

# eating organic

BY DARYL-LYNN CARLSON  
Correspondent

A famous frog once said, "It's not easy being green" and his lament might be shared with organic food enthusiasts in Canada.

The availability and variety of organic foods here is limited compared to the commercial foods most of us have become accustomed to eating — such

as a convenient and sinfully delicious ready-to-serve lasagna smothered in a five-cheese sauce or Turtles ice cream.

Often people who "eat organic" or "go green" do so only part of the time and choose carefully at mainstream grocery stores for the balance of their groceries.

But that could all change soon.

As the debate over genetically modified foods reaches a heated peak, many

wary consumers are seeking healthier alternatives.

"The public has been scared," says Arnie Appleton, owner of Ambrosia Foods in Newmarket.

In the past 10 years, the prevalence of organic foods has increased, although an explosion of popularity is anticipated to peak by 2010.

Organic is a term used to distinguish foods that have been grown and processed without pesticides or chemicals and certified by an authorized licensing body, of which there are many in Canada.

Appleton suggests Britain's mad cow epidemic that tainted beef products was the first big food scare to spur sales of organic foods. "It made people think about what they were eating."

As well, says Appleton, "Baby boomers got to the age where they were feeling aches and pains and noticing they weren't 27 anymore. We have had a society or culture change where people are more willing to take responsibility for their own well-being and health."

Wanigan Whole Food Inc. is reaping the benefit of this growing trend.

The Orangeville-based home delivery health food company has seen sales grow 20 to 25 per cent every month in the last two years, according to co-owner Jim Naish.

In fact, organic food is a \$14-billion industry in North America.

But Naish, who farmed for 15 years before starting the business, says it's a commitment to things green — rather than green backs — that propels him.

"We have to preserve the Earth for our children," he says.

Offering 6,500 hundred organic products — ranging from fresh produce, drug-free meats and poultry to juices and personal-care products — and the convenience of shopping on the Internet, by fax or phone, Wanigan is the largest health food store in the province, Naish adds.

Wanigan's refrigerated trucks make deliveries to thousands of regular customers across York Region and the GTA, according to Naish, who runs the thriving business with his partner and long-time friend, Jim Whetmore. Their 1,200-acre farm grows much of the fresh organic produce available in season — it can be in your kitchen the day after picking.

"There are a lot of people out there who eat nothing but organic food," he says.

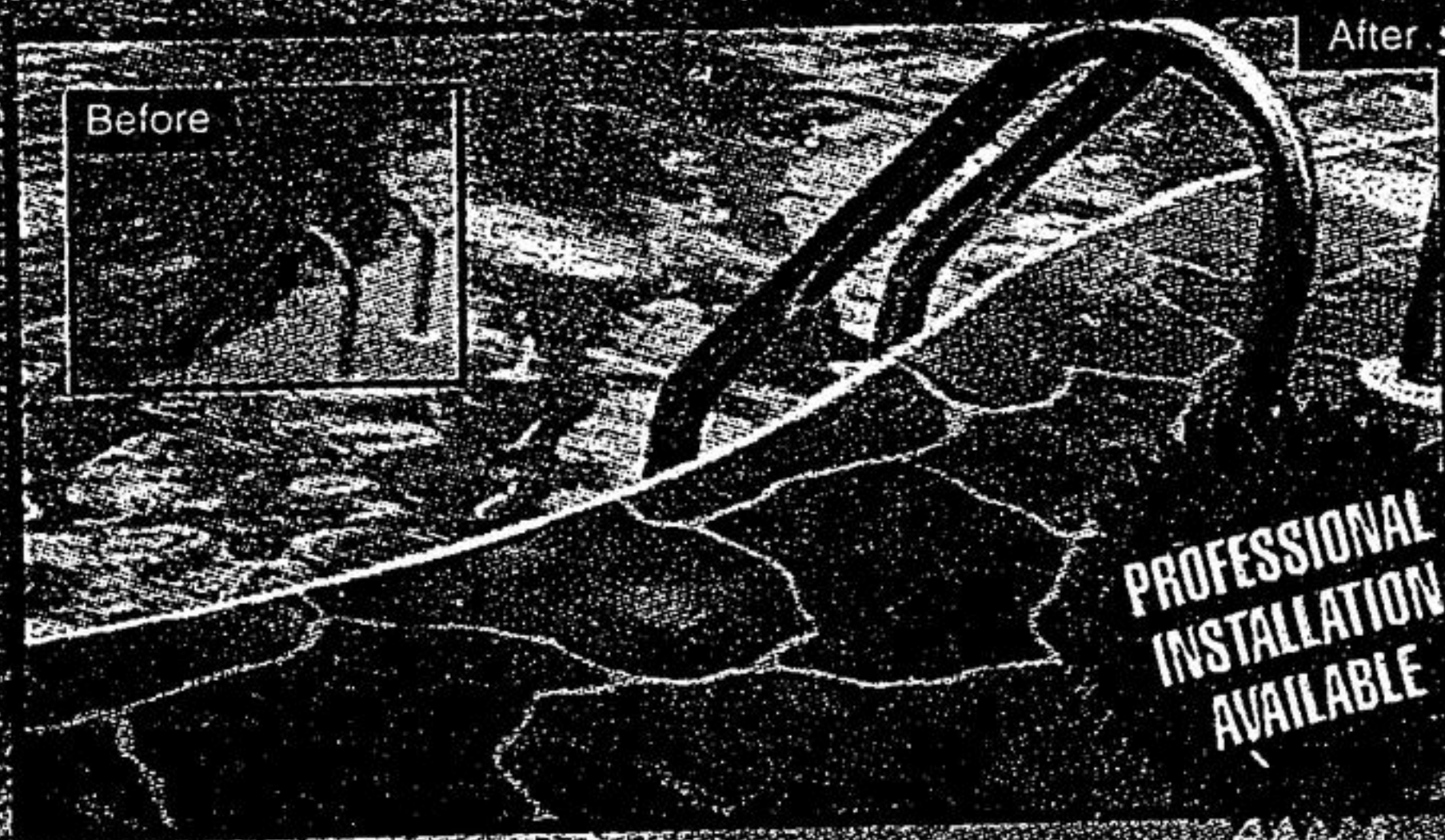
Uxbridge resident Brenda Tucker has almost achieved that goal for her family of three. She admits variety and temptation are a lure, especially for her nine-year-old son Nile. "There's pizza day at school. So I say, 'Have the pizza, but not the pop.'"

Eating organic food is just one facet of the wholistic lifestyle Tucker and her husband Jean Pierre, both artists, strive to achieve.



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**HYPERPHOIA** is a physical mis-alignment of the two eyes so that one eye is set higher in the head than the other.

This condition leads to severe problems with reading and learning, headaches, head tilting, neck and shoulder pains, poor posture, and even lower back pain.

Students and adults alike, find themselves losing their place when reading, so they finger-read. Patients find difficulty judging distances, especially driving, where moving objects are concerned, car-sickness, and are usually very poor in athletics because of poor body coordination.

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For information about Wanigan Whole Foods Inc., visit the web site at [www.wanigan.com](http://www.wanigan.com) or call 1-877-926-4426 for a free catalogue. For information about Ambrosia Foods, call 898-5262. Noah's Natural Foods can be reached at 731-2098.

