
10 Reasons For Organic

1. 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.

2. No nasty additives

Organic food doesn't contain food additives which can cause health problems such as heart disease, osteoporosis, migraines and hyperactivity. Amongst the additives banned by the Soil Association are hydrogenated fat, aspartame (artificial sweetener) and monosodium glutamate.

3. Avoids pesticides

Over 400 chemical pesticides are routinely used in conventional farming and residues are often present in non-organic food. The UK government has recently found high levels of pesticide residues in baby food, spinach, dried fruit, bread, apples, celery, and chips.

4. No GM

Genetically modified (GM) crops and ingredients are not allowed under organic standards.

5. Reliance on drugs removed

There is growing concern about the high use of antibiotics on farm animals and the possible effects on human health. Soil Association standards prohibit the routine use of antibiotics.

6. No hidden costs

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

7. 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.

8. Care for animals

Animal welfare is taken very seriously under organic standards. The benefits of the organic approach are acknowledged by animal welfare organisations such as Compassion in World Farming as well as the UK government.

9. Good for wildlife and the environment

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.

10. Top for taste

Many people prefer organic food because they say it tastes better. A number of top chefs choose organic, and every year many are involved in the Soil Association's Organic Food Awards.

Not Just Food:

Organic is no longer restricted to food, but also includes

- Clothing
- Cosmetics
- Health products
- Timber and wood products
- Compost and other gardening supplies.

Organic certification also applies to restaurants, bars, holiday accommodation and spas, as well as shops.

What is the Soil Association Mark?

The Soil Association organic symbol is the UK's largest and most recognisable trademark for organic produce.

Wherever you see it you can be sure that the food you have purchased has been produced and processed to strict and rigorous animal welfare and environmental standards



Organic Farming:

In this drive to be as efficient as possible they used chemicals to make plants grow and kill pests and diseases.

Farmers tended to specialise - growing a single crop such as wheat.

Such farming aims to be efficient, but growing one crop year after year with chemicals has had a damaging effect on the countryside and, evidence now suggests, on our health as well.

Organic farming is a holistic approach.

Organic farming protects and improves soil by:

- Restricting artificial chemicals
- Adding nutrients through composted farm manure and green waste
- Establishing crop rotation (because different crops put in or take out different nutrients and it is important to balance crop growing with building soil fertility)
- Encouraging hedgerows, windbreaks and smaller fields to reduce problems of soil erosion
- Planting cover crops to protect the soil from wind, rain and nutrient loss

Some carefully selected pesticides can be used when necessary. These have all been assessed for their impact on human health, the environment and wildlife - derris, sulphur, soft soap and copper could potentially be used.

Animal Welfare:

Organic standards put animal welfare first. Unlike the term 'free range', organic standards cover a wide range of issues, as well as requiring that animals have access to range freely. These issues include living conditions, food quality, preventing the routine use of antibiotics and hormones, and even transport and slaughter.

Organic farm animals:

- Must have access to fields (when weather and ground conditions permit) and are truly free range
- Must have plenty of space - which helps to reduce stress and disease
- Must be fed a diet that is as natural as possible and free from genetically modified organisms (GMOs)
- Must only be given drugs to treat an illness
- Cannot be given hormones which make them grow more quickly or make them more productive.

Food Labels

As well as the soil association mark above there are other food labels:



The LEAF Marque is about Linking Environment and Farming. It is one of the approaches to farm management that gives you the choice to buy affordable food produced by farmers who are committed to improving the environment for the benefit of wildlife and the countryside.



The Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) has set an internationally recognised environmental standard for sustainable and well-managed fisheries. It is based on healthy fish stocks, a thriving marine environment and effective management. The MSC logo appears on seafood in supermarkets and restaurants.

Organic farming and the environment

There is an information sheet from the soil association that outlines in more detail how the organic farming can deliver environmental benefits.

For the full version please visit the soil association website information centre

www.soilassociation.org/web/sa/saweb.nsf/89d058cc4dbeb16d80256a73005a2866/acadc975111d17ad80256e230053f8d31?OpenDocument

The above information has been taken from the soil association website, www.soilassociation.org, and www.whyorganic.org.

Organic Facts

Did you know it has been reported that...

- Many fruit and vegetables contain a cocktail of pesticides.
- 60% of what we put on our skin is absorbed into our bodies.
- Some chemicals can remain in our bodies for many years.
- Up to 500 chemicals are routinely used in conventional farming.
- It takes five years for a farm to convert to organic.
- Chemicals such as Lindane and DDT although banned in the UK are still used in other countries.
- Lindane and DDT are linked with cancer
- Traces of banned chemicals have been found in imported food.
- Antibiotics used on animals can be absorbed when you eat the meat.
- There has been a 50% rise in Soya allergies since the imports of GM Soya started