



# Top 10 Reasons to GO ORGANIC

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## ORGANIC PRIORITIZES ANIMAL WELFARE

Organic farmers must provide animals with 100% organic feed and safe, clean, cage-free living conditions. In addition, organic animals must have access to the outdoors and the ability to roam freely. Organic even requires that cows graze on rich, nutritious grass for a minimum of one third of their lives.

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## ORGANIC HELPS PROTECT CHILDREN AT SCHOOL & HOME

A California Department of Public Health study in pesticide-heavy California counties found that children in 36% of schools in these counties were exposed to harmful pesticides. These pesticides contain harmful substances that can cause cancer and harm development. Farming organically close to schools is one solution to this ongoing challenge because organic bans synthetic pesticides.

Pesticide levels in carpet dust contribute to higher leukemia rates in children living on or near conventional farms. These pesticides contain harmful substances that can cause cancer and harm development.

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## ORGANIC CONSERVES WATER & ENERGY

Organic conserves water resources by building soils high in organic matter that can better absorb and store water. In a 4-year trial in Nebraska, organic plots had 30-50% greater soil aggregation and ten times higher water infiltration than non-organic plots. The findings of numerous studies show that organic soils can better use rainwater by absorbing and storing higher amounts of water in the soil, which means there is more water available for plants during dry weather.

Organic farms usually use less energy for their farming needs compared to non-organic farms. This is because they aren't allowed to use synthetic pesticides and fertilizers that rely heavily on fossil fuels. In the United States, about 40% of energy used to produce crops and livestock is used to manufacture synthetic fertilizers and pesticides. In contrast, organic farms use inputs that require less energy to produce such as composts, animal manures, and cover crops.

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## ORGANIC STIMULATES THE ECONOMY

Agricultural economists have found lower county poverty rates and higher median household incomes in California counties with high levels of organic activity. Additionally, organic farms are far more likely to sell their products locally than non-organic farms. Farms that sell locally buy most of their supplies and services from nearby businesses and hire more local workers. This means money stays within the community and creates more jobs for people in the area.

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## ORGANIC CREATES A SUSTAINABLE GLOBAL FOOD SUPPLY

Organic soil-building and biodiversity practices create farms that are resilient to extreme weather conditions such as drought and hurricanes. Worldwide studies show that farms using organic practices experience fewer losses of crops, topsoil, and money after extreme weather events compared to non-organic farms.

Comprehensive studies show that organic agriculture can feed 9 billion people by 2050 while protecting the environment at the same time. Organic minimizes environmental harms associated with other agricultural systems such as loss of biodiversity, soil erosion, and water contamination.

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## ORGANIC PROVIDES HEALTHIER WORK ENVIRONMENTS FOR FARMWORKERS

Organic provides better working conditions for farmworkers and farmworker families through year-round employment and protection from routine exposure to synthetic pesticides in the fields and at home. Organic farms are also more likely to provide farmworkers with full-time, year-round employment with better wage opportunities.

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## ORGANIC MITIGATES CLIMATE CHANGE

Organic mitigates climate change through practices that sequester carbon, lower energy usage, and reduce emissions. Increasing to 10% organic acreage would reduce emissions equivalent to 601,500 cars per year. Going fully organic would be the equivalent of removing 7.8 million cars from the road!

A study at UC Davis compared organic and non-organic plots over 13 years. The organic plots stored 131% and 135% more carbon dioxide equivalents compared to the non-organic plots, which actually released greenhouse gases. Numerous other studies back up these findings.

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## ORGANIC PROTECTS POLLINATORS

Did you know that 75% of fruit, vegetable, and nut crops depend on pollinators? Organic farms help pollinators by growing a diversity of crops and permanent hedgerows. These hedgerows create a safe place for pollinators to live and provide a constant food source. This is important because pollinators are rapidly losing food and nesting resources. Evidence shows that organic farms increase pollinator abundance and safeguard these precious creatures that humans rely on to pollinate the crops that are consumed at almost every meal.

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## ORGANIC PROTECTS EXPECTANT MOTHERS FROM HARMFUL PESTICIDE EXPOSURE

The most routine pesticide exposure occurs off the field when farmworker families are exposed to pesticides that enter their homes and communities. Pesticide exposure starts early for children, who are even exposed in the womb. One two-decade study found that when pregnant mothers are exposed to certain pesticides, it can lead to problems with how their children's brains develop, lower IQ, and trouble paying attention. California mothers living near places where specific synthetic pesticides are used have a higher chance of having a child with autism spectrum disorder. Organic farms ban the use of synthetic pesticides, which protects both mothers and their children.

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## ORGANIC CROPS ARE PRODUCTIVE & RESILIENT TO EXTREME WEATHER

Organic farms are more resilient to extreme weather conditions such as drought or hurricanes because they support healthy soils and maintain robust levels of biodiversity. Organic soils maintain good soil structure under rain or wind, preventing topsoil and nutrients from washing away during heavy rains. Farm biodiversity also helps farms be more resilient by supporting diverse species that can handle various environmental shocks.

A Rodale Institute study found that organic fields produced more corn and soy during droughts because they kept more water in the soil. Additional studies have found that organic and diversified farms fare better after hurricanes because they had fewer crop losses and retained more topsoil.