

# What Organic Means to Your Health & Nutrition

Organic food is grown without the use of harmful, petroleum-based pesticides and chemicals. Organic farmers build soil fertility and tilth, which in turn, yields healthier, more nutritional food. When you purchase organic foods, you support farmers that are working hard to make agriculture better for the environment and food better for you.

## Nutritious Facts

- Organically grown fruits, vegetables, and grains, contain significantly higher levels of many nutrients including: 27% more vitamin C, 21.1% more iron, 29.3% more magnesium, and 13.6% more phosphorus.
- Five servings of organic vegetables provide the recommended daily intake of vitamin C for men and women, while their conventional-grown counterparts do not. Some conventionally grown oranges have been found to contain NO vitamin C! (Sally Fallon's book, Nourishing Traditions).
- Organically produced food contains a higher antioxidant level and lower mycotoxin level.

## Organic Reduces Health Risks

- Many EPA-approved pesticides were registered long before extensive research linked these chemicals to cancer and other diseases.
- The EPA now considers 60% of all herbicides, 90% of all fungicides, and 30% of all insecticides carcinogenic. (Full Circle Farms)
- Dramatic deficits in brain function are seen in children living in rural areas due to long-term exposure to agricultural chemicals, compared with children not similarly exposed, a 1998 study by Environmental Health Perspectives finds.
- Over two-dozen crops are sprayed with chlorpyrifos, making it the most commonly used pesticide in the US. A study by the Organic Center shows that exposure to chlorpyrifos among infants and children can cause significant mental and motor skill developmental delays and adverse impacts on neurological development. By age three the highly exposed children were more likely to score in the clinical range for ADHD and "Pervasive Developmental Disorder" (PDD) problems.
- A team based at the University of Washington in Seattle published an important study in 2005 showing that in school-age children, a diet composed of predominantly organic food "...provides a dramatic and immediate protective effect against exposures to organophosphorous (OP) pesticides."

## Eat organic as much as possible

Organic food is produced without the use of harmful chemical pesticides that can remain on or in food. It's especially important to buy organically grown peaches, strawberries, apples, spinach, nectarines, celery, pears, cherries, potatoes, bell peppers and raspberries. These crops typically receive several applications of pesticides and can contain significant pesticide residues.

## Shop Organic

- Ask or look to see where the food was grown? The longer it spends on a truck, plane or boat to get to you, the more nutritional value is lost.
- Read the tags and labels on the produce you buy. 7 digit PLU #'s that start with "9" indicate organics. "4" indicates conventional.
- Go to a farmers' market and get to know the hands that feed you. Ask a farmer about their soil fertility management program. Healthy soils = nutritious food.
- Purchase organic and pasture fed meats, as toxins are concentrated in an animal's skin and fat.
- Choose lean meats and low-fat dairy products if you cannot purchase organic, grass fed meat.

Do not use pesticides to kill weeds, insects, or other pests in or around the home. A very significant source of pesticides entering Puget Sound aren't from farmers but in fact come from what home owners apply to their homes and yards.

*Source: The Organic Center unless otherwise noted.*