

Your organic questions answered / Soil Association.

Contributors

Soil Association.

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HELP THE SOIL ASSOCIATION BUILD AN ORGANIC FUTURE

The Soil Association is an independent not for profit body that sets organic standards, supports and advises organic farmers and campaigns to change the way the UK farms. If you want an end to disasters like BSE and are against the commercial planting of GM crops - if you want organic food and a living countryside - please join us today.

The giant biotech companies lobby hard to protect their profits. We must campaign harder. We urgently need support from people that believe in farming that works with nature, not against it - people like you.

Benefits of Joining

- **FREE**, The Truth About Food, a 44 page booklet revealing the facts about what you eat, yours with a monthly payment.
- **FREE** if you can give £10 a month, a brochure of cottages and B&Bs on Soil Association certified organic farms offering discounts of up to 50 per cent.
- **FREE** to all members - Living Earth magazine, with features from writers like Monty Don and cook, Darina Allen.



YES, I'LL JOIN THE SOIL ASSOCIATION

Title First Name Surname

Address

Postcode

I'll join with a monthly gift of (please tick)

£3.50 £5 £10 £20 Other

Gift Aid - increase the value of your donation by nearly a third at no extra cost to you!
I am a UK tax payer and I would like the Soil Association to treat all donations I have made since April 2000 as Gift Aid donations.

Signature Date

You must be a UK tax payer for us to reclaim the tax.

FREE COPY OF THE 'THE TRUTH ABOUT FOOD' WHEN YOU PAY MONTHLY - AND OUR ACCOMMODATION BOOKLET IF YOU GIVE £10 A MONTH (see left)

MY BANK (Bank/Building Society)

BANK ADDRESS

Postcode

MY NAME as on account

Account no.

Sort code

Signature(s) Date

Originator's identification number 9 4 0 3 7 4 Ref. no. (office use only)

Instructions to your bank or building society to pay by Direct Debit
Please pay the Soil Association Directs from the account detailed on this instruction subject to the safeguards assumed by the Direct Debit guarantee. I understand this instruction may remain with the Soil Association and if so, details will be passed electronically to my bank/building society.

Banks and building societies may decline to accept instructions to pay Direct Debits from some types of account.

 **DIRECT Debit**

Please fill in the whole form and send to: **Soil Association, Freepost, Bristol BS1 6ZY.**

Please tick here if you wish to receive NO additional information from the Soil Association

To find out more about organic food visit our website:

www.soilassociation.org

Registered charity no. 230062



YOUR ORGANIC QUESTIONS ANSWERED



WHAT DOES 'ORGANIC' MEAN?

Organic farmers aim to produce good food from a balanced living soil. Strict European wide farming and processing regulations, known as standards, define what they can and cannot do, placing strong emphasis on protecting the environment. Organic farmers use crop rotations to improve the fertility of their soil. They cannot grow GM crops and can only use as a last resort seven of the hundreds of pesticides available to farmers. Trees, hedges and wider unfarmed field edges are encouraged, providing habitats for natural predators such as beetles, spiders and birds to control pests. The Soil Association developed the country's first organic standards over 30 years ago, and its distinctive symbol is trusted by consumers as a mark of the highest organic standards in the UK.



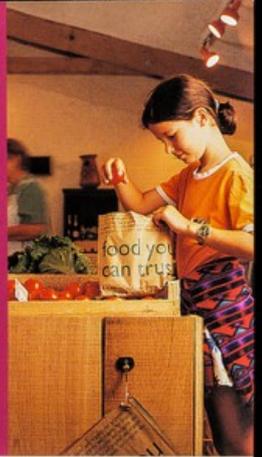
WHY IS ORGANIC FOOD MORE EXPENSIVE?

The price of organic food reflects the true cost of organic production and the special care for the environment and animal welfare involved in organic farming. It is more expensive to rotate crops, to provide extra space and better conditions for animals and to buy high-quality organically produced feed. The higher cost paid therefore represents a fair price to organic farmers and growers who produce food to these standards.



WHY SHOULD I TRY TO BUY LOCALLY PRODUCED FOOD?

Many people buy locally produced organic food because they want their money to go direct to local organic farmers and growers. As well as the social and economic benefits to communities, food grown locally is likely to be fresher and travels a shorter distance to reach you, cutting down on fuel pollution. The Soil Association has a thriving local food links department that plays a key role in the development of farmers' markets, box schemes and other local food projects. Check out the Organic Directory for a comprehensive list of local organic food outlets. Available direct from the Soil Association priced £4.95 - call 0117 929 0661 to order your copy.



YOUR ORGANIC QUESTIONS ANSWERED



WHAT ABOUT ORGANIC FARM ANIMALS - HOW WELL ARE THEY LOOKED AFTER?

Under organic standards all aspects of animal welfare are tightly controlled, including rearing, shelter, feeding and transportation. There are lower stocking density rates so animals have more room, and they are allowed to express their normal behaviour with proper access to the outdoors. Animal medicines must be used if they become ill, but cannot be used routinely in feed. Compassion in World Farming, a leading UK animal welfare organisation, recommends that its supporters buy organic food as 'it has been produced to higher welfare standards'.



IS ORGANIC FARMING BETTER FOR WILDLIFE?

The Soil Association's report, the Biodiversity Benefits of Organic Farming concluded that the number and variety of bird, butterfly and wild plant species is greater on established organic farms. Indeed, the recently announced Organic Action Plan pledges additional support for organic farmers, showing that the government acknowledges that organic farming and food offer real benefits for the environment.



HOW DO I KNOW THE FOOD I AM BUYING IS REALLY ORGANIC?

Food and drink can only legally be labelled as organic if the farms and food manufacturers producing it have been thoroughly inspected annually and licensed by an independent organic certification company. Soil Association Certification Ltd (SA Cert) is the largest UK organic certification company, licensing well over 70 per cent of all organic food sold in the UK - look for the Soil Association symbol on the labels. SA Cert also makes sure that imported produce carrying the Soil Association symbol is inspected by certification bodies applying equivalent standards and inspection procedures.