



# A Holistic Nutritionist's Food Buying Guide

Reclaiming Vitality

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Let's dispel some of the myths out there about what is "healthy" and what isn't. While we are at it, let's learn how to prioritize your food budget. Learn when to spend the extra money and where you can safely save without compromising your health.

### Dispelling myths about what is healthy:

- **Vegetable oil!** This is the number one inflammatory food. It is worse than high fructose corn syrup. These oils are actually incorrectly named since they are actually created from seeds. They undergo high heat during processing. This makes the fats go rancid. They then have chemicals added to cover the rancid taste. Avoid like the plague because they are a major contributor to the modern "plagues" of heart disease and diabetes.
- **Cereal for breakfast:** Despite the heart-healthy label, carb-loading at the start of the day gets you a ride on the blood sugar roller coaster! Choose a breakfast with plenty of protein and fat to keep you satisfied.
- **Fake meat:** Beyond Beef and other meat substitutes are touted as healthy for your body and the planet. This is simply not true! They are made with soy and corn, two of the most common GMO crops. These fake meats have synthetic vitamins added which are harmful to your health and require your liver to do extra work detoxing them out of your body. They are some of the most processed "foods" on the market. Furthermore, the crops these foods are made of do great damage to the environment because they come from factory farms that use unsustainable farming methods and that pollute our air and water.

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## Buying Meat

There is a wide range of opinions out there when it comes to eating meat! You have vegans on one extreme who feel that eating meat is unhealthy, unethical, and bad for the planet. You have the Keto, Paleo, and Carnivore crowds who eat meat and vegetables almost exclusively.

The studies come back with mixed results depending on who is doing the study and what type of meat they are using and even what parts of the animal people are eating.

The reality is that humans are omnivores. We should eat meat as well as grains and vegetables. The key is that we should be eating meat that is living the life that most closely resembles the one they would have in nature. We also need to be eating the whole animal: tip to tail. The “icky” parts have different nutrients than the coveted muscle meats.

- Avoid meat from conventional farms. Not only are the animals mistreated, they are also fed antibiotics.
- Don't get tricked by labels:
  - **Grass-fed:** This label is a bit tricky. Although the animals eat grass for the majority of their life, this label allows the farmer to “grain- finish” them at the end of their life. This fattens them up and makes them very tasty, but it greatly lessens the health benefits. The fatty acid profile (Omegas) changes drastically and makes this meat a much pricier way to get the same nutrients as conventionally raised livestock.
  - **Grass-fed, grass-finished:** These animals have eaten grass from start to finish. They have not only lived a happy life, but they will also have a great nutrient profile.
  - **Pastured:** These animals live their life out on the pasture, although they generally are given opportunities for shelter, such as a barn at night. They eat what nature intended and plenty of time in the sunshine.

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The best options are to buy meat from your local farmer if you can get your hands on it.

I use a co-op for my dairy and eggs that has chicken and beef as well. You can also use US Wellness Meats to have meat delivered to you if you don't live near any farms.

## **Ordering when eating out**

Eating out can be an important social experience. Luckily, we have many restaurants nearby that source food locally. Unfortunately, that is not the situation for everyone.

If you are going out to eat and you know that the restaurant doesn't source well, stay away from the pork and chicken! I generally choose beef, lamb, or wild-caught seafood if it is offered.

- Conventionally raised pork is toxic! The reason for this is that pigs need to root in the mud for their food. They don't detox the same way that we do. They need the mud/dirt to bind up the toxins in their bodies and escort them out of the GI tract. Pigs kept confined and on concrete cannot detox!
- Conventionally raised chickens are also toxic. They are kept in inhumane conditions: in crates on top of one another. They are generally fed the GMO crops of corn and soy as well. They need antibiotics because of how filthy their living conditions are.

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## Diary or no dairy?

Many people have been convinced that they should eat dairy or that dairy is bad for them. It all comes back to quality and keeping as close to nature as possible as we saw above.

- Grass-fed dairy is a superfood! Avoid conventional dairy which is grain-fed. It has an inflammatory fat profile instead of a healthy fat profile.
- Avoid pasteurized dairy, especially if it is ultra-pasteurized! Pasteurizing not only reduces vitamins, it also kills off the beneficial enzymes that your body needs to help digest the milk. Many people who believe they are lactose intolerant have no trouble digesting milk once they switch to raw dairy.
- Avoid homogenized milk. When milk is homogenized, the fat particles are spun around very quickly until they become very small. They become something unrecognizable to your body. It is a similar problem to those of trans-fats, also known as hydrogenated fats. We have all heard by now about the dangers of hydrogenated fats, although they are still hidden in many processed and prepared foods. If you don't have a choice to buy raw milk in your area, at least choose an organic, non-homogenized version.
- If you have a dairy sensitivity, you should address it so that you can eat the most varied diet possible. Homeopathy can address food sensitivities, intolerances, and allergies. It takes time and patience, but it is worth it!

## When should you buy organic?

Buying organic isn't as clear-cut as it sounds. Just because you are buying organic, doesn't mean that you are necessarily making a better choice for your body or the planet.

There is a big difference between buying an organic package of spinach produced by a factory farm when you are at your nearest box store and buying a bunch of spinach from the farmer down the street. That farmer may not have the money to pay to be inspected annually in order to use the "organic" label. However, that farmer takes a lot more care with his land because he lives there. He takes a lot more care when growing his spinach too. He and his family eat it!

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## Buying vegetables and fruit

Generally, organic produce is grown without the use of synthetic pesticides or synthetic fertilizers. It is not bioengineered or genetically modified and does not undergo ionizing radiation. Finally, sewage sludge is not used as a fertilizer.

As stated above, farmers who want to be certified as organic need to pay to be inspected annually as well as adhere to stringent rules.

## The Four Main Categories of Organic Labels:

### Products with less than 70% organic ingredients:

- Any level of organic ingredients
- No restrictions on remaining ingredients
- No certification claims can be made
- USDA Seal may not be used.
- May Only mention organic in the ingredient listing

### Made With Organic:

- At least 70% organic ingredients
- The remaining 30% can be non-organic allowed ingredients OR non-organic agricultural ingredients
- USDA Seal may not be used.
- Must list certification agent

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## **Organic:**

- At least 95% organic ingredients
- The remaining 5% can be non-organic allowed ingredients
- All agricultural ingredients must be organic unless not available
- USDA Seal allowed
- Must list certification agent

## **100% Organic:**

- All organic ingredients
- Any processing aids must be organic
- No non-organic ingredients are used
- USDA Seal allowed
- Must list certification agent

## **Why organic?**

Choosing organic can be an important choice for the health of your family as well as the health of the planet. In general, organic farmers are utilizing techniques that mimic nature as closely as possible. They also focus on using renewable resources and the humane treatment of animals. The pesticides and fertilizers used in conventional farming deplete our soils of nutrients and pollute the water and air.

When it comes to our bodies, synthetic pesticides and fertilizers are linked with cancer, autoimmunity, mood issues, and behavior disorders, just to name a few. All in all, the fewer chemicals our livers already have a huge job filtering out all of the toxins that we are exposed to daily. Anything that can be done to lessen the burden on that overworked organ, will only benefit our health.

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## When is it imperative to buy organic?

A good rule of thumb is to buy organic for any “thin-skinned” fruits and vegetables and vegetables that you will not peel.

Another option is to avoid buying food from the [Environmental Working Group's \(EWG\) "Dirty Dozen"](#) list. This is an annual list, although many of the veggies and fruits are the same from year to year.

The (EWG) also puts out a "[Clean 15](#)" list each year to guide you in which fruits and vegetables are safe to buy non-organic.

### 22 "Clean 15"

1. Avocados
2. Sweet corn
3. Pineapple
4. Onions
5. Papaya
6. Sweet peas (frozen)
7. Eggplant
8. Asparagus
9. Broccoli
10. Cabbage
11. Kiwi
12. Cauliflower
13. Mushrooms
14. Honeydew melon
15. Cantaloup

### 2022 "Dirty Dozen"

1. Strawberries
2. Spinach
3. Kale, mustard greens, and collards
4. Nectarines
5. Apples
6. Grapes
7. Cherries
8. Peaches
9. Pears
10. Bell and Hot peppers
11. Celery
12. Tomatoes



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## Buying grains

Grains are notorious for being pesticide-laden.<sup>(1)</sup> A common practice among wheat farmers is to spray Round-up on wheat, oats, and other grains as a desiccant. This dries the plants out, making them easier to harvest. Unfortunately, the wheat berries, oat groats, and other grains absorb the Roundup in the process. These products have to stay dry so that they don't sprout. This means that flour, baked goods, rolled oats, etc. all need to be organic unless you want them with a hefty dose of dangerous chemicals.

## A special case: Rice

Rice is an unusual case. It is full of pesticides, but since it can be soaked and rinsed before cooking, some of this can be mitigated. The main issue with rice is the uptake of heavy metals. Organic rice is just as susceptible to this as conventionally grown rice. [Brown rice has much higher levels than white rice](#) because the metals accumulate in the outer layer of the grain which is removed when making white rice. So, while you have always been taught that brown rice is healthier because it contains more nutrients and fiber, given this piece of information, that appears to be incorrect.

## Safest options when eating rice:

1. Eat rice once or twice a week to allow your body plenty of time to detox the metals
2. Make sure to soak and rinse it before cooking, whether it is organic or not.
3. Only buy white rice.

## Buying Beans and Legumes

Beans and legumes are given the same Roundup treatment that grains are. <sup>(3)</sup> The difference with beans, however, is that they are often soaked before cooking. If you are buying dried beans and soaking them at home before cooking, be sure to change out the water before cooking. You could even change out the water a few times for good measure.

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When buying canned beans, however, it is best to choose organic as those are not soaked before the canning process.

## **Buying Herbs and Spices**

When it comes to spices, you want to buy organic!

Non-organic spices have been irradiated to kill contaminants and bacteria. Furthermore, a high concentration of pesticides, fertilizers, and heavy metals get taken up by these detoxifying plants. Another issue to consider with spices is that they lose their potency and many nutrients as they sit on the shelf in the store and are later tucked away in your cupboard. The best option is generally to buy bulk organic spices from a busy grocery store. Just buy what you need for the next couple of months. If bulk isn't an option, there are finally spice companies selling smaller amounts of organic spices, so check your local grocery store.

Make your own mixes. It is so quick and easy to whip up taco seasoning or a ranch dip with your fresh, organic spices. Your mixes will be loaded with vitamins and minerals and loaded with flavor without the additives!

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