

## **+RECOMMENDED FOODS**

### **RECOMMENDED FOODS & DEFINITIONS**

**By Dr. Mark Hyman**

People from the beginning of time survived on eating whole, organic foods. Our bodies are designed to properly digest these kinds of foods, not the highly processed "garbage foods" on the market today.

Unfortunately, our culture is so far from this fundamental understanding of how to eat that you may not be completely clear on what I mean by "whole, organic foods." This problem is complicated by the fact that in the world of organic food a lot of different terminology has sprung up that describes the degree to which the food has been processed.

To assist you, I've compiled recommended foods and definitions.

#### **What Is a Whole Food?**

Whole foods are foods that are in the form in which they are found in nature—fresh, unprocessed, and simple. They are foods that come from a farmer's field, not a food chemist's laboratory. These include the following:

#### **High-fiber foods**

- Beans
- Whole grains
- Vegetables
- Fruits
- Nuts
- Seeds

#### **Quality Proteins**

- Beans
- Nuts
- Eggs
- Fish
- Lean poultry, lamb, pork, or beef (preferably organic, grass-, or range-fed)

#### **Healthy Fats**

- Fish oil
- Olive oil and olives
- Avocados
- Coconut oil (organic extra-virgin)
- Nuts and seeds, and nut and seed butters

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### Healthy Carbohydrates

- Vegetables
- Fruit
- Beans
- Whole grains

### What Is Organic?

There are a number of terms related to "organic" food products. The following should help you understand what these terms mean and assist you in choosing quality food products that are raised naturally and have minimal exposure to pesticides, herbicides, or antibiotics.

**Organic:** Organic foods are agricultural products that have been grown and treated in a way that is in closer harmony to the natural ecology of the area in which they are grown. Organic produce is grown with few pesticides and is grown in a way that keeps the soil fertile and the water clean.

**Certified Organic:** Foods that are certified organic have been held to very strict standards by the National Organics Standards Board. These standards include a restriction on the use of chemicals of any kind.

**Free-Range:** This refers to a way of raising feed animals (chickens, pigs, and cattle) in which the animal is not confined to a feedlot, stockyard, coop, or barn. Animals raised in confined conditions tend to have more diseases, are less healthy, and are fed an unnatural diet. Thus, they are full of poor-quality saturated fats. Free-range animals, while not necessarily completely free of antibiotics (used to keep disease down in a feedlot), tend to be healthier.

**Grass-Fed Beef:** This beef comes from cattle that spend their lives roaming and eating grass in a pasture. Grass-fed cattle are not closed up in a stockyard, which means they have much less need for antibiotics. They move more and eat a healthier, more natural diet, which means they are leaner. When you eat grass-fed beef you are eating leaner meat that has fewer saturated fats than feedlot cattle.

**Grass-Finished Beef:** Not all grass-fed cattle have been grass-fed their entire lives. In some cases marketers pass off cattle that have spent part of their lives in a feedlot as "grass-fed." These cows may have eaten some grass, or spent some time in a pasture, but they have also been kept in feedlots. "Grass-finished" cattle have never seen a feedlot. They spend their entire lives in a pasture. This means that they are the cleanest form of beef you can find.

### What Is a Grain?

*Whole grain:* A whole grain is the "fruit" of grasses that used to be wild—oats, wheat, rye, barley, rice, etc. Eating a refined grain is like eating a piece of fruit without the skin or seeds—often two of the most nutritious parts. Each whole grain has a bran (skin), an endosperm (the inside of the fruit), and a germ (the seed). The endosperm is where all the starch (sugar) is, the bran is the source of the fiber, and the germ is the source of vitamins and minerals. (put graphic in there).

When choosing whole grains, look for brown rice, steel-cut oats, barley, buckwheat, or quinoa.

*Sprouted grain:* A sprouted grain is a whole grain soaked in water that starts the germination process and makes the grain easier to digest. It is more slowly broken down in the gut and has a lower glycemic load than refined flour or grains. Try sprouted-grain bread or tortillas.

*Refined grains:* A grain that has the bran and germ removed is pure starch and is quickly absorbed, leading to surges in blood sugar and swings in appetite. It is commonly known as white rice, white flour, white bread, oatmeal, etc. Don't eat these!

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Dr. Hyman's Pantry

*Below are suggestions of the types of ingredients that I prefer for both reasons of health and flavor. Always look choose whole, fresh foods and, whenever possible, buy local, seasonal fruits and vegetables that are organically grown.*

### **Water**

Contact your local water department to find out the quality of your drinking water.

For cooking and drinking, we suggest you use filtered water in all recipes. Consider a water-purifying system such as a reverse osmosis filter for your home. (See [www.ultrametabolism.com](http://www.ultrametabolism.com).) If you drink bottled water, choose glass or clear, hard durable plastic containers (versus soft, opaque, thick, easily bendable plastic.) Soft plastics release toxic chemicals called phlatates

### **Mayonnaise**

We use organic soy mayonnaise, or you may prefer to make your own. For those preferring a vegan diet, there is a mayonnaise substitute called Vegenaise.

### **Organic, Hormone and Antibiotic-Free Food**

Buy seasonally fresh, locally grown, and organic produce whenever possible, as well as antibiotic and hormone-free, organic poultry, dairy products and red meat. Buy as many organic foods as your budget will allow. (Research indicates that organic foods have more nutrients and do not have the high levels of pesticides, hormones, and antibiotics of conventional foods.) Organic fruits and vegetables are also available frozen and canned. We used organic canned beans, produce, grass-fed meat, poultry, tahini, whole grain or gluten free breads and pastas, frozen fruits and vegetables and dairy products in the testing and development of these recipes. For information about buying organic produce, check the Environmental Working Group's website at [www.ewg.org](http://www.ewg.org) and for information on seafood safety, check [www.ewg.org](http://www.ewg.org) or [www.oceansalive.org](http://www.oceansalive.org).

### **Fish and seafood**

Wild, not farmed seafood is preferred.

### **Poultry**

Poultry raised without hormones or antibiotics is preferable. Remove the skin from poultry before cooking.

### **Meat**

Buy grass-fed, organic hormone free as your budget will allow. Trim all visible fat from the meat before cooking.

### **Kosher Salt**

Use kosher salt where indicated. Some recipes use standard iodized or table salt.

### **Broth or Stock**

Most recipes can be made successfully with either broth or stock. Buy reduced- or low-sodium broth or stock and, if you make your own, use salt sparingly. You can adjust the seasonings for flavor later during the cooking process.

### **Sesame Oil**

Recipes specify either light or dark sesame oil.

### **Eggs**

Omega-3 enriched eggs are a "functional food" readily available at your local supermarket. They come from chickens fed a diet rich in algae or flaxseeds as the original source of these healthy fats. In this instance, the eggs are "what the chicken ate". The egg yolks are rich in omega-3 fatty acids – egg yolks once shunned for their cholesterol content, are rich in many nutrients including choline, a phospholipid that is a key component of cells and is important for a healthy nervous system.

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### **Fresh Herbs**

For best results, use the freshest of herbs, and some herbs, such as basil are added at the end of the cooking process for maximum flavor. Most herbs are high in antioxidants and flavor-wise, transform foods.

### **Fresh Lemon and Lime Juice**

Use fresh limes and lemons. A citrus reamer is excellent for extracting the juice from lemons and limes. Strain the seeds from the juice.

### **Soy Sauce**

We recommend low sodium, wheat free or gluten free soy sauce.

### **Olive Oil**

Extra-virgin olive oil is best unless otherwise indicated. Buy the best extra-virgin oil your budget allows.

### **Tahini**

Tahini is a paste made from ground sesame seeds; it is an ingredient in hummus and has wonderful flavor.

### **Dark Chocolate**

Choose a dark chocolate, with 65 to 70% cacao content unless otherwise indicated in the recipe.