

Why Organic?

There has been a lot of talk about whether organically grown food is a superior food. Some reports and research praise its benefits over conventionally grown foods. While there are other reports that say it has no superior benefit.

To make an informed decision, I believe you need to know the facts and not just listen to propaganda. Following is a brief history of our foods and what has happened to food in the last 50 years and how it has dramatically changed our eco-systems, water ways, animal world and human health.

Throughout the ages man has depended on food for survival. The food that was consumed came from nature, very little processing or manipulation was done to the food or land. But by the turn of the 20th century small changes started to occur. First with the manipulation of fats and then by the 1950's the manipulation of crops.

The end of the World War II marked the beginning of the Chemical Revolution. This was the beginning of the practice of using manufactured fertilisers, which for the most part do not really fertilise, as they are composed of highly heated and dead substances.

This time also marked the beginning of the bombardment of crops with poisons (pesticides) that destroyed weeds, bugs and other unwanted pests. The only criteria for these poisons were that they destroyed the offending pest or plant. There was no consideration as to whether they were safe for humans or other forms of life or what would happen if they entered our water supply?

There was an arrogance of this time, it was all so scientific and so very clever that we had an array of chemicals to defeat any pest. But there was also an oversight and that was that every animal, plant, insect and bird are part of a giant system, that if one becomes poisoned then the whole system is poisoned. Today, there is not one part of the planet that is clean from pesticides and chemical residues. Even the Arctic Circle has an accumulation that is frightening.

My Grandfather was a corn farmer in the state of Iowa, USA during this time. He didn't feel good about this new order of farming and tried to warn neighboring farmers. They told him he would be lost in the revolution, they literally laughed at him. My Grandfather held onto his principles and remained an organic farmer. His principles did pay off, for 20 years ago, benefit concerts were being held for the farmers of Iowa as they had lost much of the top soil they needed to grow good quality corn due to the extensive use of chemical fertilisers and pesticides.

"You fool with nature and you will pay the price", my Grandfather always said.

Since World War II approximately 75,000 chemicals have been introduced into the environments of the world. This has infiltrated every waterway, ocean and continent on the planet. Some are harmless while others are harmful and then there are the insidious chemicals that quietly disrupt the bio systems of the planet.

These quiet chemicals disrupt the hormones of humans and animals. They are termed xeno-oestrogens, and they mimic the female hormone oestrogen. These chemicals enter the food chain in many ways, but are concentrated at the end of the food chain. We are at the end of the food chain, thus our foods are highly concentrated with these chemicals and on top of that we add hormones to some of our meats and other foods. This plethora of hormones in our food is what is mostly influencing the young age of puberty, the increase in endometriosis, the feminization of nature, the dramatic rise in hormone related problems and the increase in hermaphrodites (animal or human having both male and female sex organs).

If that's not enough, it has been well documented that some chemicals that were so naively spread on crops across the country and are now banned, such as DDT have had detrimental effects on the humans that came into contact with them. Symptoms extending from sore eyes, headaches, sinus problems up to chemical sensitivities, where people are literally allergic to the twentieth century and worse, cancer and death.

These chemicals stay in the body and are accumulated slowly, till one day the body hits a threshold where it can take no more of the chemical. The body either violently reacts or shows persistent nagging symptoms that can only be relieved by avoiding the chemical altogether. People often tell me they are allergic to fruits and vegetables, but I doubt it is the food they are allergic to, but rather the chemicals within the food.

Many people say to me, "but organic foods are too expensive". And on the surface, yes it does seem more expensive. But lets look underneath.

1. Organic foods have far less man made chemicals within and on the surface then conventionally grown foods, this is a plus in itself. The benefit: you will not reach saturation point of chemicals and therefore avoiding chemical intolerance and other insidious diseases. What is astounding is that a federally funded survey in 2000 found that consumers first concern about the food they ate was the chemicals used in production, yet only approximately 1% of the population selectively choose organic

2. Organic foods are usually delivered to markets far quicker then other foods. The benefit: less loss of vitamin, mineral and phyto-nutrients

3. Organic foods have an increase in vitamin and mineral content. A recent study done by the Australian Government Analytical Laboratories of vegetables grown

in biologically revitalised soils compared to conventionally grown vegetables, found that on average the organic group was 10 times higher in minerals such as calcium, potassium, magnesium, sodium iron and zinc. The benefits, no need for supplementation on an extensive basis.

4. Organic foods don't harm the environment. It becomes a moral issue, the ethos of sustainable farming and eating is about taking on a responsibility, giving back to the environment what we pull out of it. Do no harm. We have a moral issue. By changing the very essence of food, we change our very health. Produce that has been selectively refined and engineered to look great and do all the right things to help with modern farming practices more often than not has a lower resistance to disease, in other words they depend more on antibiotics, insecticides and the like. In turn this transcends to humans with weakened immune systems that in turn cause disease. The benefits: we all benefit.

The ramifications of chemicals in the environment as well as within our bodies have far reaching effects. You either take the time and a little bit more money now for your health or later suffer the consequences of bad health and a sick planet. Too many people in Australia are falling prey to debilitating diseases, such as heart disease, cancer, diabetes, arthritis, hormone problems, sinus and the list is endless. These diseases at one stage more often than not hit the elderly. But increasingly now, younger and younger people have these health challenges.

I don't know about you but I certainly, don't want to fade slowly into the distance, I want to be - like a light bulb. Strong and full of energy till the last few minutes, where there are a few flickers then boom out you go. I certainly don't want to be a candle in the wind, that flickers and falls all the time, being blown out occasionally and having to be revived to slowly dwindle out a sick pathetic excuse for existence.

The choices you make now regarding your health will put you in good standing as time marches on.

Being a consumer means power. Demand for something increases supply and more often than not decreases the price. If more people demand organic produce then it will become more available and less expensive, and the ramifications of this action are far reaching. Become a vigilante consumer and encourage your friends and family to do the same.

In order to be a vigilante consumer it is important to know what you are buying. The Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS) is the sole government regulator of organic agriculture, production and processing and is responsible for enforcing standards and legislation. AQIS has approved seven organic grower organisations which monitor their member-producers to ensure they adhere to AQIS standards. So if you want to know you are buying organic

look for the seal of approval from the accredited organisations. (see appendix for logo designs and list of places to shop throughout Australia).

AQUIS standards include all fruit and vegetables must be cultivated free of pesticides, in soil fed with animal and plant waste. Livestock must graze on organic pastures and are forbidden the use of growth hormones or chemical treatments. Intensive housing of animals is banned as are long periods of artificial light. The farm and its practices must be sustainable to ensure future health of the land.

If you choose organic then try and go the whole way and I promise your food and grocery bill will not be more expensive. Choose to eat only nature based foods. Organic fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds, grains, flours and dried fruits. Buy biodynamic meat and chicken. Consume only organic free-range eggs. Search out organic raw sugars, biodynamic milk, butter, yogurt cream and cheese. I suggest you do this step by step.

When I go into a grocery store and wait at the check out for my turn, I often look around into other people's grocery carts. More often than not I see prepackaged foods, packaged juices and soft drinks filling the cart, the total grocery bill for these foods always exceeds what I would spend in a week by choosing whole natural foods.

Now I'm not saying that you cannot enjoy yummy foods, just try and make them from scratch, make biscuits and cakes, and homemade drinks and desserts from organic food, but just do it the old fashion way. At home in the oven rather than from the package and plastic wrapping. I guarantee it will be lighter on your purse and give you so much more energy and health. And if you think you don't have time, remember by doing this you get more energy which makes you more efficient and thereby you find more time plus the long term ramifications give you so much more time by extending your youth and vitality.

ENDING ONE; To find an organic supplier, find a copy of my book Changing Habits Changing Lives, in the back is an appendix which has an extensive list of certified organic suppliers around Australia. I promise you this will change your life!

ENDING TWO: To find an organic supplier in your area call NASAA
www.nasaa.com.au 08 83708455

www.changinghabits.com.au