



Organic Vs. Non-Organic

Nutrition tips from DuPage Senior Citizens Council and Kane Senior Council

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What Does Organic Mean

The word "organic" describes the way farmers grow and process farming (agricultural) products. These products include fruits, vegetables, grains, dairy products such as milk and cheese, and meat.

Organic farming practices are designed to meet the following goals:

- Improve soil and water quality
- Cut pollution
- Provide safe, healthy places for farm animals (livestock) to live
- Enable natural farm animals' behavior
- Promote a self-sustaining cycle of resources on a farm

Know More About Organic Food

Potential Benefits of Organic Food

- More nutrients
- More healthy Omega-3 fatty acids
- Less pesticide residue
- Lower toxic metal levels
- More antioxidants and flavonoids
- Less Bacteria

Materials or methods not allowed in organic farming include:

- Artificial (synthetic) fertilizers to add nutrients to the soil
- Sewage sludge as fertilizer
- Most synthetic pesticides for pest control
- Using radiation (irradiation) to preserve food or to get rid of disease or pests
- Using genetic technology to change the genetic makeup (genetic engineering) of crops, which can improve disease or pest resistance, or to improve crop harvests
- Antibiotics or growth hormones for farm animals (livestock)

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“The Dirty Dozen”

12 foods “The Dirty Dozen” are most likely to carry pesticide residue and are therefore often recommended as items to buy Organic.

- Strawberries
- Spinach
- Kale, collard greens, and mustard greens
- Nectarines
- Apples
- Grapes
- Bell peppers and hot peppers
- Cherries
- Peaches
- Pears
- Celery
- Tomatoes

“The Clean Fifteen”

15 foods “The Clean Fifteen” are fruits and vegetables not likely affected by pesticides and therefore are considered ok to buy conventional:

- Avocados
- Sweet Corn
- Pineapple
- Cabbage
- Sweet Peas
- Onions
- Asparagus
- Mangos
- Papayas
- Kiwi
- Eggplant
- Honeydew Melon
- Grapefruit
- Cantaloupe
- Cauliflower

Some data shows possible health benefits of organic foods when compared with foods grown using the usual (conventional) process. These studies have shown differences in the food.

But there is limited information to prove how these differences can give potential overall health benefits.

Some might choose to eat an entirely Organic diet whereas others pick and choose what Organic products are most appropriate. Others may avoid Organic food altogether and lead a perfectly healthy life.