

## Food Fact Sheet – Organic vs. Non-Organic

### The Dirty Dozen

12 foods To Buy Organic or with a number of 9 or higher.

1. Peaches
2. Apples
3. Bell Peppers
4. Celery
5. Nectarines
6. Strawberries
7. Cherries

8. Kale
9. Lettuce
10. Imported Grapes
11. Carrots
12. Pears

### The Clean 15

Foods You Don't Have to Buy Organic

1. Onion
2. Avocado
3. Sweet Corn
4. Pineapple
5. Mango
6. Asparagus
7. Sweet Peas
8. Kiwi

9. Cabbage
10. Eggplant
11. Papaya
12. Watermelon
13. Broccoli
14. Tomato
15. Sweet Potato

## Unhealthy Ingredients

### 1. Partially Hydrogenated Oil

- Semi-solid shortening made from liquid oils (such as **canola** and **soybean**) by reacting them with hydrogen
- **Trans fats**

### 2. Brominated Vegetable Oil (BVO)

- **BVO** is an additive created by mixing vegetable oil with the element **bromine**
- Gives the flavoring oils in soda the same density as water
- The emulsified flavor oils stay suspended in the drink, boosting flavor in many citric-based fruit and soft drinks
- Causes a significant increase of triglyceride and cholesterol content in both heart and liver
- Residues in rats accumulated in body fat, damaging organs including heart, liver, thyroid, testicles, and kidneys

### 3. High Fructose Corn Syrup (HFCS)

- HFCS was developed in the 1970s because it was cheaper than cane and beet sugar
- Easier to blend in beverages; maintains sweetness better; prevents freezer burn; reduces crystallization; keeps baked goods soft and helps them brown
- With a high glycemic index, it converts to fat more than any other sugar
- It alters the metabolic rate in a way that favors fat storage
- Research suggests that it is a major factor of obesity
- HFCS increases the risk for type 2 diabetes, coronary heart disease, strokes, and cancer
- HFCS is not easily metabolized by the liver

### 4. Artificial Colors & Flavorings

- Artificial colors are chemical compounds made mainly from coal-tar derivatives
- Food coloring is used to give color, lost during processing, back to food to make it more attractive
- Artificial colors have been linked to allergic reactions, asthma, skin rashes, hyperactivity, headaches and fatigue
- Artificial flavors are cheaply produced chemical mixtures that mimic a natural flavor
- Artificial flavors also linked to numerous sensitivities

### 5. Benzoate Preservatives: BHT, BHA, TBHQ

- **Benzoates** are antioxidants normally used as sodium, potassium, or calcium salts and their derivatives
- Benzoate preservatives are phenolic compounds often added to foods to preserve fats and prevent the fats from becoming rancid; also used as a de-foaming agent
- Benzoates are often used in cereals, butter, meats, baked goods, snack foods, dehydrated potatoes, and beer
- Can result in hyperactivity, asthma, urticaria, rhinitis, dermatitis and angiodema
- Believed to cause tumors in lab rats
- **Benzoate** preservatives are (weakly) estrogenic

### 6. Caffeine

- Caffeine is a mildly additive stimulant
- Caffeine increases heartbeat, respiration, basal metabolic rate, gastro enteric reflexes and production of stomach acid and urine
- Caffeine affects the kidneys, increasing urination which can lead to dehydration
- Caffeine is metabolized by the liver
- Caffeine can lead to osteoporosis, infertility, heart disease, jitteriness, headaches, irritability, sleeplessness, possible birth defects, and depression

### 7. Artificial Sweeteners

- **Acesulfame-K**: commonly used in sugar-free baked goods, chewing gum, gelatin desserts and soft drinks. May be cancerous
- **Aspartame (Equal, NutraSweet)**: can cause sensitivities resulting in headaches, dizziness, and hallucinations
- **Saccharin**: has resulted in cancer of the uterus, ovaries, skins, blood vessels and other organs in lab rats; may cause bladder cancer
- **Sucralose (Splenda)**: artificial sweetener used mainly in diet foods; made by chemically reacting sugar with chlorine
- **Sorbitol**: a sweetener used as a thickening agent; maintains moisture in dietetic drinks, foods, candy, shredded coconut and chewing gum; commonly has a laxative effect

### 8. MSG (Monosodium Glutamate)

- MSG is an amino acid flavor enhancer
- Flavor enhancers are believed to stimulate appetites contributing to obesity
- MSG is used mainly in restaurant food, salad dressing, chips, frozen entrees, soup and chips
- Sensitivities to MSG include headaches, nausea, weakness, wheezing, edema, change in heart rate, burning sensation, and difficulty breathing
- Flavor enhancers in infant mice destroyed nerve cells

### 9. Olestra

- Olestra is an indigestible fat substitute used mainly in foods that are fried and baked
- It is a non-absorbable lipid-like substance that inhibits the absorption of some vitamins and other nutrients
- Linked to gastrointestinal disease, diarrhea, gas, cramps, bleeding, and incontinence.
- Olestra can collect and assimilate fat-soluble vitamins present in other foods, reducing their ability to be absorbed. Long-term use of Olestra can reduce fat-soluble vitamin (including E, A, D and K) absorption.

### 10. Sodium Nitrite and Nitrate

- Preservatives used in preserving, coloring and flavoring cured meats and fish They prevent botulism and are a color fixative
- Nitrites/Nitrates can combine with chemicals in the stomach to form nitrosamine, a highly carcinogenic substance

Source = <http://www.betterschoolfood.org/resources/unhealthy.cfm>