

Fresh Produce and Pesticides

Everyone wants what is best for their health and for the health of their families – especially when it comes to food. Making good food choices is one of the ways we can all work toward a healthier life; eating fruits and vegetables is an important part of that effort. You may have heard about a "Dirty Dozen" list of fruits and vegetables. If so, and if you have any questions about the safety of fresh produce, there are some facts to consider as you make food choices for yourself and for your family.

- United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Environmental Protection Agency clearly state that residues, within tolerance, do not pose a food safety risk.
- The USDA and the Environmental Working Group (EWG) itself encourage everyone to eat MORE fruits and vegetables, not less, for better health. On average, the recommended daily intake of fruit is one to two cups. For more information on serving sizes and tips to get more fruits and veggies on your plate, [visit the USDA MyPlate website](#).
- [The latest United States Department of Agriculture's Pesticide Data Program Report](#) in which grapes were tested shows only six grape samples had pesticide residue over tolerance, all were imported grapes.
- The latest California Department of Pesticide Regulation Report shows of 404 grape samples, all were under tolerance.
- Use this [calculator tool](#) to see how many servings of grapes a man, woman, teen, or child could consume and still not have any adverse effects from pesticide residue. For example, a man could consume 941 servings of grapes in one day without any effect even if the grapes have the highest pesticide residue recorded for grapes by USDA.
- Anyone concerned about pesticides should "[Just Wash It.](#)" This guidance is based on government recommendations. Washing fresh produce before eating is a healthful habit. You can reduce and often eliminate residues if they are present on fresh fruits and vegetables by washing produce (do not use soap).
- The methodology EWG used to re-package the government data did not follow any established scientific procedures, did not address the risk associated with pesticides detected within tolerance.
- Look at peer reviewed science. Read the [Journal of Toxicology](#) paper which examined these "shoppers' guides," and found that the methodology used did not follow any established scientific procedures, nor was risk associated with pesticide detection even examined.
- Review some of the nutritional studies conducted over decades that continually show the health benefits of consuming more fruits and veggies each day which were largely conducted using conventionally grown produce. One of the more recent studies found that an [estimated 20,000 cancer cases](#) could be prevented if half of all Americans simply increased their consumption of fruits and veggies by a single serving.

Sources: United States Environmental Protection Agency; United States Department of Agriculture, California Department of Pesticide Regulation, Alliance for Food and Farming and Environmental Working Group

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