



The Facts about Organic Produce

What does organic mean?

Organic produce is grown without the use of pesticides or synthetic fertilizers. Organic farming is based on farming methods that restore, maintain and enhance ecological harmony. Below are common labels seen at the store and what they mean:

- *100% Organic* = 100% organic ingredients
- *Organic* = At least 95% organic ingredients
- *Made With Organic Ingredients* = 70% organic ingredients with strict rules on the other 30%. It may not use the organic seal.



Products that are 95% organic get this label

Which is healthier?

Organic produce and conventional produce have the same nutrient value and the USDA does not claim that organic products are safer or better for you. Since one is not better for your body than the other, it is more important to focus on getting the right amount of fruits and vegetables a day. This means 2–4 servings of fruits and 3–5 servings of vegetables for an adult.



Why does organic cost more?

Organic produce costs 10%–40% more than conventional produce for these reasons:

- Costly farming methods
- Tight government rules
- Lower crop yields
- Labor intensive crops

What about pesticides?

Conventional growers use pesticides to protect their crops from molds, insects and disease. When farmers spray pesticides, they can leave residue on produce. Some people buy organic food to avoid this.

Most experts agree, though, that the amount of pesticides found on fruits and vegetables do not pose a health risk. The USDA ensures the safety of these products.

The Bottom Line

It's a personal choice. Organic produce is not healthier than conventional produce, and they have the same amount of nutrients. Also, the pesticide level on produce is safe. So, when buying produce, it is not an issue of which is better for you; it is more about lifestyle choices and personal values about pesticides, cost and the other issues about organics.

Buying Produce

Focus on getting the right amount of fruits and vegetables each day rather than worrying about buying organic or conventional produce.



Tips for Buying Produce

1. Wash ALL fruits and vegetables with water.
2. Find a balance between organic and conventional and aim to eat 2–3 servings of fruits and 4–5 servings of vegetables each day, whether they are organic or not.
3. Buy according to price. Usually organic costs more, but there may be times when there are sales on organics making them the cheaper product.
4. Buy based on what is in season. Both organic and conventional produce are going to be priced cheaper when they are in season and you will get a higher quality product.



What's in Season?

This guide shows when fruits and vegetables are in season. Buying in season will not only lower your costs, but it will also give you a better tasting product!

Winter	Spring	Summer	Fall	All Year
Apples	Asparagus	Apricot	Spinach	Bananas
Avocado	Peas	Berries	Beans	Lemons
Brussels Sprouts	Peppers	Melon	Cabbage	Celery
Potatoes	Strawberries	Broccoli	Tomatoes	Eggplant
Winter Squash	Beets	Peaches	Cucumber	Mushrooms
Kale	Rhubarb	Cherries	Cauliflower	Radishes
Leeks	Turnips	Zucchini	Plums	Carrots
Pumpkins	Artichokes	Sweet Corn	Pears	Onions