

Organic Facts

Health impacts

- More than 17,000 pesticide products for agricultural and non-agricultural use are currently on the market. Exposure to these chemicals has been linked to brain/central nervous system disruption, infertility, a multitude of cancers, and even changes to our DNA.
- The average child in America is exposed to five pesticides daily in their food and drinking water.
- Children born to mothers who lived near fields treated with pesticides are 6-fold more likely to be inflicted with autism.
- Switching to an organic diet for just five days virtually eliminates any sign of exposure to organophosphate pesticides among school-age children.
- A nationwide study found elevated risk for several types of childhood cancer for children living near fields treated with pesticides.
- More than 80,000 synthetic chemicals are used in this country and only a few hundred have been tested for safety.
- About 20% of the greenhouse gases we emit come from growing, packaging and shipping the food we eat.

Water pollution

- The common herbicides atrazine and metolachlor readily leach into our lakes, streams and drinking water.
- Our water systems regularly experiences levels of contamination above safe limits immediately following chemical fertilizer applications to farm fields.
- Forty percent of the nitrogen pollution in the Chesapeake Bay is a direct result of its use as a fertilizer on conventional farm fields.
- Environmental/water-source exposure to pesticides during conception is linked to birth defects usually associated with alcohol consumption, smoking, and diabetes.

Nutrient density

- Organic tomatoes had more flavonoids than conventional tomatoes in a study out of California.
- Researchers in the UK estimate eating organic fruits and vegetables could extend life expectancy 17 days for women and 25 days for men due to the increased nutrient levels.

Economic

- Despite more than 70 years of chemical- and petroleum-reliant farming practices, about 1 billion people are malnourished or starving in today's world.
- Organic methods can produce harvests 180 percent larger than chemical farming in communities that struggle to feed themselves.
- We could double global food production in just 10 years using organic practices and other agroecological farming methods.
- Organic farms are 35% more profitable than the average farm.
- 78% of U.S. families are buying organic.
- The organic industry generates over \$31 billion per year.
- There are 17,600 certified organic farms, ranches and businesses nationwide.
- The organic industry is creating jobs at 4 times the national average.
- 94% of organic operations nationwide are planning to maintain or increase employment in 2012.
- Organic is not just food. Over \$2 billion worth of organic fiber, cosmetic, and household products were sold last year.
- There is 4.6 million acres of organic farmland across the U.S.
- In 2011, the organic industry grew by over 9%.

Rodale Institute Farming Systems Trial

- Organic yields match conventional yields.
- Organic outperforms conventional in years of drought.
- Organic farming systems build rather than deplete soil organic matter, making it a more sustainable system.
- Organic farming uses 45% less energy and is more efficient.
- Conventional systems produce 40% more greenhouse gases.
- Organic farming systems are more profitable than conventional.