

Organic Food

Anastasia Kaluzhna, Olesia Starkova
National University of Food Technologies

Introduction. Once found only in health food stores, organic food is now a regular feature at most supermarkets. And that has created a bit of a dilemma in the produce aisle. So what does “organic” means? What are the benefits of organic food? And finally is it possible and effectually to use organic food in restaurant business?

The term “organic” refers to the way agricultural products are grown and processed. Specific requirements must be met and maintained in order for products to be labeled as "organic." Organic crops must be grown in safe soil, have no modifications, and must remain separate from conventional products. Farmers are not allowed to use synthetic pesticides, bioengineered genes (GMOs), petroleum-based fertilizers, and sewage sludge-based fertilizers. Organic livestock must have access to the outdoors and be given organic feed. They may not be given antibiotics, growth hormones, or any animal-by-products. Organic foods provide a variety of benefits. In general, organic food consumers, manufacturers, and farmers strongly believe that organic food has the following benefits compared to non-organic food. While there are plenty of arguments against the multitude of organic food being overpriced on the market, there is no denying that there are some benefits that can be enjoyed. Some studies show that organic foods have more beneficial nutrients, such as antioxidants, than their conventionally grown counterparts. In addition, people with allergies to foods, chemicals, or preservatives often find their symptoms lessen or go away when they eat only organic foods. In addition:

Organic produce contains fewer pesticides. Pesticides are chemicals such as fungicides, herbicides, and insecticides. These chemicals are widely used in conventional agriculture and residues remain on (and in) the food we eat.

Organic food is often fresher. Fresh food tastes better. Organic food is usually fresher because it doesn't contain preservatives that make it last longer. Organic produce is often (but not always, so watch where it is from) produced on smaller farms near where it is sold.

Organic farming is better for the environment. Organic farming practices reduce pollution (air, water, soil), conserve water, reduce soil erosion, increase soil fertility, and use less energy. Farming without pesticides is also better for nearby birds and small animals as well as people who live close to or work on farms.

Organic food is GMO-free. Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) or genetically engineered (GE) foods are plants or animals whose DNA has been altered in ways that cannot occur in nature or in traditional crossbreeding, most commonly in order to be resistant to pesticides or produce an insecticide. In most countries, organic crops contain no GMOs and organic meat comes from animals raised on organic, GMO-free feed.

Currently, Ukraine actively cooperates with many countries around the world in organic food production development. Among those are Switzerland and France. Today, there are about two hundred farms in Ukraine that work in organic production. New restaurants, which are specializing in organic food, are opening every year. Furthermore they are getting more and more popular among young people.

Our Ukrainian local organic farmers already produce most of the popular crops for the domestic market as well as for exports. Organic grains, oil seeds, vegetables and fruit are produced by a growing number of organic farmers here, in Ukraine. Western Ukraine has most of the country's organic livestock farmers raising organic cows, pigs, sheep and goats, as well as producing organic milk, cheese and organic meat products.

Conclusion. To sum up, organic food has already become a new way of keeping healthy life style. Organic food will absolutely tastes better in any of your dishes.