

# The Ultimate Guide to

# Shopping For Clean Food

## AT THE GROCERY STORE



# THE **ULTIMATE** GUIDE TO SHOPPING FOR CLEAN FOOD AT THE **GROCERY STORE**

As a consumer, you may be considering buying more clean foods and organic products. This is a wise plan because organic products have plenty of benefits. Organic foods have fewer pesticides and chemicals as compared to conventional food, it helps protect and conserve water, is lessens carbon dioxide, and it contributes to slowing climate change. This eBook will guide you through the process of conscious shopping and healthy eating.

## KEEPING TRACK OF CALORIES

**Do you count your calories every day? Do you always end up reaching your limit, even if it is only the afternoon?**

If so, then you are probably always stressed out about food. Calorie counting can be a devastating weight loss strategy that distracts people from identifying what matters the most, particularly the impact of different foods on their bodies. If you have been trying to counterbalance your high-calorie intake with more time in the nearest gym, you might be in deep water.

**Food labels are not always accurate.**

Labels on the products we buy, are not always precise. For instance, if the calories of a particular product's serving size are listed 200, they might really be 240. Therefore, even if you are diligent in keeping track of whether or not your diet is going the right way, your efforts may be fruitless. In fact, you may actually have a more difficult time achieving your desired body shape.

Once you get depressed about something as significant as food, healthy eating habits become harder to establish. You will also have a higher risk of acquiring diseases your body cannot afford to defend. Counting calories in the short-term

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can lead to a host of problems in the long-term especially if you are looking all calories as equal. THEY ARE NOT!

### **What should you look for in food to determine whether it is healthy or not?**

Instead of calorie counting, it is better to identify if a food has natural sugars or not. Unlike added sugars, natural sugars are relatively healthier. Spend time looking for foods that are sweetened with honey or natural fruit sugars. Avoid those products with cane sugar, corn syrup, and much more.

With so many choices from different stores, it is hard to determine what your best options are. However, paying attention to fats can make grocery shopping a little more hassle-free. Avoid foods that have a high amount of saturated fat or trans-fat; opt for those with monounsaturated fat. This type of fat is usually found in avocados, nuts, and olive oil. Be cautious of fat-free or low-fat products, as they may be fully loaded with added sugars.

Don't be enticed by "buzz words"

Many marketers have been using misleading phrases in their nutrition labels or product packaging. They claim "fat-free" or "natural" to appeal to their target customers. Use caution when selecting foods just based on packaging; pick them up, read the labels. Don't get sucked in!

## **How to Select the Most Nutritious and Delicious Produce**

Due to high public demand for food, unreliable sources of agricultural products have been on the rise. It can be a challenge to pick the healthiest, safest, most nutritious fruits and vegetables. The following tips can help make your shopping experience a little less stressful.

### **Avocado**

Avocados should feel heavy and firm, but not hard. The skin should give just slightly when pressed, and it should not be mushy. Avoid those that rattle when shaken or that are extremely soft. Very firm avocados can be placed in a paper bag on the counter for a few days to ripen.

## Apples

When it comes to apples, consider the more colorful ones. Keeping that in mind will ensure your choices are the most nutritious.

## Vegetables

The process for selecting good vegetables is the same as the fruits. But with new or unfamiliar vegetables, you may need to ask a few more questions of shop owners to ensure you're picking the best ones.

## How to incorporate healthy foods into your diet

The problem many people run into when trying to incorporate more fruits and vegetables into their diet is not knowing how to prepare them. Don't let the unknown deter you! Here are a few ways to get you off to a great start with more fruits and vegetables.

### Add avocado to Ezekial or gluten free toast

Lost your appetite for sandwiches? Instead butter, add avocado to your bread. It may help bring back your cravings for a good old fashioned sandwich. Avocados can help lower bad cholesterol and reduce the risk of hypertension.

## How to Choose the Healthiest Kind of Animal Products

Fish can arrive with an unhealthy appearance caused by the long travel from the sea to the market. Even if the fish is transported frozen or refrigerated, the quality can still be affected. Dairy products face the same challenges. All kinds of bacteria can develop in raw food if it is not properly transported and stored. We must take the quality of the products into consideration so we don't compromise our health.

**As a consumer**, choosing the best quality of the goods is the most important thing to take into consideration. Food inspectors greatly reduce the risk, but food such as fish and meat can easily develop bacteria in the process of selling and displaying. As a consumer, good quality equals good health. There are many cases when the good foods we think are safe can lead to serious illness. It

is imperative that you know what to look for in animal products and how to evaluate which products are the healthiest and safest. While we can assume that only the best quality products are for sale in the grocery store, there is always the chance that someone, somewhere, cut corners. Be an informed, educated consumer to keep your family safe.

## Here are some pointers to remember when you shopping for animal products.

- **Choose animal products raised naturally or organically**
- **Choose products that are grass-fed, hormone-free, and antibiotic-free and cage-free for poultry**
- **The redder the meat, the fresher the product**
- **For fish, clear eyes is a sign of freshness**

## Marketing Tricks

Everything in the grocery store is labeled and marketed to appeal to customers. But looks can be deceiving and, in the market industry, the packaging of the products is bait for the consumer. We often buy the products with the most attractive exterior—maybe it's the colors or the images on the packaging that catch your eye. All too often, however, the packaging is not necessarily a reflection of the quality of the product.

- Don't buy a product based on its advertisement; it is often misleading
- Look at the nutrition label at the back of the product and evaluate the ingredients of the product
- Products that say "real ingredients" make you think that is healthy, but check the ingredient list; most processed foods still contain chemical flavors and preservatives
- "Less sodium" is tricky; they may have lessened the sodium, but added another spoonful of MSG, making it even worse

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- “100% Organic” label indicates that every ingredient in the food is certified organic. “Organic” means that at least ninety-five percent of the ingredients are certified organic. If a food contains at least 70 percent organic ingredients, the words “made with organic ingredients” can appear on the label, along with a list of up to three organic ingredients.
  
- Non GMO- Genetically Modified- There are currently no labeling requirements for genetically modified foods, but there is now voluntary labeling; and many brands have jumped on board to ensure consumers have a choice. If it is a processed food, chances are there are genetically modified ingredients. Here is a list of the most common genetically modified crops and ingredients to look for.
  - soy
  - canola (canola oil)
  - corn (\*\*this includes corn's many aliases such as HFCS, maize syrup, glucose syrup, glucose/fructose syrup, tapioca syrup, dahlia syrup, fruit fructose, crystalline fructose)
  - tomatoes
  - sugar from sugar beets (\*\*products that may contain GMO sugar beets includes product that doesn't specify “cane sugar” but lists “sugar” on ingredients such as cookies, cakes, ice cream, donuts, baking mixes, candy, juice, yogurt.)
  - Hawaiian papaya



**For these products, it is best to purchase certified organic.**

- The claim “made with real fruit” is frequently found on fruit snacks, fruity cookies, cereals, and fruit drinks. Since there is no law that requires how much real fruit has to be included in a food that uses this claim, the sugary treat could contain just one grape or one drop of orange juice to be accurate.
  
- “Made with whole grains” This is one of the most popular marketing claims, and the most confusing for consumers. The “whole grain” logos are on almost all grain containing products – including sugar laden breakfast cereals. All it needs is a tiny bit of whole grains to use this claim, which means nothing for your health.

- “Multi-grain”- This doesn't explain whether the grains are refined or whole, just that there is more than one type of grain. Multi-grain has no proven health benefits, particularly if all those grains are refined



### **AVOID words like enriched and bleached**

By knowing and understanding the back level of the packaging, you won't be tricked. Only the nutritional information tells the truth about the product. Also, pay attention to the product's expiration date. If it is one year from your date of purchase, go ahead; if it is only six months from now, pass it by.

**All junk foods are made with ingredients rich in fat** and sodium that will make you gain weight, even if it doesn't look that bad.

## **BE CAUTIOUS OF HEALTHY LABELS**

Specific products are placed at eye-level for a reason, and that is to catch your attention. Even those advertised as healthy choices may be chock full of other ingredients you shouldn't be putting in your body, such as sodium, sugar, MSG etc.

**Grocery stores** are intended to make you spend more money and time inside. They conceal the healthy things on the obscure shelves in the sections no one visits in order to create food traffic and lure people into purchasing things they don't need. The entrance is littered with flowers in order to activate your salivary gland and specialty counters to make you more likely to make quick, impulse purchases. To shop clean, shop smart. Know what to look for when you go grocery shopping and know where to find it. **Doing this will keep you on the right path toward healthy living.**