

## **Ten Reasons Why You Should Eat Organic Food**

### **1. Protect Future Generation**

Children receive four times the exposure than an adult to at least eight widely used cancer-causing pesticides in food. The food choice you make now will impact your child's health in the future.

### **2. Prevent Soil Erosion**

The Soil Conservation Service Estimates that more than three billion tons of topsoil are eroded from the United States croplands each year. That means soil is eroding seven times faster than it is 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.

### **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 ground water in 38 states, polluting the primary source of drinking water for more than half the country's population.

### **4. Save Energy**

Modern farming methods 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. Organic farming is still mainly based on labor-intensive practices and organic produce also tends to travel a shorter distance from the farm to your plate.

### **5. Keep Chemicals off Your Plate**

Many pesticides approved for use by the EPA were registered before extensive research linking these chemicals to cancer and other diseases had been established. Now the EPA considers that 60% of all herbicides, 90% of all fungicides and 30% insecticides are carcinogenic. A 1987 National Academy of Sciences report estimate that pesticides might cause an extra 1.4 million cancer cases among Americans over their lifetimes.

### **6. Protect Farm Workers Health**

A National Cancer Institute study found that farmers exposed to herbicides had a greater factor of six, than non-farmers of contracting cancer. Farm workers health also is a serious problem in developing nations, where pesticides can be poorly regulated. Several of the pesticides banned from use in the United States are still manufactured here for export to other countries.

### **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.

### **8. Support a True Economy**

Although organic food might seem more expensive than conventional foods, conventional food prices do not reflect hidden cost borne by taxpayers, including nearly \$74 billion in federal subsidies in 1988. 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. This approach increased farm production, but the lack of natural diversity of plant life has left the soil lacking in natural minerals and nutrients. To replace the nutrients, chemical fertilizers are used, often in increasing amounts.

### **10. Taste Better Flavor**

There's a good reason many chefs use organic foods in their recipes. They taste better. Organic farming starts with the nutrients of the soil which eventually leads to the nourishment of the plant and ultimately our palates.

*Excerpted from an article by Sylvia Tawse, Organic Times, Spring 1992*



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