



THE *Ultimate* GUIDE TO SHOPPING

for Clean Food & Buying
Organic Food in the Market

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THE **ULTIMATE** GUIDE TO SHOPPING FOR CLEAN FOOD AND BUYING ORGANIC IN THE MARKET

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, it lessens carbon dioxide, and it contributes to slowing climate change. This eBook will guide you through the process of conscious shopping and healthy eating.

Why is Calorie Counting Futile?

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.

Here are some of the reasons why calorie counting is useless.

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 as 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.

KEEPING TRACK OF CALORIES INTAKE IS DAUNTING AND STRESSFUL.

Do you count your calories every day?

Do you always end up reaching your limit, even if it is only the afternoon?

Then you are probably always stressed out about food.

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 can lead to a host of problems in the long-term.

What should you look for any 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, and corn syrup. In fact, it's best to buy whole foods. That means you are purchasing foods in their natural state.

Pay attention to fats

With so many choices from different stores, it's hard to determine what your best options are. However, paying attention to fats can make grocery shopping a little less 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. Apples are best purchased organic as they contain high amounts of pesticide residue.

Tropical Fruits

Unlike the fruit in North America, tropical fruit is often viewed as less nutritious. But choosing the ripest ones can boost their nutritional quality. For papaya, opt for ones with green leaves. Ripe mangoes have a fruity smell and should be soft when you squeeze them.

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 or farmers to ensure you're picking the best ones.

Asparagus

Choose those with firm, brightly-colored, smooth stalks, and avoid any limp ones. The thicker the stalks, the longer you will have to cook them to avoid toughness.

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 toast or gluten free toast

Lost your appetite for sandwiches? Instead of margarine or 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.

Blend Healthy Beans into Smoothies

Try blending beans into your regular smoothies. It's simple to do and helps your smoothie pack an even more powerful healthy punch.

You can also add sprouts, as they are packed with nutrients.

The beauty of fruits and vegetables is that there are endless ways to prepare them. You will never tire of a healthy diet when you have such a wide variety of yummy ingredients to choose from!

Why the Quality of Animal Products – Such as Meat, Fish, Eggs, and Dairy –

Is crucial, and how to choose the healthiest kind

The majority of us buy our food from a market; the days of growing our own foods on our own farms are largely long gone. We try to buy items we think are good quality, fresh, safe, and undamaged.

HOWEVER, GOODS SUCH AS DAIRY PRODUCTS AND WILD-CAUGHT SEA PRODUCTS HAVE A TENDENCY TO EASILY LOSE THEIR FRESHNESS.

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.

How to Choose the Healthiest Kind of Animal Products

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Here are some pointers to remember when you are 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**
- **Avoid being duped through devious food Industry claims and select the best-packaged goods**

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, or maybe it's the confusing labeling marketers use to make you think a product is healthy. All too often, however, the packaging is not necessarily a reflection of the quality of the product.

Below are some tips you should remember to avoid being tricked by the food industry:

- **Don't buy a product based on its advertisement; it is often misleading**
- **Look at the nutrition label on 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**

If you can't avoid being attracted to the packaging of a product, here are few things to consider. The first thing to do is find the nutritional label on the back of the product. When a product says that it is “rich,” that means it has at least 20% of the nutritional value of a particular ingredient. If the label says, “good source of,” it means the product contains only 10 to 19% of the nutritional value.

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. For wet foods, only choose packages with a transparent cover so you can see what the product looks like. Blue complements yellow, so if the cover is blue and the product is yellow, it may be difficult to see if the product inside is good.

HOW TO SHOP EFFECTIVELY FOR ORGANIC RECIPES WHILE SAVING TIME AND MONEY

Organic foods continue to grow in popularity. Have you been considering purchasing organic but are anxious about how it might destroy your budget? According to Gallup polling reports, 45% of people look specifically for organic agricultural products over conventionally raised meats and crops.

Here are some ways that you can shop more efficiently for organic ingredients while saving both time and money:

- **PRIORITIZE THE SHOPPING CART**

Almost any advice for improving grocery shopping experiences includes making a list. This is important every time, especially when buying organic foods. Consumer Reports estimates that your food budget will rise by a whopping 50% if you choose an organic item as a substitute for each item you need. Prioritize what items you need to buy organic and choose the generic or cheapest brand for everything else.

- **BECOME A LABEL READER**

Along with a lot of confusing labels, it's hard to know what is organic and what is not. Become a smart label reader to ensure you are buying organic products and not spending money on fancy expensive goods that may look good, but are not organic. Look for the USDA organic label. Another label to look for is the Non-GMO Verified label.

- **SAVE A LITTLE MORE EVERY WEEK**

Since your food budget will increase with the addition of organic items, you may need to set back a little more money. If you save only \$5 each week instead of buying that expensive coffee, you can have that \$25 or \$30 at the end of every month to treat yourself to healthier organic food.

- **MAKE THE MARKET LOOP**

If you make the trip to a farmer's market to buy some of your organic products, do not buy everything at the first stand. Instead, take a trip around the market first to compare quality and prices. Bear in mind that farmer's markets are perfect for discussing bulk items. Needing a large amount of fruit for smoothies? You could save cash by purchasing in bulk here.

- **STOCK UP AT THE BIG BOX STORES**

Big box wholesalers enable you to buy a selection of organic products in bulk, including granola, cereals, peanut butter, and so much more. If you are a member of a wholesaler, it's a great idea to check the prices and sales to see if you can get these healthy items at a bargain price.

HOW TO BECOME A CONSCIOUS CONSUMER

Getting sick of spending cash on processed crap and junk food, which is going to sit in your fridge for weeks, all the while you are wondering why you even bought it? Here are some tips to make your grocery shopping trips more efficient in cost, time, and health.

1. LOOK HIGH AND LOW

Sections are divided as follows, from the bottom to top: bulk, lower profit yielding and obscure products, kid-appealing foods and packaging, adult foods, and, finally, healthy, all the way at the top. This puts the kid-friendly, sugary products at their level, and the expensive branded products at your level. The food that doesn't earn the store much money will be passed over for stuff that doesn't need too much bending or stretching to reach. More often than not, you will find the products with the least amount of sugar or sodium on the bottom and

top shelves. Bend and stretch to get the most bang for your buck and healthier choices for your body.

2. SCOUTING TRIP

One crucial step in the process of changing your shopping habits is to make a quick scouting trip, at your own pace, and explore where things are. If you have moved to a new town and are about to hit that super stocked store, go for one particular thing, take your time searching for it, and get out. Once you are inside the store, you can walk at an unhurried pace and take a mental note how the supermarket store is sectioned off. This will prevent those hurried impulse buys of less healthy choices when you are pressed for time.

3. ASK QUESTIONS

If you are lost, or the store moved something since your first scouting trip, do not be afraid to ask the sales assistant for directions. Asking them will often result in a faster route through the store that avoids all of those unnecessary, unhealthy items.

4. 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 and sugar. Do some research online for truly "good-for-you" brands and find out what retailers carry them. Doing this will make your trip more focused, easier, and faster, not to mention healthier.

Supermarkets 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.**