



How can I wash pesticides from fruit and veggies?

Kaye was at the grocery store buying fruit for a salad when she noticed a bottle of fruit-washing soap on display next to the produce. Her fruit salad was going to be part of a potluck lunch, so Kaye wanted to clean the fruit thoroughly from germs or [pesticide residues](#). She then wondered if she needed to purchase such an expensive fruit cleaner, or if water-rinsing was enough. Kaye thought perhaps her [antimicrobial](#) dish soap would work just as well as any fruit wash. After all, dish soaps are used on items used for eating. While searching the internet for more information about washing fruit with soap, Kaye stumbled upon the [National Pesticide Information Center \(NPIC\)](#) website and decided to call for more information.

[Click here](#) to read what Kaye learned from NPIC about using water, fruit washes, and/or other soaps on fruits and vegetables ...



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Kaye learned that [washing with water](#) reduces dirt, germs, and pesticide residues remaining on fruit and vegetable surfaces. Holding the fruit or vegetable under flowing water removes more than dunking the produce. Peeling or scrubbing produce like potatoes with a stiff clean brush or rubbing soft items like peaches while holding them under running water works best to remove residues. However, pesticide residues can stick better to waxy or soft-skinned fruits. If the produce was treated with wax, pesticide residues may be trapped underneath the wax.

Even more interesting, the specialist said that some [fruit and vegetable washing products](#) can be effective at removing dirt or residues, but they have not been proven to be any more effective than water alone. This is because water alone is effective at removing some surface residues. No washing method is 100% effective for removing all pesticide residues.

The specialist explained that unlike dishes, fruit and vegetables have pores. [Dish soap or bleach](#) can get trapped or absorbed by the pores and become difficult to rinse off the fruit once they have been applied. Kaye realized that using cleaning products may actually add residues to her produce! The specialist added that dish soaps and bleach are not meant to be used on fruit or vegetables and may cause health effects if used on food.

Kaye felt confident that she can reduce pesticide surface residues, dust and germs on fruit and vegetables. She knew that if she decided to use more than water to wash fruit, she would make sure that the product is meant for cleaning fruit.

Click [here](#) for more information about pesticide residues. To learn more about healthy fruit and vegetable handling practices click [here](#).

