



From Farm to Table

Safe Food on Your Plate

Consumers are fortunate to have many safe and nutritious food choices available at affordable prices, making it easier to follow nutrition guidelines. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) advises people to make healthy food choices from all five food groups to get the recommended nutrients. That includes five to nine daily servings of fruits and vegetables.¹

Mom and Dad were right. Eat more fruits and vegetables.

Maintaining healthy eating may reduce the risk of cancer, heart disease, diabetes and obesity.²

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and USDA scientists routinely test to help make sure Americans have safe food.³ Our abundant and safe food supply includes conventionally and organically grown foods, giving consumers plenty of options to eat their recommended fruit and vegetable servings.

Count on a safe food supply that's safe to eat.

The presence of residues does not mean the food is unsafe to eat. EPA sets legal maximum residue limits (MRL) for pesticides on crops. All EPA established MRLs are deemed safe for consumers based on a comprehensive risk evaluation.

University of California researchers conducted an in-depth, risk-based assessment of the 12 foods with the highest potential for pesticide residue contamination as called out by environmental advocacy groups. They found exposures were well below safety thresholds.⁴

Wash fruits and vegetables with cold or warm tap water to remove any possible residues, dirt, or bacteria before you eat them.



Check out your food!

Want more information about the USDA data? Go to www.safefruitsandveggies.com to calculate the number of servings of a food that you would need to eat before potentially seeing any adverse effects.⁵

For example, a woman would have to consume 454 servings of strawberries in one day (that's 3,632 large strawberries) and a child would have to consume 181 servings (1,448 large strawberries) to reach the level where adverse effects could potentially be seen from the highest pesticide residue recorded by USDA.

Equally nutritious.

Fruits and vegetables are equally nutritious whether they are grown on organic or conventional farms. Many studies, including a 2012 Stanford analysis, found no nutritional difference between diets that included organic or conventional produce.⁶ Another systematic review of 55 studies comparing conventionally and organically produced crops found no evidence of a difference in nutrient quality between organically and conventionally produced foods.⁷



DID YOU KNOW?

ALL farmers protect their crops.

According to the UN Food and Agricultural organization, 20-40% of crops are lost each year due to disease and pests.⁸ Pesticide use is common in conventional and organic crop production, although organic agriculture has a different set of regulations than conventional agriculture.⁹ Only naturally derived or non-synthetic pesticides can be used on certified organic foods.¹⁰

The National List of Allowed and Prohibited Substances identifies the synthetic substances that may be used and the non-synthetic substances that may not be used in organic crop and livestock production. It also identifies a limited number of non-organic substances that may be used in or on processed organic products.^{11,12}



Sampling program tests for safety of fruits and vegetables.

USDA collects thousands of produce samples every year as part of its Pesticide Data Program (PDP). 2016 Sampling included more than 100 different fruits, vegetables and other commonly eaten foods that are analyzed for residues of more than 600 different pesticides.

- The latest PDP summary shows overall pesticide residues found on foods tested are at levels below legal limits set by EPA and are not a risk to consumer health.^{13,14}
- USDA's detection methods are so sensitive they can detect trace amounts of pesticide at one part per billion; or the same as detecting a 1/2 teaspoon of water in an Olympic-sized pool.
- For 25 years, the PDP has confirmed minimal residue on organic and conventional produce.
- In the most recent survey, more than 99% of foods tested have residue levels well below legal limits.¹³

All pesticides are rigorously tested and approved.

- All pesticides are evaluated for impact to human health and to the environment.
- Pesticides are registered with the EPA before they are used on crops. Farmers must follow strict regulations to use them.¹⁴
- EPA regulations aim to protect all people, especially infants and children, who may eat fresh produce.
- FDA monitors and enforces legal limits "set by EPA" on imported and domestic foods "other than meat, poultry, and some egg products."
- USDA monitors for pesticide residues every year, and provides data to help assure consumers that the food they feed themselves and their families is safe.

Food Chain Partnership is an innovative business model developed by Bayer, where growers, traders, processors, and retailers work together on integrated crop solutions based on sustainable agricultural principles for the benefit of all the partners involved. Their common goal is the sustainable production of high-quality and affordable food.

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food chain partnership



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