

WHOLE FOODS GUIDE



Whole foods are foods as they are found in nature. They contain flavor and ingredients that nature intended. They are free of artificial flavors and colors as well as added chemicals that are used to increase shelf life of processed foods. Since whole foods have been minimally processed, they provide more natural ingredients such as vitamins, minerals, and fiber. Food that is organic is free of chemicals, pesticides, herbicides, and fungicides. These foods are more flavorful and tend to be more nutrient-dense than foods that are commercially grown.

FRUITS

Fruits are most flavorful and nutritious when they are eaten in season. Eat a variety of organically grown fruits to coincide with the change of seasons. Fruit selections include: avocados, bananas, berries, cherries, grapes, grapefruit, guavas, kiwis, mangos, melons, oranges, pawpaw, persimmons, plums and pineapple.

VEGETABLES

Vegetables are also most nutrient-dense and flavorful when organically grown and in season. It is important to include both raw and cooked vegetables in your diet. Raw vegetables are higher in vitamin, mineral, and fiber content. Cooked vegetables are easier to digest. Vegetable selections include: artichokes, asparagus, beets, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, chard, collard, cucumbers, eggplants, kale, lettuce, mushrooms, parsnips, peppers, potatoes, pumpkins, radishes, rutabagas, spinach, sweet potatoes, turnips, and yams. Sea vegetables such as nori are good sources of minerals.

GRAINS

Whole grains contain more natural vitamins, minerals, protein, and fiber than refined grains. Whole grains include amaranth, barley, brown rice, buckwheat (kasha), couscous (coarsely ground steamed wheat), millet, oats, polenta (coarse cornmeal), quinoa, rye, and wild rice. It is important to eat a variety of grains in your diet. This helps prevent allergies to wheat, which is the most widely consumed grain.

LEGUMES

Legumes are seeds that are grown in pods. They include beans, lentils, peas, and peanuts. They are a good source of both protein and fiber. Other beans include adzuki, black, broad (fava), butter, garbanzo (chickpeas), kidney, lima, navy, pinto, and black-eyed peas.

NUTS AND SEEDS

Nuts are most healthy in their raw, natural form. This does not include nuts that have been salted, sugarcoated, or roasted. Roasting of nuts decreases their content of minerals and B vitamins. Choose nut butters that have not been hydrogenated. This process alters the monounsaturated oil in nuts forming cholesterol raising saturated fats. Pumpkin, sunflower, and sesame seeds are good sources of protein, minerals, and vitamin E.

SEAFOOD

Seafood is a good source of protein. Some sea foods such as haddock, mackerel, salmon, sardines, and trout contains beneficial omega-3 fatty acids. These omega-3 fatty acids may raise protective HDL cholesterol and guard against heart disease. They also are important for proper brain, eye, hair, and skin development. Some research studies suggest that omega-3 fatty acids may also help to protect against and treat certain auto-immune disease such as rheumatoid arthritis.

MEATS/POULTRY/EGGS/DAIRY

Animal food sources are most healthy when the animals have been raised without antibiotics and added hormones and other toxins. In addition, choose animal products from animals that have been raised without cages. Cage-free animals experience healthier, less stressful living environments that affect the quality of food they produce. There are a growing number of dairy alternatives. They include: almond milk and cheese, rice milk, soy milk, cheese and yogurt, brazil nut cheese, nutritional yeast, and tofu sour cream. Other foods high in calcium include dark leafy vegetables such as kale, collards, and mustard greens; sea vegetables and beans.

OILS

Use oils such as coconut oil for sautéing foods because they are more heat stable than polyunsaturated oils. Use olive oil mainly for salad dressing and low heat preparations. “Cold-pressed” oils are best because the slow-turning presses that crush out the oil generate little heat so that vitamin E and antioxidants are not destroyed. Heat-pressed oils are treated with petroleum-derived solvents and are bleached and deodorized.

SEASONINGS

Seasonings enhance or add flavor to food. Whole food seasonings include basil, chili peppers, cilantro, dill, garlic, lemon, lime, mint, onion, orange zest, parsley, rosemary, sage, and thyme.