

Don't panic! It's organic!

the absolutely fabulous guide to organic food

What's the deal on organic produce?

There has recently been a lot written in the press about the pros and cons of organic produce, but what actually are the benefits to us and the environment?



It's healthier

It contains higher levels of vitamins and minerals such as vitamin C, calcium, magnesium and cancer fighting antioxidants.



No nasty additives

Organic food contains none of the banned substances such as hydrogenated fat, monosodium glutamate and aspartame. Additives like these are known to cause heart disease, migraines, osteoporosis and hyperactivity.



Avoids pesticides

Conventional farming routinely uses more than 400 chemicals to cultivate produce, and high residues are often found in non organic foods.



No GM

Genetically Modified ingredients (Frankenstein foods, to you and me) are not allowed under organic standards to be put into organic food products.



No drugs

Organic standards prohibit the routine use of antibiotics, drugs, wormers and growth hormones on animals.



No hidden costs

If you think you might be paying a little extra, just compare it with the fact that we already bear the cost of around £120m a year hidden in taxes just to remove chemicals and pesticides that conventional farming leaves in our drinking water!



High Standards

All organic farms and food companies are inspected at least once a year to ensure they meet the standards laid down by European law, they also spot check as well.

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Animal Welfare

The benefits of animal care under organic standards in Britain are acknowledged by the UK Government and organisations such as Compassion in World Farming (www.ciwf.org.uk).



Good for the environment and wildlife

It causes lower pollution as it avoids using sprays and produces less carbon dioxide (the global warming gas) and less dangerous wastes. Organic farming uses crop rotation methods which keeps the soil more fertile and healthier than conventional farming methods.



Taste!

It really does taste better; many top chefs choose organic and many are involved in the Soil Association's food awards.



Remember, that organic standards only define a system of farming; they say nothing about packaging, varieties, the energy used in transport, or employment ethics. Most of the organic food on most supermarket shelves comes from a very intensive, commercially driven and very widely distributed system; which is why to get the freshest possible produce, fruit and vegetable box delivery schemes are a better option.



Local farms and farmers markets are often a great source of organic produce and the words 'free range', 'farm assured', 'hormone free', 'GM free', 'natural', or something similar appear on many products; this may not mean that they are organic, so always check that they are Soil Association Accredited or that the products carry the Soil Association logo to be certain.



For more information about the Soil Association, go to www.soilassociation.org
The Soil Association is the main Organic regulatory body in the U.K., and has probably the highest and most comprehensive set of standards in the world! Most companies using its accreditation often exceed the minimum requirements laid down by them in order to carry their certification