

# Chicago Tribune

## OPINION

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### Safe fruit

This is regarding "Pesticides & your peaches; Tribune watchdog: Latest government report shows more than 50 pesticides on our peaches; How can fruit lovers avoid the risks?" (Page 1, Aug. 12), by Tribune reporter Monica Eng. We thought it was important to communicate to your readers some information that may not have been clear.

First, the article conveys that any findings of pesticide residues pose a risk. However, we have had toxicologists examine the residue findings of the United States Department of Agriculture as well. Regarding peaches for example, Dr. Robert Krieger, a toxicologist with the Personal Chemical Exposure Program at the University of California, states that if you consider the highest residues found from the past three years, a child, a teen or an adult would have to eat 400 to nearly 16,000 servings a day to reach the science-based no-effect level. The no-effect level simply means that you still won't see any negative health effects from residues after consuming those extreme amounts of fruit.

Further, the USDA Pesticide Data Program's executive summary clearly states that more than 99 percent of the foods analyzed did not contain residues above the safety tolerances established by the Environmental Protection Agency. And, if residues are present, the Federal Food and Drug Administration states that you can reduce and often eliminate pesticide residues on fresh fruits and vegetables by washing them with cold or warm tap water.

Consumers should know that farmers of fresh fruits and vegetables strive every day to provide safe, wholesome and nutritious food. Most have been farming for generations. And consumers can eat these nutritious foods with confidence. After all, the farmers' best and most loyal consumers are their own families.

-- Marilyn Dolan, executive director, Alliance for Food and Farming

-- Tom Nassif, president and CEO, Western Growers Association

-- Bryan Silbermann, president and CEO, Produce Marketing Association

-- Tom Stenzel, president and CEO, United Fresh Produce Association

