

# 12 MONTHS TO A HEALTHIER YOU

JULY TOPIC: CHEMICALS USED  
TO GROW OUR FOOD SUPPLY



# A note from me...



I think everyone understands and accepts that our food is sprayed with pesticides, fungicides, insecticides and herbicides during the growing process. This is a common practice and no eyebrows get raised.

Unfortunately, the chemicals used in growing our food is poisoning us through our food supply. This is also common knowledge, yet most people don't connect the dots that inflammation or other chronic illnesses, and cancer can be linked to these toxins consumed at every meal.

Yes, the EPA and FDA set minimum acceptable residues, however, they never take into account the accumulation of residues on EVERYTHING that we put into our mouths.

Prior to WWII, the worst pesticide used was sulfur. During WWII, DDT was developed and liberally sprayed in the war zones to help combat insect borne illnesses like typhoid and malaria.

Unfortunately, this potent neurotoxin is still being found in people and soil samples today.

Rachel Carson, a marine biologist for the Fish and Game Commission, blew the whistle on the dangers of DDT in her book *Silent Spring* in 1962. Her book led to the creation of the Environmental Protection Agency in the early 70's.



# Your mission, if you choose to accept: Start taking the steps to stop consuming food contaminated with toxic herbicides, fungicides and pesticides.

After WWII there was a surplus of chemicals that got a second life in the US. DDT was sprayed in urban and suburban settings as well as on food crops. From this moment on, new potent pesticides, fungicides and herbicides were developed and generously used for growing our food supply. Today there are over 17,000 different pesticides, fungicides and herbicides used in the agricultural industry.



Children being sprayed with DDT circa 1946 to prevent polio, original source unknown

In 1996 Monsanto, a chemical company that produces Round Up, introduced "Round Up Ready" Soybeans with many more crops that followed.

Roundup Ready seeds are a type of genetically modified seed that has been engineered to be resistant to the chemical glyphosate, which is the main active ingredient in the weedkiller Roundup. This means that farmers can liberally spray their crops with Roundup to kill weeds without harming the crop itself.

As farmers began killing all the weeds, once thought to fight for nutrients in the soil, they also got rid of the pollinators that were attracted to the weeds.



When pesticides, fungicides, and herbicides are sprayed on crops, residues are left behind on the surface of the plants. These residues are absorbed by the plants through their leaves, stems, and roots.

Crops such as leafy greens, apples, strawberries and peppers accumulate the residues inside the plant and fruit. As a result, these chemicals accumulate inside the crops making it difficult if not impossible to wash off.

These chemicals also make their way into the ground water, local streams, rivers and into our water supply.

Some of these chemicals can remain in the soil and contaminate our water long after they've been applied, DDT is still being found in soil decades after it stopped being used.

Additionally, these residues are left behind on ingredients used in processed foods.

The Environmental Working Group has studied cereals, milk, creamer and other processed food and found not only is glyphosate present, but other pesticides as well.

The next time you head out to the store to purchase any processed food, think to yourself, HMM I can't wait to consume a nice dose of pesticides with that meal??



I'm sure no one would even consider having a can of RAID™ present in their kitchen when they're preparing food, unfortunately the same chemicals are used on our produce.

A staple food that is fed to cattle on dairy and meat farms is Round Up ready corn. The chemicals used to treat the corn are passed through to the beef, and dairy products. Those residues end up on the shelves in your grocery store.

When you take into account the residues left behind on all of the food you consume, the pesticide residues in your body can quickly add up.



## Purchasing Safer Food

When it comes to buying produce, there are a few mindset shifts that can be helpful.

Appearances can be deceiving. Just because a fruit or vegetable looks fresh and healthy doesn't mean it hasn't been treated with chemicals.

In fact, much of the produce found in grocery stores is sprayed before being shipped to warehouses, coated with yet another chemical to maintain freshness.

Alarmingly, there is no legal requirement for companies to disclose the chemicals utilized in both the growing and processing stages of your food. Certain produce may be coated with waxes to prevent spoilage and extend its shelf life.

It's important to note that pre-cut fruits and vegetables often undergo a rinsing process with a bleach solution, the solution is thought to dissipate before packaging however, residues are left behind. Therefore, opt for whole produce to prep at home.

The Environmental Working Group, or EWG, has The Shopper's Guide™ which represents their analysis of the latest fruit and vegetable testing data from the Department of Agriculture and Food and Drug Administration.

I use the guide to determine when to spend the extra money on organic vs when it's okay to purchase conventionally grown.

The full list ranks 49 items with the items that have the most residues as the Dirty Dozen.™ The items at the end of the list with the least pesticide residues are known as the Clean 15™.

This is a link to the full list with lots of extra articles that you can read. [LINK HERE](#)

I have also included a link to a printable version of the Dirty Dozen that you can print and cut into a business size card to carry with you. [LINK HERE](#)

I use the Dirty Dozen this way...if an item on my list is in the top half, I'll choose organic. If the item is in the bottom half of the list, I'll choose conventional.





I recognize there are lots of items not on this list, and this is what you can do for those items.

I look at the type of skin to determine if I buy organic or conventional. Note if the skin is porous or if there is a thick removable skin. Mushrooms for example, absorb everything they are sprayed with, for that reason I opt for organic when I can.

When purchasing processed produce, opt for frozen whenever possible. If you don't have any other choice, always look at the full ingredient list.

Ingredients:  
Organic Olives,  
water, and sea  
salt.

The water in this  
can is clear.



Ingredients: Olives, Water,  
Sea Salt, and Ferrous  
Gluconate.

Ferrous Gluconate is an iron  
supplement that stabilizes the  
color. The side effects are  
stomach upset and diarrhea. Many  
people think that olives cause  
upset stomachs, it might just be  
this additive.

The water in this can is black.

Processed food is trickier since you really don't know where all of the ingredients are coming from or how they were processed before arriving at the manufacturing facility. A good rule of thumb is, the more processing, the less your body will recognize it, and the more inflammation it will cause.

This principle applies even when it comes to organic processed foods. Organic Doritos, for instance, are essentially a nutritional void, albeit without the toxic residues found in their conventional counterparts.

One important factor to look at here: organically grown produce is not just a label. There are agents that not only look at how the produce is grown, but also the farmer's philosophy of growing food. Using nature as the guiding force instead of poisonous chemicals. The USDA is very rigorous about certifying a farm with the USDA Certified Organic seal. You can feel good about purchasing produce with this label.

# In conclusion...

It's no surprise that organic produce has been proven to be more nutritious than conventionally grown, lots more goes into the growing process. This should be pretty obvious. When a plant grows in soil contaminated with toxins, it can't produce the same caliber of high-quality fruit that a plant thriving in nutrient-dense soil can.

Farmers Markets are fabulous for buying fresh produce, some farmers will spray chemicals so make sure to ask your farmer if they grow with or without the use of pesticides, herbicides or fungicides.

**One really important point to keep in mind...the benefits of purchasing fresh produce, even if its NOT organic, outweighs choosing processed produce or not eating fruits and vegetables! Fresh produce is critical to good health! Cooking veggies can breakdown some of the chemicals as well.**

Washing produce is also very important, even if it's organic. Using white vinegar or nontoxic dishwashing liquid (no fragrances or toxic ingredients) to wash fruit and veggies will remove any residues.

Here are some handy links:

[Attitude Dishwashing Liquid](#)

[Pur Home Dishwashing Liquid](#)

[Attitude Fruit and Vegetable Wash](#)

[Fit Organic Fruit and Vegetable Wash](#)

Don't forget to visit your favorite farmer's market and become friends with your local farmers. This is the best source for locally raised, minimally processed, organic food.

Keep eating your veggies no matter what!!!

xoxo,

Annette

[The Sage Hearth](#)