

# Understanding Organic

# CCOF

## Organic Defined

Organic food is produced without using harmful or toxic pesticides, sewage sludge or petroleum-based synthetic fertilizers, genetically modified organisms (GMOs), bioengineering, or ionizing radiation. Organic meat, poultry, eggs, and dairy products come from animals that are given no antibiotics or growth hormones and that have not been cloned.

inspected, and certified to be in compliance with the federal organic regulations. Research shows that there is increasing consumer confidence in the USDA seal and that it represents to consumers someone working behind the scenes to ensure their food is safe and healthy\*. CCOF is happy to be that someone. We are proud of the role we play in ensuring the integrity of organic for the consumer.

### 100% Organic

- 100% organic ingredients
- Only organic processing aids used
- Absolutely no non-organic agricultural ingredients used (excludes water and salt)
- Must be certified. The certifying agency must be named on label

**Example:**

100% Organic oatmeal

Look For...



### Organic

- At least 95% organic ingredients
- Up to 5% may be from a limited, approved list of allowed non-organic agricultural ingredients and other additives (e.g. vitamins, baking soda, citric acid) approved by the USDA National Organic Program
- Must be certified. The certifying agency must be named on label

**Example:**

Organic cereal

Look For...



### Made With Organic Ingredients

- Must contain 70%–94% organic ingredients
- Remaining 30% can be allowed non-organic agricultural ingredients approved by the USDA National Organic Program (e.g. vitamins and citric acid)
- May list up to three organic foods or food groups on label
- Must be certified. The certifying agency must be named on label

**Example:** Cereal made with organic oats

Look For...



### Products with less than 70% Organic Ingredients

- Product is not required to be certified
- All products with less than 70% organic ingredients are in this category
- No restrictions on non-organic ingredients
- The word “Organic” can only be listed in Ingredients Panel

**Example:**

Ingredients: Organic oats, organic raisins...



## Organic Standards and Certification

As a leader in the organic movement since 1973, CCOF helped create the current U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) National Organic Program (NOP) regulations. These regulations require that all foods labeled as “certified organic” must be grown and processed according to strict standards. Operations marketing their products as organic, growers, processors, retailers, and restaurants must all be inspected by a USDA-accredited third-party certifier, such as CCOF, to ensure all the rules necessary to meet these standards are being followed.

## The Benefits of Organic Certification

### Consumer Confidence in Your Product

The presence of the USDA and/or CCOF seal on a product guarantees that the product has been grown, produced,

## Beware of Other Labeling:

By knowing the differences in labeling, you can be sure about what you are purchasing and can gain confidence in the organic integrity of the products you buy.

### “Natural”, “Local” and “Sustainable”

There are no federal standards for “natural”, “local” or “sustainable” claims. These products may include toxic pesticides, genetically modified organisms, or synthetic substances that are prohibited in organic production.

### “No Spray”, “Pesticide Free” and “Residue Free”

These labels do not ensure that your food is organic. Claims like “pesticide free” usually mean the edible parts of a crop have not been sprayed with harmful chemicals. However, synthetic fertilizers, insecticides, and fungicides may have been used to grow the food.



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\*Natural Marketing Institute (NMI)