

Why Buy Organic?



1. Protect Future Generations: "We have not inherited the Earth from our fathers. We are borrowing it from our children" - Lester Brown. The average child receives four times more exposure than an adult to at least eight widely used cancer-causing pesticides in food. The food choices you make now will impact your child's health in the future.

2. Prevent Soil Erosion: The Soil Conservation Service estimates that more than 3 billion tons of topsoil are eroded from the United States croplands each year. That means soil is eroding seven times faster than it is being built up naturally. Soil is the foundation of the food chain in organic farming. But in conventional farming the soil is used more as a medium for holding plants in a vertical position so they can be chemically fertilized. As a result, American farms are suffering from the worst soil erosion in history.

3. Protect Water Quality: Water makes up two-thirds of our body mass and covers three-fourths of the planet. Despite its importance, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimates pesticides - some cancer causing - contaminate the groundwater in 38 states, polluting the primary source of drinking water for more than half the country's population.

4. Save Energy: American farms have changed drastically in the last three generations, from family-based small businesses dependant on human energy, to large-scale factory farms highly dependant on fossil fuels and other high inputs. Modern farming uses more petroleum than any other single industry, consuming 12 percent of the country's total energy supply. More energy is now used to produce synthetic fertilizers than to till, cultivate and harvest all the crops in the United States.

5. Keep Chemicals off Your Plate: Many pesticides approved for use by the EPA were registered long before extensive research linking these chemicals to cancer and other diseases had been established. Now the EPA considers that 60 percent of all herbicides, 90 percent of all fungicides and 30 percent of all insecticides are carcinogenic. The bottom line is that pesticides are poisons designed to kill living organisms and can also be harmful to humans. In addition to cancer, pesticides are implicated in birth defects, nerve damage, and genetic mutation.

6. Protect Farm Worker Health: A National Cancer Institute study found that farmers exposed to herbicides had a cancer risk six times greater than non-farmers. In California, reported pesticide

poisoning among farm workers suffer the highest rates of occupational illness in the state. Farm worker health is also a serious problem in developing nations, where pesticide use is poorly regulated. An estimated 1 million people are poisoned annually by pesticides.

7. Help Small Farmers: Although more and more large scale farms are making the conversion to organic practices, most organic farms are small, independently owned and operated family farms of less than 100 acres. It's estimated that the United States has lost more than 650,000 family farms in the past decade.

8. Support a True Economy: Although organic foods might seem more expensive than conventional foods, conventional food prices do not reflect hidden cost born by taxpayers, including many billions in federal subsidies every year. Other hidden costs include pesticide regulation and testing, hazardous waste disposal and clean-up, and environmental damage.

9. Promote Biodiversity: Mono-cropping is the practice of planting large plots of land with the same crop year after year. While this approach tripled farm production between 1950 and 1970, the lack of natural diversity of plant life has left the soil lacking in natural minerals and nutrients. To replace these nutrients, chemical fertilizers are used, often in increasing amounts. Single crops are also much more susceptible to pests, making farmers more reliant on pesticides. Despite a tenfold increase in the use of pesticides between 1947 and 1974, crop losses due to insects have doubled - partly because many insect pests have become resistant to certain pesticides. Sustainable farming methods include proper crop rotation.

10. Taste Better Flavor in Your Food: There's a good reason why many chefs use organic foods in their recipes- they taste better! Organic farming starts with the nourishment of the soil which eventually leads to the nourishment of the plant and, ultimately, our plates.

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