

Consumer Reports Evaluates Pesticide Residue on Fruits and Vegetables

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On August 27, 2020 Consumer Reports [published an article](#) in which they analyzed 5 years of data collected by the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) and determined that, in some cases, the amount of pesticides found on fruits and vegetables exceeded safe levels. Specifically, Consumer Reports determined that approximately half of non-organic fruits and vegetables posed little risk, while about 20% of the produce (including green beans, peaches, and potatoes) received poor scores.

While industry groups argue that pesticide residue does not pose a health risk, Consumer Reports alleges that pesticides can damage the brain and nervous system, and that even low levels have been linked to cancer, reproductive issues and various health problems. They further suggest that overall health impacts may be greater, as questions remain regarding the effects of long-term low-dose exposure.

To help consumers identify which produce poses the biggest potential risk from pesticides, Consumer Reports experts developed ratings for 35 fruits and vegetables based on information from USDA's Pesticide Data Program. The ratings factor in the total number and level of pesticides on the produce, the frequency in which pesticides were detected, and toxicity using EPA's chronic reference dose. More information on the methodology used can be found [here](#).

In the article, Consumer Reports urges government agencies and Congress to take various steps to protect consumers from the alleged harms of pesticides, including banning the agricultural use of the riskiest pesticides, providing the public with easy-to-search databases, and placing import alerts on fruits and vegetables that test positive for banned pesticides.

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