

# The Organic Label

Organic farmers do not use synthetic pesticides or fertilizers on crops and do not use antibiotics with animals. Organic farmers focus on building healthy soils and integrating all farming practices to produce healthy crops and livestock.



Food labeled with the USDA Organic Seal is produced by farmers who are inspected and certified every year to make sure their farms meet national standards for organic production.

## Categories of Organic Food Labeling:

- \* **100 Percent Organic** means all ingredients and processing methods are certified organic.
- \* **Organic** may be used on products with at least 95 percent certified organic ingredients. The remaining 5 percent must be approved for use under the USDA organic seal.
- \* **Made with Organic** Ingredients may be used on products with at least 70 percent organic ingredients.
- \* For more info:  
[www.ams.usda.gov/AMSv1.0/nop](http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSv1.0/nop)



## Where can I find Organic products?

- \* Eat Well Guide: [www.eatwellguide.org](http://www.eatwellguide.org)
- \* Local Harvest: [www.localharvest.org](http://www.localharvest.org)
- \* Savor Wisconsin: [www.savorwisconsin.com](http://www.savorwisconsin.com)
- \* Organic Foods Store Locator: [www.organicstorelocator.com](http://www.organicstorelocator.com)
- \* Organic Advisory Council: [www.organic.wisc.edu](http://www.organic.wisc.edu)
- \* Farm Fresh Atlas: [www.farmfreshatlas.org](http://www.farmfreshatlas.org)

## Information in this pamphlet was provided by the

- \* Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection
- \* Madison Area Community Supported Agriculture Coalition
- \* UW Extension
- \* Midwest Organic and Sustainable Education Service

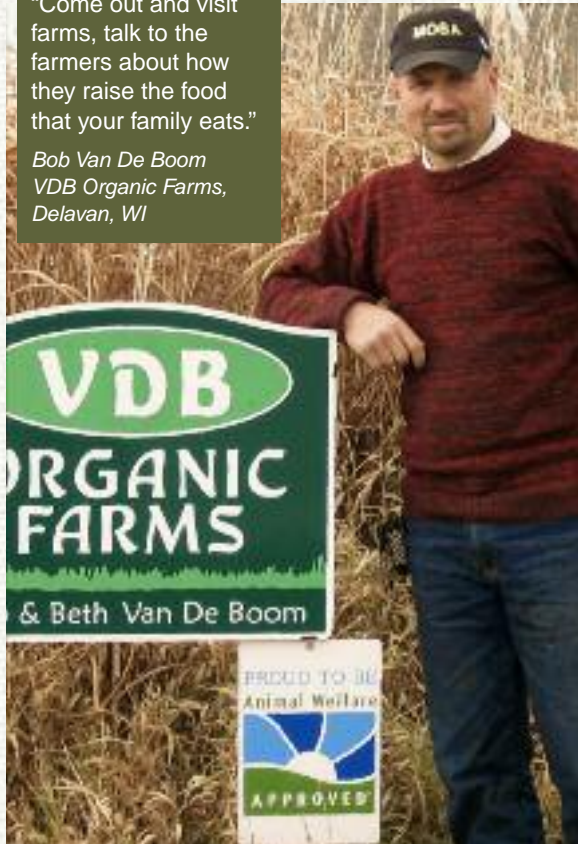


Understanding  
what the organic  
seal on a product  
really means

## Organic ~ Know how your food is produced

"Come out and visit farms, talk to the farmers about how they raise the food that your family eats."

Bob Van De Boom  
VDB Organic Farms,  
Delavan, WI



## Organic or Local

Local and organic may be the best of both worlds. The Buy Local movement is about knowing where your food comes from and supporting local farmers. Organic and local are both good ways of knowing more about how our food is produced.

## Is organic food better?

### Reduced Pesticide Exposure

While buying organic food doesn't eliminate your risk of exposure to toxins, ongoing research by the U.S. Department of Agriculture consistently shows very low or no pesticide residues in organic foods. The U.S. President's Cancer Panel Report, published in 2010, links many cancers to pesticide exposure through food.

### Your Local Economy

When you choose an organic product, not only are you supporting a sustainable food production system, but often you are putting a high proportion of those dollars into the farmer's pocket, and helping circulate your dollars in local and regional communities. Many organic foods are produced on small farms or by small companies. Even national brands of organic foods tend to be produced in much smaller batches than their conventional counterparts.



"We find that farming organically is much more in tune with who we are.

Working with nature and the natural rhythms of animal and plant life just makes sense to us."

Rebecca Goodman  
Northwood Farm,  
Wonewoc, WI

Photo credit  
Bill Lubing

## NUTRITIONAL QUALITY

- ✦ While more research is needed, a growing body of information suggests there are nutritional benefits to eating some organic foods. A variety of studies show:
- ✦ Some organic fruits and vegetables have higher levels of some vitamins, minerals and antioxidants.
- ✦ Livestock consuming fresh pasture, a requirement for organic certification, form higher proportions of healthy fats. That means meat and milk from pasture raised livestock is higher in Omega 3 and conjugated linoleic acid (CLA).

## Organic Farming is Sustainable

Organic farmers are dedicated to environmental stewardship, and providing a stable and prosperous local community. The price premium paid for organic food sustains the environment, family farming and healthy rural communities.