

Reasons to Buy Organic

Can Organic Foods Really Improve Your Health?

Yes. Organically grown food is your best way of reducing exposure to toxins used in conventional agricultural practices. These toxins include not only pesticides, many of which have been federally classified as potential cancer-causing agents, but also heavy metals such as lead and mercury, and solvents like benzene and toluene. Minimizing exposure to these toxins is of major benefit to your health. Heavy metals damage nerve function, contributing to diseases such as multiple sclerosis, lower IQ, and also block hemoglobin production, causing anemia. Solvents damage white cells, lowering the immune system's ability to resist infections (p. 171).¹

Are Organic Foods Nutritionally Superior to Conventionally Grown Foods?

In addition to significantly lessening your exposure to these health-robbing substances, organically grown foods have been shown to contain substantially higher levels of nutrients such as protein, vitamin C and many minerals (p. 171).¹ A review of 41 studies comparing the nutritional value of organically to conventionally grown fruits, vegetables and grains, also indicates organic crops provide substantially higher levels of many nutrients such as protein, vitamin C and many minerals (p. 127)¹; (p. 198).²

Organic Food	Nutrient Functions	Incidence of Deficiency	Typical Symptoms and Diseases
27% more Vitamin C (p. 127) ¹	Help protect cells from free radical damage; regenerate your Vitamin E supplies; improve Iron absorption; lower your cancer risk (p. 794). ¹	20 to 50% of diets Deficient (p. 201). ²	Bleeding gums, depression, easy bruising, impaired wound healing, irritability, joint pains, loose teeth, malaise, tiredness frequent colds or infections, lung-related problems (p. 200) ² ; (p. 794). ¹
29.3% more Magnesium (p. 127) ¹	Relaxes nerves and muscles; builds and strengthens bones; keeps blood circulating smoothly (p. 764). ¹	75 to 85% of diets deficient; average diet contains 50 to 60% of the RDA (p. 200). ²	Elevated blood pressure, heart attack, anxiety, confusion, hyperactivity, insomnia, nervousness, muscular irritability, restlessness and weakness, imbalanced blood sugar levels, headaches (p. 200) ² ; (p. 764). ¹
21.1% more Iron (p. 127) ¹	Enhance oxygen distribution in the body, keep the immune system healthy, help the body produce energy (p. 762). ¹	The most common mineral deficiency (p. 200). ²	Anemia, confusion, decreased ability to concentrate, headaches, increased susceptibility to infections, depression, dizziness, fatigue and weakness, hair loss, brittle nails, constipation, inflamed tongue, mouth lesions (p. 200) ² ; (p. 762). ¹

How Do Organic Foods Benefit Cellular Health?

DNA: Eating organically grown foods may help to better sustain health since recent test tube and animal research suggests that certain agricultural chemicals used in the conventional method of growing food may have the ability to cause genetic mutations that can lead to the development of cancer. One example is the pentachlorophenol (PCP) that has been found to cause DNA fragmentation in animals (p. 171).¹

Mitochondria (the energy production factories of our cells): Eating organically grown foods may help to better promote cellular health since several agricultural chemicals used in the conventional growing of foods have been shown to have a negative effect on mitochondrial function. These chemicals include paraquat, parathion, dinoseb and 2-4-D; they have been found to affect the mitochondria and cellular energy production in a variety of ways including increasing membrane permeability, which exposes the mitochondria to damaging

free radicals, and inhibiting a process known as coupling that is integral to the efficient production of ATP (the molecule in which energy is held for immediate use in our cells) (p. 171).¹

Cell Membrane: Since certain agricultural chemicals may damage the structure and function of the cellular membrane, eating organically grown foods can help protect cellular health. The insecticide endosulfan and the herbicide paraquat have been shown to oxidize lipid molecules and therefore may damage the phospholipid component of the cellular membrane. In animal studies, pesticides such as chlopyrifos, endrin and fenthion have been shown to overstimulate enzymes involved in chemical signaling, causing imbalance that has been linked to conditions such as atherosclerosis, psoriasis and inflammation (p. 171).¹

Genetically Modified Foods:

1. Organic Foods Production Act states that organic food cannot contain genetically modified ingredients, growth hormones, antibiotics, synthetic fertilizers and pesticides, sewer sludge fertilizers, irradiation and other artificial ingredients.
2. GMO Health Risks: <http://www.responsibletechnology.org/health-risks>
3. 10 Reasons to Avoid GMOs: <http://www.responsibletechnology.org/10-Reasons-to-Avoid-GMOs>
4. Millions Against Monsanto: <http://organicconsumers.org/monsanto/index.cfm>
5. Join the Campaign to End GMOs: <http://www.responsibletechnology.org/take-action/join-the-campaign>
6. Non-GMO Verified Products: <http://www.nongmoproject.org>
7. Non-GMO Shopping Guide: <http://www.nongmoshoppingguide.com>
8. Non-GMO iPhone App: <http://itunes.apple.com/us/app/non-gmo-project-shopping-guide/id359782606?mt=8>
9. Take Action Tool Kit: <http://www.responsibletechnology.org/take-action/action-tool-kit>
10. GMO-Free Schools: <http://www.responsibletechnology.org/take-action/gm-free-schools>
11. GMO-Free Info for Healthcare Providers: <http://www.responsibletechnology.org/healthcare-providers>
12. GMO-Free Churches: <http://newhope360.com/blog/organic-farmer-mission-god>

Web Sites and Phone Numbers for Additional Information on Organic Foods:

- World's Healthiest Foods Web Site: <http://whfoods.com>.
- Consumer's Union, nonprofit publisher of *Consumer Reports* magazine: <http://www.greenerchoices.org>.
- Organic Trade Association, represents the organic industry in U.S.A., Canada & Mexico: <http://www.ota.com>.
- Organic Trade Alliance: <http://www.organic.org>.
- National Organic Program, the federal government's organic regulatory program housed in the United States Department of Agriculture: <http://www.ams.usda.gov/nop/>.
- Organic Research, a website for information about organic regulation worldwide: <http://www.cabi.org>.
- Local Organic Food: <http://www.localharvest.org>.

Phone Numbers for Questions and Comments about Organic Food:

- Organic Trade Association: (413) 774-7511.
- National Organic Program, USDA: (202) 720-3252.

References:

1. Mateljan, G. (2006). *The world's healthiest foods: Essential guide for the healthiest way of eating*. Seattle, WA: George Mateljan Foundation.
2. Pizzorno, ND, J. E. (1998). *Total wellness: Improve your health by understanding and cooperating with your body's natural healing systems*. Rocklin, CA: Prima Health.