

# GOOD FOR THE PLANET, GOOD FOR PEOPLE, GOOD FOR BUSINESS.

Whichever sustainability benefits are most important to your business, from reducing greenhouse gases to regenerating soil health, there's only one option that addresses the full suite of environmental and social concerns and is backed up by federal certification—**USDA Organic**.

## The organic opportunity

Shoppers today have increasingly high expectations for brands and retailers. They expect to see the full scope of their values reflected in the products they choose—this includes not just environmental sustainability, but also animal welfare and social justice.

Recent surveys show that a majority of Americans believe that organic products are better for the planet, healthier for people and animals, and more ethically produced than conventional.

THE ORGANIC WHEEL OF SUSTAINABILITY



Over **82%** of US households **stock organic food in their kitchens.**

When surveyed about their **top concerns in the food and beverage industry**, most consumer priorities were addressed by the **organic standard**. For example, 70% expressed concerns over the use of synthetic chemicals and GMOs, which are prohibited in organic products.

ORGANIC CONTINUES TO BE ONE OF THE FASTEST GROWING SECTORS IN US AGRICULTURE:  
**IN 2020, ORGANIC SALES GREW TO A RECORD HIGH OF \$63+ BILLION.**

# GOOD FOR THE PLANET

## Organic, the original climate-smart agriculture

By relying on ecosystem services to produce food and fiber, organic farms have a regenerative (rather than extractive) effect on the environment. Organic standards require that farmers protect the natural resources on their lands, which makes organic farms key players in the fight against the climate crisis.



### ORGANIC FARMS ...



Emit **18% less global warming-causing gases** and use **~50% less new reactive nitrogen** (an extremely potent greenhouse gas).\*



Produce healthier soils that contain **13% higher total organic matter** and capture **44% more stable sequestered carbon**.\*



Releases **40% fewer carbon emissions**.\*

\*As compared to conventional

## Conserving natural resources and protecting biodiversity

Organic farmers are required to maintain or improve the natural resources on and around their farms, including soil, water, wetlands, and wildlife habitats. By avoiding toxic chemicals and maintaining healthy wildlife habitats, organic practices promote biodiversity and protect pollinators.

### ORGANIC FARMS ...



Increase overall **biodiversity by 30%** and **pollinator diversity by up to 50%**.



**Reduce nitrates** released into groundwater **by 50%**.



**Use 45% less energy** than conventional systems.



Are more resilient; **organic farms produce yields up to 40% higher** than conventional systems in drought.



**Conserve forests and wild lands**; most organic operations are converted from land already in agricultural use, either from active conventional farms or fallowed fields.

# GOOD FOR PEOPLE

## Nutritious and delicious

Organic is the only label claim federally certified to always be non-GMO and produced without harmful pesticides, chemical preservatives, or antibiotics.

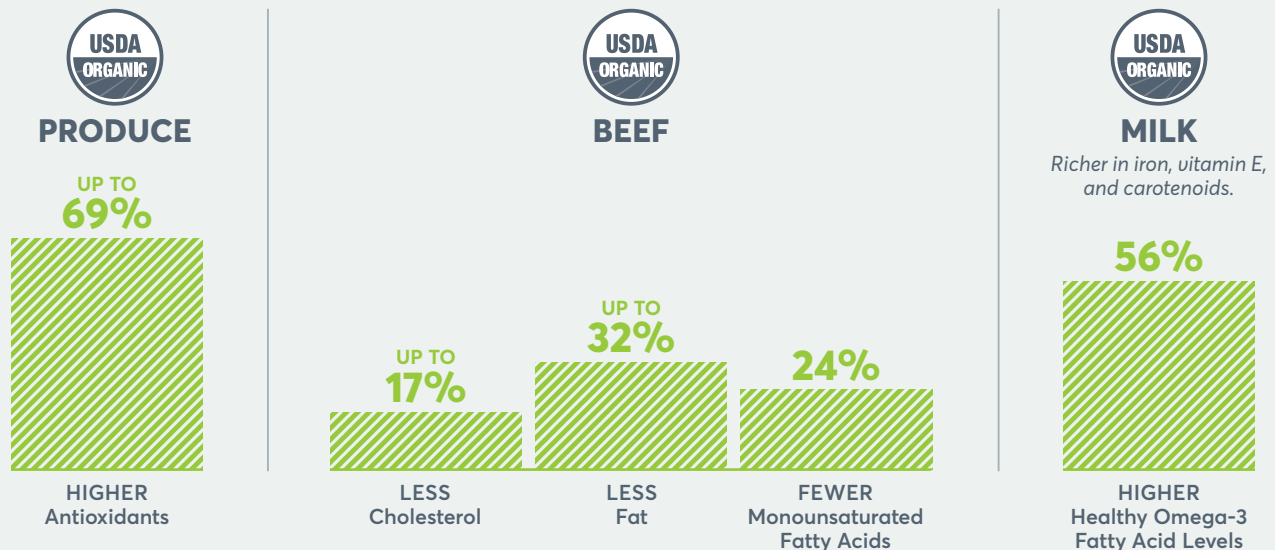


Pesticide residues in organic produce are 55x lower in vegetables and 115x lower in fruits versus conventional produce.



Organic protects frontline farmworkers, who experience the most danger of acute exposure and health consequences.

### ORGANIC, A HEALTHIER OPTION



Nutritional data as compared to conventional products

## Supporting local economies, sustaining communities

Organic is good for individuals *and* good for communities. If social justice and rural economic development are important for your company, organic is always the best choice.

**Clusters of organic businesses** are correlated with reduced poverty, increased median household income, and higher participation in the labor force.

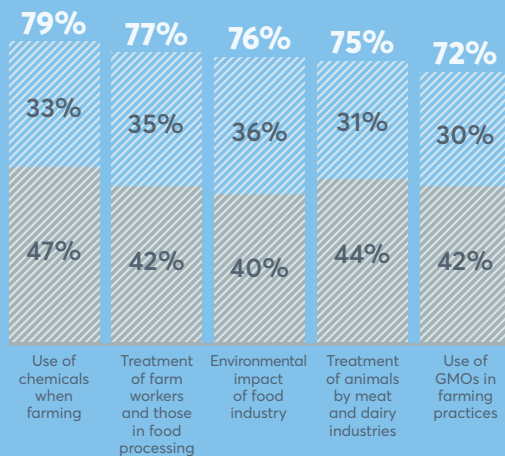
**Access to farmer cooperatives, training and support services, and the integration of traditional knowledge** are among the most important benefits of organic agriculture, as reported by small-holder farmers globally.

**Organic creates better opportunities for farmers.** This year, USDA invested \$300M to help more farmers transition to organic production.

# GOOD FOR BUSINESS

Customers want to know that brands and retailers have carefully considered their values and integrated purpose and societal impact into the products they sell. A majority of consumers report that organic is the label that best embodies their values.

## ORGANIC ALIGNS WITH CONSUMER PRIORITIES AND VALUES



/// SOMEWHAT CONCERNED    ■ VERY CONCERNED

Source: Edelman Trust Survey, 2021

## The organic shopper

### FAMILY ORIENTED

Organic shoppers are 15% more likely to have children in their household.



71%

OF PARENTS USE ORGANIC PRODUCE



65%

USE ORGANIC PACKAGED FOODS



62%

USE ORGANIC MILK



### YOUNGER AND MORE ENGAGED

45% of the organic customer base are under 40, despite only being 36% of the general population.



Food Forward consumers, those most likely to **share their feelings and knowledge about food with others and take action on food-related issues**, overwhelmingly expressed trust in and a preference for organic products.

## Federally guaranteed

Unlike other eco-labels like "natural" or "regenerative", the USDA Organic label is backed by 3rd party inspection, federally enforced, and provides traceability from the farm to the consumer.



**Certified organic operations** are inspected at least once a year and must submit organic system plans annually to their certifier for review and approval.

**Organic fraud is a crime.** Cheating in organic can mean losing certification and facing significant potential financial penalties.

**All field operations** are inspected at least once every year.

# RESOURCES

## PAGE ONE

Recent surveys show that a majority of Americans believe that organic products are better for the planet, healthier for people and animals, and more ethically produced than conventional (Edelman, 2022).

Over 82% of US households stock organic food (Nielsen, 2016).

When surveyed about their top concerns in the food and beverage industry, most consumer priorities were addressed by the organic standard. For example, 70% expressed concerns over the use of synthetic chemicals and GMOs, which are prohibited in organic products. (Edelman, 2022).

In 2020, organic sales grew to a record high of \$63+ billion (Organic Trade Association, Organic Industry Survey, 2021).

## PAGE 2, GOOD FOR THE PLANET

Emit 18% less global warming causing gases and use ~50% less new reactive nitrogen (an extremely potent greenhouse gas) (Laura Cattell Noll et al 2020 Environ. Res. Lett. 15 045004).

Produce healthier soils that contain 13% higher total organic matter and capture 44% more stable sequestered carbon (*Science Direct*, 2017. "Advances in Agronomy". Volume 146, Pages 1–35).

Release 40% fewer carbon emissions. (Rodale Institute, "Farming Systems Trial 1981–Present").

Increase overall biodiversity by 30% and pollinator diversity by up to 50%. (*Journal of Applied Ecology*, "Land-use intensity and the effects of organic farming on biodiversity: a hierarchical meta-analysis," 2013).

Reduce nitrates released into groundwater by 50%. (Sustainable Agriculture Research, "Water Quality in Organic Systems," 2015)

Use 45% less energy than conventional production "Farming Systems Trial 1981–Present").

Are more resilient; organic farms produce yields up to 40% higher than conventional systems in drought. (*Nature Plants* "Organic agriculture in the twenty-first century," 2016).

## PAGE 3, GOOD FOR PEOPLE

Pesticide residues in organic produce are 55× lower in vegetables and 115× lower in fruits versus conventional produce. (*Agronomy*, "Organic Farming Lessens Reliance on Pesticides and Promotes Public Health by Lowering Dietary Risks," 2021.) (TOC Summary)

Organic protects frontline farmworkers, who experience the most danger of acute exposure and health consequences (The Organic Center, "Critical Issue Report: Occupational Pesticide Exposure," 2018.)

Chart: *Nutrition*

- **PRODUCE:** Higher antioxidants (*British Journal of Nutrition*, "Higher antioxidant and lower cadmium concentrations and lower incidence of pesticide residues in organically grown crops: a systematic literature review and meta-analyses," 2014).
- **BEEF:** Less cholesterol, fat, and monosaturated fatty acids (*Journal of the Science of Food and Agriculture*, "Nutritional properties of organic and conventional beef meat at retail," 2019).
- **MILK:** Higher Omega 3 fatty acids (*British Journal of Nutrition*, "Higher PUFA and n-3 PUFA, conjugated linoleic acid, α-tocopherol and iron, but lower iodine and selenium concentrations in organic milk: a systematic literature review and meta- and redundancy analyses," 2016).

Clusters of organic businesses are correlated with reduced poverty, increased median household income, and higher participation in the labor force. (OTA White Paper, "U.S. Organic Hotspots and Their Benefit to Local Economies," 2016).

Access to farmer cooperatives, training and support services, and the integration of traditional knowledge are among the most important benefits of organic agriculture, as reported by small-holder farmers globally. (*Science Advances*, "Many shades of gray—The context-dependent performance of organic agriculture," 2017.)

This year, USDA invested \$300M to help more farmers transition to organic production. (USDA, 2021).

## PAGE 4, GOOD FOR BUSINESS

A majority of consumers report that organic is the label that best embodies their values. (Edelman, 2022)

Chart: *The organic shopper, family oriented* (Natural Marketing Institute, 2020).

Chart: *The organic shopper, younger and more engaged* (Natural Marketing Institute, 2020).

Chart: *Organic aligns with consumer priorities* (Edelman, 2022).

Federally guaranteed: (USDA Organic Regulations 7 CFR Part 205)