

IMPORTANCE OF ORGANIC FOOD ON HEALTH

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Organic foods are made without Synthetic pesticides, Genetic modification, or fertilizers without any synthetic component. Genetic modification means that there is the “production of heritable improvements in plants or animals for specific uses, like genetic engineering” European Commission (2014). Organic foods must also not contain any type of antibiotic or growth hormone. The Organic Foods Production Act (1990) was designed to do three things:

- Create standards that would regulate the marketing of organically made foods and products;
- Give consumers a guarantee that the products labeled organic were in fact organic;
- To make possible the interstate exchanges in foods that are organic.

DEFINITION OF ORGANIC FOOD:

‘Organic food is the product of a farming system which avoids the use of man-made fertilisers, pesticides; growth regulators and livestock feed additives. Irradiation and the use of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) or products produced from or by GMOs are generally prohibited by organic legislation. (www.bbcgoodfood.com).

Organic food is food produced by methods that comply with the standards of organic farming. Standards vary worldwide, but organic farming in general features practices that strive to cycle resources, promote ecological balance, and conserve biodiversity. Organizations regulating organic products may restrict the use of certain pesticides and fertilizers in farming. In general, organic foods are also usually not processed using irradiation, industrial solvents or synthetic food additives. (en.wikipedia.org).

THE BENEFITS OF ORGANIC FOOD

How your food is grown or raised can have a major impact on your mental and emotional health as well as the environment. Organic foods often have more beneficial nutrients, such as antioxidants, than their conventionally-grown counterparts and people with allergies to foods, chemicals, or preservatives often find their symptoms lessen or go away when they eat only organic foods. Organic produce contains fewer pesticides. Chemicals such as fungicides, herbicides, and insecticides are widely used in conventional agriculture and residues remain on (and in) the food we eat. Eating organically grown foods is the only way to avoid the cocktail of synthetic chemicals present in commercially grown food. More than 600 active chemicals are registered for agricultural use in America, to the tune of billions of pounds annually. Heavy pesticide exposure can contribute to neurological issues, malfunctions, impairments, as well as creating toxicity within your body (Bourn D, Prescott J., 2016).

- **Organic food is often fresher** because it doesn’t contain preservatives that make it last longer. Organic produce is often (but not always, so watch where it is from) produced on smaller farms near where it is sold.
- **Organic farming is better for the environment.** Organic farming practices reduce pollution, conserve water, reduce soil erosion, increase soil fertility, and use less energy. Farming without pesticides is also better for nearby birds and animals as well as people who live close to farms.
- **Organically raised animals are NOT given antibiotics, growth hormones, or fed animal byproducts.** Feeding livestock animal byproducts increases the risk of mad cow disease (BSE) and the use of antibiotics can create antibiotic-resistant strains of bacteria. Organically-raised animals are given more space to move around and access to the outdoors, which help to keep them healthy.
- **Organic meat and milk are richer in certain nutrients.** Results of a 2016 European study show that levels of certain nutrients, including omega-3 fatty acids, were up to 50 percent higher in organic meat and milk than in conventionally raised versions.
- **Organic food is GMO-free.** Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) or genetically engineered (GE) foods are plants whose DNA has been altered in ways that cannot occur in nature or in traditional crossbreeding, most commonly in order to be resistant to pesticides or produce an insecticide.

ORGANIC FOOD AND HEALTH

This is probably the most obvious but there are two different aspects of your health that are impacted by your choosing organic food: what you're NOT getting and what you ARE. (Barański, M; Rempelos, L; Iversen, PO; Leifert, C, 2017).

The biggest advantages of organic food include:

- **Nutrient-Denser Food:**

According to a State of Science Review done in 2008, organic food has *more nutritional superiority* than its non-organic counterparts.

- **Stronger, More Energetic Body:**

No pesticides, chemicals, or processed additives bogging down your system means a smaller risk of disease, illness, and disorders in yourself. Nothing leaves you feeling tired and gross like unhealthy junk food.

- **It Tastes Better:**

True, it may not taste as good if you're accustomed to the addictive qualities of junk food additives, such as processed sugar and MSG. But after just a short time of your body experiencing truly healthy food, you'll be craving it. No, really, you will. And all the crap will start having a bad after-taste.

- **Safe from Dangerous Pesticides:**

Chemical pesticides has been linked to breast, prostate and other cancers, non-Hodgkins lymphoma, leukemia, infertility, convulsions, immune and endocrine disorders, Parkinson's disease and depression. Just to name a few!**Safe from Scary Chemicals:**

Herbicides and fertilizers have been connected with various cancers, immune disorders, infertility, cardiac disease, hypertension, and numerous other diseases.

- **Safe from Other Crazy Shizz:**

Things like **genetically engineered foods** (frankenfoods, such a tomatoes spliced with fish genes for cold weather tolerance), food fertilized with sewer sludge, appetite enhancers given to animals and synthetic hormones are just a few more advantages of organic food.

- **Peace of Mind:**

Knowing your buying organic food can help you to enjoy what you eat for all the reasons outlined above and below. Some of the advantages of organic food seem to have less to do with you than they do with others. But we all know that what we do to others, we do to ourselves. Howard, Sir Albert. (2014).

A few of the benefits for others when we choose organic:

- **Supports the Local Economy:**

Purchasing organic, especially from the farmer's market, **supports your local community's economy**, creating jobs and keeping farmers thriving.

- **Keeps Our Families Healthy:**

Conventional food practices have been linked to birth defects, learning disorders, childhood leukemia, ADHD, autism and nervous system disorders in children.⁵ In fact, even a newborn baby's cord blood shows traces of 21 banned pesticides and 200+ other harmful chemicals!

- **Keeps Our Neighbors Healthy:**

Supporting organic farms means fewer people - neighbors or farmers or people in distant countries - coming into contact with harmful chemicals. This benefits the entire nation's and world's health and wellness.

ORGANIC FOOD AND THE ENVIRONMENT

And lastly, the advantages of organic food to the environment. Not only does this protect the planet, but it obviously still protects our health, the health of loved ones, and the health of other living creatures (Blair, Robert, 2012).

A few more advantages of organic food to support the environment:

- **Keeps Plants Healthy:**

No super-insects created by pesticides wiping out farms or wild spaces. Organic plants thrive because they are made stronger with organic practices.

- **Keeps Animals Healthy:**

No sick birds, dying sea or freshwater life, or infertile wildlife from chemical exposure.

- **Creates Healthy Conditions:**

No topsoil erosion, pollution, nutrient depletion, antibiotic-resistant bacteria, or scarred landmarks from clear-cutting and mono-cropping when we work with Nature to provide for our needs.

- **Supports and is Supported By Nature:**

Let's face it. We don't know it all. We may not know all the advantages to organic food (or manufacturing) practices. But we know "organic" has been working for millenia, so why mess with a track record like that when we don't need to?

The most recent systematic literature reviews and meta-analyses have indicated significant and nutritionally-relevant composition differences between organic and conventional foods. This included higher antioxidant, but lower cadmium and pesticide levels in organic crops, and higher omega-3 fatty acids concentrations in organic meat and dairy products. Marcin Barański, Leonidas Rempelos, Per Ole Iversen, and Carlo Leifert (2017). Also, results from a small number of human cohort studies indicate that there are positive associations between organic food consumption and reduced risk/incidence of certain acute diseases (e.g. pre-eclampsia, hypospadias) and obesity. Concerns about potential negative health impacts of organic food consumption (e.g. risks linked to lower iodine levels in organic milk) have also been raised, but are not currently supported by evidence from human cohort studies. However, there is virtually no published data from (1) long-term cohort studies focusing on chronic diseases (e.g. cardiovascular disease, diabetes, cancer, and neurodegenerative conditions) and (2) controlled human dietary intervention studies comparing effects of organic and conventional diets. It is therefore currently not possible to quantify to what extent organic food consumption may affect human health.

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