



The  
Organic  
Center

## Organic Facts Booklet

Thank you for signing up for The Organic Scoop! Our newsletter will keep you up to date on the most cutting edge research of interest to the organic community.

This booklet contains factsheets on the top benefits of choosing organic. Please feel free to share them far and wide!

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# Top twelve Reasons to go Organic



## 1. Organic Is the Only Alternative Delivering Meaningful Health Results.

It is hard to miss the problems arising in the wake of the conventional food system—toxic exposures, birth defects, learning disabilities, obesity, water pollution, unacceptable suffering by farm animals, to name a few. While dozens of labels promise undefined and unverified benefits, the certified organic label stands apart in delivering what people need—nutritious food, grown using methods that minimize the use of toxins while building soil quality and protecting water quality. A growing, dynamic organic food sector will stimulate

valuable changes benefiting all of agriculture, as well as everyone dependent on the American farmer for three square meals a day.

## 2. Reduce Your Exposure to Harmful Synthetic Pesticides.

On average, conventional farmers apply 2-12+ synthetic pesticides to their crops. The average serving of conventionally grown leafy greens, peppers, tree fruits, berries, and grapes contains three to four pesticide residues. Residues of some widely used pesticides may trigger subtle changes in a child's development, and have been linked to a wide range of health problems including ADHD, autism, obesity, and certain forms of cancer.

## 3. Boost the Nutritional Quality of Your Food.

Organic crops are grown in healthy, biologically active soils. While crops on organic farms tend to yield somewhat less per acre and often take longer to grow than crops on conventional farms, plants nurtured by soil on organic farms produce crops that often contain higher levels of important antioxidants, minerals, and vitamins.

## 4. Steer Clear of Unknown Genetically Engineered Food Risks.

Most of today's genetically engineered (GE) foods were approved over 15 years ago during a period when the government was aggressively promoting biotechnology. The prevailing "wisdom" was that GE foods were "substantially equivalent" to conventional foods. We have since learned that even small differences in the genetic makeup of food can lead to unexpected human health risks. Because organic farmers are not allowed to plant GE seeds, nor use GE crop inputs, choosing organic is the only sure way to avoid GE food risks.

## 5. Decrease your Intake of Unnecessary Hormones and Antibiotics.

Most conventional livestock farmers use a combination of growth hormones, drugs, feed supplements, and high-grain diets to push their animals to grow faster, get bigger, and produce more milk and eggs per day. In fact, animals on conventional farms are often pushed so hard that they experience serious reproductive and/or other health problems leading to heavy antibiotic use. The National Organic Program (NOP) rule prohibits the use of virtually all synthetic animal drugs. At the end of the day, healthy animals produce healthier meat, milk and dairy products, and eggs.



## 6. Give Farm Animals a Healthy Measure of Respect.

A significant share of the livestock raised on conventional farms live in crowded, stressful conditions that erode animal health, increase drug dependency, and take away any chance of carrying out natural behaviors. However, the National Organic Program (NOP) rule, states that organically raised animals must have access to the outdoors, including pasture, and ample space to behave naturally.



## 7. Preserve Local Crop Varieties for Future Generations.

Today 50% of all food eaten worldwide comes from four plant species and three animal species. A handful of multi-national corporations own and control over 50% of the world's seed market. Small organic farms often preserve heirloom and rare seed varieties for future generations to enjoy. There are more than 10,900 certified organic farms and ranches in the U.S. and more than 4 million organic acres.\*

## 8. Improve Water Quality and the Safety of Drinking Water.

Rainfall landing on a field of crops will carry a certain amount of soil, nutrients, and chemicals downstream or into underground aquifers. The more chemicals applied per acre, the greater the challenge in preserving water quality. The Dead Zone in the Gulf of Mexico is the most graphic example of the enormous harm caused when farm chemicals flowing off of millions of acres congregate in the mighty Mississippi.

## 9. Promote Biodiversity and Beauty in Rural Landscapes.

Organic farmers not only encourage biodiversity, they depend on it – both above and below the ground. Experienced organic farmers have learned over many decades that combining multiple crops with livestock and other animals is the best way to promote soil health and fully utilize the rainfall and sunlight that falls on an acre in any given year.

## 10. Maintain Healthy Soil.

Healthy soil is the bedrock of all successful organic farms. Hundreds of studies conducted over the last 50 years have compared soil quality on organic versus nearby conventional farms and virtually everyone has concluded that organic management practices, including crop rotation, substantially enhance soil quality, restore nitrogen and organic components, and sequester carbon to help fight global warming.

## 11. Organic Food Delivers More Intense Flavors.

Studies suggest that organic fruits and vegetables more often than not have higher levels of flavor-enhancing nutrients, coupled with lower concentrations of water and sugars. The end result—typically more intense and complex flavors. Plus, no artificial food colors or preservatives are added to any organic foods.

## 12. Create Healthier Working Environments for Farmworkers and Rural Neighbors.

Farming is second only to mining on the list of the most hazardous occupations. Unless great care is exercised, exposures to toxic pesticides, caustic fertilizers, and other chemicals will pose risks for many people working on or living near farms. Organic farmers simply do not use high-risk chemical materials and so workers, and rural neighbors, have one less health risk to worry about.



For more information and sources visit [www.GenerationsofOrganic.org](http://www.GenerationsofOrganic.org) and [www.ota.com/industrysurvey.html](http://www.ota.com/industrysurvey.html)

\* 2010 Organic Industry Survey

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# Top Eight Organic Lunchbox Picks

It's that time of year again – back to school,

which means you'll be doing a lot of shopping—school supplies, clothes and shoes, and those important lunch box items for growing kids. Since most people can't afford to buy organic *all* the time, we teamed up with Green Living Expert, TV Host and Author, [Sara Snow](#) (a greenie mom herself), to create a list of the foods to buy organic when packing lunchboxes. Remember to get your kids involved in the selection of organic foods so they too can learn and, let's face it, because they'll probably end up helping to keep you on your toes!

**1. Peanut Butter** Conventional peanut butter often has added ingredients like sugar, corn syrup, hydrogenated fats and pesticides! None of which are good for your child's health. Organic peanut butter has a short and natural ingredient list, often containing just peanuts and salt. Don't worry, your kids will get used to the lack of added sugars and fats. Of course, you can also find slightly sweetened organic PB, kissed with organic cane sugar.



**2. Apples** are easily transportable, full of antioxidants, delicious and loved by kids and parents. They are also one of the top fruits carrying a heavy pesticide load and posing a major pesticide risk. Choosing organic apples can make a big difference in lowering your family's exposure to toxic synthetic pesticides while increasing your nutrient intake. Plus, studies have shown that organic apples actually taste better than conventional ones. All in all, a better choice!



**3. Jelly or Jam** Look at most fruit jams and jellies at the supermarket and you might be surprised to find the second ingredient is high fructose corn syrup—a processed sweetener nearly always made from genetically modified corn. Look for organic brands with more of the real stuff like cane sugar and actual fruit and free of the nasty stuff like toxic synthetic pesticides and GMOs.

**4. Bread** There has been a surprising discovery lately when it comes to one of our country's staples: wheat. The Organic Center recently found that pesticide residues on wheat pose a great risk. Why? Farmers often spray it on *after* the grain is harvested to keep pests away while the wheat is in storage. But this means that those pesticides are still hanging on when the wheat is milled into flour and baked into breads, cookies and more. Plus, sandwich bread, especially whole wheat, is another one of those foods you wouldn't think has added unwholesome ingredients, but the most common sandwich breads use high fructose corn syrup as a sweetener. Play it safe and look for organic breads for your family's toast and sammies.



**5. Cheese Sticks** Try not to compromise when shopping for your dairy selections. Organic dairy farming prohibits synthetic growth hormones and antibiotics and organic farming practices may increase the nutritional value of the milk. Studies have shown that organic dairy products often have a greater amount of heart-healthy omega-3s compared to conventional dairy products. The increased nutrients come from all the grass cows get to eat while roaming pastures, unlike conventionally raised cows that are often kept in confined feed lots and given processed feed. So tell the conventional milk, cheese and yogurt to moooooove over and make way for the organic stuff.

**6. Celery** The synthetic pesticides used on celery are often some of the most dangerous known developmental toxins. And some of these chemicals are systemic, which means you can't wash or peel them off because they are taken up through the roots of the plant and remain inside the vegetable when you eat them. Pay close attention and buy organic celery for your kids' snacks.

**7. Granola Bars** Most granola bars are loaded with hydrogenated, processed oils (trans fats) and high fructose corn syrup. These artificial ingredients are not permitted in certified organic products. It's as easy as reading labels and buying organic varieties free of these processed ingredients. But if you don't like your options, get a little creative in the kitchen.

**8. Fruit snacks** may have the word fruit in the name, but don't count on fruit even being one of the ingredients. Common brands often contain artificial colors, flavors, petroleum-based waxes and high fructose corn syrup. Yuck! Try to choose brands with natural ingredients and real organic fruit juices. Or simply pack a piece of whole fruit. Your child will thank you...someday, even if not today.



## MORE ABOUT SARA SNOW

*Green Lifestyle Expert / TV Host / Author*

Sara Snow is a Green Lifestyle Expert, TV Host and Author with a passion for healthy living and the creation of a more sustainable planet. As creator and host of GET FRESH WITH SARA SNOW and LIVING FRESH for the Discovery Networks, host of BIG GREEN LIES for the Fine Living Channel, as well as through her book, SARA SNOW'S FRESH LIVING, Sara shares a message of simple, attainable green living. It's the same message she, daughter of organic-foods pioneer, Tim Redmond, grew up with. Sara is also a frequent public speaker and media contributor and sits on the board of directors of the non-profit groups The Organic Center and Holistic Moms Network. Learn more at [www.sarasnow.com](http://www.sarasnow.com)

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# Top Ten Reasons to Trust the Organic Seal

**1. Requirements to Display the USDA Organic Seal**—Since 2002, products that display the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) organic seal are certified by the National Organic Standards Board to meet requirements for organic growing, production, handling, storage, and processing practices.

**2. Assurance of Organic Ingredients**—The USDA organic seal ensures buyers that the products they purchase contain at least 95% organic ingredients. The remaining 5% can be non-organic ingredients like baking soda, salt, non-synthetic flavors and vitamins and minerals.



**3. Pesticide Testing Program**—Farmers must provide a history of every substance applied to their land for the past three years and pass a rigorous pesticide residue testing program. Toxic synthetic pesticides are never allowed in organic production, thus protecting you from harmful exposures.

**4. Animal Health and Welfare**—The organic seal verifies that farmers do not use antibiotics or growth hormones, and that they use 100% organic feed and provide animals with access to the outdoors.

**5. Environmental Health**—Promotion of ecological balance, conservation of biodiversity and the cycling of resources are key components that producers must adhere to in order to comply with USDA organic certification. Toxic synthetic pesticides, synthetic fertilizers and sewage sludge are not allowed on organic farms.

**6. Avoiding GMOs**—Use of GMOs is prohibited in USDA certified organic production. Your best protection against genetically modified ingredients is to buy organic.

**7. External Inspections**—30,000 onsite inspections are conducted by certification agents every year to ensure that farmers and producers are in compliance with USDA organic standards.

**8. Third Party Verified**—Beginning with seed selection and soil management, an accredited third-party certification agency audits farming, processing, handling, storage, and packaging facilities to ensure compliance with organic seal regulations.



**9. Audit of Third Party Certifiers**—Third party certification agencies are routinely reviewed to be certain that their auditing methods are up-to-date and meet national regulations.

**10. Heavy Penalties for Non-compliance**—A fine of up to \$11,000 can be imposed on any person who knowingly sells or labels a product organic that is not produced and handled in accordance with the standards set by USDA.

For more information visit The Organic Center at [www.organic-center.org](http://www.organic-center.org) and [www.generationsoforganic.org](http://www.generationsoforganic.org).

**Information sourced from the following:**

*National Organic Program: [www.ams.usda.gov](http://www.ams.usda.gov)*

*CCOF: [www.ccof.org](http://www.ccof.org)*

*National Organic Standards Board: [www.ams.usda.gov/NOSB](http://www.ams.usda.gov/NOSB)*



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# Top Twelve Tips for a Safer Pregnancy

## Protect your Baby's Health Before Birth

By The Organic Center and Anna Getty, founder of Pregnancy Awareness Month



### 1. Eat organic foods to protect your unborn baby from toxic synthetic pesticide exposure.

A mother's diet plays a major role in determining how many toxic synthetic chemicals and pesticides are present in amniotic fluids; they may predispose a child to reproductive problems.

Pesticides account for one in three

known endocrine disruptors (chemicals that interfere with the hormone system) and may set the stage for autism, ADHD, mental development, and cancer.

### 2. Eat organic food for optimum nutrition.

According to studies on matched pairs, organically grown produce can contain up to 25% higher nutrients than conventionally grown produce.

### 3. Drink filtered water.

Harmful synthetic chemicals have been found in public drinking water. Install a quality kitchen sink water filter for easy use.

### 4. Eat what you want your baby to like—wholesome organic fruits and vegetables.

Babies have more taste buds in the womb than after they are born. Your unborn baby will taste what you eat and pick initial favorite foods.

### 5. Avoid exposure to plastics, particularly ones that contain Bisphenol A (BPA) and come in contact with water and food.

Avoid plastic resin #s 1, 3, 6, and 7. Safer choices are #s 2, 4, and 5. Or instead, use stainless steel or glass re-usable containers and bottles.

### 6. Take off your shoes in your home to reduce pesticides, lead, and animal fecal matter (from lawns and soil) that get tracked in the house.

It is a good habit to begin, as later your baby will be crawling on your floors!

### 7. Get rid of toxic household cleaning products. Read labels carefully—the more information the better.

Even so-called "green" cleaning products may contain questionable ingredients. Avoid phenols, phosphates, and petroleum-based surfactants. Look for "non-toxic" and "biodegradable" ingredients. Nothing is safer to clean with than vinegar and baking soda mixtures.

Visit [generationsoforganic.org](http://generationsoforganic.org) for easy and effective natural cleaning recipes!

### 8. Avoid personal care products that contain harmful chemicals.

Check out the Environmental Working Group's Skin Deep® database as a great place to learn more about everyday harmful chemicals.

### 9. Use hair dye without an ammonia base if you color or highlight your hair.

Ammonia has been linked to negative health effects, such as asthma.

### 10. Take prenatal supplements made with organic and whole ingredients.

Many traditional supplements use synthetic chemicals as fillers.

### 11. Drink organic teas.

Herbs such as chamomile are often heavily sprayed with pesticides that are not washed off prior to drying, steeping, and drinking.



### 12. Create a community of supportive and healthy women.

Start an organic moms group in your area to exchange ideas, create an organic co-op, or start a healthy dinner swap.



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## and Five Things You Can Do to Reduce Your Exposure



### WHAT TO KNOW...

#### 1. What is a GMO?

GMOs (genetically modified organisms, also known as genetically engineered-GE) are altered at the molecular level through laboratory processes that take genes from one species and insert them into another to obtain desired traits.

**2. Environmental concerns.** GMOs may migrate and damage other farms and ecosystems. They have been known to cross-pollinate and contaminate non-GMO crops; once they get into the wild they cannot be recalled. Additionally, studies have shown GMO crops often use more pesticides than non-GMO crops.

**3. Safety.** The safety of GMOs for human consumption has not been assured. Several studies have affirmed that GMO crops have the potential to introduce new toxins or allergens into our food and environment. There are no mandatory human clinical trials for GMO crops, no requirement for long-term testing on animals, and limited testing requirements on allergenicity.

**4. Presence.** As much as 60-70% of processed foods available in U.S. grocery stores likely contain some GMOs. If you eat something with high fructose corn syrup, there's a 90% likelihood that you are consuming GMOs.

**5. Labeling.** Most developed countries, including the 15 nations of the European Union, Japan, Brazil, Australia, New Zealand, South Korea, Russia, and China, have mandatory labeling of genetically modified foods.

## 5 Things You Can Do



### WHAT TO DO...

**1. Buy organic.** The USDA's official organic standards prohibit products that were grown and made with GMOs. Organic food and products are the best way to avoid GMOs.

**2. If not organic, look for the Non-GMO Project label.** If a product carries the Non-GMO Project Verified Label, it has been tested and found to have less than 0.9% GMO contamination.



**3. Avoid foods that are most likely to be GMOs.** There are nine GMO crops on the market today: corn, soybean, cotton, sugar beets, alfalfa, canola, Hawaiian papaya, yellow crookneck squash, and zucchini. Those crops often end up in the following foods when processed: corn syrup, corn starch, corn oil, beef, milk, chicken, farmed fish, soy lecithin, soy protein, vegetable oil, and cottonseed oil.

**4. Write the FDA to demand labeling on all foods that contain GMOs.** Politicians need to hear the message loud and clear: we all have a right to know what's in our food. You can add your voice to the campaign by going to [justlabelit.org](http://justlabelit.org)

**5. Educate your family and friends.** Spread the word by telling people about the unknown and negative impacts of GMOs. (Do you know that the FDA is close to approving GE salmon, the world's first genetically engineered animal?) Sign the petition to have your food labeled and then pass it on: [justlabelit.org](http://justlabelit.org).

Source: "LABEL IT NOW: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT GENETICALLY ENGINEERED FOODS," by Gary Hirshberg, Dr. Chuck Benbrook, and Britt Lundgren



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# Top Five Organic Gardening Tips



## 1. Choose organic seeds

Organic seeds are harvested from certified organic crops and therefore are not treated with fungicides like most conventional seeds. Without the application of synthetic pesticides and fertilizers, organic plants rely more on their own defense systems when battling pests and diseases and grow deep roots to extract nutrients from the soil. Plants grown from organic seed are typically stronger and more adapted to thrive and grow under organic gardening practices.

## 2. Fertilize your soil by using organic compost and manure

Common non-organic garden fertilizers, found at your local garden and home store, may contain ammonium phosphate and other synthetic chemicals. These synthetic fertilizers do not break down and can contaminate soil and pollute waterways. They can also cause skin poisoning and are hazardous if inhaled or consumed. Nutrients in organic compost and manure are slower releasing and encourage stronger and deeper root systems, which in turn can help increase the nutrient content of your fruits and vegetables.

## 3. Use the buddy system

Companion planting (or intercropping) is an excellent organic gardening technique. Certain plants are beneficial to other plants by deterring harmful insects, attracting beneficial ones, adding fertilizer to the soil through their roots, providing shade or trellis support, or even by helping the neighboring plant produce a greater yield. For example, marigolds have been known to kill harmful nematodes in the soil and can even deter some of the hardest of weeds, including bindweed. Garlic helps repel aphids and borers. Corn and beans are natural buddies: corn provides a strong stalk for the beans to climb, while the nitrogen-rich beans help feed the soil, encouraging healthier corn.



## 4. Control weeds naturally

Common garden weed killers like glyphosate can cause skin, eye, nose, and throat irritation. If glyphosate is ingested by pets they can become ill, suffering from lethargy, hyper-salivation and vomiting. Control weeds naturally with boiling water, vinegar, and/or salt. Or use organic herbicides, which often contain limonene, a concentration of natural chemicals found in citrus, and essential oils. Certain weeds can be great to eat too! Almost all of them have deep roots, which makes them difficult to kill. But this also helps them enrich the soil by bringing important nutrients to the surface and makes edible weeds highly nutritious for us, too. Edible weeds include dandelion, purslane, mallow, lamb's quarter, burdock, and nettles.\*

## 5. Avoid synthetic pesticides

Common home garden pest control products often contain toxic synthetic pesticides like triazicide and carbaryl. The Environmental Protection Agency considers carbaryl to likely be carcinogenic to humans. Exposure can also cause headaches, nausea, coordination problems, and more serious disorders. These pesticides kill insects by disrupting their nervous systems and are highly toxic to honeybees and other beneficial insects. Deter pests naturally by encouraging beneficial insects and using companion planting. Pests can be creatures of habit, so rotate your crops, by either planting different fruits and vegetables each year and/or planting them in different locations in your garden. This can help keep them guessing!

\* Not all "weeds" are edible so make sure you know what you are harvesting before eating them.

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# 1 2 Top Twelve Organic Foods Highest in Antioxidants

Organic fruits and vegetables, grown without the stimulation of chemical fertilizers, are slower growing, allowing plants more time to sink deep roots and extract health-promoting nutrients including vitamins and hundreds of antioxidants from the soil. These powerful antioxidants give fruits their bright color and help fight free radicals in the body, which cause cell deterioration.

**1. Wild Blueberries**—This tiny but mighty wild berry is a true nutritional powerhouse. Loaded with the highest level of antioxidant properties, wild blueberries are also one of the few fruits native to North America.

**2. Artichokes**—With only 65 calories, this member of the thistle family is chock full of essential nutrients, especially quercetin, known for its anti-inflammatory properties. While most people love the heart of the artichoke, the majority of its health benefits come from the steamed leaves.



**3. Cranberries**—When eaten as a whole food (think cranberry salsa or a few added to a smoothie), cranberries offer the body a plethora of anti-inflammatory benefits for healthy joints. Beware of non-organic cranberries, as they contain the highest level of pesticide risk per serving of any fruit.

**4. Black Plums**—Eating fresh black plums and their dried companions, prunes, has shown to help the body absorb more iron, an essential mineral for keeping us in top shape. Don't forget, when plums are in season they are the perfect lunchbox treat!

**5. Blackberries**—Thanks to the presence of anthocyanins (pigment producing antioxidants), the blackberry's claim to fame is its dark, rich color which aids in the prevention of cancer and heart disease.

**6. Raspberries**—This tiny fruit, a member of the rose family, delivers over 50% of your daily requirement of Vitamin C with just one cup. When in season, stock up and freeze; studies have found that frozen raspberries still maintain their antioxidant benefits.

**7. Farmed Blueberries**—Ranked only second to strawberries in terms of popularity, cultivated blueberries are also full of phytonutrients, such as anthocyanins, which gives them their deep blue pigment.



**8. Pomegranate**—Juice isn't the only way to get the health benefits of the pomegranate--the seeds provide an extra healthful boost of dietary fiber. Here's a tip: to easily remove the seeds, slice it in half, whack the back with a heavy spoon and watch the seeds pop right out!



**9. Strawberries**—This summertime favorite is high in ellagic acid, which is known to have anti-cancer properties. Strawberries are also high in Vitamin C, which improves collagen production. What's not to love: healthy skin and cancer prevention all wrapped up in a sweet treat!

**10. Red Delicious Apples**—Believe it or not, that bright red skin contains most of the antioxidants, so go for the red! Apples also contain pectin, which helps lower cholesterol, as well as boron, which helps the body absorb calcium. An apple a day...

**11. Sweet Cherries**—Fresh, sweet cherries have been shown to ease the pain of arthritis due to their anti-inflammatory properties. These summer jewels are also full of potassium and calcium.



**12. Red Cabbage**—While you might be more familiar with green cabbage, red cabbage contains considerably more phytonutrients—all of which aid the body in disease prevention.

For more information visit The Organic Center at [www.organic-center.org](http://www.organic-center.org) and [www.generationsoforganic.org](http://www.generationsoforganic.org).

**Sources:**

*Elevating Antioxidant Levels in Food through Organic Farming and Food Processing*, Dr. Charles M. Benbrook, *The Organic Center*, January 2005.

*USDA Database for the Oxygen Radical Absorbance Capacity (ORAC) of Selected Foods, Release 2*, Prepared by David B. Haytowitz and Seema Bhagwat, May 2010.



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# Seven Sustainable Swaps to **Detox** Your Home

According to the Environmental Working Group there are around 75,000 chemicals in everyday use with some 1,000 new ones entering the market every year—yet only 2 to 3% have been adequately tested for safety!



## SWAP YOUR

### 1. Common laundry detergent FOR plant-based detergents.

“Free and Clear” doesn’t necessarily mean your detergent is free of harmful chemicals. In fact, 1, 4 Dioxane is a synthetic petrochemical commonly found in laundry detergent, but is not labeled, and is associated with cancer and liver disease.

### 2. Toxic weed killers FOR vinegar in a spray bottle.

Glyphosate, the toxic weed killer and active ingredient in Roundup, can cause headaches and dizziness and even genetic damage to human cells. This may lead to an increased risk of cancer in those with repeated exposure.

### 3. Regular cotton sheets FOR organic cotton sheets.

Conventionally grown cotton uses more insecticides than any other single crop. Each year cotton producers around the world spray more than 10% of the world's pesticides and nearly 25% of the world's insecticides. We spend one-third of our lives sleeping on those sheets!

### 4. Paraben-based lotions FOR organic cocoa butter, coconut oil, or olive oil.

Studies have linked parabens (a type of preservative) to breast cancer because of their estrogen-like properties that build up in breast tissue. Go for natural, plant-based moisturizers.





## 5. Non-stick pans

FOR ceramic lined or cast iron pans.

Teflon, and other similar non-stick coatings that line non-stick pots and pans, emits a chemical called PFOA (perfluorooctanoic acid). Fumes from heated PFOA have been found to cause birth and developmental disorders and negatively affect the brain and nervous system.

## 6. Standard petroleum-based paraffin candles

FOR organic soy or beeswax candles with organic essential oils.

Petroleum-based candles often contain carcinogens, neurotoxins, and reproductive toxins. Synthetic fragrances generally contain hormone-disrupting phthalates. Avoid indoor air pollution and choose natural luminescence.

## 7. Plastic food storage containers FOR reusable glass or stainless steel containers.

Plastic food storage containers have been shown to leach the harmful hormone-disrupting chemical Bisphenol A (BPA) into food after microwaving or repeated uses. Instead, choose non-porous materials for your leftovers.

For more sustainable solutions and sources, please visit The Organic Center at [www.organic-center.org](http://www.organic-center.org) and [www.generationsoforganic.org](http://www.generationsoforganic.org).



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# Seven Simple Steps to **Save** on Organic

## 1. Cook it Yourself

The best way to save money on organic food is to cook from scratch. Buying whole ingredients can be much cheaper than buying packaged foods, plus you can use the ingredients for multiple dishes. If you are strapped for time, check out the extensive selection of new slow cooker cookbooks published in the past two years; they definitely aren't the one-pot wonder recipes from the 1970s. Flavorful and complex soups can be enjoyed in the evening after only minutes of prep in the morning.



## 2. Buy Foods in Season

Don't look for bargains on organic strawberries in November. Buying foods in season saves money. For example, when strawberries are at their peak in the late spring/early summer, find an organic "pick your own" farm or load up from the grocery store and freeze extras for those long months when they aren't in season.

## 3. Buy Private Label Store Brands

A number of the large chains, including specialty gourmet and health food stores, have their own private label line of organic products. Before reaching for that name-brand product, just quickly

peruse the organic selection. You might be surprised to find the organic store brand version to be cheaper than the non-organic version.

## 4. Use Coupons

Visit your favorite organic brand online before you head to the grocery store and chances are you will find direct links to coupons. A major organic company recently told us that the top reasons people visit their website are for coupons and recipes.

## 5. Buy from the Bulk Section

Purchasing bulk beans, grains, herbs and snacks can be a great way to buy only what you need and save money. Do a price comparison and see the difference. You can save up to 90% when you need just a pinch of a certain spice or herb and you don't want an entire jar. Plus, it's always good to buy small quantities of herbs and spices to keep them fresh and flavorful.



## 6. Go meatless once a week

Eliminating meat, seafood and dairy for one or two dinners per week will save you money and might even improve your health. Take the money you would spend on those pricier cholesterol containing proteins and apply it buying organic vegetables or grains. Some vegetarian meal ideas are: minestrone soup, Portobello tacos and sweet and spicy stir-fry.

## 7. Join a CSA

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) is one of the most economical ways to buy organic produce. Typically you pay a local farm up front for a season of produce, milk, or meat. Shares, as they are called, typically start at around \$300 for a small family for 24-28 weeks of produce. Not bad if you break down the cost on a weekly basis! Some CSAs allow you to volunteer on their farm, which can reduce the price of the share. CSA numbers have grown from only 50 in 1990 to over 4,000 in 2011! Local Harvest is a terrific source to find CSAs in your area.



For more information visit The Organic Center at [www.organic-center.org](http://www.organic-center.org) and [www.generationsoforganic.org](http://www.generationsoforganic.org).

**USDA  
ORGANIC**

## WHAT IS ORGANIC?

Organic food production methods promote biodiversity, the biological cycling of nutrients, and plant and animal health. Certified organic farmers may not use toxic synthetic pesticides, artificial fertilizers, and unnecessary hormones or antibiotics. Instead, they use practices that restore, maintain, and enhance soil and ecosystem health.

GMOs, artificial ingredients, or trans fats may not be used.

