



Food to live by.

Organic Basics

National Organic Program Standards (USDA Certified Organic)

- The USDA launched its National Organic Program (NOP) on Oct. 21, 2002.
- The NOP standards govern organic certification of farming and processing operations.
- The NOP created a uniform definition of organic foods with standardized product labeling guidelines.
- The detailed standards are more than 500 pages long and can be found at www.ams.usda.gov/nop/NOP/standards.html

Standards for Organic Certification

- No synthetic pesticides
- No fertilizers made with synthetic ingredients or sewage sludge
- No genetically modified organisms (GMOs)
- No irradiation
- Clear and appropriate buffers between organic fields and nearby conventional farms
- Long-term soil management plans
- Detailed record keeping of all materials used
- Three-year transition period for fields that have been farmed conventionally
- Annual inspection by USDA-approved, independent certifier

Product Labeling Requirements

- Products that may display the USDA Organic Seal:
 - “100% Organic” — made entirely with organic ingredients
 - “Organic” — made with 95% organic ingredients, and remaining 5% can only be ingredients not available organically in commercial form from a list specified in the regulations.
- Products that may not display the USDA seal but contain organic ingredients:
 - “Made with organic ingredients” — at least 70% organic (organic claim allowed on display panel)
 - If a product contains less than 70% organic ingredients, the ingredient list may denote which products are organic (no organic claim allowed on display panel)



Benefits of Organic Farming

- Keeps toxic and persistent chemicals out of the air, water, land, and food supply while sequestering the greenhouse gas carbon dioxide (CO₂)
- Creates a safer working environment for farm workers
- Reduces chemical exposures for neighboring homes, schools, and businesses
- Promotes healthy, balanced ecosystems and biodiversity
- Reduces danger to non-target species
- Promotes healthy soil, which reduces erosion

Organic Farming Helps Fight Global Warming

- Rodale Institute's 26-year Farming System Trials show that organic farming helps combat global warming by capturing atmospheric carbon dioxide and sequestering it in the soil.
- Conventional farming exacerbates the greenhouse effect by producing a net release of carbon into the atmosphere.
- U.S. agriculture as currently practiced emits a 1.5 trillion pounds of CO₂ annually into the atmosphere.

Overall, three-quarters (75%) of US families report they have purchased at least some organic products, while only 27% report they never buy organic products.

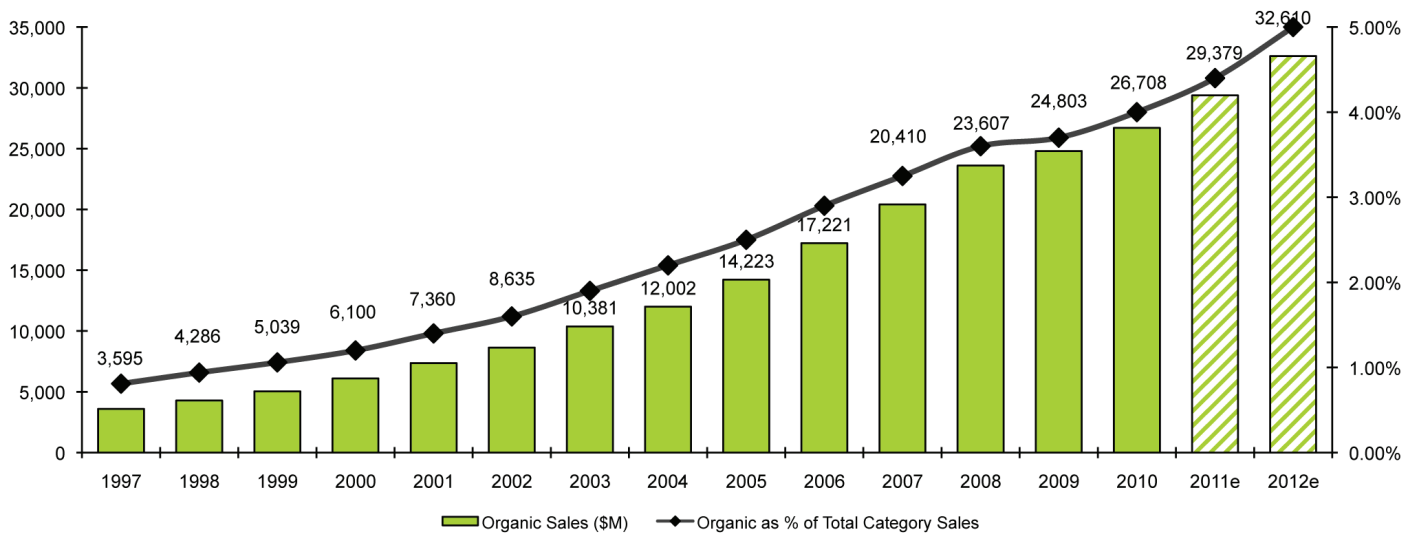
(2010 US Families' Organic Attitudes & Beliefs Study)

When given a choice, most American consumers (58%) prefer to purchase organic foods.

(Thomson Reuters-NPR Health poll, May 2011)

Total organic category growth from 1997 to 2010 in dollar sales and as a percentage of retail food sales.

(The Organic Trade Association's Manufacturer's Survey, 2011)



Top Reasons Parents Buy Organic Food *(Hartman Group 2011)*

