

jazzercise®

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NEWSLETTER

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Organic Foods - Are They Worth It?

To buy or not to buy? Organics, that is. It seems as if the grocery store carries organic versions of virtually every consumable product. How can you possibly know when it's actually beneficial to buy organic foods, and when it is simply a waste of money?

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, certain produce carries higher levels of pesticide residue than other foods. These particular fruits and vegetables are the ones that are worth paying a higher price for organic labels. In fact, the Environmental Working Group (EWG) reports that you can lower your pesticide exposures by up to 80 percent simply by purchasing organic versions of select produce.

To help you get started, here is a list of foods that make the organic checklist.

- **Apples** – An apple a day keeps the doctor away, but what if it is packed with pesticides? In conventional orchards, apples are assaulted with a slew of pesticides to kill-off insects and fungi. Even scrubbing or peeling the apple won't remove the pesticides completely, not to mention that peeling the apple strips away important nutrients.
- **Peaches & Nectarines** – These fruits are plagued with multiple pesticides in traditional orchards. In fact, EWG found 26 different pesticides on nectarines alone. Go ahead and spring for organic peaches and nectarines. Or if your budget is too tight, then go for a safe non-organic substitute, such as tangerines, oranges and grapefruit.
- **Berries** – According to EWG, raspberries and strawberries are "must-buy" organics. Be particularly vigilant when you buy strawberries out-of-season, since they are most likely imported from countries with more lenient pesticide regulations.
- **Thin-Skinned Produce** – Since it is impossible to wash off all the chemicals from conventional crops, always purchase organic thin-skinned produce. Bell peppers, for instance, do not have much of a barrier to pesticides. And celery has absolutely no protective skin. Other thin-skinned products that can be packed with contamination are pears, cherries, and grapes.
- **Potatoes** – Not only are potatoes vulnerable to above-ground pesticides, they are also exposed to fungicides in the soil.
- **Leafy Greens** – Leafy greens, like spinach, are often contaminated with the most potent of all pesticides. Splurge on organic spinach or buy a less expensive alternative, such as cabbage.

Sure, the list seems long for organic must-haves. But, the list of safe non-organic foods is even longer. Produce that is rarely threatened by pests in its growing stages is far less likely to be sprayed with pesticides. This is the case for foods such as onions, asparagus, cabbage, and broccoli.

Meanwhile, foods with thick skins are generally safe because the skin protects edible portions of the food from contamination. Safe thick-skinned foods include avocados, pineapples, bananas, oranges, grapefruits, and watermelon. Save a few bucks purchasing non-organics for these foods, and splurge on the ones where the organic label really makes a difference.

EFT Table - Second week of December.

Find all your friendly tickets, b-day cards and rain checks and bring them to class to exchange for Jazzercise goodies.

For EFT students only.

Did you know?

Eating Fish Can Aid In Losing Weight

Fatty fish like salmon, tuna and sardines are loaded with hunger-quashing omega-3 fatty acids. These healthy fats help trigger the rapid transfer of "I'm full" signals to your brain, according to the National Institutes of Health. Bonus: A 3.5-ounce serving of salmon nets you 90 percent of your recommended daily value of vitamin D, which will help preserve your precious calorie-craving, metabolism-stoking muscle tissue.

Technique Tip of the Month ----> Reverse Sit Up

1. Start in a seated position with your knees bent and feet on the floor. Arms are crossed in front of your chest.
2. Allow your torso to lean back controlling the movement with your abdominals and hip flexors. Hip flexors are muscles located in the front of your hip.
3. Only lean your back as far as is comfortable to you.
4. Maintain a neutral spine and avoid rounding through your back.
5. Abdominals and hip flexors remain contracted to return your torso to the starting position.
6. If a modification is required, place your hands behind you on the floor or hold the back of your thighs for support.

Performing this exercise on a regular basis will help strengthen your hip flexors and work your abdominal muscles as stabilizers.