



# Will the Organic Food Phenomenon Continue or Fade Away?

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## Editorial

As environmental problems increase, several health concerns have been seen leading to organic food as a crucial future. The concept of 'green consumerism' is encouraged after the destruction of natural and environmental resources [1]. Today, individuals are not only environmentally conscious but are considering their benefits also as they are in search of a more sustainable lifestyle. It's observed that people are switching to healthier and pesticide-free food, but the question is, will it continue or not in the future?

One must know the exact health benefits of switching to organic food. According to the Organic Trade Association, the sales of baby food and beverages increased to 11 and 8% respectively in 2021 [2]. Organic foods are produced without artificial fertilizer, pesticides, chemical additives, etc. and they promote a better immune system and keep the individual fit [3]. The antioxidant content in organic foods is much higher than in conventional foods. According to the group of researchers, obesity is reduced to 31% in individuals eating organic foods as compared to those on conventional foods [4]. Organic foods neither damages wildlife and the ecosystem nor can they be modified in any way. Also, the farmlands remain healthy due to the rotation of soil and crops. It can also reduce global warming by storing higher levels of carbon dioxide during soil-building process. Organic foods are not derived from genetic engineering and are GMO-free (genetically modified organisms). One of the reasons for the popularity of organic foods is that it provides a healthier alternative to conventional foods [5].

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Conventional farming has always faced strong criticism because of the use of synthetic fertilizers and pesticides causing soil erosion, water pollution, and biodiversity. Conventional foods have high levels of heavy metals and lower availability of antioxidants [6,7]. They do not contribute to the prevention of cancer [8]. Conventional meat and dairy products may come from animals treated with different antibiotics for the prevention or treatment of infections.

The biggest barrier to organic food is its high cost. Others include lower yield and more labor intensive (as it utilizes fewer chemicals) [9,10]. Hurdles like lack of consumer confidence, insufficient marketing efforts, consumers' inability to differentiate between organic and conventional products, and lack of strong scientific evidence showing its significance over conventional foods can't be excluded [11]. Indeed, organic food may not solve every dietary and environmental problem, but it has valuable perks. According to scientists, organic yield is far lower than the conventional yield and therefore needs more land to grow organic crops.

Several studies have been done to compare the phenolic and flavonoid compounds in both organic and conventional crops [12]. The fertilizers used may be the root cause of lower nutritional benefits in conventional foods. Mutiri and Al-Sowayan reported that the laboratory results have shown significant differences with higher content of flavonoids in organic crops [8].

The demand for organics is increasing steadily because consumers are now more concerned about their health and sustainable future. And now it's high time to switch towards organic foods and educate others regarding its benefits [13]. The difference in nutritional benefits, the environmentally friendly behavior, and above all the perception of consumers,

make organic foods more acceptable. Some productive steps should be taken by the company producing organic foods. They should design and communicate their messages effectively to influence the attitude and behavior of consumers to buy eco-friendly products.

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