

*Editorial*

## Pesticides in organic food and organic farming

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Organic farmers and food producers do not use synthetic chemicals like pesticides or artificial fertilisers to cultivate and produce their crops. They don't utilize Genetically Modified (GM) ingredients or irradiate their meals. Organic farmers are concerned about animal welfare and environmental sustainability. Animal products can be classified as organic. Organic eggs, for example, come from free-range chickens rather than caged (battery) hens. Fruit and vegetables, dry legumes, grains, meat and meat products, dairy foods, eggs, honey, and certain processed foods are examples of organic goods accessible.

Organically farmed animals are handled gently and respectfully. Chickens, for example, are not raised in cages and cows are not confined in feedlots. Growth-stimulating medicines, steroids, hormones, or antibiotics are not given to the animals. Vaccines may, however, be used to prevent illness in the animals. Organic farming is also concerned with environmental protection and operating in accordance with existing ecosystems, such as water, soil, and energy conservation, as well as the use of renewable resources and natural agricultural cycles. Traditional agricultural practises are frequently employed, such as crop rotation to minimize soil nutrient depletion and crop-livestock integration.

### Organic food contains pesticides and other toxins

Organic foods are not always fully devoid of chemicals. They might have been cultivated on ground that had not previously been utilized for organic food production, and hence include chemical residues. Pesticide residues in organic food, on the other hand, are far lower than in conventional farming, where crops are grown using synthetic pesticides. In addition, some naturally occurring pesticides are permissible in organic

farming. The majority of consumers purchase organically farmed food because they are worried about pesticides, additives, antibiotics, and other chemical residues and they feel organic food is healthier. Concerns about the impact of conventional farming on biodiversity and the environment, as well as the ethical treatment of cattle, are among the other factors.

### Nutritional value of organic foods

Several studies comparing the nutritional composition of organic and conventionally cultivated vegetables found no significant variations in important vitamins and minerals. Despite the minor changes, research has revealed that certain organic foods contain:

- Lower nitrate concentrations
- Vitamin C levels that are higher

Mineral concentrations that are higher (such as phosphorous, magnesium and iron). Organic foods encourage more compassionate treatment of animals while also delivering hormone-and antibiotic-free meat. Furthermore, some consumers are concerned about the long-term health, economic, and environmental effects of genetically modified foods, and choose for organic goods to support an industry that does not utilize GM technology. Organic foods encourage a healthier and more environmentally friendly way of life. Excessive pesticide usage and planting only one crop several times are examples of modern conventional agricultural techniques (monocropping). Over time, this has resulted in a decrease in soil fertility as well as an increase in salt and blue-green algae in streams.

Organic farmers diversify their crops, use physical weed control, and animal and green manure to reduce environmental

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impact. Organic farms can only be certified after three years of operation following organic principles. However, because the term "organic" is not regulated in Australia, it is critical to ensure that the items you buy are grown and produced by certified farmers and producers. Prior to 2009, there was no standard (guidelines and norms) for domestic and imported organic goods. As a result, the term "organic" was misrepresented in the domestic food market. Organic food production, processing, and labeling are currently governed by two main criteria.

These guidelines establish an agreed-upon set of procedures for organic food production. This ensures the quality and traceability of organic food from "paddock to plate." The rules

cover organic product production, preparation, shipping, marketing, and labeling.

While it is essential for organic goods exported from Australia to be certified and fulfill the National Standard for Organic and Biodynamic Produce, the Australian standard (for domestic and imported commodities) is voluntary. Its goal is to help the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) guarantee that claims made regarding organic and biodynamic products are accurate and truthful. Organic-certified product was cultivated, harvested, stored, and transported without the use of synthetic chemicals.