

# ORGANIC SHOPPING TIPS



## MEAT

- **Conventional:** Meat found in regular grocery stores. Animals are raised in tight quarters (feedlots) and injected with antibiotics and hormones, such as *recumbent bovine growth hormone* (rBGH) which is also known as *recombinant bovine somatotropin* (rBST). Hormones accelerate growth rates and milk production to increase profits.
- **Free Range:** The animals are raised out in pastures. They are not fed organic feed, but they are also not injected with hormones or antibiotics.
- **Organic:** The animals are free range, not injected with hormones, and they are fed organic feed. Always look for the words “*grass fed*” when buying beef. Cows are not designed to eat anything else.
- **Calories are still calories!** Lean meat is better and under 3g of fat per serving. Lean beef is ground round, sirloin, round steak, and tenderloin. Lean poultry is chicken and turkey breasts. Wild game like bison, buffalo, elk, and venison are all lean as well.

## FISH

- Fish is a good source of lean protein, and cold water fish contains heart healthy *omega fats*. Salmon, albacore tuna, and sardines are good examples of healthier fish.
- The concern with fish is the chemical *mercury* which is said to cause a number of side effects, such as irritability, memory problems, and brain and kidney problems. Pollution in water is the primary cause.
- Always choose cold water or farm raised fish that has been raised in *non-polluted* waters. Confirm this with the packaging label.
- Pregnant women are at highest risk of side effects as mercury poisoning can have an adverse effect on the fetus.
- Tuna, shark, swordfish, mackerel, grouper, and lake trout are high in mercury.

## DAIRY & EGGS

- The same problems exist with dairy as with meat, being that *they are products of the animals that produce them*.
- One of the primary reasons cows are injected with rBGH is to increase milk output. Canada and Europe have banned this practice due to the health hazards. According to the Cancer Prevention Coalition, rBGH in milk raises cancer risk. Cheese, yogurt, and any other dairy product that comes from a cow are included.
- Like products from cows, eggs from conventional chickens are in question as well.
- Follow the same label guidelines for these products—look for organic, free range, and raised without hormones and antibiotics.

## FRUITS & VEGGIES

- You have one major concern with fruits and vegetables—*organic or conventional?*
- Nutritional values might be equal, but conventional crops are still grown with pesticides.

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## BEVERAGES

- If you are in need of a soda fix, you are in luck. Organic and all natural versions exist in regular AND diet form! They are sweetened with organic cane sugar and *stevia*—a low-calorie, all-natural sugar substitute.
- **Conventional Fruit Drinks:** Have artificial flavors and colors as well as High Fructose Corn Syrup (HFCS). They are also processed from fruits that have been grown with pesticides. The natural and organic versions are clean.
- **Coffee:** Second largest commodity next to oil. Also one of *the most contaminated* products you can consume. If you're going to make one change toward organic, *choose coffee!*
- **Energy Drinks:** High in caffeine, HFCS, artificial colors, artificial sweeteners, and preservatives. If you can't make it through your day without a lift, reach for an all natural energy drink that is made with clean ingredients.
- **Sport Drinks:** High in artificial colors, flavors, and contain HFCS. If you are into endurance training, consider a natural sport drink that is fruit-juice sweetened and has no artificial ingredients. Coconut water is a great electrolyte formula that is all natural.
- **Sweeteners:** Avoid "artificial" sweeteners, such as aspartame, sucralose, acesulfame potassium, and saccharin.

## SWEETS

- Conventional cakes, cookies, and candy bars have many bad ingredients, such as HFCS, artificial colors, artificial flavors, and hydrogenated or partially hydrogenated oils.
- Healthy versions exist of all these sweet tooth satisfiers. They are created with organic cane sugar and have no preservatives.

## SUMMARY!

- **Conventional VS. Organic?** Conventional has chemicals and organic does not.
- **Meats?** Organic is best choice. Free Range is second best. Avoid conventional. Look for "free range, organic, raised without rBGH, grass fed" or "raised without antibiotics" on packages of meats, fish, eggs and dairy products.
- **Calories IN vs. calories OUT!** No matter how healthy the food or beverage is--calories are still calories. If you are trying to lose weight, reduce your overall caloric intake.
- **READ INGREDIENT LABELS!** Avoid products that have HFCS, hydrogenated or partially hydrogenated oils, artificial colors, abbreviations (for long chemical names), or words you cannot pronounce.

\*Kevin Rail/Ron Jones (7.10.10)