



ORGANIC FOODS: TO BUY OR NOT TO BUY?

Lately there has been a surge in interest about eating organic foods. However, many people do not know much about organics. With the proper information, consumers will be able to make good choices with regard to organic foods.

What does organic mean?

Organic foods are grown without the use of artificial pesticides, fertilizers, biotechnology, or irradiation. Animals that are raised on organic farms only eat organically-grown feed, are at all times not restrained, and do not receive antibiotics or synthetic growth hormones.

Is organic food healthier than non-organic food?

The answer to this question is unclear. Some food scientists believe that both types of food are equally healthy since they both contain the same vitamins and minerals and since washing foods before eating can reduce or eliminate chemicals on non-organic foods. Others believe that organic foods are healthier since they have fewer chemicals, which means that fewer toxins have a chance of entering the body. Additionally, since organic foods cannot rely on chemicals to kill pests, many of these foods produce their own healthy phytochemicals that serve as pesticides to protect the food from bugs.

What organic foods should I buy?

Only you can decide whether you want to buy organic foods. Thus far, no research studies have shown organic foods to be significantly more nutritious than non-organic foods. However, if you do want to buy organic foods, it is important to know which foods may be the most beneficial. You may want to buy organic for the following 12 foods as they have been found to have the most pesticide residues:

- | | |
|---------------|------------------|
| *Peaches | *Cherries |
| *Apples | *Lettuce |
| *Bell peppers | *Imported grapes |
| *Celery | *Pears |
| *Nectarines | *Spinach |
| *Strawberries | *Potatoes |

By choosing these foods in the organic section, you will reduce the amount of pesticides you eat, which may lead to better health.