

Vicki's Veggies

Top 10 Reasons To Buy Organic and Local

1. Protect Future Generations.

The average child receives four times more exposure than an adult to at least 8 widely used pesticides in the food.

2. Prevent Soil Erosion

Soil and soil organic matter are the foundation of the food chain in organic farming. Organic matter and humus prevent erosion and act as a sponge to soak up more water.

3. Protect Water Quality

Pesticides and excess nutrients and animal wastes get into surface and ground water. Organic farmers use composted manure, no soluble chemical fertilizers or pesticides. They also seek to protect waterways on their farm with buffers and natural riparian zones.

4. Save Energy

Studies (even Canadian) show that organic farmers use less energy on their farm than conventional ones do. More energy is used to produce synthetic fertilizers than to till, cultivate and harvest crops. Supporting local foods also saves trucking fuel.

5. Keep Chemicals Off Your Plate.

The bottom line is that pesticides are poisons designed to kill living organisms, and can also be harmful to humans. In addition to cancer, pesticides are implicated in birth defects, nerve damage and genetic mutation.

6. Protect Farm Worker Health

Studies have shown that farm workers are more exposed to pesticides and have six times greater risk of contraction cancer. An estimated 1 million people per year are poisoned by pesticides, mostly in developing countries.

7. Help Small Farmers.

Most organic farms are small, diversified and independently owned and operated family farms of less than 200 acres. We have lost thousands of family farms, which continues today. Organic farming could be one of the few survival tactics left for family farms.

8. Support a True Economy.

Although organic foods might cost more, conventional food prices do not reflect hidden costs borne by taxpayers, including billions of dollars of government subsidies (not necessarily directed to farmers). Other hidden costs include pesticide regulation and testing, hazardous waste disposal and clean-up, and environmental damage. Supporting local farmers also supports the local economy.

9. Promote Biodiversity

Mono-cropping is the practice of planting large plots of land with the same crop every year. The lack of natural diversity of plant life leaves the soil lacking in minerals and nutrients. Single crops are also susceptible to pests and diseases. Biodiversity also means taking marginal lands out of production and restoring wetlands, riparian zones and wood lots.

10. Taste - Better Flavour.

There's a good reason why many chefs use local organic foods in their recipes - they taste better! Organic farming starts with nourishment of the plant and ultimately our palates. Organic foods also offer greater amounts of vitamins and minerals than conventional foods.

For more info on organic farming contact EFAO at efao@wightman.ca or www.efao.ca or COG at office@cog.ca or www.cog.ca

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