

MEDIA RELEASE

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Organic Food Benefits

'Numerous studies show that on balance organic foods have higher levels of nutrients and significantly lower levels of pesticides' Andre Leu, Chair of the Organic Federation of Australia (OFA), stated.

'A scientific study published in the Journal of Applied Nutrition in 1993 clearly showed that organic food is more nutritious than conventional food. Organically and conventionally grown apples, potatoes, pears, wheat, and sweet corn were purchased in the western suburbs of Chicago, over two years, and analysed for mineral content. The organically grown food averaged 63% higher in calcium, 73% higher in iron, 118% higher in magnesium, 178% higher in molybdenum, 91% higher in phosphorus, 125% higher in potassium and 60% higher in zinc. The organic food averaged 29% lower in mercury than the conventionally raised food.'

'A recently published review of scientific research by Charles Benbrook, Ph.D. reveals that on average organic foods contain about one-third higher in antioxidants than comparable conventional produce.'

'These phyto-nutrients have been shown to have major roles in preventing and reversing diseases such as heart disease and arterial diseases. They are important for preventing and reducing inflammatory and autoimmune diseases such as asthma and arthritis. Most significantly they are shown to have anti cancer and other protective properties for our health and well being.' Mr Leu said

'A study by the Danish Institute of Agricultural Research and the University of Newcastle's showed that cows raised on an organic diet produce milk with 50% more Vitamin E and 75% more beta carotene than conventionally farmed cows. The organic milk has two to three times more zeaxanthine and lutein, which are powerful antioxidants. Higher levels of omega 3 essential fatty acids, that provide protection from heart and other diseases, are also found in organic milk.'

'A scientific article published in the Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry stated that organically grown corn, strawberries and marionberries have significantly higher levels of cancer fighting antioxidants than conventionally grown foods.'

'The European Journal of Nutrition published a study by Dr John Paterson from the University of Strathclyde, UK. The study found that organic vegetable soups contain almost six times as much salicylic acid as non-organic vegetable soups. Salicylic acid is produced naturally in plants as a protective compound against stress and disease. It is responsible for the anti-inflammatory action of aspirin, and helps combat hardening of the arteries, heart disease and bowel cancer.' Andre Leu stated.

Two comprehensive studies have been published that compared the differences between organic and conventional foods. Both studies analysed around 40 previously published studies, each independently of the other. One study was conducted in the UK by nutritionist Shane Heaton and the other in the USA by Virginia Worthington as a peer reviewed university graduate thesis. Both studies came up with similar conclusions showing that there is overwhelming evidence that organic food is more nutritious than conventional food. Heaton stated: '***On average our research found higher vitamin C, higher mineral levels and higher phytonutrients – plant compounds which can be effective against cancer.***'

Many studies show that conventionally farmed foods have pesticide and other chemical residues. Repeated tests show that many of these foods can carry a cocktail of synthetic poisons. Studies by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control found a cocktail of many toxic chemicals in the blood and urine of most Americans that they tested.

Reduced Exposure to Residues

A detailed scientific analysis of organic fruits and vegetables in the USA, published in the peer-reviewed journal Food Additives and Contaminants, showed that organic foods have significantly less pesticide residues than conventionally grown foods.

A similar study in Australia by Ruth McGowan for the Victorian Department of Primary Industries conducted 14000 tests on 300 hundred samples of certified organic produce. The study concluded that: ***“The results demonstrate that Victorian organic produce is virtually ‘chemical free’.”***

‘Both of these studies showed that vast majority of organic foods have no residues. Where residues were found these were due to the widespread contamination caused by several pesticides used in conventional farming. Even then, these residues were substantially lower in organic foods than in conventionally produced food.’ Mr Leu stated

‘Most importantly scientific studies are beginning to show that that eating organic food results in lower levels of these pervasive chemicals in humans.’ Andre Leu said

A study published in Environmental Health Perspectives found that children who eat organic foods have lower levels of pesticides in their bodies. The University of Washington researchers who conducted the study concluded ***‘The dose estimates suggest that consumption of organic fruits, vegetables, and juice can reduce children's exposure levels from above to below the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's current guidelines, thereby shifting exposures from a range of uncertain risk to a range of negligible risk. Consumption of organic produce appears to provide a relatively simple way for parents to reduce their children's exposure...’***

Conclusion

The United Nations FAO states the case very succinctly. ***‘It has been demonstrated that organically produced foods have lower levels of pesticide and veterinary drug residues and, in many cases, lower nitrate contents. Animal feeding practices followed in organic livestock production, also lead to a reduction in contamination of food products of animal origin.’***

‘The facts show that organic foods have health benefits because of higher nutritional values. They excel in the antioxidants that prevent heart disease, cancers, anti-inflammatory and autoimmune diseases.’ Mr Leu stated

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