

Quality Matters

One of the reasons why research into nutrition is so difficult and why there are so many conflicting points of view out there is the simple fact that there are SO MANY variables to take in to account in any study into the effects of different food types on the body.

One such variable is Food Quality.

Study after study after study has failed to take the quality of the food they are testing into account.

And it's why we get headlines such as,

"Bacon More Carcinogenic Than Smoking."

The first question I always ask when looking at a study such as this is "Ok where did that bacon come from?"

The difference between a eating bacon from a pig raised in a feed a lot, fed the cheapest food available and pumped full of antibiotics to keep it alive (*as the food it's being force fed is actually killing it*) and a pig raised in it's natural habit, eating acorns and free to run around, in the sun, hump all day long and generally have a healthy, active life, is so huge they may as well be different foods.

And eating it will have a significantly different effect on your body.

The first will cause inflammation, lead to a higher toxic load and ultimately place the body under more stress. Which as we know leads to weight gain and a whole host of other problems downstream.

The second is one of the most nutrient dense food stuffs on the planet.

This is also true with plants. A carrot that has been grown in nutrient rich soil, organically and that hasn't travelled thousands of miles to get to your plate but is eaten the day it is picked is going to have a much higher nutrient count than it's alternative.

Those nutrients get passed on to you and then have a very different effect on the body.

So whenever choosing foods we want to look for the most nutrient dense form we can find.

For meat this means grass fed, grass finished.

The grass finished part is essential as often cows are grass raised and then fed grains for the last 6 months of their life to fatten them up (***notice here farmers have known for years that feeding cows grains makes them get fat, sadly it works the same in humans***). This process almost totally destroys the nutrient profile of the meat from that cow. Now this isn't always the easiest to find especially if your travelling.

Now remember the goodness in meat is mainly found in the fat, but remember from the masterclass how fat is also used as storage for toxins.

This means that if you are eating grass fed, grass finished meat you want to get the fattest cut possible and eat all the fat. If you are buying second rate meat, buy the leanest cut you can and ignore the fat.

So in order of preference we want:

1. Grass fed, grass finished.
2. Organic
3. Grass fed, grain finished
4. Feed a lot. (never eat this is you can help it)

The same goes for seafood. Frozen sea food will often tell you how and where it was caught. Avoid anything which is farmed and look for line or net caught in the open ocean. We have to be a little careful with some seafood because of all the heavy metals present in the water.

These tend to accumulate in fish higher up the food chain. So try to limit yourself to fish less than 30cm in length when fully grown as they'll have less chance to accumulate toxins.

The only exception to this rule is wild caught or sockeye Salmon. Sardines, anchovies, and similar sized fish are perfect.

When it comes to veg, again we have a chain of preference.

Local veg will generally have been sitting around in transport for much less time than something grown and shipped in from the other side of the world. As plants starts losing nutrients the second they are picked we want our time from harvest to plate to be as short as possible, this also (generally) ensures you'll be eating veg which is in season which is an added bonus.

Organic is better as it isn't covered in pesticides and tends to have a better nutrient profile (it often tastes much better as well).

So in order of preference for veggies:

1. Organic, Local.
2. Organic, non local.
3. Local, non organic.
4. Non organic, local.
5. Non organic, non local.

A WORD TO THE WISE

Do not allow your self to become overwhelmed by this, remember perfect is the enemy of good. If you can't find grass fed, grass finished meat, then grab a lean cut of chicken instead. If you fancy a swordfish steak once a month...go for it. When it comes to food quality I know it's not always possible to get the best stuff, as long as you're **generally** following the guidelines above you'll most likely be doing a lot better than you were before this program and the benefits will follow.