



Organic Foods – The Facts

Organic foods are grown by farmers that:

- use renewable resources such as natural fertilizers
- use farming methods that emphasize soil and water conservation and improving the environment such as crop rotation, tillage, cover crops, etc.

Organic meat, poultry, eggs, and dairy products come from animals that are given...

- no antibiotics
- no growth hormones

Organic produce is produced without using...

- most conventional pesticides
- fertilizers made with synthetic ingredients or sewage sludge
- bioengineering
- ionizing radiation



How can I tell organically produced food from conventionally produced food?

- Look at package labels
- Look for signs in store



The USDA seal is optional, but it tells consumers that a product is at least 95% organic.

On single ingredient food...

Look for the word "organic" and a small sticker version of the *USDA Organic* seal on vegetables or pieces of fruit, or they may appear on the sign above the organic produce display. The word "organic" and the seal may also appear on packages of meat, cartons of milk or eggs, cheese, and other single-ingredient foods.

On foods with more than one ingredient...

Labels can only bear the seal if at least 95% of the ingredients are organic. If 70 to 95% of the ingredients are organic, it can say, "made with organic...(and list the specific organic ingredients.) For foods with less than 70% organic ingredients, these ingredients can only be listed on the ingredient label with no claim on the front package.

Are organic products better for me?

- Synthetic pesticides are not allowed, but there is some evidence that plants produce more natural toxins as protection.
- Some say organic products are more nutritious, but several scientific studies have determined that there is not much difference.
- Animals produced organically have the potential to possess higher rates of bacterial contamination than those produced conventionally since organic production generally prohibits antibiotic use.

**It is up to each consumer to decide
if using organic products is right for them.**



The University of Georgia and Ft. Valley State University, the U.S. Department of Agriculture and counties of the state cooperating. The University of Georgia Cooperative Extension and the Colleges of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences & Family and Consumer Sciences offer educational programs, assistance and materials to all people without regard to race, color, national origin, age, sex or disability.

**An Equal Opportunity Employer/Affirmative Action Organization
Committed to a Diverse Work Force**

Bulletin #FDNS-E-8961

Date July 2007

Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, The University of Georgia Colleges of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences and Family and Consumer Sciences and the U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating.

Dr. Scott Angle, Dean and Director