

It's National Nutrition Month!

Let's celebrate food!

National Nutrition Month is a nutrition education and information campaign sponsored annually by the American Dietetic Association. The campaign is designed to focus attention on the importance of making informed food choices and developing sound eating and physical activity habits. Initiated in March 1973 as a week-long event, "National Nutrition Week" became a month-long observance in 1980 in response to growing public interest in nutrition.

All month long we'll give you nutritional tips and info. Celiac, diabetes, fiber... This week: 6 Reasons to Buy Organic.

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6 Reasons to Buy Organic

Recent increases in sales of organic foods and products are signs that consumers are making, and paying for, the honest distinction between organic and conventional produced products. Eating organic will spare you needless chemicals while doing something important for the environment.

Under regulation, all products labeled as organic must be produced without hormones, antibiotics, pesticides, synthetic fertilizers (including sewage sludge, irradiation, or genetically modified ingredients). Organic meat must come from animals which eat only organic feed - no hormones or antibiotics - and must have access to the outdoors.

Here's six reasons we feel you should buy organic:

1. **No Pesticides:** If you eat meat and dairy products and can buy only a few organic items, make meat and dairy the ones you buy organic. According to the EPA, the majority of all pesticide residues are found in meat, poultry, and dairy products. Residues from chemicals and pesticides in grass or grain feed are largely stored in an animal's fat. Also, government data shows that certain conventional fruits and vegetables are most likely to carry multiple pesticide residues. It's suggested to buy these items as organic: apples, pears, celery, bell peppers, carrots, grapes, peaches, lettuce, kale, cherries, strawberries, and nectarines.
2. **No Hormones:** Conventional beef produced in the United States is heavily contaminated with natural or synthetic sex hormones, which are associated with an increased risk of reproductive and childhood cancers. When beef cattle enter feedlots, pellets of these hormones are implanted under the ear skin, a process that is repeated at the midpoint of their 100-day pre-slaughter fattening period. These hormones increase carcass weight, adding over \$80 in extra profit per animal. Hormones are also often used in conventional dairy cows to increase milk production. Not only is this unhealthy for the cows (increased mastitis, etc), but increases of breast, colon, and prostate cancers have been seen in people.
3. **No Antibiotics:** It's estimated that more antibiotics are used to treat healthy animals in the US than sick humans. Antibiotics are also used as growth promoters in conventional meat production and often as a substitute for sanitary conditions and thorough inspections. The overuse of antibiotics has contributed to the rise in strains of drug-resistant bacteria.
4. **No Irradiation:** Foods are irradiated to kill microorganisms and to stop the ripening process. Irradiation, however, does decrease the nutrients in food, stop enzyme activity in food, form toxic by-products, and cause chemicals to form completely new, foreign chemicals. Not only is

irradiation just a band-aid for huge problems in our food system, but serious health problems (premature death, cancer, etc) have been seen in laboratory testing.

5. **No Genetically Modified Organisms:** Since 1996 Americans have been eating genetically modified (GM) ingredients in most processed foods. GM plants, such as soybean, corn, cottonseed, and canola have had foreign genes forced into their DNA. The inserted genes come from species, such as bacteria and viruses, that have never been in the human food supply. Genetically modified organisms are not safe. They have been linked to thousands of toxic and allergenic reactions, thousands of sick, sterile, and dead livestock, and damage to virtually every organ and system studied in lab animals.
6. **No Sewage Sludge:** Instead of the compost used in organic farming, convention foods in the US can be grown in a mudlike by-product from sewage-treatment plants. Not only is this disgusting, but the industrial and domestic waste and chemicals survive the sewage-treatment process.