

# Good, Better, Best Shopping Guide

By Jill Winger Author of *The Prairie Homestead Cookbook*



## Meat

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**GOOD:** Organic commercially-raised poultry, pork, or beef

**BETTER:** Non-local pastured-raised poultry, pork, or beef

**BEST:**

- Homegrown or locally-raised grassfed beef or bison.
- Homegrown or locally-raised pastured poultry or pork supplemented with organic grains
- Wild game (elk, deer, game birds, etc.)

**TIP:** Buy whole chickens instead of just breasts and wings so you can make homemade stock with the leftover bones.



**TIP:** Buy bone-in beef and pork so that you can make homemade stock with the leftover bones.

**SKIP:** Conventionally-raised or factory-farmed beef, chicken, and pork

## Fats

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**GOOD:** Butter, coconut oil

**BETTER:** Organic, grassfed butter, unrefined coconut oils, organic olive oil

**BEST:**

- Home-raised and homemade butter, lard, and/or tallow
- Locally sourced butter, lard, and tallow, high-quality olive oil from a reputable dealer

**TIP:** Save the bacon fat from your organic bacon purchases in a glass jar and use it for cooking. It's especially good for cooking potatoes!

**SKIP:** Margarine, vegetable oils, canola oil, vegetable shortenings

## Sweeteners:

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**GOOD:** Organic white and brown sugar

**BETTER:** Organic, unrefined sweeteners such as sucanat, rapadura, whole cane sugar

**BEST:** Organic, homemade, or locally-sourced honey and maple syrup

**SKIP:** Refined white sugar, artificial sweeteners



## Dairy:

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**GOOD:** Low-temp vat pasteurized whole milk and dairy products from organic sources

**BETTER:** Low-temp vat pasteurized dairy products from local farms

**BEST:** Homegrown or locally-sourced raw milk and cheese products from grassfed animals

**SKIP:** Conventional organic milk (*has been cooked to the point of being completely sterile*), conventional cheese brands, processed “cheese food” products.

## Eggs:

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**GOOD:** Organic eggs from the store

**BETTER:** Pastured or free-range eggs from local farms or the farmers market

**BEST:** Homegrown or locally raised eggs from free-range chickens fed an organic diet

**SKIP:** Conventionally-raised eggs



## Grains:

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**GOOD:** Organic, unbleached, all-purpose flour

**BETTER:** Organic grains or homemade whole grain breads made with active dry yeast

**BEST:** Ancient grains (*Einkorn*, *spelt*, etc.) with wild yeast used as leavening

**TIP:** The storage life of whole grains is longer than that of ground flour. Buy whole grains in bulk and grind them as needed.

**SKIP:** Bleached, all-purpose flour

## Fruits & Veggies:

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**GOOD:** Organic fruits and vegetables from the store

**BETTER:** Local or semi-local non-organic certified produce from small farms who simply cannot afford organic certification

**BEST:** Homegrown or locally-sourced fruits and vegetables grown without exposure to pesticide and herbicide

**SKIP:** Non-organic, non-local, grocery store produce that are vulnerable to higher levels of pesticides. This includes thin-skinned produce and is often known as the “dirty dozen”: berries (especially *strawberries*), leafy greens (especially *spinach*), nectarines, apples, grapes, peaches, cherries, pears, tomatoes, celery, potatoes, and peppers.