

Making the switch to organic foods

Buying organic is a delicious way to bring healthy eating and support for the environment into your kitchen. The key principle behind organic food is healthy soil. By acting as responsible stewards of their land, organic farmers create a cycle of healthy soil, growing healthy food for healthier people. (We think it tastes better, too.)

Conventional farming practices extract a higher cost from our environment through contamination caused by pesticides polluting our air, soil and water. Fertilizers can weaken the soil with synthetic nutrients. Herbicides and pesticides harm more than the targeted pests, as these harsh chemicals run off into the soil and water supply. Farmers and farm workers who apply these chemical adjuncts could also risk their own long-term health. Efforts to clean up these areas often come at a hidden cost to taxpayers. The loss of natural habitats for beneficial insects and wildlife is inestimable.

Many pesticides can penetrate the peel, and others are absorbed in the plant's roots. Washing and peeling may only remove up to 25 percent of pesticide residues.

Resources

Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy
2105 1st Ave. S., Minneapolis, MN 55404
612-870-3424 | www.iatp.org

Environmental Working Group
1436 U Street NW, Suite 100,
Washington, DC 20009
info@ewg.org | www.ewg.org

Food Alliance Midwest
400 Selby Ave., Suite Y
St. Paul, MN 55102
651-265-3682 | www.cdfus.coop

Midwest Organic Services Association
P.O. Box 821, Viroqua, WI 54665
608-635-2526 | mosa@mosaorganic.org
www.mosaorganic.org

Organic Trade Association
P.O. Box 547, Greenfield, MA 01301
413-774-7511 | info@ota.com | www.ota.com

United States Department of Agriculture
Washington, DC 20250
www.usda.gov

Provided by your food co-op

FLORIDA

Ever'man Natural Foods
315 W. Garden St., Pensacola
New Leaf Market
1235 Apalachee Pkwy, Tallahassee

GEORGIA

Life Grocery & Cafe
1453 Roswell Rd., Marietta
Sevananda Natural Foods Market
467 Moreland Ave. N.E., Atlanta
KENTUCKY
Good Foods Market & Cafe
455-D Southland Dr., Lexington

MAINE

Blue Hill Co-op Community Market & Cafe
4 Ellsworth Rd., Blue Hill
Rising Tide Community Market
323 Main St., Damariscotta

MARYLAND

Silver Spring Co-op
8309 Grubb, Silver Spring
Takoma Park Co-op
201 Ethan Allen, Takoma Park
The Common Market
5728 Unit B-1 Buckeystown Pike, Frederick

MASSACHUSETTS

Berkshire Co-op Market
42 Bridge St., Great Barrington
Green Fields Market
144 Main St., Greenfield
Harvest Co-op Markets
581 Mass Ave., Cambridge
57 South St., Jamaica Plain
McCusker's Market
3 State St., Shelburne Falls
River Valley Market
330 North King St., Northampton

Wild Oats Co-op Market
320 Main St., Williamstown

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Concord Cooperative Market
24 South Main St., Concord
Hanover Co-op Food Store
45 South Park St., Hanover
Hanover Co-op Market
43 Lyme Rd., Hanover

Kearsarge Cooperative Grocer
52 Newport Rd., New London

Lebanon Co-op Food Store
12 Centerra Resource Park, Lebanon

NEW YORK

Abundance Cooperative Market
62 Marshall St., Rochester
Flatbush Food Cooperative
1415 Cortelyou Rd., Brooklyn
GreenStar Cooperative Market
215 N. Cayuga St., Ithaca
701 W. Buffalo St., Ithaca

Honest Weight Food Co-op, Inc.
484 Central Ave., Albany

Hungry Hollow Co-op
841 Chestnut Ridge Rd., Chestnut Ridge
Lexington Cooperative Market
807 Elmwood Ave., Buffalo

Syracuse Real Food Co-op
618 Kensington Rd., Syracuse

NORTH CAROLINA

Chatham Marketplace
480 Hillsboro St., Pittsboro
Deep Roots Market
3728 Spring Garden St., Greensboro
French Broad Food Co-op
90 Bitmore Ave., Asheville

Hendersonville Community Co-op
715 Old Spartanburg Hwy., Hendersonville

Tidal Creek Cooperative Food Market
5329 Oleander Dr., Ste. 100, Wilmington

Weaver Street Market
101 E. Weaver St., Carrboro
716 Market St., Chapel Hill
228 South Churton St., Hillsborough

PENNSYLVANIA

East End Food Co-op
7516 Meade St., Pittsburgh
Weavers Way Co-op
559 Carpenter Ln., Philadelphia
2129 72nd Ave., Philadelphia

Whole Foods Cooperative
1341 West 26th St., Erie

TENNESSEE

Three Rivers Market
937 North Broadway, Knoxville

VERMONT

Brattleboro Food Co-op
2 Main St., Brattleboro
City Market/Onion River Co-op
82 S. Winooski Ave., Burlington

Hunger Mountain Co-op
623 Stone Cutters Way, Montpelier

Middlebury Natural Foods Co-op
9 Washington St., Middlebury

Putney Food Co-op
8 Carol Brown Way, Putney

Springfield Food Co-op
335 River St. (Rt. 106), Springfield

Co-op Food Store
209 Maple St., White River Junction

Upper Valley Food Co-op
193 N. Main St., White River Junction

VIRGINIA

Roanoke Natural Foods Co-op
1319 Grandin Road S.W., Roanoke

ALL ABOUT

Organic Foods



www.strongertogether.coop

Printed on elemental chlorine-free, 10% post-consumer recycled paper using soy ink.

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stronger together

Go organic!

If you're making the switch to organic foods, first explore the foods you eat most often while considering your budget and lifestyle. Do you eat fresh fruit in the morning? Try in-season organic fruit for breakfast. Do you drink coffee? Try organic varieties. Eat a lot of salads for lunch? Give the organic lettuces and greens a go. We think that you'll taste the difference and realize how easy it is to make the switch.

While prices of organic foods might seem a little higher to some shoppers, we support paying a premium price in the interest of giving organic farmers a fair return on their investment. Organic certification is an expense to farmers that benefits consumers' right to know how their food was grown. We encourage shoppers to "go organic" in support of such ecologically minded farmers (and so that you can continue to enjoy the great flavor of organic foods).

Organic certification of retailers

Any retailer selling organic food must be prepared to conform to the USDA Organic Food and Production Act, although becoming a certified organic retailer is optional. Although certification is not required, we support the organic certification of our retail stores because it maintains a chain of integrity from certified farms to certified warehouses to certified grocers.

Co-ops are working together to help systematically certify our stores as efficiently as possible. Ask your local co-op's representative for information about their certified departments.



Organic retailer certification is based on site inspections by the organic certifying agency. These inspections include a review of our organic producers, processors, handlers, manufacturers and retailers. A certified organic retailer must conform to the following:

- Adhere to a comprehensive plan to protect organic products from contamination and commingling with non-organic product and non-organic cleaning supplies.
- Keep documentation that tracks connections between the retailer and organic suppliers for five years.
- Display organic product with proper and accurate signage.
- Keep organic certificates on file for farms from whom the store buys directly.
- Submit to an annual review of organic certification.

Organically grown food is produced without the use of synthetic pesticides, chemicals and fertilizers. Organic agricultural practices promote sustainable growing methods that nurture the soil, crops and animals, creating a beneficial habitat for all living things.



National organic standards for certified organic products

All foods labeled and sold as "organic" must be certified by the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) accredited independent certifying agencies.

Organic farming and certified products are defined by the USDA Organic Foods Production Act as follows:

- Three years with no application of prohibited materials (no synthetic fertilizers, pesticides, or GMOs) prior to certification.
- No use of prohibited substances while certified; no sewage sludge; no irradiation.
- Proactive soil building, conservation, manure management, and crop rotation systems.
- Egg-laying chickens must have access to the outdoors, no cages, and a vegetarian diet.
- Cattle must derive 30 percent of their feed from pasture.
- No antibiotics or hormones used.
- 100 percent organic feed.
- Organic management from birth or hatching.
- No commingling or contamination of organic products during processing, and mandatory recordkeeping for all operations.

THE DIRTY DOZEN

The dozen produce items most contaminated with pesticides:

1. Peaches
2. Apples
3. Bell pepper
4. Celery
5. Nectarines
6. Strawberries
7. Cherries
8. Pears
9. Grapes (imported)
10. Spinach
11. Lettuce
12. Potatoes

LABELING OF PRODUCTS

USDA label requirements on all organic products follows four basic labeling categories.

LABEL CLAIM	LABEL PARAMETERS
"100% Organic"	100% organic ingredients.
"Organic"	At least 95% organic ingredients.
"Made with Organic (specified ingredients or food groups)" on label	At least 70–95% organic ingredients.
None	Less than 70% organic ingredients.

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