

Dirty Dozen / Clean Fifteen

EWG's guide to pesticide residue levels in produce (2024 list)

Dirty Dozen (Buy Organic)

These have the highest pesticide residue levels. Prioritize organic for these items.

RANK	PRODUCE ITEM	PESTICIDE RESIDUE LEVEL
1	Strawberries	Very High — up to 22 different pesticides
2	Spinach	Very High — highest by weight
3	Kale / Collard / Mustard Greens	Very High — DCPA, dieldrin detected
4	Peaches	High — multiple fungicides
5	Pears	High — 5+ pesticides on average
6	Nectarines	High — similar profile to peaches
7	Apples	High — diphenylamine residue common
8	Grapes	High — imported worse than domestic
9	Bell & Hot Peppers	High — insecticides including acephate
10	Cherries	High — fungicide residues
11	Blueberries	Moderate-High
12	Green Beans	Moderate-High — acephate detected

Clean Fifteen (Conventional OK)

These have the lowest pesticide residue. Save your budget and buy conventional.

RANK	PRODUCE ITEM	PESTICIDE RESIDUE LEVEL
1	Avocados	Very Low — <2% had any residue
2	Sweet Corn	Very Low — thick husk protects
3	Pineapple	Very Low — thick rind protects
4	Onions	Very Low — natural pest resistance

RANK	PRODUCE ITEM	PESTICIDE RESIDUE LEVEL
5	Papaya	Very Low
6	Sweet Peas (frozen)	Very Low
7	Asparagus	Very Low
8	Honeydew Melon	Low
9	Kiwi	Low
10	Cabbage	Low
11	Mushrooms	Low
12	Mangoes	Low
13	Sweet Potatoes	Low
14	Watermelon	Low
15	Carrots	Low

Can't afford all organic? Wash conventional produce with a baking soda soak (1 tsp per 2 cups water for 12-15 minutes) to remove up to 80% of surface pesticide residues. Plain water removes about 50%.