



Week One Participant Manual:
Hanging Out in The Produce Aisle



Week 1 Contents

- Produce to Buy Organically vs. Conventionally
- Shopping for Local and In-season Produce
- What the Numbers on the Produce Stickers are all About
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JOURNALING

- What are your thoughts on the genetic modification of food movement?
- What are your thoughts on eating locally and eating in season?



The Dirty Dozen And The Clean Fifteen

According to a new report from the nonprofit Environmental Working Group, if you're eating non-organic celery, you may be ingesting more than you bargained for. This group analyzed almost 100,000 USDA and FDA reports to determine just which fruits and vegetables are left with the highest (and lowest) amounts of pesticide residues.

The reason for the difference between these two groups is that the skin of certain produce items has a greater tendency to absorb the pesticides.

What about washing the produce?

Of course, all produce should be washed before consuming. However, keep in mind that the EWG made their list after the food had been "power-washed by the USDA". Thus, the residual pesticides of the dirty dozen have already become integral to the plant skin itself. For non-organic fruits and vegetables, the best precaution would be to first wash, than peel the skin from the produce.

For the "Clean Fifteen", it is not necessary to peel the skins, after washing.

The Dirty Dozen	The Clean Fifteen
1. Celery	1. Onions
2. Peaches	2. Avocados
3. Strawberries	3. Sweet Corn
4. Apples	4. Pineapples
5. Domestic Blueberries	5. Mango
6. Nectarines	6. Sweet Peas
7. Sweet Bell Peppers	7. Asparagus
8. Spinach, Kale, Collard Greens	8. Kiwi Fruit
9. Cherries	9. Cabbage
10. Potatoes	10. Eggplant
11. Imported Grapes	11. Cantaloupe
12. Lettuce	12. Watermelon
	13. Grapefruit
	14. Sweet Potatoes
	15. Sweet Onions



Shopping for Local in Season Produce

Local Farms Near You: www.localharvest.org

- At this website you can also learn how to participate in Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) in your area.
 - CSA is when a farmer offers a certain number of "shares" to the public. Typically the share consists of a box of vegetables, but other farm products may be included.
 - Consumers purchase a share and in return receive a share of seasonal produce each week throughout the farming season.
 - It is a great way to expose you and your family to new, local and in season produce.

Pick Your Own Produce: www.pickyourown.org

- At this website you can locate farms that allow you pick your own produce.

Seasonal Chart: www.sustainabletable.org/shop/seasonal

- The chart at this weblink allows you to search by your location, local produce that is in season at specific times of year.



Know Your Produce Numbers

We are in a quandary these days. Trying to figure out how our fruits and veggies are produced can be a research project in itself. Right now in the US (and other countries) labeling is voluntary.

Until this all gets worked out this could be somewhat of a helpful tip...

Some produce contain a PLU code which is the number listed on the sticker found on the produce. This code is optional so many produce items do not have them. In fact these PLU codes were developed for the benefit of the suppliers and retailers to assist them in sorting and pricing produce. The intention of the PLU code was never to help the consumer shop. So for the produce that do indeed contain the sticker the number can help you to at least determine a bit of information....

If the produce has **4** digits (beginning with any number), this means that the produce was conventionally grown-meaning with the use of pesticides. Actually sometimes the number might be five digits in length with the first number be a zero but usually this zero is left out.

If the produce has a **5** digit code, and begins with a **9**, this means that the produces was organically grown.

If the produce has a **5** digit code that begins with an **8** this means that the produce was genetically modified.

If you have the opportunity to shop at local farmers' markets do that. Many times farmers are growing produce organically but do not have the amount of money that it takes to become certified. As a result they are not allowed to use the USDA Certified Organic Stamp. So simply ask the farmer.



So now take a look at the Kiwi to the left and decide how this piece of fruit was produced...

- Conventionally
- Organically
- Genetically Modified



Buy This and Say Bye-Bye to That Produce Shopping

Buy	Bye- Bye
Non-genetically modified fruits and vegetables	Genetically modified fruits and vegetables
Produce that is organically grown based on the guidance of the Dirty Dozen resource guide (refer to the website for this resource).	Conventionally grown produce that is found to have a high pesticide load based on the Dirty Dozen resource guide (refer to the website for this resource).
100% fruit juice	Fruit juices that are only 10% fruit juice, and contain high fructose corn syrup, added sugars, food dyes, etc.
100% vegetable juice	Vegetable juices that contain preservatives, monosodium glutamate, etc.
Actual fruit and vegetables (eat on a daily basis)	One-A-Day Multivitamin (unless otherwise prescribed by doctor)