Why eat Organic Foods?

According to the Environmental Working Group Organization (EWG.org), which is a nonprofit organization that advocates for policies that protect global and individual health, the benefits of eating organic foods, is to lower your risk of eating foods contaminated with Pesticides.

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) noted Pesticide Law defines a pesticide as:

*Any substance or mixture of substances intended for preventing, destroying, repelling, or mitigating any pest.

*Any substance or mixture of substances intended for use as a plant regulator, defoliant, or desiccant.

*Any nitrogen stabilizer

Dr. Andrew Weil MD, who was born in Philadelphia in 1942, has an A.B. degree in biology (botany) from Harvard University and an MD from Harvard Medical School, has a partnership with the EWG and advocates the EWG’s Guide to Pesticides in Produce. According to Dr. Weil, you should care about pesticides because the EWG points out that there is a growing consensus in the scientific community that even small amounts of pesticides and other chemicals can have adverse effects on health, especially during vulnerable periods such as fetal development and childhood.

The EWG guide is based on the results of pesticide tests performed on produce by several federal agencies. Most of the data took into account how people washed and prepared produce. Of the fruits and vegetable categories tested, a “Clean 15” list and a “Dirty Dozen Plus” list, were developed.

The “Clean 15” foods had the lowest pesticide load and are the safest conventionally grown crops to consume from the standpoint of pesticide contamination. The list is as follows:

1.) Avocados
2.) Sweet Corn
3.) Pineapples
4.) Cabbage
5.) Sweet peas (frozen)
6.) Onions
7.) Asparagus
8.) Mangoes
9.) Papayas
The “Dirty Dozen Plus” list consists of produce noted to have the highest pesticide load, making them the most important to buy the organic versions, grow them organically yourself, join a local co-op which promotes organic food or partner up with a local farmer or farmers market that does not use pesticides. The list is as follows:

1.) Strawberries
2.) Apples
3.) Nectarines
4.) Peaches
5.) Celery
6.) Grapes
7.) Cherries
8.) Spinach
9.) Tomatoes
10.) Bell Peppers
11.) Cherry Tomatoes
12.) Cucumbers

The extra “Dirty Dozen Plus” consists of:

1.) Snap peas (imported)
2.) Potatoes
3.) Hot peppers
4.) Kale
5.) Collard Greens

Another benefit of choosing organic, besides you and your family’s health, is pesticide and herbicide use contaminates groundwater, ruins soil structure, promotes erosion, and may be a contributor to “colony collapse disorder,” the sudden and mysterious die-off of pollinating honeybees that threatens the American food supply.