

# Facts about Organic food

## Definition of “Organic”

Organic does not only refer to foods that are free from pesticides, preservatives, hormones, and antibiotics; the term “organic” also defines how the food is produced. Organic farmers use natural fertilizers and soils free from petroleum based substances and other harsh chemicals.

## Labeling

Food with an organic label must be certified under the National Organic Program through the United States Department of Agriculture. Look for a sticker with the USDA organic seal on the produce.



## Is Going Organic Healthier?

There is no current evidence that going organic is healthier. However, a study from The Journal of Agricultural and Food chemistry did find that organic tomatoes have nearly twice as much flavonoids as non-organic tomatoes. Flavonoids are a category of antioxidants that have been linked to reducing the risk of heart disease. This is a topic that is still being studied.

## Pesticide Free

By going organic your body benefits from eating foods that are free from pesticides and chemicals. Certain foods that are high in pesticides are : apples, strawberries, peaches, spinach, and lettuce. If you can, these foods are best purchased organic.

## Foods That Are Low in Pesticide Residue

Be a smart shopper and choose produce that is lower in pesticide residue; you can save money by only buying a few items that are organic. The Environmental Working Group put together a list called the Clean Fifteen, which lists foods that are naturally lower in pesticides. Items from that list include onions, sweet corn, pineapples, avocados, cabbage, sweet peas, eggplant, kiwi, cantaloupe, sweet potatoes, and mushrooms.

## Cutting the Cost

Here are a few tips to save while going organic :

- Only buy a few organic items by replacing produce that is high in pesticides with the organic option.
- Choose produce that is lower in pesticide residue, such as those from the “Clean Fifth”.
- Buy locally