

# ORGANIC 101

Contrary to what people think, organic refers to the farming method used to produce food according to the USDA organic standards, not to the nutritional facts or calories of the product.

Organic foods have been grown or farmed without the use of:

- synthetic pesticides
- Bioengineering
- synthetic fertilizers
- sewage sludge
- GMOs
- Ionizing radiation

The emphasis is on maintaining and preserving the organic integrity and sustainability of the environment. Organic crop production cover areas including maintaining soil fertility, manure and crop rotation, management of pests, weeds, and diseases, maintaining identify and integrity of organic crops. For Organic livestock production, some areas covered are livestock living conditions and facilities, grazing requirements, organic feed, animal health and origin.

## Do organic crops use fertilizers and pesticides?

Yes, fertilizers and selected pesticides derived from natural sources are allowed and may be used in producing organically grown food.

## Is Organic healthier for you?

Research hasn't shown extra benefits in the nutritional status of an individual from consuming organic foods, thus far.

## ORGANIC LABELS EXPLAINED

Organic products are labeled according to the percentage of organic ingredients they have. This chart shows what to expect from different labels.

**100% Organic**



**Organic**



**Made with Organic**



**Organic Ingredients**



✓ Organic seal allowed

✓ Organic seal allowed

✗ Organic seal NOT allowed; Must specify which ingredients are organic

✗ Organic seal NOT allowed; Product can't be described as "organic"

✓ 100% certified organic ingredients and processing aids

✓ 95 % certified organic ingredients

✓ At least 70% certified organic ingredients

✗ No specific % certified organic

✓ No GMOs

✓ No GMOs

✓ No GMOs

✗ May contain GMOs

✓ All ingredients comply with National List of Allowed and Prohibited Substances

✓ Non-organic ingredients comply with National List

✓ Non-organic ingredients comply with National List

✗ Compliance with National List not required

✓ Certification required

✓ Certification required

✓ Certification required

✗ Certification NOT required

## References

<https://www.usda.gov/media/blog/2020/10/27/organic-101-allowed-and-prohibited-substances>

<https://www.usda.gov/media/blog/2012/03/22/organic-101-what-usda-organic-label-means>

<https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/organic-certification/organic-basics>