



# The Shocking Truth About “Natural” Flavors

Other than salt, water, and sugar, natural flavors are the fourth most common ingredient on food labels today.

The [FDA allows](#) food companies to use the term “**natural flavors**” to describe any food additive that *originated* in nature.

This is a major problem for anyone who chooses to eat clean and healthy.

*This is why:*

## **Reason #1: Natural Flavors Are 90 Percent Chemical Junk**

Despite their innocent and even healthy-sounding name, [80 to 90 percent](#) of the ingredients that make up natural flavors contain chemical solvents and preservatives, including the carcinogen BHA, propylene glycol (found in antifreeze), and genetically modified organisms (GMOs).

## **Reason #2: Natural Flavors Are Basically Perfumes for Your Mouth**

Cleaning products, perfumes, and cosmetics contain a combination of chemicals called a “fragrance.” In processed food, this chemical mixture is called a “flavor.” Because smell comprises 80 to 90 percent of the sense of taste, fragrances and flavors are often alarmingly similar in chemical composition.

## **Reason #3: Natural Flavors Are Designed By Scientists to Be Addictive**

There are four major corporations that control the \$24 billion market for both flavors and fragrances: Givaudan, Firmenich, IFF and Symrise. In a fascinating 2011 interview that aired on [60 Minutes](#), scientists from Givaudan, one of the aforementioned power players in the food flavoring world, admitted their number one goal when creating flavors was to make them addictive.

## **Reason #4: The FDA Lets Flavor Companies Call the Shots**

Incredibly, the FDA frequently allows food companies to develop their own food additives without providing oversight or safety reviews of their chemical concentrations. These companies are smart: they hire expensive lawyers to ensure they've followed the archaic FDA processes when developing their flavors ... and generally the FDA leaves them alone.

*David Andrews, Senior Scientist at the Environmental Working Group (EWG), sums it up nicely:*

*"The truth is that when you see the word "flavor" on a food label, you have almost no clue what chemicals may have been added to the food under the umbrella of this vague term. For people who have uncommon food allergies or are on restricted diets, this can be a serious concern."*

### **What You Can Do About It**

Natural flavors are not natural, no matter how much food companies try to convince you otherwise.

But they're so prevalent in so many foods it's really hard to avoid them.

The simple solution is to stop buying foods that contain natural flavors. You can also [contact the FDA](#) expressing your concern. Or [reach out to your elected officials](#) and tell them you think this is unacceptable and you'd like more oversight of these types of ingredients in the foods you eat.

At the end of the day, eating more fresh foods that come from nature and packaged foods with only ingredients you recognize as real food is the easiest way to avoid natural flavors.