

# Healthy Farmer

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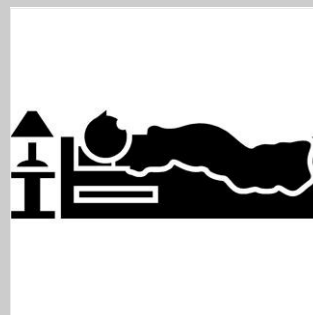
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## Relax and Indulge (sometimes)

It seems as if we are bombarded daily with things we shouldn't do or eat. Some people even joke that "all the fun" is gone. Finally, a recent article by Health magazine that is summarized on CNN.com, puts some of the most common restrictions aside, so go ahead and have some fun already!

Some of the pleasures that are cited by CNN from the Health magazine article are:

*Getting your zzz's:* This one was unanimous. Everyone needs and benefits from sleep—and there are no drawbacks! The right amount of sleep time gives us better energy, better mental acuity and many other benefits.



*Daily chocolate fix:* the experts agreed that a daily dose of chocolate is a good thing, as long as it is just a couple squares of the dark chocolate. Of course it is easy to overdo on this one. But as long as we stick to the guidelines, dark chocolate may help lower blood pressure. It has also been demonstrated that a bit of dark chocolate each day helped lower the stress level in highly anxious people. Look for at least 75% cacao. Keep a little bit handy while you're in the field or in the gardens.

*Girls' (or guys') nights out:* We all know that it can be difficult to find time for friends and family, especially during busy farming seasons. But the benefit of even just an hour or two spent with loved ones can certainly outweigh the drawbacks. The CNN article notes that strong social ties can even contribute to a longer life span.



*The morning cup of coffee:* Even for early risers, sometimes it can be difficult to find your way around without some caffeine in the morning. The good news is that, according to the article, moderate coffee-drinking in middle age has been associated with lower risks for dementia. It can also fight heart disease and some cancers. As long as you stick with a couple cups a day so as not to interrupt the very important sleep!

*Sunshine:* This one is truly good for farmers—and many probably already know this. The article says that sunshine is a natural antidepressant and helps us feel alert. The sun may even help to reduce risks for cancer and heart disease.

Don't forget to apply plenty of sunscreen, though, to protect from skin cancer.

*Full-fat dressing:* For many people who don't care for the taste of low-fat or fat-free salad dressings, this many come as good news. The article says to go ahead and use a little bit of the full-fat dressings. Monounsaturated fats such as those found in vegetable oils such as olive oil, nuts and seeds, can help reduce the risk for heart disease and strokes. The article cautions, however, that no more than 30% of the daily calories should come from fat.

*Relax with a drink at the end of the day:* As long as it's in moderation—go ahead and have that glass of wine, beer or cocktail. Wine in particular has some benefits for the heart. But do try to limit it to one 5-ounce glass a day.

It is so rare that we are given permission to enjoy a few things in life. Now we know that some of the “guilty” pleasures are actually not so guilty after all. So go ahead, relax and enjoy.

For the full CNN article, please visit:

[“America's healthiest pleasures: 10 'vices' that are good for you”](#)

### **AgriSafe Clinic Network**



The AgriSafe Clinic Network specializes in care for farm families. The clinics are located in many areas of the country. AgriSafe Executive Director, Natalie Roy, has written the featured article for AgriWellness Partners. For more information about AgriSafe,

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[Www.agrisafe.org](http://www.agrisafe.org)

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