 22g	
Vitamin A 0%	• Vitamin C 0%
Calcium 2%	• Iron 15%
*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:	
	Calories: 2,000 2,500
Total Fat	Less than 65g 80g
Saturated Fat	Less than 20g 25g
Cholesterol	Less than 300mg 300mg
Sodium	Less than 2,400mg 2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate	300g 375g
Dietary Fiber	25g 30g
Calories per gram: Fat 9 • Carbohydrate 4 • Protein 4	

SERVING SIZE AND SERVINGS PER CONTAINER

Pay attention to these. Most packaged foods will have multiple servings in each container. Don't assume that snack size bag of chips or nuts is considered "one serving."

FAT

Don't worry too much about total fat, but trans-fat is important. Meats, like this ground beef, naturally have trans-fat which is ok. But any processed, packaged food with trans-fat means partially hydrogenated oil is present, which has been linked with a high risk of heart disease.

THE % DAILY VALUE

Looking at this is a good way to get an estimate of how much of a

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 4 oz (113g)	
Servings Per Container Varies	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 220	Calories from Fat 130
	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 14g	22%
Saturated Fat 6g	30%
Trans Fat 1g	
Cholesterol 75mg	25%
Sodium 75mg	3%
Total Carbohydrate 0g	0%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Sugars 0g	
Protein 22g	
Vitamin A 0%	• Vitamin C 0%
Calcium 2%	• Iron 15%
*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:	
	Calories: 2,000 2,500
Total Fat	Less than 65g 80g
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Cholesterol	Less than 300mg 300mg
Sodium	Less than 2,400mg 2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate	300g 375g
Dietary Fiber	25g 30g
Calories per gram:	
Fat 9 • Carbohydrate 4 • Protein 4	

certain nutrient you are getting. It's just an estimate, though, you may need more or less depending on your weight and nutritional needs.

SUGAR

Always check the sugar content. It's recommended to get less than 10% of your daily calories from sugar. So if you eat 2,000 calories a day, that would be a maximum of 200 calories from sugar, or about 50 grams. Fruits and vegetables will have natural sugar, which is ok. The American Heart Association recommends no more than 9 teaspoons (38 grams) of added sugar per day for men, and 6 teaspoons (25 grams) for women.

INGREDIENTS LIST:

This is important to read and is usually found underneath

the Supplement Facts panel. All ingredients are listed in order of their amount in the product. Be on the lookout for ingredients you can't pronounce, you generally want to avoid these.

The eight most common food allergens (tree nuts, soy, fish, peanuts, shellfish, eggs, wheat and dairy) must be clearly labelled in the ingredients list. Labels may have the allergens listed in a parenthetical statement in the list of ingredients or they may also be found below ingredients list in a "Contains" statement.

Some companies will voluntarily disclose if their product is made on

equipment that processes the major food allergens, or if it may contain traces of food allergens, though this disclosure is not federally mandated.

EXAMPLE 1:

Ingredients: Enriched flour (wheat flour, malted barley, niacin, reduced iron, thiamin mononitrate, riboflavin, folic acid), sugar, partially hydrogenated cottonseed oil, high fructose corn syrup, whey, (milk), eggs, vanilla, natural and artificial flavoring, salt, leavening (sodium acid pyrophosphate, monocalcium phosphate, lecithin (soy), mono and diglycerides).

EXAMPLE 2

Ingredients: Enriched flour (flour, malted barley, niacin, reduced iron, thiamin mononitrate, riboflavin, folic acid), sugar, partially hydrogenated cottonseed oil, high fructose corn syrup, whey, eggs, vanilla, natural and artificial flavoring, salt, leavening (sodium acid pyrophosphate, monocalcium phosphate), lecithin, mono and diglycerides.

Contains: Wheat, Milk, Egg, and Soy.

SUPERMARKET FOOD DEPARTMENTS

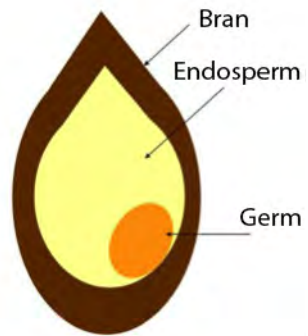
BREADS AND ROLLS

Living Well Recommendation: All grains can be inflammatory and are best avoided or only consumed sparingly. Choose gluten-free whole grain and sprouted options when you can, and always choose organic.

Whole grain

Grains include wheat, corn, rice, oats, barley, quinoa, sorghum, spelt, and rye, among others. The part we eat is the seed and is made up of three components: the bran, the germ and the endosperm.

The bran contains antioxidants, B vitamins and fiber; the germ contains more B vitamins, protein, minerals and fats; and the endosperm is mostly carbohydrate and protein. Whole grain contains all three of these parts. Typical refined grains (white flour) contain only the endosperm. Whole grain products have more protein, vitamins and minerals and fiber than refined grains.



Look for:

The 100% Whole grain stamp on breads, rolls, and pasta, but don't be fooled by the whole grain seal on baked goods and



junk foods like Cheetos and cookies. They can still be loaded with other unhealthy ingredients.

Whole wheat

Whole wheat products contain all three parts of the wheat grain. They will have slightly higher amounts of fiber and protein compared to refined wheat flour products.

Multigrain

These products are made with multiple types of grain. They may not be whole grains. Multigrain products are not necessarily healthier.

Sprouted

The grains (seeds) have been allowed to sprout (germinate). This can increase some of the nutrients in the grain, including vitamin C, the B vitamins, folate, fiber and some amino acids. Sprouted grains are also easier to digest and the nutrients in them may be more bioavailable. Ezekiel 4:9 is a popular brand; it can be found in the freezer section.

Enriched

During the process of making flour, most of the vitamins and minerals are lost. Enriched products have the lost nutrients added back in. Whole wheat flour is a better choice than enriched products.

Fortified

Similar to enriched, fortified products have nutrients added back in. However, these products have higher levels of the nutrients added in as well as nutrients that are not naturally present in grain, such as calcium. Since 1998, many flour products are fortified with folic acid to help prevent neural tube birth defects, but excess folic acid has also been linked to increased cancer risk in adults.

Gluten-free does not necessarily mean healthier. Many gluten free products are made with starch, which can cause big spikes in blood sugar.

Gluten Free

Gluten is a type of protein found in certain grains. People with Celiac disease must avoid gluten because it causes intestinal damage. Some studies show that gluten proteins can cause intestinal damage even in healthy people as well.

Gluten is found in:

- All varieties of wheat (spelt, kamut, farro, durum, bulgur, semolina)
- Barley
- Rye
- Triticale

Naturally gluten free grains include:

- Amaranth
- Buckwheat
- Corn
- Millet
- Oats *
- Quinoa
- Rice
- Sorghum
- Teff

* Oats are naturally gluten free but are typically contaminated with gluten during the growing and manufacturing process. If you're avoiding gluten, be sure to choose oats that are labelled gluten-free.

To support a gluten free claim, companies must test their product to show that it contains less than 20 part per million of gluten. If you have Celiac disease or must be very strict

about avoiding gluten, be sure to check the labels of products marked “naturally gluten free.” Sometimes they will have a statement saying that it was manufactured in a facility that also processes wheat or other gluten-containing grains. There may be cross-contamination.

Pesticides, herbicides and fungicides are frequently used during the growing cycle of grains, and up to 16 different pesticide residues have been found in wheat flour. For that reason, it’s always best to buy organic.

CANNED FOODS

Living Well Recommendation: Choose glass jars or brands that use BPA-free cans. Watch out for extra sodium and MSG.

Many studies have found that canned produce is equivalent in nutrients or even superior to fresh produce. And for some foods, the heating process during canning actually increases the amount of nutrients. Canned tomatoes have higher amounts of lycopene than fresh tomatoes, canned corn is higher in lutein than fresh, and canned carrots are higher in beta carotene.

However, the sodium content of canned foods can be extremely high, and most conventional brands use BPA-lined cans. Also, if you plan to cook or heat the food up anyway, it doesn’t matter whether you buy fresh or canned.

Canned foods do typically give you more food for your buck and the convenience can’t be overlooked. If you choose canned foods, look for BPA free cans or glass jars, and check the label for the sodium content. While some glass jars will have a metal lid lined with BPA, the contact area with the food is less than with a fully-lined can, so the potential contamination risk may be lower.

MSG is also added to many canned foods. See the section on Food Additives for more information and the many different names for MSG.

BPA-free brands of canned fruits, vegetables, meats and seafood:

- Ace of Diamonds
- American Tuna
- Amy's
- Annie's Homegrown
- Beach Cliff
- Bearitos
- Bionature
- Campbell's Organic
- Earth's Best Organic
- EarthPure
- Eden Organic (excluding their canned tomatoes)
- Farmer's Market
- Genova
- Gluten Free Cafe
- Health Valley
- Imagine
- Juanita's
- Jyoti Natural Foods
- King Oscar
- Lucini Italia
- Muir Glen (canned tomatoes only)
- Native Forest
- Native Factor
- Natural Sea
- Pillar Rock
- Port Clyde
- Raincoast Trading
- Read
- Seneca
- Sprouts
- Trader Joe's
- Tyson
- Walnut Acres
- Westbrae Natural

Note: Not all of these brands are organic or non-GMO.

THE PROBLEM WITH BPA

BPA is a type of plastic used to line the inside of metal cans, but it can leach into the food. It is also used in food and beverage storage containers and to coat receipts. BPA can mimic estrogen in the body and disrupt hormones. It's been linked to infertility, breast and reproductive system cancer, obesity, diabetes, early puberty, behavioral changes in children and resistance to chemotherapy treatments.

In addition to choosing BPA-free canned foods, look for the BPA free label when buying reusable plastic water bottles and plastic storage containers. Better yet, choose stainless steel or glass containers. Never store hot food in plastic or microwave plastic containers, and avoid handling receipts when you don't need them.

Campbell's to Label their GMO foods

In January 2016, Campbell's announced they would begin to label their products that contain genetically modified ingredients within the year. Look for the statement on the bottom of the back label, but note that many Campbell's products can still contain excess sodium, preservatives, MSG and BPA. The Campbell's Organic line is BPA-free.

COFFEE, TEA AND COCOA

Coffee

Coffee is one of the most heavily pesticide-laden crops in the world. However, [studies](#) suggest most of the pesticides will be lost during the roasting process. But to help keep pesticides out of the environment (including the water supply), choosing organic and fair-trade coffee is a more responsible way to go.

- Equal Exchange coffee is one fair trade, organic brand that can found in many stores.

Tea

Tea is highly contaminated with pesticides. **In fact**, a Greenpeace study found that up to 60% of the teas tested from India and China had at least one pesticide above the safety limit set by the European Union. Lipton was one of the brands at the top of the list for pesticide residue. Celestial Seasonings tea were also found to have pesticide residues over the legal limits, though a test commissioned by Celestial Seasonings found no pesticide residue.

Another concern with tea is that it can be high in fluoride, which has been linked to bone problems, reduced IQ and cardiovascular issues. Luckily, [studies](#) have found that higher quality teas are typically lower in fluoride, and white, green, and herbal teas have less fluoride than black tea.

- Choose organic white, green or herbal tea.
- Twinings Organic is a common brand you can find in many stores.

Cocoa

Cocoa beans are also one of the most heavily pesticide-laden foods. Additionally, many of the countries that produce cocoa beans have much weaker regulations and may use pesticides that are banned in the US.

Avoid alkalized or Dutch-processed cocoa when you can, as this processing reduces the healthy antioxidant and flavonoid content significantly. Cocoa processed with alkali will be stated on the ingredients list.

- Nativas Naturals Cacao Powder is organic and non-alkalized.

CONDIMENTS AND SALAD DRESSING

Living Well Recommendation: With the exception of salsa or hot sauce, the most popular condiments are not high concern for pesticides so you don't have to always choose organic. However, be careful with ketchup and salad dressing because they are more likely to contain GM high fructose corn syrup or GM industrial seed oils.

Ketchup

Tomatoes rank #38 on the list of fruits and vegetables with the highest amount of pesticides, so they are relatively clean and you don't have to worry about buying organic. However, most major ketchup brands use high fructose corn syrup, which is likely made from GM corn. Try these Living Well approved brands instead:

- Annie's Naturals
- Organicville
- Simply Heinz
- Tessemae's
- Tree of Life
- Woodstock

Mayonnaise

Most mayos are made with GM canola or soybean oil and contain chemical additives and preservatives. Low fat varieties can also have added high fructose corn syrup, extra fillers, color and additives. Miracle Whip isn't any better, with added high fructose corn syrup and mysterious added "flavor".

Don't be fooled by products labelled "made with olive oil". Many of these products still contain canola or soybean oil. Be sure to read the ingredients list. There are not many "clean" mayos available so check out the recipe guide for instructions on how to make your own at home, or try these Living Well approved brands instead:

- Primal Kitchen Mayo
- Sir Kensington

Mustard

Mustard is not high in pesticides so you don't need to buy organic. Most conventional yellow mustards do not have harmful food additives and are ok. When choosing honey mustard, check the label to make sure it doesn't contain high fructose corn syrup.

Salad Dressings

Most salad dressings are made with GM soybean oil, canola oil, or other processed industrial seed oils high in omega-6 fatty acids, which can lead to inflammation. Fat-free varieties are packed with extra sugar. Choose one of the brands below that are made with olive oil, or check out the recipe guide for easy dressings you can make at home.

Brands that use olive oil:

- Bragg's Organic
- Tessamae's

Brands that are organic (using non-GMO canola/vegetable/sunflower/safflower oil):

- Annie's

Brands using organic, non-GMO soybean oil:

- Brad's
- Drew's

- Full Circle
- Whole Foods 365

Buyer Beware! Salad dressings labelled “Olive Oil & Vinegar” or “Made with olive oil” may actually contain soy or vegetable oils as well. Newman’s Own brand is one example. Be sure to read the ingredients list.

Salsa and Hot Sauce:

Since bell peppers and hot peppers are high on the list of vegetables having the most pesticides, choose organic salsa and pico de gallo when you can.

- Drew’s Organic Thick & Chunky Medium Salsa

DAIRY AND DAIRY ALTERNATIVES

DAIRY

Living Well recommendation: Choose organic, grass fed dairy when possible. Organic Valley is a popular nationwide brand you can choose. If you can’t afford to buy all of your dairy products organic, try to at least choose organic and grass fed for the dairy products highest in fat: butter, cream and full fat yogurt and milks.

Conventional

Cows that produce conventional dairy are fed hay, and (likely GMO) grains like corn and soy. The animals may stay in a barn for their entire lives and are milked up to 3 times per day. They are also given recombinant bovine growth hormone (rBGH) to increase milk production. Typically raised in close quarters, the cows are given antibiotics to prevent disease and treat frequent udder infections. Though federal law prohibits antibiotic residue in milk, a 2015 investigation by the FDA found that some milk samples had illegal drug residues, including antibiotics that aren’t approved for use in cattle.

Recombinant bovine growth hormone (rBGH)

rbGH leads to more infections in cows, which leads to greater use of antibiotics. Unnecessary use of antibiotics can lead to antibiotic resistance, a major public health threat. Ingesting antibiotic-tainted milk and dairy products can also introduce the antibiotics into your system, leading to disrupted gut microflora and other antibiotic-related side effects.

rBGH Free/ Hormone Free

The cows were not given recombinant bovine growth hormone or other hormones to increase milk production.

Organic

For a dairy product to be labelled organic, USDA requires that the cows be put on pasture for the grazing season, a minimum of 120 days per year. Farmers also have to have a pasture management plan in place to protect the fields, soil, and water quality. Any supplemental feed must be organic and non-GMO, and the cows cannot be given antibiotics or growth hormones.

A 2002 [meta-analysis](#) found that organic dairy products contain significantly higher amounts of protein, alpha linoleic acid, [omega-3s](#), conjugated linoleic acid, EPA and DPA. [Other studies](#) have found that organic milk had a higher amount of vitamin E and carotenoids than conventional milk.

Grass-Fed

Grass-fed dairy will have many of the same nutrient benefits as organic dairy. Unless it is also labelled organic, the cows may or may not have been given antibiotics or supplemental GMO or non-organic feed.

Milk from cows that eat green grass also contains higher amounts of vitamin K2, a nutrient that almost everyone isn't getting enough of.

Look for: Organic Valley Grassmilk

Vitamin K2 is essential for shuttling calcium out of your bloodstream and into your bones, helping keep your arteries calcium free and your bones strong. The Rotterdam study found that those who had the highest intake of K2 had a 57% lower risk of dying from heart disease, and a 27% lower risk of all-cause mortality.

Raw Milk

Whereas regular milk is heated (pasteurized) to kill any potentially harmful bacteria, raw milk is not. It also has not been homogenized, which is the process of emulsifying (mixing) the milk so that the fat (cream) does not separate. Raw milk will have a layer of cream on top.

Pasteurization can decrease the nutrient content of milk, and raw milk is said to be easier to digest due to the preservation of enzymes that are typically destroyed during pasteurization.

Is it safe?

[Recent studies](#) have confirmed that the risk of foodborne illness from properly handled raw milk is low. An FDA analysis in 2013 found that over the course of the previous five years, fewer than fifty people became ill after drinking raw milk. To put that in perspective, FDA reports that between 1996 and 2005, there were about 1,700 cases of *e.coli* *per year* from other foods such as eggs, processed foods and sprouts.

Raw milk isn't sold in grocery stores, but you can find more information and local farmers who sell it at realmilk.com

DAIRY ALTERNATIVES

Living Well recommendation: Avoid soymilk and choose other non-dairy varieties that don't have added sugar and are carrageenan-free. If you notice you get digestive issues from these products, it may be due to the thickeners used in them.

One of the main concerns with dairy-free milks is that many

contain the additive carrageenan, which gives the milk a thicker consistency. Carrageenan is isolated from seaweed and some in vitro and animal research suggests it may promote inflammation in intestinal cells. There has also been at least one [animal study](#) that suggests carrageenan may be carcinogenic. However, research in humans is lacking. Carrageenan will cause gastrointestinal distress in some people.

Other thickeners may be in these products as well, such as guar gum, gellan gum and xanthan gum. These additives have not shown any significant harmful effects in studies, but may cause gas and bloating in some people.

Many “original” and flavored varieties of non-dairy milks have added sugar. Look for products marked “unsweetened” if you want to avoid added sugar. Additionally, most non-dairy milks have been fortified with calcium and vitamin D. Be sure to shake well, as the calcium can settle to the bottom.

Milk dairy products such as cream, chocolate milk, cottage cheese, ice cream, sour cream and yogurt may contain carrageenan as well. Be sure to read the ingredients list.

Soy Milk

Soy has estrogenic properties and can disrupt hormones. For that reason, most people should avoid it or only consume it on occasion. Almost all soy products are genetically modified, so if you do choose soy be sure to choose organic or one labelled non-GMO.

Organic, carrageenan-free brands of soy milk include:

- 365 Whole Foods (all but Vanilla and Original Light)
- Eden Soy (EdenSoy contains no carrageenan except for chocolate-flavored EdenSoy. Eden is in the process of reformulating its chocolate soy milk.)

- Natur-a
- Organic Valley
- Pacific Foods (organic unsweetened original) The non-organic line contains carrageenan
- So Nice (Natural flavor only)
- Soy Dream (Shelf Stable: classic vanilla and enriched chocolate; Refrigerated: classic original)
- Sunrise Soya (all except light fortified sweetened)
- Tofu Shop
- Trader Joe's Unsweetened in aseptic package (refrigerated does contain carrageenan)
- Twin Oaks
- Vermont Soy (unsweetened)
- Westsoy (original, unsweetened, lowfat)

Nut milks: Almond, Cashew, Coconut, Hazelnut

The main concerns with these milks is the potential carrageenan content.

Organic, carrageenan-free brands of almond milk include:

- Beber
- OMilk NYC
- Silk
- Trader Joe's* (refrigerated)
- Wegman's
- Westsoy
- WholeFoods 365

Carrageenan-free brands of cashew milk include:

- Silk (not organic)

Organic, carrageenan-free brands of coconut milk include:

- Native Forest (canned milk or cream)

- So Delicious
 - Tropical Traditions (coconut cream concentrate)
-

If you want to avoid all additives in nut milks, you can easily make them at home! See the Recipe Guide.

Rice Milk

Rice milk is much higher in sugar and carbohydrates than other non-dairy milks. There's also some concern with the arsenic levels in rice products. According to the Environmental Working Group, one cup of rice milk has an arsenic level that exceeds the legal allowable amount in a glass of water. For this reason, rice milk is best avoided or consumed infrequently.

Organic, carrageenan-free brands of rice milk include:

- B.R.A.T. (all flavors)
- Kirkland Signature
- Natur-a
- Nature's Promise (Giant)
- Rice Dream — shelf-stable (organic classic original, organic enriched original)
- Trader Joe's*

*Ingredients vary in Trader Joe's products. Please read ingredients labels carefully.

Hemp Milk

Hemp milk is touted for its omega-3 content. However, the omega-3 in hemp is alpha linoleic acid (ALA), which the body must then convert to EPA and DHA. The body is not very efficient at making the conversion. Most of the health benefits associated with omega-3s come from EPA and DHA, so don't rely on hemp milk for your daily intake of omega-3s. But if you like the taste and the additives don't upset your digestion, there's no reason not to enjoy organic hemp milk.

Organic, carrageenan-free brands of hemp milk includes:

- Hemp Bliss

For a full list of all dairy and non-dairy products with and without carrageenan, [check out this link](#).

EGGS

Living Well recommendation: Eggs are an amazing source of nutrition and high quality eggs are worth the extra money. But eggs just might be one of the most confusing items to purchase at the supermarket. At the grocery store, look for pasture-raised organic eggs. Organic Valley is one brand you can find nation-wide. Other recommended brands based on location can be found [here](#).

Conventional Eggs

Five or six chickens are crammed into the same cage and given room that's only about two-thirds the size of a sheet of paper. Their feeding, watering, and egg collecting is typically automated. The buildings they are kept in are typically windowless, with artificial lights to help extend egg production. The close quarters can lead to cannibalism so farmers will cut off the tips of their beaks to keep them from harming each other. If egg production drops the farmers will withhold food from the hens, sending them into a state of molting that produces another round of eggs, and then they are disposed of. The chickens are typically fed corn and soy (likely GMO) and given rounds of antibiotics to ward off infections from the unsanitary conditions.

Grade AA, Grade A, Grade B

Eggs are graded based on the quality of the exterior and interior of the egg. Grade AA is considered the highest grade, with shells that are smooth, evenly shaped and without discoloration. The interior will have a thick egg white and blemish-free yolk.

Grade A eggs will be slightly less quality than Grade AA, followed by Grade B. The grading does not factor in the taste or nutrition of the egg.

Pasteurized

These eggs have been heated to kill pathogens. If your recipe calls for using raw eggs (like mayo), choose pasteurized eggs.

Brown vs White

The color of the eggshell will vary depending on the breed of hen that laid the egg. Some people swear they taste different but there's no nutritional difference between the two. Brown eggs typically cost more than white eggs because they come from a larger hen that requires more food.

Cage Free

The chickens were raised conventionally but were not kept in cages. While this practice may sound more humane than caged chickens, the birds are typically stuffed in dirty, cramped quarters, and some farmers will still clip their beaks to keep them from pecking each other. Cage-free does not mean the birds had access to the outdoors.

Omega-3 Enriched

The chickens were likely raised conventionally and fed chicken feed enriched with a source of omega-3s such flaxseed or fish oil. [These eggs have](#) a slightly lower amount of saturated fat and up to 5 times greater amounts of omega-3s. They also have slightly less omega-6 fatty acids.

Organic

Hens were fed organic feed and not given antibiotics or other drugs. They cannot be kept in cages and must be given access to the outdoors, though for some farms that may mean a small door to a concrete patio. Nutritionally, organic eggs that were

raised mainly on organic chicken feed are pretty much equal to conventional eggs. [One study](#) found that compared to conventional eggs, organic eggs had a slightly greater content of saturated fat.

Free Range or Free Roaming

For this label, USDA requires that chickens are not kept in cages and have access to the outdoors. That access may only be a concrete slab or bare patch of dirt. It does not necessarily mean that the chicken had access to grass or pastured or was able to forage for food.

Pastured or Pasture-raised

This label is not regulated by the government. Honest farms will use it when their hens have been raised mainly on pasture with supplemental feed. Because the chickens are able to peck grubs and insects, the nutrition of the eggs is much greater than conventional eggs.

One study found that pastured hens laid eggs that had twice as much vitamin E and 2.5 times omega-3s compared to conventional eggs.

Mother Earth News also commissioned [a study](#) comparing pastured eggs to conventional. They found pastured eggs had:

- 1/3 less cholesterol
- 1/4 less saturated fat
- 2/3 more vitamin A
- 2 times more omega-3 fatty acids
- 3 times more vitamin E
- 7 times more beta carotene

FATS AND OILS

Living Well Recommendation: Use animal fats or coconut oil for cooking. Extra virgin olive oil is best only used cold. Avoid vegetable and canola oil, and margarine and shortening.

Lard and Tallow

Though demonized by the mainstream media, animal fats are actually some of the best fats to cook with because they are not easily oxidized and have a high smoke point. If you can't find them in your local food store, you can order them online at fatworksfoods.com

Clarified butter (Ghee)

This fat has one of the highest smoke points, making it an excellent choice for high-heat cooking. It has a much higher smoke point than butter because the lactose and proteins that are easily burned have been removed. You can find clarified butter in most grocery stores or easily make it at home (see the recipe guide.) Or try:

- Organic India Ghee
- Pure Indian Foods Organic Grass-Fed Ghee

Regular Butter

Butter is a great source of healthy saturated fat, which helps raise healthy HDL levels. Though once villainized for increasing LDL levels, we now know that saturated fat only changes the density of LDL, changing small, dense, bad LDLs to the larger, fluffy, better kind of LDL.

One tablespoon of butter contains 10 percent RDA for vitamin A, which is important for vision, immune function, and proper cell growth. Grass-fed butter is also a source of vitamin K2, which helps transport calcium out of your blood and into your bones and keeps your arteries nice and flexible.

Here are the best options when choosing butter:

Best: Raw (unpasteurized) from grass-pastured cows, preferably certified organic:

- Raw butter can't be found in the supermarkets, so you'll have to ask around at your local health food store

where to get some. You can also [check out this link](#).

- Grass-fed butter has a higher omega-3 content than butter from cows fed grains
- Only grass-fed butter has vitamin K2.

Good: Pasteurized butter from grass-fed cows, preferably organic:

- Organic Valley Pasture Butter is the best option
- Kerrygold is another good option, though it is not organic and the cows may have been fed GMO feed.

OK: Nonorganic, regular pasteurized butter:

- Unfortunately, there's a high chance the cows that produced this butter were fed GMO corn and grains. However, this is still MUCH better than margarine!

Coconut Oil

Coconut oil is another great cooking oil with a high smoke point. It's also a rich source of saturated fat that is mostly medium-chain triglycerides (MCTs).

MCTs are special because they go straight from the intestines to the liver, where they are either used as a quick source of energy or converted into ketone bodies. MCTs also may be able to help you control your weight better, as they've been shown to help control appetite and help boost metabolism and increase fat oxidation. They also benefit blood lipids. In one study of overweight women, coconut oil raised HDL and lowered the LDL/HDL ratio more effectively than for women given comparable amount of soybean oil.

Living Well approved brands:

- Artisana Organic Raw Coconut Oil
- Nature's Way Extra Virgin Organic Coconut Oil
- Nutiva Organic Virgin Coconut Oil

If you happen to try coconut oil and don't like the coconut flavor, you can try liquid coconut oil or MCT oil, which do not have any coconut taste.

Olive Oil

Olive oil is best used raw (cold), and extra virgin olive oil should never be heated. As with any oil, the more refined it becomes, the higher the smoke point (which is why vegetable oils have such high smoke points). If you have to do high-heat cooking and want or need to use olive oil, go with the extra-light version. It's not any lower in calories or fat — the light refers to the taste.

Treat shopping for olive oil like you would shopping for wine. Look for the date it was produced — high-quality oils will put this on the bottle. Unlike with some wines, however, older isn't better. You want olive oil that was produced recently. Choose oil that comes in a dark glass bottle or metal container, as light will oxidize it. Avoid plastic containers when you can. Buy small bottles. It may be pricier, but you are likely to be able to use all the oil before it goes rancid. Lastly, store it in a cabinet away from light and heat.

Try: Bragg Organic Extra Virgin Olive Oil

Virgin vs Extra Virgin vs. Light

- Extra virgin oil is considered the highest quality oil. It is unrefined and retains a higher content of antioxidants, vitamins and minerals from the plant it is sourced from and also has a stronger taste. Extra virgin oil will have a lower smoke point compared to virgin or refined oils.
 - Virgin oil is also unrefined but has a slightly less strong taste.
 - Oils not marked virgin or extra virgin are either 100% refined oil or a blend of virgin and refined oil.
 - Refined oil has been processed with heat or chemicals to remove any "flaws" or bitterness.
 - Light oil is a refined oil with a lighter taste. It does not mean it has less calories.
-

MacNut Macadamia Nut Oil is another good choice of oil rich in monounsaturated fats, if you don't like the taste of olive oil.

Vegetable Oils and Canola Oil

Most vegetable oils are made from corn, soy, canola, sunflower seeds, safflower seeds, or peanuts and should be avoided due to their extremely high content of omega-6 fats. Too much omega-6 in the diet can cause inflammation and disrupt the integrity of cell membranes. In addition, vegetable oils are processed using chemicals and solvents.

There is one exception: avocado oil. If you have to deep-fry, it's really the best choice. However, you have to be sure to get the refined oil. Unrefined avocado oil does not have such a high smoke point.

Another reason to avoid soybean and canola oils: One study found that the these oils actually contain trans fats!

Margarine and Shortening: Sources of Trans Fats

These products are vegetable oils that have been hydrogenated to make them shelf stable and solid at room temperature. Just recently, the FDA has determined that trans fats are not safe for consumption. They've been linked to cardiovascular disease, inflammation and even cancer. Avoid these products.

Salad dressings and marinades are a common source of vegetable oil, be sure to check the ingredients list. See the condiments section for recommended brands

Smoke points

Different fats have different smoke points at which they begin to oxidize. If you notice the fat/oil starting to smoke when it's

being heated or the butter turning dark brown, that means the fat is oxidizing. While you don't necessarily have to throw out this oil and start over, it's best to keep a close eye on your cooking temperature and prevent the oil from smoking whenever possible.

SMOKE POINTS

	Degrees Fahrenheit
Refined Avocado Oil	520
Clarified Butter (Ghee)	450–485
Extra Light Olive Oil	468
Refined Coconut Oil	400
Virgin Olive Oil	391
Lard	370
Butter	350
Coconut Oil	350
Extra Virgin Olive Oil	320–375

FRUITS & VEGETABLES

Living Well Recommendation: Always choose organic when buying the top 10 pesticide-laden fruits and vegetables. Frozen vegetables are a good option when produce is out of season, and beware of BPA in canned produce. Steaming your produce is the best cooking method to prevent nutrient loss.

The top 10 most pesticide-covered fruits you should buy organic (the higher on the list, the more pesticide contamination):

- | | |
|-----------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Apples | 6. Blueberries (domestic) |
| 2. Peaches | 7. Cherries |
| 3. Nectarines | 8. Plums |
| 4. Strawberries | 9. Pears |
| 5. Grapes | 10. Raspberries |

The top 10 most pesticide-covered vegetables you should buy organic (the higher on the list, the more pesticide contamination):

- | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Celery | 6. Snap peas (imported) |
| 2. Spinach | 7. Potatoes |
| 3. Sweet bell peppers | 8. Hot peppers |
| 4. Cucumbers | 9. Lettuce |
| 5. Cherry tomatoes | 10. Kale / Collard greens |

These are the top ten “cleanest” crops you can buy conventional:

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------|
| 1. Avocados | 6. Asparagus |
| 2. Pineapples | 7. Mangoes |
| 3. Cabbage | 8. Kiwi |
| 4. Sweet peas (frozen) | 9. Eggplant |
| 5. Onions | 10. Grapefruit |

*Note: Sweet corn and papayas are also high on the “clean” list, but because there are GM versions of these crops we recommend you buy organic to be sure you don’t get a GM variety.

Dirty Dozen App

Download the Environmental Working Group’s Dirty Dozen app on your smartphone for a handy list of the fruits and vegetables to buy organic.

PLU Codes

In addition to looking for the USDA organic logo, you can check the PLU codes on the little stickers on produce to know if they are organic or conventional.

- Conventional produce will have a four digit code that starts with a 3 or 4
- Organic produce will have a five digit code that starts with a 9

**Conventional****Organic**

Some sources claim that a five digit code that starts with an 8 means the produce is a GM variety. While it's true that the 8-code was created for this purpose, no produce manufacturers currently use these codes. GM crops will have the four digit code that starts with a 3 or 4.

Genetically Modified Fruits & Vegetables

These crops have GM versions, so look for a non-GMO label or choose organic:

- Alfalfa (sprouts)
 - Corn
 - Papaya
 - Soy (edamame)
 - Sugar Beets (not typically found in produce section)
 - Zucchini
 - Yellow Summer Squash
-

FRESH, FROZEN, AND CANNED

Fresh

When in-season and picked when ripe, local, fresh produce will always be the best option. The nutrients will degrade with time so always try and eat your produce soon after buying it. Look on the PLU sticker for the state or country of origin. If you have options, always buy the variety that was harvested the closest to you.

Frozen

For crops that are not in season, buying them frozen is a great option. Whereas fresh produce may have been picked before it was fully ripe and lost a portion of its nutrient content during shipment, frozen fruits and vegetables are typically picked during the peak of their ripeness, preserving a majority of their vitamins and minerals. Frozen foods can also be more affordable than fresh.

US Grade A/US Fancy is the highest quality grade for frozen vegetables, followed by Grade B. The grading is determined mostly by the appearance of the produce, not the nutrient quality.

Canned

[Many studies](#) have found that canned produce is equivalent in nutrients or even superior to fresh produce. And for some foods, the heating process during canning actually increases the amounts of nutrients. Canned tomatoes have higher amounts of lycopene than fresh tomatoes, canned corn is higher in lutein than fresh, and canned carrots are higher in beta carotene.

However, the sodium content of canned foods can be extremely high. And most conventional brands use BPA-lined cans. Also, if you plan to cook or heat the food up anyway, it doesn't matter whether you buy fresh or canned.

Should you buy fruit and vegetable washes?

Don't waste your money. A study from the Department of Food Science and Human Nutrition at the University of Maine found that distilled water was just as or more effective at reducing bacteria and residual pesticides than three commercial washes. For fruits and vegetables with a tough outer skin, use a brush to scrub them under running water. For other produce, soak for two or three minutes in distilled or cold tap water, rinse, and you're all set.

Canned foods do typically give you more food for your buck, though, and the convenience can't be overlooked. If you choose canned vegetables, look for BPA free cans or glass jars, and check the label for the sodium content. While some glass jars will have a metal lid lined with BPA, the contact area with the food is less than with a fully-lined can, so the potential contamination risk may be lower. See the canned foods section for a list of BPA-free brands.

Fruit and Vegetable Seasons

The in-season crops will vary depending on where you live, but this is a [general guide](#):

WINTER

Apples	Grapefruit	Pineapple
Bananas	Kale	Potatoes
Beets	Leeks	Pumpkins
Brussels Sprouts	Lemons	Rutabagas
Cabbage	Onions	Sweet Potatoes and Yams
Carrots	Oranges	Turnips
Celery	Parsnips	Winter Squash
	Pears	

SPRING

Apples	Celery	Pineapple
Apricots	Collard Greens	Radishes
Asparagus	Garlic	Rhubarb
Bananas	Greens (cooking)	Spinach
Broccoli	Lettuce	Strawberries
Cabbage	Mushrooms	Swiss Chard
Carrots	Onions	Turnips
	Peas	

SUMMER

Apples	Cherries	Nectarines
Apricots	Collard Greens	Okra
Bananas	Corn	Peaches
Beets	Cucumbers	Plums
Bell Peppers	Eggplant	Raspberries
Blackberries	Garlic	Strawberries
Blueberries	Green Beans	Summer Squash & Zucchini
Carrots	Honeydew Melon	Tomatillos
Cantaloupe/ Muskmelons	Kiwifruit	Tomatoes
Celery	Lima Beans	Watermelon
	Mangos	

FALL

Apples	Garlic	Pears
Bananas	Ginger	Pineapple
Beets	Grapes	Potatoes
Bell Peppers	Greens (cooking)	Pumpkins
Broccoli	Green Beans	Radishes
Brussels Sprouts	Kale	Raspberries
Cabbage	Lettuce	Rutabagas
Carrots	Mangos	Spinach
Cauliflower	Mushrooms	Sweet Potatoes and Yams
Celery	Onions	Swiss Chard
Collard Greens	Parsnips	Turnips
Cranberries	Peas	Winter Squash

Extend the life of your berries

Strawberries, blueberries, raspberries and blackberries are quick to mold. You can make them last a few days longer by soaking them for ten minutes in a bowl of water with ½ cup vinegar added. Rinse, allow to air dry and return to the fridge.

MEAT

Living Well recommendation: Pasture-raised, grass fed organic meat is the best choice. If you can't find pastured meat, organic is your next best option. Meats are higher in pesticide residue than produce, so it's even more important to buy organic meat.

Natural

USDA regulation state that natural meats may not contain any artificial ingredients and must be minimally processed. However, it does not indicate anything about how the animals were raised, what they were fed, and whether or not antibiotics or hormones were used. This label does not mean the meat is organic.

Fed Vegetarian Feed

This is usually found on poultry and is meant to indicate that the chickens were not fed animal by-products (usually feathers or bone meal). It doesn't not indicate that the meat is of better quality. In fact, chickens and poultry are not vegetarians by nature. Vegetarian feed is usually corn or soy and it is likely to be GMO unless it is labelled organic.

Organic

If the meat is labelled organic you can be sure it was raised on organic land, no antibiotics or hormones were used on the animal, any feed given to the animals was non-GMO and was grown without synthetic pesticides or chemical fertilizers, and the animals were not fed any animal-byproducts. It also means that the animals had access to the outdoors, though it does not mean that the animals were raised outside or had access to grass or pasture.

Raised Without Hormones or Hormone Free

Always look for beef labelled hormone free or raised without hormones.

Federal law prohibits the use of hormones in poultry or pork, so it doesn't matter if these products are labelled hormone free or not.

Raised without Antibiotics or Antibiotic Free

Always look for this statement for all meats (or buy organic). Not only is the overuse of antibiotics in animal farming contributing to the rise of antibiotic-resistant bacteria, but antibiotics are also used to fatten up animals before slaughter, a completely unnecessary and reckless use of the drugs.

Free Range

The USDA only regulates the claim “free range” for poultry produced for meat, and it only means that the birds had access to the outdoors. It does not mean the birds actually went outdoors or foraged for food. Free range is not regulated for beef, pork, or egg-producing hens. So while companies may put this on their label, it does not have a standard, regulated definition.

Cage-Free (Poultry)

All poultry raised for meat cannot be kept in cages, so this label means nothing.

Grass-Fed or Grass-Finished

Prior to April 11, 2016, companies that used “Grass-fed” on their label must have met the USDA regulation that 99% of the animal’s feed be from grass or forage. USDA has since withdrawn their standard for grass-fed labels and are allowing companies to make their own standards. This could mean that some unscrupulous producers allow for only 50% of the animals diet to be from grass, and the rest from grain. There will be no way to know unless you look for “100% Grass fed” or the American Grassfed seal.

Grass-fed beef is typically lower in fat and higher in omega-3s. It also has a higher content of conjugated linoleic acid, a fatty acid that may have specific health benefits. Grass fed meat also has higher amounts of vitamin E and glutathione, a powerful antioxidant.

Pasture Raised

Though this term is not regulated by the USDA, farmers that use it honestly have raised their animals in a way that allows



them to naturally eat and forage for food outdoors. The quality of pastured meat is likely to be much higher than factory farmed meat since the animals are not solely relying on grains for their food.

Poultry that eat bugs and grubs have eggs and meat with [higher omega 3 content](#) and cattle that eat only eat grass also have superior omega-3 content of their meat. In addition, since the animals are not confined into close quarters, they are generally healthier and not likely to need as many, if any, antibiotics, as compared to conventionally-raised animals.

Non-GMO

As of January 2016, no genetically modified land animals exist for human consumption, so if you see this on a label it does not mean that meat is better than a meat without non-GMO labelling. If you're looking at a meat product that contains other ingredients, like sausage, a non-GMO label will indicate that none of the other ingredients are GMO. Note: See Seafood section for information on GM salmon

Humanely Raised

Currently there is no legal definition for the term "humane", and this label has been found on products where the animals have been subject to inhumane practices such as confinement systems and mutilations. To be sure you are getting truly humanely raised meat, look for the following third-party seals:



NUTS, PEANUTS, SEEDS AND NUT BUTTERS

Living Well Recommendation: Buy organic unroasted nuts and seeds in the bulk section of your grocery store to avoid extra salt, sugar, and oil typically found in the canned and jarred brands.

Tree nuts and seeds can make for nutritious snacks but many canned brands add extra salt, sugar and refined oils. Look for unroasted nuts and seeds in the bulk foods section of your grocery store where you can avoid these unnecessary additives and also dramatically save money.

However, give them a whiff before you fill up your bag- nuts and seeds easily go rancid because of their polyunsaturated fat content. For that reason, once you get them home you should always store them in the fridge or freezer.

Most nuts and seeds are pasteurized, so they aren't truly "raw" (even organic varieties) unless you buy them directly from the grower. By law, almonds have to be pasteurized before they can be sold in stores or else they are treated with a chemical called propylene oxide. Since there's no federal definition for labelling something "raw", some nuts could be labelled raw even though they have been pasteurized.

Pistachios are frequently bleached so their shells are not stained, and the high fat content of nuts and seeds causes them to absorb pesticides more readily. Buy organic when you can.

Nuts and seeds can easily be roasted at home (roasting them can destroy some of the nutritional content, though). The most nutritious way to eat nuts and seeds is to soak and/or sprout them. This neutralizes some of the enzyme inhibitors naturally present in nuts, making them easier to digest.

See the recipe section for roasting and soaking instructions. Nut butters can also be easily made at home if you have a high powered blender.

Nut Butters brands to try:

- Artisan — organic, raw
- Once Again — organic, raw
- Wilderness Family Naturals — organic, raw, soaked and dried

Peanuts are actually legumes, not nuts. They grow underground and are exposed to pesticides for a longer time than tree nuts. Additionally, peanuts are frequently contaminated with a mold that produces aflatoxin, a toxin shown to be carcinogenic. Even organic varieties can contain aflatoxin, so it's best to only enjoy peanut butter in moderation.

Organic Peanut Butter

Look for a product without any added sugar

- Arrowhead Mills — no added oils or sugar
- Santa Cruz Organic Peanut Butter
- Smucker's Organic — added peanut oil, no sugar
- Wegman's organic — no added oils or sugar

PANTRY AND BAKING

Here are some Living Well-approved brands for common pantry and baking items:

Soy Sauce Alternatives

- Bragg Liquid Aminos — Non-GMO
- Coconut Secret Organic Raw Coconut Aminos

Wheat Flour Alternatives

- Bob's Red Mill Almond Flour
- Arrowhead Mills Organic Brown Rice Flour
- Bob Red Mill's Organic Brown Rice Flour
- Bob's Red Mill Organic Coconut Flour

Rice

- Lundberg Farms Organic California Brown Basmati Rice

Chocolate Chips

- EnjoyLife chocolate chips are dairy, nut, and soy free
- Lily's Dark Chocolate Chips sweetened with stevia

Coconut Butter / Manna

- Artisana Organic Raw Coconut Butter
- Nutiva Coconut Manna

Spices

- Frontier spices are organic and fair-trade
- Simply Organic

Stevia

- Mountain Rose Herbs Organic Stevia Leaf Powder
green powdered stevia
- Sweet Leaf Organic Stevia Extract refined stevia

Vinegar

- Bragg Organic Apple Cider Vinegar
- Marukan Organic Rice Vinegar
- Napa Valley Naturals Organic Balsamic Vinegar
- Spectrum Naturals Organic Distilled White Vinegar
organic corn and rye

PACKAGED AND PROCESSED MEATS

Living Well Recommendation: Look for organic, antibiotic-free, hormone-free and nitrite free meats with no fillers.

Processed meat includes meats that have been processed by curing, salting, smoking, drying or canning (sausages, hot dogs, salami, bacon, ham, salted and cured meat, corned beef, smoked meat, dried meat, beef jerky and canned meat products like Spam).

Many observational studies have shown that eating processed meat is associated with increased risk of many chronic diseases including high blood pressure (hypertension), heart disease, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and bowel and stomach cancer.

Sodium nitrite is one additive in processed meat that may be responsible for the increased risk in bowel cancer. It is added to the meat to help preserve it. When exposed to high heat from grilling or frying, nitrites form harmful compounds called nitrosamines which have been shown in animal studies to cause cancer. Other harmful compounds

can be formed when the meat is smoked or grilled, and these compounds are highly concentrated in processed meats.

You don't have to give up bacon forever, though. So far, the evidence shows that the absolute risk of cancer from eating processed meats is pretty low and you can dramatically reduce your risk by eating these products less frequently, eating them in combination with vegetables, and cooking the meats at lower temperatures. Also look for brands without added nitrites or other preservatives.

In addition to the standard concerns of antibiotics and hormones in regular meat, many canned meats or packaged deli meats have added filler ingredients like soy protein, corn starch, MSG and other preservatives that are best avoided. Be sure to read the ingredients list.

Living Well Approved Brands:

- Applegate
- Bilinski's
- Let's Be Frank
- Niman Ranch
- Organic Prairie
- Smart Chicken
- Tallgrass Beef
- US Wellness Meats
- Wellshire (only at Wholefoods)
- Wholefoods 365

SEAFOOD

Living Well recommendation: Choose wild-caught, sustainable seafood when possible.

Farmed seafood is not usually a good choice. Fish grown in aquaculture farms are subject to vaccinations and antibiotics to prevent or treat the diseases that arise from being grown in close captivity. Farmed fish are usually fed GMO grains and soy which drastically increases their omega-6 content. There are some farmed fish that are better than others.

Always Choose Wild-Caught:

- Alaskan Salmon (Avoid Atlantic salmon, it is farmed)
- Shrimp
- Tuna (troll, pole-caught, or chunk light)

Farmed OK:

- Shellfish: Mussels, Clams, Oysters
- Domestic Catfish
- Domestic Rainbow Trout

Generally safe

The following are almost always wild-caught:

- Crabs - there are no farmed crabs on the market
- Cod, pollock, and haddock
- Herring
- Anchovies
- Sardines

For all others, choose wild-caught if you can, and if not, look for domestic farmed versions.

Beware “Organic” labelled seafood.

Currently, the USDA does not regulate seafood under the National Organic Program. So if you find seafood marked as organic, it may or may not be up to USDA standards.

Wild caught salmon: Healthier and non-GMO

Wild caught salmon contains a better ratio of omega-3:omega-6 and up to **90%** more vitamin D than farmed salmon. **Farmed salmon** may also have up to 8 times higher levels of PCBs compared to wild salmon.

Another reason to always buy wild-caught salmon is so you know you are not getting a genetically modified variety. In November 2015, FDA approved the first GM salmon for human consumption. The salmon is currently not required to be labelled as GE so the only way to know for sure you are not buying GM salmon is to buy wild-caught or a farmed salmon with non-GMO certification.

Look for these seals to help you choose the healthiest, sustainable and eco-friendly seafood:



Mercury in Seafood

These fish are the highest in mercury. Try and limit your consumption of the top 5 to no more than once a month, and the other to no more than once every week or two.

1. Swordfish
2. King Mackerel
3. Shark
4. Tilefish
5. Orange Roughy
6. Flatfish (Plaice, Sole, Flounder)
7. Canned white Tuna (albacore or yellowfin)
8. Canned Light Tuna (skipjack)

SNACK FOODS

Living Well Recommendation: All processed foods that come in a package should be consumed infrequently. Read the ingredients list and beware of ingredients you can't pronounce, along with GM soy, vegetable or canola oils.

Here are some Living Well approved brands to enjoy on occasion:

Potato and Corn Chips

- Boulder Canyon — cooked in avocado oil
- Garden of Eatin corn tortilla chips — organic, non GMO
- Good Health — cooked in avocado oil
- Jackson's Honest — cooked in coconut oil

Crackers

- Annie's Organic
- Late July Organic

- Mary's Gone Crackers — organic, gluten free, whole grains with nuts and seeds

Other Crunchy Things

- Beanitos bean chips (also contains rice)
- Lundberg organic rice cakes
- Turbana plantain chips

Jerky

- Epic — uncured, gluten free, paleo-friendly
- Krave — no nitrites, no msg, gluten free
- Laura's Lean Beef — organic, grass-fed, no added nitrites

Snack Bars

- Go Raw sprouted bars

Candy

- Alter Ego Dark Blackout Organic Chocolate
- Genesis Raw Chocolate
- Green & Black's chocolate — Fair trade, organic
- Lily's chocolate — Fair trade, non-GMO, sweetened with stevia and erythritol
- Lulu's Chocolate — Fair Trade, organic
- Justin's Organic peanut butter cups
- Theo chocolate — organic, fair trade

Beware of Trans fats in Processed Foods

Unfortunately, you can't always trust the nutrition facts panel. For certain nutrients, the FDA allows "0" to be put on the label when there is less than half a gram per serving. This is the case for trans fats. Since there is *no safe* amount of trans fat to eat, even having less than half a gram per day could be a detriment to your health. The good news is that food labels must list all of the ingredients in the product. So if you're eating anything that comes out of a package, be sure to read the label. Any ingredient that is "**hydrogenated**," "**partially hydrogenated**," or "**shortening**" means that trans fats are present — even if the amount listed is zero.

SUGARS & SWEETENERS (NATURAL AND ARTIFICIAL)

THE MANY NAMES FOR SUGAR

Added sugar is in up to 75% of packaged foods, including ones you wouldn't expect, like bread and pasta sauce. Anytime you see the word "sugar" on the Ingredients list, you should take caution. Here are some other names for sugar you may see:

- Agave nectar
- Barley malt
- Barley malt syrup
- Buttered syrup
- Cane juice
- Cane juice crystals
- Caramel
- Carob syrup
- Corn sweetener
- Corn syrup
- Corn syrup solids
- Dehydrated cane juice
- Demerara sugar
- Dextrin
- Dextrose
- Evaporated cane juice
- Free-flowing brown sugars
- Fructose
- Fruit juice
- Fruit juice concentrate
- Glucose
- Glucose solids
- Golden sugar
- Golden syrup
- HFCS (High-Fructose Corn Syrup)
- Honey
- Malt syrup
- Maltodextrin
- Maltol
- Maltose
- Mannose
- Maple syrup
- Molasses
- Muscovado
- Panocha
- Refiner's syrup
- Rice syrup
- Saccharose
- Sorghum Syrup
- Sucrose
- Sweet Sorghum
- Syrup
- Trehalose

Coconut sugar, date sugar, and other concentrated “fruit sugars”

While these sugars may have some trace minerals that aren't in refined cane sugar, your body still processes it in a very similar way. They are not inherently healthier than refined cane sugar.

Raw vs filtered honey:

Raw honey will contain pollen while filtered honey will not. The nutritional content is the same between the two. If you're trying to use honey to help reduce seasonal allergies, be sure to get local, raw honey.

Blackstrap Molasses

During the creation of refined cane sugar, blackstrap molasses is the dark substance left over after a majority of the sugar crystals have been removed. The glycemic index of molasses is 55 (compared to table sugar's 80) and it also is a concentrated source of many vitamins and minerals. In fact, one tablespoon contains:

- Iron (3.6 mg, or 20% of the RDA)
- Calcium (176 mg, or 17.6% of the RDA)
- Copper (0.42 mg, or 21% of the RDA)
- Manganese (0.54 mg, or 27% of the RDA)
- Magnesium (44 mg, or 11% of the RDA)
- Potassium (510 mg, or 9.7% of the RDA)
- B vitamins, including B6 (0.15 mg, or 7.5% of the RDA) and smaller amounts of B2 and B3
- Selenium (3.6 mg, or 5.2% of the RDA)
- Small amounts of sodium, zinc, and phosphorus

Look for *unsulphured* blackstrap molasses, meaning it has been processed without sulfur dioxide.

The American Heart Association recommends no more than 9 teaspoons (38 grams) of added sugar per day for men, and 6 teaspoons (25 grams) for women.

OTHER NATURAL SWEETENERS

Lo Han Guo/Monk fruit (Nectresse): this is made from the fruit of a vine that grows in Asia. The extract is up to 300 times sweeter than sucrose with little to no calories.

Stevia/ rebaudioside/rebiana/reb A (Truvia, Pure Via): Stevia is a plant that has been used as a sweetener for centuries in South America. It has no calories. Rebaudioside A is one of the main compounds in the plant that gives it a sweet taste. Avoid the chemically processed versions like Truvia and look for a 100% stevia powder or stevia extract.

Tagatose (Naturlose): a low-calorie, low glycemic index sweetener made from lactose. It is only partially absorbed in the intestines and can cause similar GI issues as sugar alcohols.

Trehalose: A natural sweetener that is only 45 percent as sweet as sucrose, but may be GMO.

Sugar alcohols:

Sugar alcohols occur in certain fruits and vegetables and can also be man-made. They are lower in calories than regular sugar and are considered safe, though for some people they can cause gas, bloating, or other digestive stress.

- Erythritol
- Hydrogenated starch hydrolysate
- Isomalt
- Lactitol
- Maltitol
- Mannitol
- Sorbitol
- Xylitol

Artificial Sweeteners

Avoid these! Despite being promoted as a weight loss aid, fifteen studies since 1986 have shown that artificial sweeteners

cause increases in appetite, calorie consumption, weight gain and increased blood sugar levels. They can also be made from GMOs.

- Acesulfame potassium (Sunett, Sweet One)
- Aspartame (Equal, NutraSweet)
- Neotame
- Saccharin (SugarTwin, Sweet'N Low)
- Sucralose (Splenda)
- Advantame

OTHER DEPARTMENTS

BEER, WINE AND LIQUOR

ORGANIC BEER

Organic beer must contain 100% organic agricultural ingredients, but a beer “made with organic ingredients” only needs to be 70% organic. Neither are required to list every ingredient on the label.

Living Well Recommended brands (with a few personal favorites from our staff):

- Bison Brewing
- Butte Creek
- Eel River
- Lakefront Brewery
- Lenny Boy Brewing Co
- Mill Street Brewery Original Organic Lager
- Peak Organic
- Samuel Smith

Mike recommends the Chocolate Stout

- Stone Mill Pale Ale
- Uinta Brewing Co (not all brews are organic)

Nate and Emily recommend the Baba Black Lager

ORGANIC AND/OR BIODYNAMIC WINE

Organic wine cannot contain added sulphites. However, wine “made with organic grapes” can contain some added sulphites, so read the label carefully if you’re sensitive to sulphites.

Living Well Recommended brands:

- Bonterra

Rob recommends the Cabernet Sauvignon

- Bousquet
- Chateau Maris
- Dirty & Rowdy
- Emiliana
- Eyrie

Aaron recommends the Pinot Noir

- Frey

Joel recommends the Syrah

- Lapostolle

Kate recommends the Casa Carmenera

- Natura
- Santa Julia Organica
- Teavine :An interesting mix of organic green tea, sparkling white wine and honey

ORGANIC OR NON-GMO LIQUOR

Organic distilled spirits must be 100% organic, with no added chemicals or toxins and no GMO ingredients. Spirits “made with organic” ingredients must be 70% organic.

Living Well Recommended brands:

- Art in the Age infused spirits
- CapRock Gin, Vodka and Brandy
- Crop Organic Vodka

Erika recommends the cucumber flavor

- Ocean Organic vodka

- Square One organic vodka

Oprah named Square One vodkas one of her Favorite Things from 2015

- Tierras Organic Tequila
- Tres Generaciones Organic Tequila (some)
- Bourbon: Wild Turkey, Four Roses, Buffalo Trace
— not organic, but use non-GMO corn

HOUSEHOLD CLEANING

Living Well Recommendation: Avoid the harmful chemicals in most cleaning products and make natural, safer, and cheaper versions with just a few simple ingredients.

There's one section of the grocery store filled with more harmful chemicals than any other aisle— the household cleaning aisle. The chemicals used when we clean get inhaled or absorbed into our skin and then end up in our water supply.

Many of these man-made chemicals have been classified as endocrine disruptors and potentially or even outright carcinogenic. For example, over 50% of the bathroom cleaners rated by the Environmental Working Group got an “F” rating, meaning the product has ingredients that pose significant hazards to health or the environment. Only 4% (9 products) scored an “A”.

But even some cleaners marked at “green” or “eco-friendly” may still be harboring harmful ingredients, since there are no standardized requirements for the use of those labels. But the best reason to avoid this aisle? You can easily make household cleaners at home with safe and natural ingredients for way less money.

Here's what you'll need to make just about any cleaner you want:

- Distilled vinegar
- Castille or Dr. Bronner's soap
- Baking soda
- Essential oils

HOMEMADE HOUSEHOLD CLEANERS

Laundry detergent: 1/3 cup Dr. Bronner's Soap in the detergent tray plus 1 cup of baking soda in the load. If the machine

is HE you can use $\frac{1}{4}$ cup Dr. Bronner's.

Dryer sheets: Don't use them! Try using wool dryer balls, like [these](#). You can add a few drops of essential oils to the dryer balls and let them sit for 10 minutes before putting them in the dryer.

Dishwashing soap: Dr. Bronner's soap works well. For a difficult baked-on mess, try adding some baking soda to scrub with.

Dishwasher Rinse Agent: Pour 1 cup distilled vinegar in a cup and set in the top rack of the dishwasher. It will do the rest.

Dusting Spray: Combine 1 cup water, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup distilled vinegar, 2 teaspoons olive oil and 10-15 drops essential oil. Add to spray bottle and shake well before use.

Drain Cleaner: Pour $\frac{1}{4}$ cup baking soda into the drain, followed by $\frac{1}{4}$ cup vinegar. Allow to sit for one minute. Pour another $\frac{1}{4}$ cup vinegar into the drain and allow to sit. Flush with hot water.

Household cleaner: 1 part distilled white vinegar to 1 part water and add in 10-20 drops of essential oil for a fresher scent. This works great for countertops, surfaces, floor, tubs and windows.

Glass, Mirror and Window cleaner: Spray with distilled vinegar and wipe with towel.

Toilet: Pour in a cup of vinegar and a bit of baking soda. Let it sit a while and then scrub.

Natural pesticides: [Diatomaceous earth](#)

It can also be used on pets to repel fleas.

If you're in a pinch and you really must buy your cleaners, here are some of the top rated brands from the EWG and other healthier options:

- AspenClean

- bioKleen
- Branch Basics
- Greenshield Organic
- BuggyLove Organic
- Ecover*
- Mrs. Meyer's Clean Day*
- Seventh Generation*
- Soap Nuts
- Sun & Earth*

*Note: the products under these brands vary from grades A through F. Check ewg.org to be sure of the grade of the specific product you choose.

PERSONAL CARE AND BEAUTY PRODUCTS

Living Well Recommendation: Your skin is your biggest organ and anything you put on it will be absorbed into your bloodstream and spread throughout your body. Personal care items should be treated like food- if you wouldn't eat it, you shouldn't put it on your skin!

The majority of the brands recommended below have received a 1 or 2 rating by the Environmental Working Group. That means they have ranked low in potential toxic hazard.

Always check that ingredients list. Here's a general list of things to avoid, but generally, if you can't pronounce it you likely don't want to put it in or on your body.

- Parabens
- Phthalates
- Sulfates
- PEGs (polyethylene glycols)
- Phenoxyethanol
- Petroleum products
- DEA's
- Any synthetic fragrance or "parfum"
- BHA
- DBP
- Formaldehydes: urea, DMDM, Methenamine
- Siloxanes

- Sodium Laureth Sulfates
- Triclosan

Anti-bacterial soaps and hand sanitizers

Avoid these products! Most are made with Triclosan, a chemical that has been linked to liver toxicity, thyroid dysfunction, and may even lead to spontaneous abortions. Besides, studies show washing your hands with plain old soap and water is just as effective as triclosan-based sanitizer.

Cosmetics

Many of the brands you'll find at the supermarket or drugstore are best avoided and you may be better off buying online. Some of the following recommended brands may be found at department or big box stores.

- 100 Percent Pure
- Bare Minerals
- Tarte
- Pacifica (available at Target or Walmart)
- Sephora — some products will list what is not in it.

Deodorant

The main toxic ingredient in most deodorants is aluminum, which has been linked to organ system toxicity and Alzheimer's disease. The skin in the armpit is thin and many lymph glands are located there. Substances are rapidly absorbed and able to spread throughout the body via the lymph system. Because of this, non-toxic deodorant is one of the most important body care items to choose.

If you try a natural deodorant and it doesn't work for you, try a different brand until you find one that does. Coconut oil has antibacterial properties and can work well as a natural deodorant for some people.

If you shop at a natural foods market you might be able to

find some of the following brands. Otherwise, try looking on amazon.com.

- Alba Botanica
- Alvera — *recommended by Jasmine*
- Crystal Body
- Crystal Essence
- Primal Pit Paste
- Tom's of Maine aluminum free

Lotions

Many body lotions are chock full of chemicals like PEG compounds, a petroleum-based ingredient that acts as a thickener and moisture-carrier and may be carcinogenic. Since your skin rapidly absorbs anything you put on it, there's no safer body care product than something that is safe to ingest—like coconut oil. If you haven't tried using this great moisturizer yet, give it a shot. Other oil products like almond oil, argan oil, kuikui nut oil, jojoba oil, or grapeseed oil are options.

If you don't like to use an oil, look for one of the brands recommended in the shampoo and conditioner section, they have all been highly rated for their lotion products as well.

Soap

Dr. Bronner's castille soap wins. Use it for face, body and hand soap. Dr. Bronner's soap is concentrated, biodegradable, made with organic and certified fair trade ingredients, and packaged in a 100% post-consumer recycled bottle.

Shampoo and Conditioner

If you want to go truly 100% pure, natural and non-toxic, you can try washing your hair with baking soda and using a vinegar rinse to make hair shiny. Or you can look for these brands that have been rated highly by the EWG.

- Andalou Naturals
- Acure Organics
- Alba Botanica

- Aubrey Organics
- Burt's Bee
- derma e
- Desert Essence
- Kiss My Face
- SheaMoisture

Sunscreens

Not only are some of the actual chemical sunscreen ingredients toxic, but many products are packed with other harmful ingredients as well, like preservatives and retinyl palmitate, which may actually *increase* sun cancer risk. Additionally, don't rely on sunscreen for cancer prevention; there's actually no proof that they prevent skin cancer. Only use them when you must prevent a sunburn.

- Look for a product made with non-micronized zinc oxide or titanium dioxide, rather than a chemical-based sunscreen.
- Avoid aerosol spray cans, as they are not as effective as lotions and can get into the lungs.
- If you just need a light protection, coconut oil has a natural SPF 4.

Best brands:

- Alba Botanica
- Aubrey Organics
- Badger
- Dr. Mercola
- Nature's Gate
- The Honest Company
- True Natural

Worst brands:

- Banana Boat
- Coppertone
- CVS
- Neutrogena
- NO-AD

GENERAL INFORMATION

FOOD ADDITIVES

Living Well Recommendation: Many food additives are not natural and may have harmful effects on the human body. Avoid processed foods when you can, and always check the ingredients list. If you can't pronounce it, you shouldn't eat it.

Butylated hydroxyanisole (BHA)

A preservative used in chips, preserved meats, and baked goods. The National Toxicology Program classifies it as “reasonably anticipated to be a human carcinogen,” the International Cancer Agency categorizes it as a possible human carcinogen, and it's listed as a known carcinogen under California's Proposition 65. Studies have shown it to be an endocrine disruptor and cause tumors in animals.

Butylated hydroxytoluene (BHT)

Another preservative used synergistically with BHA. It's been shown to be an endocrine disruptor and cause developmental effects and thyroid changes in animals.

Food Dyes

Food dyes are made from petroleum and are completely unnecessary in food. Many dyes have been banned due to their toxic

effects on lab animals, and the ones that remain in use still have questionable health concerns including tumors in lab mice, allergic reactions, and hyperactivity in children. Avoid food dyes when you can.

- Blue 1
- Blue 2
- Green 3
- Orange B
- Red 3
- Red 40
- Yellow 5
- Yellow 6

MSG (monosodium glutamate)

MSG is a flavor enhancer originally derived from seaweed. Commonly used in Chinese food, this additive has been shown to have neurotoxicity because it causes nerve cells to fire excessively. It can cause headaches, brain fog, tingling and pain. MSG has also been linked to many health issues including fibromyalgia, obesity, fatty liver, high insulin, high blood sugar, high cholesterol, liver toxicity, metabolic syndrome, high blood pressure, disturbance to the gut-brain connection, and neurological and brain damage. Some people are more sensitive to it than others, but everyone should try and avoid products with added MSG.

Names of ingredients that always contain MSG:

- | | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| • Glutamic acid | • Natrium glutamate | nutrient |
| • Glutamate | • Anything "hydrolyzed" | • Autolyzed yeast |
| • Monosodium glutamate | • Any "hydrolyzed protein" | • Gelatin |
| • Monopotassium glutamate | • Calcium caseinate, Sodium caseinate | • Textured protein |
| • Calcium glutamate | • Yeast extract, Torula yeast | • Whey protein |
| • Monoammonium glutamate | • Yeast food, Yeast | • Whey protein concentrate |
| • Magnesium glutamate | | • Whey protein isolate |
| | | • Soy protein |

- Soy protein concentrate
- Soy protein isolate
- Anything “protein”
- Anything “protein fortified”
- Soy sauce
- Soy sauce extract
- Anything “enzyme modified”
- Anything containing “enzymes”
- Anything “fermented”
- Anything containing “protease”
- Vetsin
- Ajinomoto
- Umami

Natural & Artificial Flavors

Whereas natural flavors are extracted and purified from a natural source, artificial flavors are chemically man-made. However, both can contain preservatives, solvents and be comprised of up to 100 different chemicals. In addition, natural flavors may be from sources you wouldn't expect. For example one approved “natural flavor” is castoreum, a secretion from the anal glands of beavers. Avoid these additives when you can.

Nitrates and Nitrites

These are preservatives added to smoked and cured meats. They form nitrosamines, known carcinogens. In 2010, scientists at the World Health Organization's International Agency for Research on Cancer declared that ingested nitrites and nitrates are probable human carcinogens. See the Processed meats section for healthier brands of processed meats

Potassium Bromate

Used as a stabilizer in processed grain products like bread and cracker dough, this chemical is listed as a known carcinogen by the state of California, and the international cancer agency classifies it as a possible human carcinogen. The United Kingdom, European Union and Canada prohibit the use of potassium bromate in food but it's still allowed in the USA.

Propyl gallate

The additive is used as a preservative in products with fat, such as sausage and lard. It has shown some evidence of causing tumors in rats and may also be an endocrine disruptor.

Propyl Paraben

This preservative is used in processed grain products like tortillas and muffins, and is also used as a food dye. It's been shown to be an endocrine disruptor, to decrease sperm counts in rats, and may also accelerate breast cancer cell growth.

Phthalates and BPA

While these chemicals are not intentionally added to food, they are found in many plastic food packaging and can leach into food. They can also wind up in meats, dairy products, fruits and vegetables from antibiotics and pesticides.

BPA has been linked to reproductive harm and cancer, and phthalates can affect reproductive development and hormones so these chemicals should be avoided as much as possible.

- Avoid canned goods that aren't labeled BPA-free. See the canned foods section for a list of BPA-free brands.
- Buy fresh foods rather than packaged foods when possible and choose organic. Phthalates are used in antibiotics, pesticides and sewage sludge (which is used as fertilizer in conventional agriculture).
- Never microwave food in plastic. This includes the plastic "steam bags" many vegetables are packaged in. Put the frozen foods in a glass or ceramic microwave safe dish instead.
- Trade in your coffeemaker for a French press or glass or ceramic pour-over. Plastic k-cups and plastic coffee makers can leach phthalates when the water is heated.
- Store your leftovers in glass or stainless steel containers instead of plastic.
- Plastic products with recycling codes 3 and 7 may contain phthalates or BPA. Look for plastic with recycling codes 1, 2, or 5.
- Don't buy bottled water and choose a water filter with granulated activated carbon.
- Phthalates can also be found in many personal care items.

Taking these actions will make a difference. A study from the Silent Spring Institute found that when participants switched to a fresh-foods diet with no canned goods and minimal plastic packaging, the levels of BPA and Phthalates in their urine decreased up to 90%!

HIDDEN SOURCES OF SUGAR

Watch out for these hidden sources of sugar!

Applesauce	27g in 6oz
Baked beans	12g per ½ cup
BBQ and other sauces	8g in 1 oz
Bottled tea	48g in 16oz
Breakfast cereal	10-20g per cup
Canned fruit	30g per cup
Chocolate milk	6g in 8oz
Coleslaw	14g in 1 cup
Dried cranberries and other dried fruit	29g in ¼ cup
Granola cereals or bars	19g in 1 cup
Energy drinks	25g per 8oz
Fat Free salad dressings	7g per 2 TBS
French, Russian, & Thousand Island dressing	9g in 2TBS
Frozen meals	40g per meal
Fruit juice	15g in 1 cup
Fruit snacks	16g per serving

Jelly and Jam	4g in 1 TBS
Ketchup	6g in 1oz
Instant Oatmeal	12g in 1 packet
Orange Juice	24g in 8oz
Protein bars	15g in 1 bar
Sports drinks	14g in 8oz
Tomato and pasta sauce	7g in ½ cup
White wine (sweet)	6g per glass
Yogurt	19g in 6oz

1 teaspoon = 4 grams of sugar

Recommended Maximum Added Sugar Intake:

Men — 36 grams (9 teaspoons)

Women — 20 grams (5 teaspoons)

MONEY SAVING TIPS

Living Well Recommendation: Don't go grocery shopping hungry and take time to make a list.

Sell By and Expiration Dates: Don't Toss it Yet!

A Harvard study found that billions of pounds of food are prematurely thrown out every year because of confusion over sell by and expiration dates.

- With the exception of infant formula, sell by and expiration dates are not federally required. They are determined by states and food companies and have nothing to do with the safety of the food.
- A Sell By date only indicates when the store needs to sell the food by, and a Best By date only indicates the peak quality of the food. While they both give you some indication of the likelihood the food may have

begun to spoil, they don't mean the food is bad.

- Instead, look for signs of spoilage such as mold or slime, and smell the food to see if it has begun to go bad. Your sense will tell you whether the food is safe to eat.
- Many stores will drastically discount food items that have reached their sell by date. Stock up on these foods and put them in the freezer until you're ready to eat them.
- Some foods take a really long time to (or never) go bad, so buy in bulk. Butter and coconut oil will rarely go rancid and honey lasts indefinitely. Dried rice and beans also last for many years if stored properly.

Fruits and Vegetables:

- Be picky with what you choose organic- see the fruits and vegetables section for the produce you don't always need to buy organic.
- Buy in season at your farmer's market.
- Check out the freezer aisle- many times frozen vegetables are cheaper, especially the bulk bags.
- Buy them whole and use the whole vegetable: Pre-cut fruits and veggies are more expensive. Save vegetable ends and stalks in a freezer bag for the next time you need to make a batch of bone broth or soup stock.

Organic Meats

- Buy a whole chicken instead of individual parts; save the bones to make stock or bone broth.
- If you do buy parts, choose dark meat over light meat.
- Roasts (chuck, flank and shank) are less expensive than tenderloins and strip steaks. Ground beef is also less expensive.

- Use a slow cooker to make those tougher cuts just as tender and tasty.
- Organ meats are incredibly cheap and packed with nutrition. Only buy organ meats from pastured, organically raised animals.

Fish

- Cod and grouper are less expensive yet nutritionally dense choices.
- Buy more expensive fish (like wild-caught salmon) whole and fillet them yourself. Save the heads and bones for fish stock.
- Canned sardines are full of nutrition, low in contaminants and are only about \$1 per can.

Nuts and Beans: Avoid the jars and cans

- Buy in bulk, and buy nut in-shell. Check out the recipe guide on how to easily roast your own nuts and make your own nut milks.
- Nuts can be stored in the freezer to help them last longer.
- Buy dry bagged beans and legumes and soak them yourself.

Ditch the cereal box

- Though we don't recommend eating cereal for health reasons, if you do buy it look for the brands that are sold in bags rather than boxes.

Avoid eye-level and brand names

- Less expensive items and brands are typically above or below eye level items.

Choose loose-leaf tea over tea bags

- You pay less and get more antioxidants from the intact leaves. A simple metal loose-leaf tea infusers is only a couple dollars.

Buy these things online:

- Herbs and spices, especially the ones you use frequently.

Shop Ethnic Stores

- These stores will have exotic foods and spices for much cheaper than your grocery store.

Grow Your Own

These can easily be grown indoors:

- Sprouts
- Microgreens
- Salad lettuce
- Herbs
- Garlic

Forage for Free

Many superfoods can be found in your own backyard or local park (just make sure they don't use pesticides there):

- Pine needles — With 300 times more vitamin C than oranges, make some pine needle tea then next time you have a cold.
- Dandelion — The leaves are a great prebiotic to feed the good bacteria in your gut, the root is a powerful liver tonic and the flowers are a great source of lecithin.
- Berries — Mulberries, wild raspberries, blackberries, wineberries and blueberries can be found in many parts of the country.

Don't buy chemical-laden cleaners.

- You can easily make all-natural versions with a few cheap ingredients. See our section on household cleaners.

APPENDIX

HOW TO FIND A FARMER'S MARKET AND LOCAL, QUALITY FOODS

RESOURCES TO HELP YOU FIND A FARMER'S MARKET IN YOUR AREA:

- [USDA Agricultural Marketing Service](#)
- [Buy From The Farm \(Canada\)](#)
- [Local Harvest](#)
- [Eat Wild](#)
- [Eat Well](#)

CSA RESOURCES:

- [USDA](#)
- [Biodynamic Association](#)
- [ATTRA Sustainable Agriculture Program](#)
- [National Cooperative Grocers Association](#)

OTHER RESOURCES:

- [Sustainable Table](#) is an online directory of sustainable products in the U.S. and Canada.
- [American Pastured Poultry Producers Association](#)

ONLINE SHOPPING

ORGANIC PRODUCE

- **Boxed Greens:** boxedgreens.com
- Delivers to Phoenix, Arizona and surrounding areas
- **Door to Door Organics:** www.doortodoororganics.com
- Delivers to Chicago, Cleveland, Colorado, Kansas City, Michigan, Milwaukee, and the Tri-State areas
- **Farm Fresh to You:** www.farmfreshtoyou.com
- Delivers to California
- **Full Circle:** www.fullcircle.com
- Delivers to Washington, Oregon, Idaho, California, and Alaska.
- **Spud:** www.farmfreshtoyou.com
- Delivers to areas in California and Canada
- **Urban Organic:** www.urbanorganic.com
- Delivers to areas of New York

GRASS-FED & PASTURE-RAISED MEAT AND SEAFOOD

- **Butcher Box** www.getbutcherbox.com
- **GrassFed Traditions** www.grassfedtraditions.com
- **Healthy Buyers Club** www.healthybuyersclub.com
- **Heritage Foods USA** www.heritagefoodsusa.com
- **Slanker Grass-Fed Meats** www.texasgrassfedbeef.com
- **US Wellness Meats** www.grasslandbeef.com
- **White Oak Pastures** www.whiteoakpastures.com
- **Wild Idea Buffalo Co.** www.wildideabuffalo.com
- **Vital Choice** www.vitalchoice.com

RAW MILK

- **www.realmilk.com/real-milk-finder/**

PANTRY ITEMS

- **Amazon** www.amazon.com
- **Thrive Market** www.thrivemarket.com
- **Vitacost** www.vitacost.com

- [Wise Choice Market](http://www.wisechoicemarket.com) www.wisechoicemarket.com
 - Fermented Foods, bone broth, raw milk cheese, wild salmon and many other items

SPICES, COFFEE AND TEAS:

- [Mountain Rose Herbs](http://www.mountainroseherbs.com) www.mountainroseherbs.com
- [Vitacost](http://www.vitacost.com) www.vitacost.com
- [Amazon](http://www.amazon.com) www.amazon.com
- www.iherb.com

EATING ON THE ROAD

WHAT TO EAT AND AVOID AT A RESTAURANT

1. Avoid bread — Ask for your burger without the bun. Most restaurants will be able to make your sandwich without the bread — whether it be the fillings of a turkey club or a Reuben with melted Swiss cheese. Going breadless doesn't mean you can't enjoy the things you like
2. Ask for real butter, not margarine.
3. Replace rice, pasta, bread, or other sides with fruit, vegetables, and dairy.
4. For drinks, stick to water, unsweetened iced tea, or a nice glass of wine.
5. Avoid ketchup — it has a high sugar content, and often has high-fructose corn syrup
6. If you're ordering a salad, ask for oil and vinegar rather than any pre-made dressings. They can be a source of MSG and HFCS, and are usually packed with unnecessary carbs and sugars.
7. This might be tough, but avoid the dessert menu. Almost everything there will be full of added sugars. A cup of coffee, either black or with cream, is a much better way to end your meal.

BEST GAS STATION SNACKS

1. It's important to avoid processed foods. They contain a whole host of dangerous food poisons, which we get more into in the Food Additives section.
2. Most gas stations and convenience stores do now have a good selection of fruit like apples, bananas, and oranges.
3. Dark chocolate.
4. Trail mix — avoid anything with added sugar, like yogurt-covered raisins or processed candies. However, a bag full of nuts and dried fruit is filling and good for you.
5. Cheese — individually wrapped sharp cheddar is available most places, providing a good source of calcium and protein. Choose these over cheese curls, hands down.
6. Hard boiled eggs — most gas stations have these prepackaged now. They're a great source of protein and nutrients.
7. Beef jerky — look for brands without preservatives or added sodium.

RECIPES

CLARIFIED BUTTER (GHEE):

Ingredients and Supplies:

- 2 sticks (1/2 pound) unsalted butter
- Saucepan

Directions:

1. Cut the butter into chunks.
2. Place the butter in a saucepan and melt slowly over low heat.
3. Once it's completely melted, remove the pan from the heat and let stand for five minutes.
4. Skim the foam from the top and discard it (this is the lactose sugars and proteins).
5. Slowly pour the clarified butter into a container, discarding the milky solids in the bottom of pan.

Note: You'll lose about one-fourth of the butter, but that's OK! It's the sugars and proteins that you don't want.

The ghee will last in the fridge for about one month.

KETCHUP

Ingredients and Supplies:

- 1 can (6 ounces) tomato paste;
- 2 tbsp vinegar or lemon juice;
- 1/4 tsp dry mustard;
- 1/3 cup water;
- 1/4 tsp cinnamon;
- 1/4 tsp salt;
- 1 pinch ground cloves;
- 1 pinch ground allspice;
- 1/8 tsp cayenne pepper, optional
- Bowl, whisk, and storage container

Directions:

Combine all the ingredients in a bowl and whisk well to combine. Refrigerate overnight to let the flavors develop.

Recipe courtesy paleoleap.com

MAYONNAISE

Ingredients and Supplies:

- 1-1/4 cup of light olive oil, divided (be sure to use light olive oil, not extra virgin)
- 1 egg
- 1/2 teaspoon mustard powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 to 1 lemon, juiced
- Blender, food processor or hand blender and mixing bowl.

Directions:

1. Place the egg, 1/4 cup of olive oil, mustard powder, and salt in a mixing bowl, blender, or food processor. Mix thoroughly.
2. While the food processor or blender is running (or while mixing in a bowl with a stick blender), slowly drizzle in the remaining cup of olive oil. The slower, the better.

3. After the mixture has emulsified, add lemon juice to taste, stirring gently with a spoon to incorporate.

Recipe courtesy www.whole30.com

NUT MILKS

Ingredients and Supplies:

- Nut milk bag
- High speed blender
- 1 cup raw nuts (almond, cashew, hazelnuts)
- 3.5 cups water
- small pinch of salt
- cinnamon, vanilla, sweeteners are optional

Directions:

1. Soak the raw nuts in water for 8 hours or overnight
2. Drain the water.
3. Place the nuts in the blender and add 3.5 cups water. Blend on highest setting about 60 seconds.
4. Place the nut milk bag over a bowl and slowly pour the mixture into the bag.
5. Gently squeeze the bag until most of the milk has drained.
6. Stir in or re-blend with salt and any additional spices or sweeteners.
7. Store in a sealed jar in the fridge for up to 1 week.
8. Shake well before using.

You can use the nut pulp in baked goods, or dehydrate again and make almond flour.

NUT BUTTER

Ingredients and Supplies:

- Food processor or high powered blender
- 2-4 cups soaked
- 1-2 tablespoons oil (coconut, macadamia, almond, etc)
- Salt and Sweetener, optional

Directions:

1. Add soaked nuts to food processor/blender. Depending on

the size you may need to do this in batches.

2. Grind 2-10 minutes until the nuts are first a fine powder, then add the oil.
3. Continue to blend until the mixture is smooth and creamy, stopping to scrape down the sides every minute or so. This could take up to 20 minutes, be patient.
4. Add salt or sweeteners at the end. Store in an airtight container in your fridge.

ROASTED NUTS AND SEEDS

Supplies:

- Baking tray

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees
2. Spread the nuts or seeds in a single layer on a baking sheet
3. Sprinkle with salt, if desired
4. Place in the middle rack of the oven a roast for five minutes
5. Stir the nuts/seeds.
6. Seeds may only need a few more minutes.
7. Nuts may need 5-10 more minutes

SOAKED NUTS AND SEEDS

1. Rinse nuts/seeds in a colander.
2. Place in a glass jar or bowl and cover with water
3. Put in fridge 8 hours or overnight. Rinse the next day for soaked nuts/seeds. These can be stored in the fridge in an airtight container for a few days.

SPROUTED NUTS AND SEEDS

Supplies:

- A bowl to fit the mason jar
- A mason jar
- A sprouting lid that fits the mason jar. You can also use a reusable coffee filter or a cheesecloth

Directions:

1. Put the seeds or nuts into the jar and cover them with water. Let them sit in the water for about eight hours.
2. Drain the water and rinse the sprouts. Invert the mason jar into the bowl so the water can continue to drain.
3. Twice a day, rinse the sprouts by filling the jar through the sprouting lid and draining the water. Then prop it in the bowl again. Keep the sprout jar on your counter, but not in direct sunlight.
4. After about five-seven days, the seeds and nuts will have sprouted. Store in an airtight container in your fridge and use within a few days.

SALAD DRESSINGS

BALSAMIC VINAIGRETTE

Ingredients:

- 1/4 cup balsamic vinegar
- 2 teaspoons dark brown sugar, optional
- 1 tablespoon chopped garlic
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 3/4 cup olive oil

Directions:

Place all the ingredients in a screw-top jar and shake to combine.

Recipe courtesy Food Network

JASMINE'S HONEY MUSTARD

Ingredients:

- 2 Tablespoons raw honey
- 2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
- ¼ cup dijon mustard
- 2 tablespoons olive oil (optional)

Directions:

Whisk together all ingredients in a bowl. Add more or less honey to sweeten to your taste.

QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

BEER, WINE AND LIQUOR

Choose organic, or even better, look for Biodynamic wine. See the section for specific brands.

BREADS AND ROLLS

All grains can be inflammatory and are best avoided or only consumed sparingly. Choose gluten-free whole grain and sprouted options when you can, and always choose organic.

CANNED FOODS

Choose glass jars or brands that use BPA-free cans. Watch out for extra sodium and MSG.

COFFEE, TEA AND COCOA

Coffee is one of the most heavily pesticide-laden crops in the world and tea is highly contaminated with pesticides. Choose organic. White, green and herbal teas typically contain less fluoride than black teas. Look for organic, non-alkalized cocoa.

CONDIMENTS AND SALAD DRESSING

With the exception of salsa or hot sauce, the most popular condiments

are not high concern for pesticides so you don't have to always choose organic. However, be careful with ketchup and salad dressing because they are more likely to contain GM high fructose corn syrup or GM industrial seed oils.

DAIRY

Choose organic, grass fed dairy when possible. Organic Valley is a popular nationwide brand you can choose. If you can't afford to buy all of your dairy products organic, try to at least choose organic and grass fed for the dairy products highest in fat: butter, cream and full fat yogurt and milks.

DAIRY ALTERNATIVES

Avoid soymilk and choose other non-dairy varieties that don't have added sugar and are carrageenan-free. If you notice you get digestive issues from these products, it may be due to the thickeners used in them.

EGGS

Eggs are an amazing source of nutrition and high quality eggs are worth the extra money. But eggs just might be one of the most confusing items to purchase at the supermarket. At the grocery store, look for pasture-raised organic eggs. Organic Valley is one brand you can find nation-wide.

FATS AND OILS

Use animal fats or coconut oil for cooking. Extra virgin olive oil is best only used cold. Avoid vegetable and canola oil, and margarine and shortening.

FRUITS & VEGETABLES

Always choose organic when buying the top 10 pesticide-laden fruits and vegetables. Frozen vegetables are a good option when produce is out of season, and beware of BPA in canned produce.

Top 10 Most pesticide Laden Produce:

1. Apples
2. Peaches
3. Nectarines
4. Strawberries
5. Grapes
6. Celery
7. Spinach
8. Sweet Bell Peppers
9. Cucumbers
10. Cherry Tomatoes

HOUSEHOLD CLEANING

Avoid the harmful chemicals in most cleaning products and make natural, safer, cheaper versions with just a few simple ingredients including baking soda, vinegar, castile soap and essential oils.

MEAT

Pasture-raised, grass fed organic meat is the best choice. If you can't find pastured meat, organic is your next best option. Meats are higher in pesticide residue than produce, so it's even more important to buy organic meat.

NUTS, PEANUTS, SEEDS AND NUT BUTTERS

Buy organic unroasted nuts and seeds in the bulk section of your grocery store to avoid extra salt, sugar, and oil typically found in the canned and jarred brands.

PACKAGED AND PROCESSED MEATS

Look for organic, antibiotic-free, hormone-free and nitrite free meats with no fillers.

PERSONAL CARE AND BEAUTY PRODUCTS

Your skin is your biggest organ and anything you put on it will be absorbed into your bloodstream and spread throughout your body.

Personal care items should be treated like food- if you wouldn't eat it, you shouldn't put it on your skin!

SEAFOOD

Choose wild-caught, sustainable seafood when possible.

SNACK FOODS

All processed foods that come in a package should be consumed infrequently. Read the ingredients list and beware of ingredients you can't pronounce, along with GM soy, vegetable or canola oils.

SUGARS & SWEETENERS

Avoid artificial sweeteners and use refined cane sugar sparingly. Blackstrap molasses is a nutrient dense sweetener to try.

To download an easy-to-print copy of this quick reference guide, [click here](#). That way, you can easily reference the basics of this report while shopping.
