

Tips At Tech: Organic

- Look for thicker peels. Fruits and vegetables with thicker peels or that must be peeled before eating have a lower pesticide content.
- The lettuce at the Smart Choices outlet is organic, so head over and make yourself a salad!
- You can find organic soy milk at Sam's Place @ Murray, Sam's Place @ Sneed, Sam's Place @ the Student Union Building, Sam's Place @ Wall/Gates and Sam's West on campus. Use it in your coffee or on your cereal!

Fun Facts

- Organic food and beverage sales are expected to reach \$19.7 billion (18% increase from 2006)
- Up to 500 chemicals are routinely used in conventional farming and some of these chemicals can stay in our bodies for many years.
- It takes 5 years for a farm to convert to organic.
- Every day, each of us eats a quarter of a teaspoonful of carcinogens. 99.99% of these are made naturally by all plants to inhibit disease organisms and deter consumption by animals and insects.

References:

What is organic. <http://www.organic.org/>. Accessed 3/10

Organic foods: Are they safer? More nutritious? www.mayoclinic.com. Accessed 3/10

National Organic Program: What is organic? www.ams.usda.gov. Accessed 3/10



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Organic

Good for you. Good for nature.



Smart Choices

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Organic

We pass by it in the produce section and we see the labels around the grocery store, but what does organic mean and why is it so expensive?

Organic foods are grown without added pesticides, fertilizers, antibiotics, or hormones. Some advocates even claim that they are more nutritious as well, but the jury is still out on that one. Since it is more difficult to grow food without the help of fertilizers and pesticides, organic food costs more than conventionally grown food.

Still, organic foods are becoming more and more popular as people are starting to take control of their health, but whether organic foods are healthier than conventional foods is still unknown.

What Does The Label Mean?

To be certified organic, food products must come from farms and processing plants that are certified organic.

To be certified as organic, these farms and processing plants must be inspected by certified government officials to ensure that they are up to USDA organic standards.

These officials make sure that organic methods are used, which includes ensuring that the environment is not contaminated with pesticides and that no fertilizers or non-organic compounds are used.

Foods that abide by these standards can label their food products with the USDA organic label.



Organic Labeling

If you are thinking of making the switch to organic food, it's important to know what organic labeling means and the different types.

- 100% organic - contains all organically grown ingredients except for added salt.
- Organic - must contain at least 95% organic ingredients except for added salt. They must also contain no sulfites, a food preservative.
- Made with organic ingredients - must contain at least 70% organic ingredients except for salt, and must not contain sulfites.

Are Organic Foods Healthier?

Although studies show that minimal amounts of pesticides are not harmful, some experts believe that these pesticides may build up in our bodies, which could lead to problems in the future.

Organic food advocates also claim that organic foods are more nutritious than conventional, but there is no evidence to suggest that this is the case.

Although it is not evident whether organic foods are more nutritious, organic farming is better for animals and the environment.

Why Go Organic?

There are many reasons to go organic, regardless of whether organic foods are healthier or not. Buying organic food can help to reduce the toxic load of our bodies, water, soil, and air. Supporting agriculture that does not use fertilizers and pesticides can help to build healthier soil, which results in healthier food. Organic food also tastes better and has truer flavor. These alone should be reasons to choose organic foods more often or when possible.

Since organic foods are more difficult to grow, they are often more costly, but are they worth the cost? Many people are starting to believe they are. If you choose to buy organic, it may cost more money, but you are assuring that you are getting the healthiest foods for your body while supporting the health of the environment.

