

Making America Organic...One Home At a Time!



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Parents Turn To Organic Food

Erin O'Neal has two daughters and a fridge stocked with organic cheese, milk, fruits and vegetables in her Annapolis, Maryland, home. She is among the increasing number of parents who buy organic to keep their children's diets free of food grown with pesticides, hormones, antibiotics or genetic engineering. "The pesticide issue just scares me – it wigs me out to think about the amount of chemicals that might be going into my kid," said O'Neal, 36.

Since last year, sales of organic baby food have jumped nearly 18 percent, double the overall growth of organic food sales, according to the marketing information company ACNielsen.

As demand has risen, organic food for children has popped up at more than just natural food stores.

For example, Earth's Best baby food, a mainstay in Whole Foods and Wild Oats markets, just reached a national distribution deal with Toys R Us and Babies R Us. Gerber is selling organic baby food under its Tender Harvest label. Stonyfield Farm's YoBaby yogurt can be found in supermarkets everywhere.

The concern about children is that they are more vulnerable to toxins in their diets, said Alan Greene, a pediatrician in northern California. As children grow rapidly, their brains and organs are forming and they eat more for their size than do grown-ups, Greene said.

"Pound for pound, they get higher concentrations of pesticides than adults do," said Greene, who promotes organic food in his books.

New government-funded research adds to the concern. A study of children whose diets were changed from regular to organic found their pesticide levels plunged almost immediately. The amount of pesticide detected in the children remained impercepti-

ble until their diets were switched back to conventional food.

"We didn't expect that to drop in such dramatic fashion," said Emory University's Chensheng Lu, who led the Environmental Protection Agency-

funded research. Lu's findings will be published in February in the journal *Environmental Health Perspectives*.

Scientists are still trying to figure out how pesticides affect children, Lu said, but he notes that it took years to prove the health hazards of lead.

Still, the uncertainty is leading parents, especially new or expecting mothers, to switch to organic food. Many are even making their own baby food from organic ingredients.

"Maybe that has the reputation of being difficult, but it doesn't have to be, and once you get into the habit of doing something regularly, it gets to be easier," said Jody Villecco, a nutritionist for Whole Foods.

In a traveling lecture series for Whole Foods and *Mothering* magazine, Villecco demonstrates by shaving a peeled banana with a knife to make mush – "There, we just made baby food," she said. She recommends people make baby food in big batches and freeze it in ice cube trays.

Eating organic is not cheap. But Green and Lu said parents have options if they can't afford the food or don't want to search for it or make it: Buy fruits and vegetables known to have lower pesticide residues.

The Environmental Working Group, a Washington-based advocacy group, has produced a guide to the pesticide levels in fruits and vegetables commonly sold in grocery stores, basing the

(Continued on page 2)

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Harvest Blend Regular

- Cauliflower
- Carrots
- Green Kale
- Sweet Yellow Onions
- White Garlic
- Roma Tomatoes
- Hass Avocado
- Cucumbers
- Red Leaf Lettuce
- Braeburn Apples
- Bosc Pears
- Bananas
- Kiwi
- Valencia Oranges

See the web site for details on our other options. Produce bag contents are subject to change based on availability.

Account Updates



We've gotten a lot of new customers lately, so this is a reminder that whenever possible, all changes to your account should be made through the Member Area of the web site.

Due to the amount of email we get, we cannot promise that requests sent to us in email will be seen in time for your next delivery.

If you have any questions about your account, we'd be glad to help. But please remember to use the web site whenever possible.

(Continued from page 1)

findings on data from the Agriculture Department and Food and Drug Administration. The guide says the lowest pesticide levels are found in asparagus, avocados, bananas, broccoli, cauliflower, sweet corn, kiwi, mangos, onions, papaya, pineapples and sweet peas.

The highest pesticide levels, meanwhile, are found in apples, bell peppers, celery, cherries, imported grapes, nectarines, peaches, pears, potatoes, red raspberries, spinach and strawberries.

The rating system is unnecessary, according to industry representatives who say conventional food is safe and affordable. "There are some people in the organic food industry and the environmental industry who have unfortunately scared parents into thinking you have to turn to organic sources for baby food, based on claims that have no basis in science or fact," said Jay Vroom, spokesman for CropLife America, an industry

group. "The products my industry produces are safe" for everyone.

Beyond baby food, dairy and produce, snacks are also a rapidly growing segment of organic food, according to the Organic Trade Association, an industry group.

Snacks are a priority for Susan Guegan, 44, a mother of four boys in Boulder, Colorado. Guegan made their food from scratch when they were babies. Now she buys organic versions of the cookies and hot dogs they ask for.

"They love Oreos," she said. "They'll say, 'Can we get this?' I'm like, 'Can you read me the ingredients?' They'll laugh and try to say some of them. I'll say, 'You can put that back.'"

Recipes

Kale with Tomato and Pepper

- 1 bunch kale
- 2 tbsp balsamic vinegar
- 1 small green pepper, seeds and ribs removed, sliced
- 1 small red pepper, seeds and ribs removed, sliced
- 1 small yellow or orange pepper, seeds and ribs removed, sliced
- 1 cup diced onion
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1/2 cup water
- 3 cups diced tomato
- Salt and pepper to taste

In a large pot bring 4 cups of salted water to a boil over high heat. Add kale and boil until tender, about 10 minutes. Drain in a colander, then refresh under cold running water, and drain well. In a large skillet, heat balsamic vinegar. Combine bell peppers, onion and garlic and sauté for 3-5 minutes. Add 1/2 cup water. Bring to a boil. Lower heat and simmer until water evaporates and onion is softened, about 5 minutes. Add tomato and simmer for 5 minutes. Stir in cooked kale and cook for 15 minutes more. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Peas, Cauliflower and Tofu with Spicy Orange

- 1 onion, medium size
- 2 tbsp garlic, minced
- 1 lb. peas, fresh or frozen
- 1 cauliflower, florets, fresh
- 12 oz. tofu, firm, cubed
- 1/2 cup almonds, whole shelled
- 1/3 cup coconut, unsweetened shredded
- 12 oz. can orange juice, frozen concentrate
- 3 oranges, peeled, sectioned, and cut in half
- 2 tsp ginger, ground
- 1/2 tsp turmeric, powder
- 1/4 tsp cayenne pepper, ground
- 3 tbsp soy sauce
- 1 tbsp corn starch



This recipe is best served over a bed of brown rice. Begin cooking the rice. Peel and dice the onion. Peel and mince the garlic. Cook the onion and garlic until the onions begin to get translucent. Mix frequently. Add the peas, cauliflower, tofu, orange juice concentrate, ginger, turmeric, and cayenne pepper. When the ingredients become hot add the orange sec-

tions, almonds, and shredded coconut. Continue mixing to insure that the ingredients are evenly cooked. In a cup or small bowl mix the soy sauce and corn starch until they are smooth. When the vegetables are tender add the soy sauce - corn starch mixture and continue mixing until the corn starch is dissolved and thickens the liquid, and evenly coats the other ingredients. Serve over the rice.

Avocado Apple Salad

- 1 avocado, peeled and sliced
- 1 large beetroot, peeled and grated
- 1 carrot, peeled and grated
- 1 small lettuce, torn into small pieces
- 1 red onion, sliced
- 1 apple, cored and sliced
- 1/3 cup walnuts, chopped and toasted
- 1/4 cup Italian dressing
- 2 tbsp lemon juice
- 1 tsp wholegrain mustard

Place all salad ingredients through apples together in a bowl. Toss gently to combine. Place dressing ingredients into a jar. Secure lid. Shake well.

Avocado 'N Everything Pizza

- 2 cups buttermilk baking mix
- 1/2 cup hot water
- 1 can (8 ounces) tomato sauce
- 1/4 cup chopped green onion
- 1/2 cup shredded mozzarella cheese
- 1/2 cup sliced mushrooms
- 1/3 cup sliced ripe olives
- 1 small tomato, sliced
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 avocado, seeded, peeled and sliced
- Fresh basil leaves, optional

Heat oven to 425. Stir together buttermilk mix and water with fork in small bowl. Pat or roll into 12-inch circle on ungreased baking sheet or pizza pan. Mix together tomato sauce and green onion; spread over pizza dough. Top with cheese, mushrooms, olives and tomato slices. Drizzle olive oil over top. Bake 15 to 20 minutes or until edge of crust is golden brown. Remove pizza from oven and arrange avocado slices over top. Garnish with basil leaves and serve.