



What & How We Eat

Fast facts

Eating responsibly can be harder than it sounds. We hear in the news about things to consider that go beyond keeping portion sizes small and eating different food groups. We are asked to think about the following: What are the environmental impacts of what I eat? Are foods with GMOs safe? What makes something organic? Should I use a meal delivery service?

Ultimately, what you eat is up to you. Here, we've provide some quick information to help you unravel some of the complexities and decide what and how you want to eat.

How do I know if slaves harvested my food?

- Today, an estimated 24.9 million people (including children) around the world are victims of forced labor, generating \$150 billion in illegal profits in the private economy.
- A 2018 report by KnowTheChain lists major companies, including Kraft, Nestle, Coca-Cola, PepsiCo, and Monster Energy, and how they compare in their efforts to no longer use forced labor: knowthechain.org/the-issue/
- Some foods that are commonly labelled regarding the ethics of their origins include chocolate/cocoa, coffee, tea, sugar, bananas, and seafood.
- Fair Trade has several different labels, some requiring certification and some not. All work with farmers to determine fair wages for workers and fair prices.
- Rainforest Alliance certified products must meet standards of sustainable farming and environmental practices. When combined with the FSC seal from the Forest Stewardship Council, the company must guarantee reasonable wages for workers, protection of endangered species, and creation of a forest reserve: www.rainforest-alliance.org/faqs/what-does-rainforest-alliance-certified-mean

What should I know about meal delivery kits?

- A study around the environmental impact of using a meal kit delivery service versus buying ingredients at the grocery store had surprising results. Though meal delivery kits had more packaging than buying items at the grocery store, they also had less greenhouse gas emissions, less food waste, less energy use than retail refrigeration, and more efficient transportation, overall leaving less of an environmental footprint than a grocery store meal.
- Meal delivery kits vary in cost, accommodation of allergies and diet, and commitment to eco-friendliness. Check this handy guide to compare them: www.verywellfit.com/complete-guide-to-meal-kit-delivery-services-4136742



Fast facts

What should I know about buying organic?

- Organic foods are “grown without the use of pesticides, synthetic fertilizers, sewage sludge, genetically modified organisms, or ionizing radiation. Animals that produce meat, poultry, eggs, and dairy products do not take antibiotics or growth hormones.” (source: [organic.org/faqs/](https://www.organic.org/faqs/))
- There are three organic labels: “100% Organic” means made with only organic ingredients; “Organic” means made with at least 95% organic ingredients; “Made with Organic Ingredients” means made with a minimum of 70% organic ingredients with strict restrictions on the remaining 30%, including no GMOs. (source: [organic.org/certified-organic-label-guide/](https://www.organic.org/certified-organic-label-guide/))
- Foods often cited as more likely to be sprayed with or retain pesticides are fresh peaches, carrots, strawberries, green beans, and sweet bell peppers, among others.
- Foods typically having low pesticide rates even when not canned or organic are broccoli, oranges (when not using the rind), lettuce, grapes, and onions, among others.

How can I tell if the latest diet craze is a hoax?

- Avoid diets that advise you to eat unlimited amounts of one food while eliminating most others, or that eliminate an entire food group.
- Rapid weight loss also involves unhealthy loss of muscle, bone, and water. If you lost weight gradually, you’re also more likely to keep it off.
- There are no food combinations that will cause you to gain or lose weight faster if you eat them together or eat them at a certain time.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

“Frequently Asked Questions”. Rainforest Alliance, September 28, 2018, Accessed 22 June 2019. <https://www.rainforest-alliance.org/faqs/what-does-rainforest-alliance-certified-mean>

“Frequently Asked Questions”. Organic.org, 2019, Accessed 22 June 2019 <https://organic.org/faqs/>

Heard, Brent R. “Comparison of life cycle environmental impacts from meal kits and grocery store meals” Resources, Conservation and Recycling. Volume 147, August 2019, Pages 189-200, Accessed 22 June 2019. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0921344919301703?via%3Dihub>.

“When to Buy Organic Produce Cheat Sheet.” Consumer Reports Online, *Consumer Reports Inc.*, 2019, Accessed 22 June 2019. <https://www.consumerreports.org/video/view/healthy-living/food-nutrition/4119963227001/when-to-buy-organic-a-produce-cheat-sheet/>

Ed. Wolfram, Taylor. “How to Avoid Fad Diets”. Eat Right, *Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics*. March 18, 2019, Web. Accessed 24 Jul. 2019. <https://www.eatright.org/health/weight-loss/fad-diets/staying-away-from-fad-diets>

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