

Bashing Organics Doesn't Educate the Public

Here are some of the inconsistencies and annoyances in the arguments of people who constantly bash organic food.

(1) Yes, there are approved compounds such as copper sulfate and chrysanthemum-derived pyrethrins that are used by organic farmers as fungicides and insecticides, respectively. But while the organic-bashers dismiss the possibility that trace amounts on conventionally grown foods can do any harm--which in reality is still under study and varies with the pesticide---it's suddenly a big deal that there are trace amounts of organic pesticides. The latter set of compounds, which differ from those of used in conventional crops should of course also be scrutinized and regulated, but the organic-basher's focus is to patronize and expose the "naivety of consumers" ad nauseum.

(2) Herbicides, which target weeds, are not used at all by many organic fruit growers in at least Washington and Oregon. Conventional producers worldwide rely heavily on the controversial atrazine.

(2) To emphasize about how "scamful" organics are, the bashers emphasize that organics are a multi-billion dollar industry. Yes they have somewhere between \$30 to 40 billion in revenue in the U.S., but it's little (3%) compared to the \$1.2 trillion Americans spend on groceries annually.

(3) Libertarians will defend personal freedom above anything else. But some libertarians make it a mission to dissuade people from buying organics, as if it will infringe upon the freedom of the bashers. It may not be possible to feed the world with any one specific approach; but it takes a variety of methods, including where and when appropriate, carefully regulated GMOs, to do it effectively and in a sustainable way.

(4) How will Africa further suffer from the fact that a minority of people in North America choose to possibly overpay for apples?

(In reality although organics are generally pricier, there are exceptions: the organic apple farmers in Quebec charge about the same as for non-organic! Costco actually has a better deal on organically grown British Columbia corn chips and they taste much better than the leading brand)