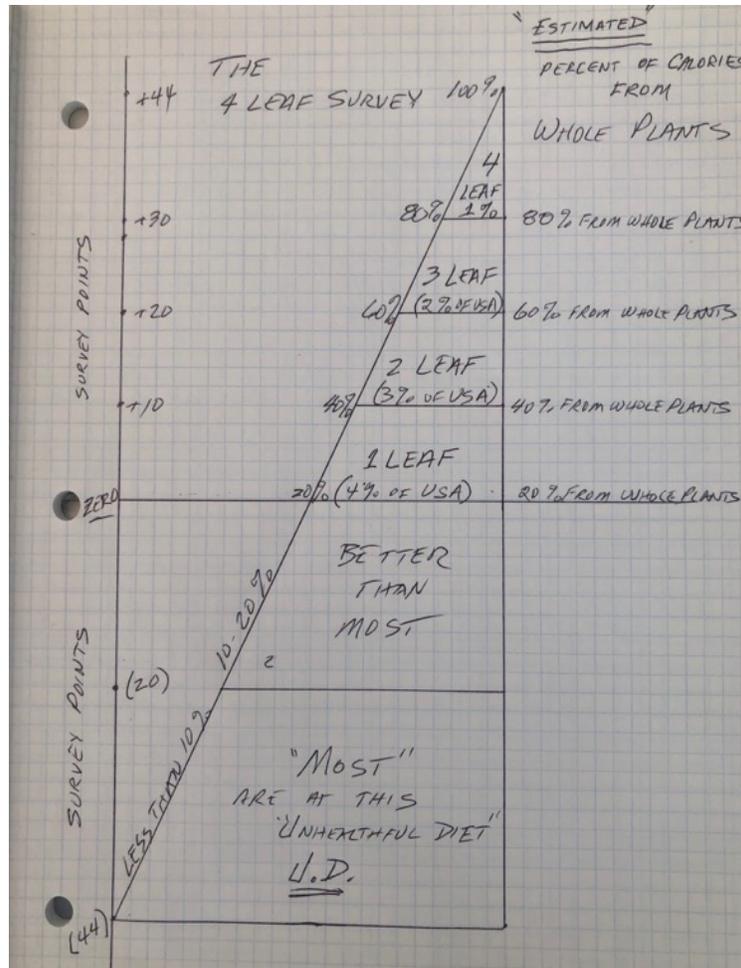


## The Simplicity of the 4Leaf Algorithm (6-11-19)

**Introduction.** Our [4Leaf Survey](#) is comprised of 12 multiple-choice questions. The first four cover whole, plant-based foods and have a maximum of 44 “plus” points. Questions 5 through 12 cover processed and animal based foods like dairy, white flour, sugar, salty snacks, meat and vegetable oil. Those questions carry a total of 44 “minus” points. The 1Leaf level begins at net zero points. See chart below for a graphical look.

**This chart illustrates how it works. Scroll down for more info.**



**Discussion.** The twelve questions on the 4Leaf Survey don’t measure calories but by measuring eating patterns, it enables us to “estimate” the percent of calories from whole plants pretty well. It would be impossible to count the calories for many reasons, but it’s quick and easy to answer 12 multiple-choice questions which place the survey-taker within the universe of six possible levels of eating. Scores range from -44 points to +44 points. We know that people scoring +44 are eating nearly 100% whole plants and that people scoring -44 points are eating close to none. That takes care of two of the six levels – the lowest and the highest.

The straight line of the hypotenuse of the above triangle enables us to determine a fair estimate of the other four levels of eating. It stands to reason; as the net score goes up, the percent of whole plant calories goes up. The only complaint I’ve ever heard about this survey is from a few very healthy eaters who were disappointed with their 3Leaf score when they knew that they were eating at the 4Leaf level, so we tweaked the algorithm a bit, making it easier for healthy eaters to score “4Leaf.” But those aren’t the people we’re trying to help.

We’re trying to help the people who score well below zero, which is about 90% of the population in the developed world. This survey does an excellent job of engaging those people in the process and showing them exactly what food choices will help them improve their score AND their health.

*J. Morris (Jim) Hicks, creator of the 4Leaf Survey*