

Do you know what's in your food?



Food Residues: the facts



Pesticides are toxic chemicals used to kill or control pests. Their widespread introduction into the environment, often without adequate safeguards, creates problems, including introducing unwanted residues into food.

Food residue

In PAN UK's analysis of the government's own data, it was found that more than 5% of fruit, vegetables and other foods carried harmful pesticide residues which posed "appreciable" health risks to consumers.

Worst foods for residue:

PAN UK looked at the government's 2005 studies and found the worst ten foods for pesticide residue, in relation to how often eaten and whether peeled, were:

	flour
	potatoes
	bread
	apples
	pears
	grapes
	strawberries
	green beans
	tomatoes
	cucumber

Analysis of the government's 2005 data compared residues against the safety limit for consuming an amount that would be eaten within one meal, or a day. This safety limit was exceeded in 97 cases, indicating that there could be an appreciable health risk to the consumer. These samples were at levels typically between 100% and 500% of the safety limit, although one sample reached 1,600%.

What can you do?

- Keep eating at least 5 a day fruit and veg!
- Consider replacing those items on the top ten list with organic
- Increase your consumption of fruit and veg least likely to contain residues
- Make your concerns known to your local supermarket
- Grow your own fruit and veg

More information can be found at www.pan-uk.org

