



TOP 10 reasons to eat organic

1. Top for taste

Many people buy organic food because they believe it tastes better than non-organic. This could be because organic fruit and vegetables tend to grow more slowly and have a lower water content, which may contribute to the fuller flavour some people experience. A poll in 2005 showed that quality and taste of food are important to more people than low prices.

2. It's healthy

On average, organic food contains higher levels of vitamin C and essential minerals such as calcium, magnesium, iron and chromium as well as cancer-fighting antioxidants. Organic milk is naturally higher in Omega 3 fatty acids, Vitamin E, Vitamin A (Beta Carotene) and certain other antioxidants than non-organic milk.

3. No nasty additives

Only 32 of the 290 food additives approved for use across the EU are permitted in organic food. Amongst the additives banned by the Soil Association are hydrogenated fat, aspartame (artificial sweetener) and monosodium glutamate which have been linked to health problems.

4. Avoids pesticides

The best way of reducing your exposure to potentially harmful pesticides is to eat organically grown food, where their use is avoided. Over 311 pesticides can be routinely used in non organic farming and residues are often present in non-organic food. Over 40% of all non-organic fruit, vegetables and bread tested in 2005 contained pesticides according to the Government's Pesticide Residues Committee. The results for particular fruit and vegetables were much worse, e.g. chemicals were found in all oranges tested, 90% of bread, 72% of grapes, 95% pears.

5. GM-free

Genetically modified (GM) crops and ingredients are not allowed under organic standards. Over a million tons of GM crops are imported to feed non organic livestock that produce much, if not most, of the non organic pork, bacon, milk cheese and other dairy products in our supermarkets.

6. Reliance on drugs removed

Antibiotic additives routinely added to animal food to speed animal growth are linked with bacterial resistance in humans to the same or closely related antibiotics. Soil Association standards ban the routine use of antibiotics.

7. No hidden costs

Compare this with the £120m that tax payers fork out annually to pay for chemicals to be removed from drinking water, mainly as a result of the pesticides used in farming.

8. High standards

Organic food comes from trusted sources. All organic farms and food companies are inspected at least once a year. The standards for organic food are laid down in European law.

9. Care for animals

No system of farming has higher levels of animal welfare standards than organic farms working to Soil Association standards. Compassion in World Farming believes that the Soil Association's welfare standards are leaders in the field. (Joyce d'Silva, Director, Compassion in World Farming.)

10. Good for wildlife and the environment

Overall organic farming supports more farmland wildlife than non-organic farming. The UK government has said that it is better for wildlife, causes lower pollution from sprays, produces less carbon dioxide - the main global warming gas - and less dangerous wastes.