



## **DID YOU WASH YOUR APPLE TODAY?**

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Think about it...

Modern-day agricultural chemicals have helped farmers grow bigger, better, and more bountiful produce in the United States and all over the world. But like most advancements, the benefits of agricultural progress also carry a cost. Despite the efforts of growers, handlers, and grocers, many fruits and vegetables found on the grocery store shelf have some level of chemical residue.

Pesticides and other agricultural chemicals are specifically engineered to be "waterproof" so that they are not washed off by rain and irrigation. Many fruits and vegetables (grapes, apples, cucumbers, etc.) are also coated in wax to preserve the quality and appearance of the produce from the fields to your kitchen table.

Studies suggest that some of these chemicals may be toxic to the human body. Specifically, pesticides have been linked to cancer, reproductive problems, and neurological disorders and can be especially harmful to children, the elderly, and anyone suffering from a deficient immune system. In addition to agricultural chemicals and other residues, 20 or more strangers may have handled your fruit or vegetable before you put it in your mouth.

Despite the dangers associated with chemical residues, most everyone agrees that the benefits of a diet rich in fresh fruits and vegetables outweigh the potential risks. To minimize concern about chemicals, wax, and 'fingerprints,' follow the four simple tips outlined below.

1. Buy organic whenever possible. A 2002 study by Consumers Union, publishers of Consumer Reports, found that organic foods are 2/3 more likely to be free of pesticide residue than conventionally grown foods. Still, pesticide residue was found on as much as 1/3 of the organic produce studied.
2. Cleanse preparation surfaces and utensils. Make sure that countertops, cutting boards, and knives are clean before using.
3. Use a natural vegetable wash. Thoroughly wash produce with tap water and a 100% natural fruit and vegetable wash, such as Veggie Wash<sup>®</sup>. Studies show that using a vegetable wash can remove pesticides significantly better than water alone, because surfactants found in vegetable washes help loosen the oil, dirt, and wax found on many fruits and vegetables. To be effective and safe, a produce wash should contain only natural ingredients and rinse easily.\*



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4. Be sure to wash fruits and vegetables (like oranges and melons) that you plan to peel or cut. Contaminates can pass through to the fruit during the peeling or cutting process. For soft or leafy produce (strawberries, broccoli, spinach), rinse briefly in a bowl or sink of vegetable wash diluted with water to remove contaminants.

\* **Never** use bleach or dish soap to wash produce. These products are not 100% natural and may not rinse well. The residue from these chemicals may cause illnesses such as nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea

Follow these four easy steps for safer, more natural, and healthier fruits and vegetables. You and your family can enjoy the benefits of a healthy, balanced diet, while minimizing your exposure to unwanted substances.