

CONVENTIONAL & ORGANIC FOODS



CONVENTIONAL FOODS

“Conventional” is an agricultural term referring to a method of growing edible plants (such as fruits and vegetables) and other products. May include use of synthetic pesticides or genetic modification.



PROS OF CONVENTIONAL FOODS

- Cost friendly- higher production rates
- Many conventional methods and genetic engineering can actually reduce some environmental impact by reducing amount of farmland needed and increasing output.
- There is very little evidence showing significant differences in nutritional value of organic and conventional foods
- EPA must ensure that all pesticides used on food in the US meets Food Quality Protection Act's stringent safety standards.

*Washing removes 99.9% of pesticides



CONS OF CONVENTIONAL FOODS

- Exposure to synthetic pesticides, antibiotics, and hormones.
- Environmental impact: greenhouse emissions, soil damage, etc
- Unknown long term impacts of GMO



ORGANIC FOODS

Organic plant foods are produced without using synthetic pesticides, synthetic fertilizers or sewage sludge, irradiation, and genetic engineering. Organic meat, poultry, eggs, dairy products come from animals that are given no antibiotics or growth hormones.



PROS OF ORGANIC FOODS

- Limits exposure to pesticides, antibiotics, and hormones.
- (Of note: Organic farming can still use organic/natural pesticides)
- Environmentally friendly- uses less energy, fewer greenhouse emissions, healthier soils, etc.
- Enables more natural livestock behavior (animals must have access to outdoors)



CONS OF ORGANIC FOODS

- Costly- Growing crops without certain pesticides causes more losses from crop damage, more expensive feed for animals, etc.
- Higher risk of spoilage
- There is very little evidence showing significant differences in nutritional value of organic and conventional foods



CONVENTIONAL & ORGANIC FOODS



CONCLUSION

Conclusion: Choosing to buy organic is a personal decision. There is no conclusive scientific evidence that shows organic produced foods are healthier or that GMO/ conventional foods are harmful.

TIPS

- Whether you go organic or conventional, the primary goal should be to eat your 5 servings of fruits and veggies a day.
- Benefits of a healthy diet rich in fruits and vegetables outweigh pesticide exposure
- Check out the “Dirty Dozen” and “Clean 15”- a list of fruits and veggies with the highest/lowest contamination levels released every year by the Environmental Working Group
- Read labels carefully. Just because something is organic does not necessarily mean it is healthy (e.g., cookies, chips, candy)
- Trim fat from meat as some pesticide residues concentrate in animal fat
- Buy local and in season to reduce costs
- Remember to always wash your produce thoroughly to reduce pesticide and fungicide residues- doesn't matter if it's organic or conventional!
- Check out SafeFruitsAndVeggies.com as a resource for science-based information about the safety of organic and conventional produce!

