

Environmental Working Group's  
**SHOPPER'S GUIDE TO  
PESTICIDES  
in PRODUCE**



**DIRTY DOZEN** Buy These Organic  
**CLEANEST 12** Lowest in Pesticides

<b>WORST</b>	Peaches	Onions	<b>BEST</b>
	Apples	Avocado	
	Sweet Bell Peppers	Sweet Corn (Frozen)	
	Celery	Pineapples	
	Nectarines	Mango	
	Strawberries	Asparagus	
	Cherries	Sweet Peas (Frozen)	
	Pears	Kiwi Fruit	
	Grapes (Imported)	Bananas	
	Spinach	Cabbage	
	Lettuce	Broccoli	
	Potatoes	Papaya	

Don't see your favorites? Get the full results at [www.foodnews.org](http://www.foodnews.org) & support EWG research with an online gift.



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### Why Should You Care About Pesticides?

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

### What's the Difference?

An EWG simulation of thousands of consumers eating high and low pesticide diets shows that people can lower their pesticide exposure by almost 90 percent by avoiding the top twelve most contaminated fruits and vegetables and eating the least contaminated instead. Eating the 12 most contaminated fruits and vegetables will expose a person to about 15 pesticides per day, on average. Eating the 12 least contaminated will expose a person to less than 2 pesticides per day. Less dramatic comparisons will produce less dramatic reductions, but without doubt using the Guide provides people with a way to make choices that lower pesticide exposure in the diet.

### Will Washing and Peeling Help?

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

### How Was This Guide Developed?

The produce ranking was developed by analysts at the not-for-profit Environmental Working Group (EWG) based on the results of nearly 43,000 tests for pesticides on produce collected by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration between 2000 and 2004. A detailed description of the criteria used in developing the rankings as well as a full list of fresh fruits and vegetables that have been tested is available at [www.foodnews.org](http://www.foodnews.org).

