

Is organic food better for you?

You are probably asking the same questions and finding the same answers.

Let's try and clear it up for you.

You may be wondering if organic food is safer to eat than conventional food and why should that be so?

Let's talk about pesticides. The term pesticide will cover insecticides, herbicides and fungicides. These are sprayed on or applied to apple orchards to control things like aphids, apple scab and brown rot to name but a few.

Is it safer for you to eat organic food?



Any attempt to answer is organic food better for you has to look at the ways food is produced.

- Conventional orchards use a range of pesticides to treat pests. In [Europe 490 substances](#) are approved for use as pesticides in conventional farming. These may fall into the [class](#) of organochlorines, organophosphates, carbamates, neonicotinoids and pyrethroids. All are synthetic pesticides.
- Organic orchards are not allowed to use synthetic pesticides, there are [28](#) pesticides approved for use in organic farming. These are all naturally occurring with the exception of pheromones which are not applied to crops but used in traps.
- Both synthetic and naturally occurring pesticides can be harmful to humans if not used properly.
- In a [2020 report](#) by the European Food Safety Agency's testing of residual levels of pesticides in food, 94.9% were within the legal limits of the maximum residue level (MRL) and 5.1% exceeded the MRL.
- In a [study](#) conducted in 2020 it was found that the occurrence of pesticide residues in organic samples is approximately 5 times lower than in conventional.
- The [Environmental Working Group \(EWG\)](#) states: "Everyone should eat plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables, whether organic or conventionally grown. The health benefits of such a diet outweigh the risks of pesticide exposure."

Is organic better for the planet?



The impact on the environment to produce the food you eat has to play a major role in determining if organic food is better for you.

- Conventional farming produces a [higher yield](#) per land used therefore can lead to less deforestation, reduced carbon dioxide emissions and greater biodiversity.
- This uses an approach called [life cycle assessment \(LCA\)](#), this approach simply relates environmental impacts to the amount of product harvested from a given area of land.
- Such assessments fail to fully account for the role of land degradation, biodiversity decline and pesticide impacts.
- Typically, farms using organic methods use [less energy](#) than non-organic farms and also have lower emissions.
- [Nitrogen pollution](#) is reduced in organic farming and lowers the risk of environmental pollution
- [Carbon](#) is stored more readily in organic soils, on average nearly two tonnes more for a football sized pitch area.

Does organic food taste better?



Incredible taste experiences can certainly produce feelings of well-being in you. That is a great way to determine if a certain type of food like organic is better for you.

- Several factors can influence whether organic food is perceived to taste better.
- Probably the most noticeable factor that determines whether an organic apple tastes better would be the proximity of the orchard to where you purchased it. The fruit is fresher which would account for the superior flavour.
- A study published in the **British Journal of Nutrition** (BJN) stated: **Notably**, when a plant grows organically without pesticides its taste is enhanced as well. Studies considered in the BJN paper show that higher antioxidant levels affect food's organoleptic qualities—taste, aroma, and mouthfeel—and how the human senses detect a food's unique flavour.

Is organic food more nutritious?



Is it safe to assume that the more nutritious a food is the better it is for you?

- It can depend on the food you are eating. For example, a popular 35g organic dark chocolate bar has over 15 grams of fat. OK, you might really enjoy eating it but you have to ask yourself Is that healthy for you?
- In general studies have found that conventional and organic fruit have pretty much the same levels of nutrients.
- Some [studies](#) have suggested that organically grown fruits provide significantly greater levels of vitamin C, iron, magnesium, and phosphorus than non-organic varieties of the same foods. In addition, organic foods typically provide greater levels of a number of important antioxidant phytochemicals (anthocyanins, flavonoids, and carotenoids).

To sum up, the study of the impact that organic farming will have on your health is still not clear as there has not been enough long-term research undertaken.

This [study](#) may help you to make a more informed decision.