

Why Should We Choose Organic?

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Choosing organic products may offer superior health benefits and safety than conventional products. Organic farmers use methods that grow plants with lower levels of nitrogen and nitrate. High levels of these compounds have been linked to the development of cancer in animals (though research is not yet conclusive of the effects on human health). It has also been shown that plants with lower levels of nitrogen tend to have higher amounts of antioxidants!

In addition, organic products are almost always a safer option and significantly reduce your exposure to pesticide residue. Conventional products contain levels of pesticides and hormones that may pose health risks. New studies have shown that certain pesticides are linked to ADHD, obesity, diabetes, and learning disorders; but at this time there is no concrete evidence.

Choosing organic in the supermarket

Sometimes labels in the supermarket can be confusing. We see "all-natural", "free-range", or "hormone-free" and immediately think organic. These terms are still important, but are not synonymous with organic. There are also different levels of organic material in products. Here is a quick guide to interpreting the term "organic" on food labels:

- **"100 percent organic"**: Products that are completely organic or made of all organic ingredients.
- **"Organic"**: Products that contain at least 95 percent organically produced ingredients. The other 5 percent are ingredients that aren't available in organic form or that appear on an approved list.
- **"Made with organic ingredients"**: Products that contain at least 70 percent organic ingredients. The organic seal cannot be used on these packages.

Whether you choose organic or not, here are some things to consider:

- Buy in season and local produce whenever possible
- Reduce the amount of pesticides on food by
- Washing and scrubbing all produce under running water
- Peeling fruits and vegetables (*just take note this reduces the fiber and vitamin content*)
- Discarding the outer leaves of leafy vegetables
- Trimming visible fat and skin from meat and poultry (*pesticide residue can collect in the fat*)



