When the ancient Greeks started the Olympic Games in 776 BC, they established certain special production regimes, including the Olympic greenhouses.

Milo of Croton, for example, a wrestler of legendary strength who won five successive Olympic Games from 776 BC to 688 BC, ate 6 kilograms of meat, 9 kilograms of barley and 8.5 litres of water a day, according to ancient records.

Today’s athletes view sports and nutrition quite differently. And many of them say organic food is essential to their well-being and performance.

Ashleigh McIvor — after a long list of impressive, international Ski Cross results dating back to 2003 — became the first-ever Olympic Ski Cross champion during the 2010 Olympic Games in Vancouver.

As an elite athlete, she says, “It is important that I feel my body with the healthiest food, as it impacts my overall well-being, strength, stamina, and ultimately, my performance on the hill.”

McIvor decided to support the organic movement in 2005, at the urging of her sister, an environmental sciences student at the time.

“As an athlete, I spend most of my time outdoors. I am a true nature lover and I care deeply about protecting the planet,” she says. “Every small step counts, and the food you choose to buy has an impact on the long-term health of the planet.”

When Stonyfield, a Quebec-based organic yogurt brand, presented Ms. McIvor with the opportunity to become an ambassador for its Clever Awakening social-media campaign — to inform Canadians about organic food — Ms. McIvor felt it was a good fit. She will be leading an online conversation through www.stonyfield.ca.

According to a recent Ipsos Reid Canada online survey, “Fifty-one per cent of Canadians feel they are not well informed about the products from organic farming, and 62 per cent are interested in learning more,” says Kenneth Melkonian, brand manager with Stonyfield.

“That is why we asked an elite athlete such as Ashleigh to partner with us, we want to engage the public through an inspirational Canadian who embraces our mission and demonstrates that eating organic is better for your health, the health of your community and the health of your planet,” Mr. Melkonian says.

A film night illustrating the ideas behind organic agriculture, or the opportunity to become an ambassador for the campaign, could be a big plus for the first-time Olympian.

Canadian Olympic Ashleigh McIvor is among the Canadians who choose organic foods. Beyond her concern that she “fuel her body with good food,” Ms. McIvor says, “I care deeply about protecting the planet. Every small step counts, and the food you choose to buy has an impact on the long-term health of the planet.”

Free organ-ic—a-djective

Organic production is a holistic system designed to optimize the productivity and fitness of diverse communities within the agro-ecosystem, including soil organisms, plants, livestock and people. The principle goal of organic production is to develop enterprises that are sustainable and harmonious with the environment.

Organic Week 2010

There were any organic foods on your Thanksgiving table this year? It would have been good timing since Monday was also the beginning of Organic Week in Canada.

The Canadian organic sector has declared October 9 to 16 national Organic Week. Organic Week partners, including the Canada Organic Trade Association, Canadian Organic Growers and various regional and provincial partners, believe in the benefits of organic agriculture systems and want to spread the word.

Organic Week celebrations are happening across Canada.

Events across the country include restaurant concerts, tests, performances and organic farm tours, to name a few. (Read more about some special events on page 4 of this report.)

And organizers are also asking organic food enthusiasts to plan events in their own communities.

It could be a book club discussion, a recipe contest or a film night illustrating the ideas behind organic food. There are plenty of suggestions and listings at www.organicweek.ca.

This week also promotes the “Canada Organic” logo. Finding the logo on a food product tells the shopper that it meets Canada’s new national organic food production regulations and standards.

We will be on location this week and share some great deals. Looking for a special deal? Catch us on Saturday, World Food Day – a good time to ask: how is your food grown?
Q&A with Derek Lynch
Canada Research Chair, Organic Agriculture, Nova Scotia Agricultural College

Your recent research has shown that organic farming systems use less energy than traditional practices. Can you describe your findings? Earlier this year, I worked with Dr. Ralph Martin and Dr. Rod MacRae to conduct a comprehensive review of over 120 scientific publications comparing the energy use and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions of organic farming systems with those of traditional farming systems.

What did you find? Our findings confirm what many already know: organic farming systems don’t involve the use of nitrogen fertilizer, pesticides or herbicides, and use at least 20 per cent less energy to operate than traditional farms.

What are the main energy differences between organic and non-organic farming systems? In organic farming systems, producers do not use nitrogen fertilizer, which is very energy intensive to produce, or pesticides and herbicides. These contributions to the embodied energy costs of the product produced on the farm. The federal government, under the Growing Forward Policy Framework, work, recently committed $6.5 million to Canada’s Organic Science Cluster. This national research program is being led by the Organic Agriculture Centre of Canada at the Nova Scotia Agricultural College and the Organic Federation of Canada. The research will contribute to our knowledge of how organic methods can benefit all agriculture, from fruit horticulture to dairying production systems, to environmental sustainability overall.

Is there any precedent where consumers are told this product is carbon-neutral or has a lower climate-change impact? Tentative steps have already been taken towards GHG labelling in other parts of the world. In Europe, the Nature and More labelling and tracking scheme provides consumers with information on the GHG emissions associated with a product. And a Swedish initiative, Climate Labelling for Food, is working to decrease climate impact by setting food production standards. This is complemented by a food-labelling system through which consumers can make conscious climate choices and businesses can increase their competitive power. While we don’t yet have a label that speaks to energy use and the climate, we do have the Canada Organic label. I would encourage people to consider organic as the best way of knowing how your food has been produced. Canada’s organic standards require that farmers follow fundamental organic principles of environmental sustainability, which promote biodiversity, minimize soil erosion, and recycle renewable resources, decrease pollution and increase soil fertility through non-chemical means.
While organic food sales make up a small percentage of total retail food sales in Canada – 2.5 percent – that number speaks volumes when compared to organic food sales in 2006, which had 0.9 percent of the market.

“The Canadian organic sector has been growing 20 to 35 percent a year – a fairly breathtaking pace – for many years,” says Matthew Holmes, executive director, Canada Organic Trade Association. “Even during the depth of the recession, we saw a drastic increase in organic growth, but it still grew. While other sectors were retracting, some of our members had their best years on record.”

In 2008, some of our members had their best years on record, says Leo Johnson, co-owner of Organic Meadow, a co-op consisting of over 100 organic family farms, says other market drivers are salad greens, cereals and dairy products. Organic Meadow is an example of an organization that has experienced incredible growth, “Our first run of organic milk was 700 litres, and today we are at 25,000 litres….and today we are at 12 different diary for cheese, butter, ice cream and yogurt production, with distribution coast to coast, and representation on the shelves of all major grocery stores across Canada,” he says.

Due to market demand, Organic Meadow recently partnered with Sarah’s Dairy Ltd. to build Ontario’s first new dairy in decades. “We went ahead with a 12,000-square-foot plant to a 20,000-square-foot plant.” While Organic Meadow has no plans to export outside of Canada anytime soon, other organic companies are thriving on the international market.

Invermere, B.C.-based Kicking Horse Coffee – an organic, fair trade coffee that is nearing exportation in 2010 – says Mr. Holmes. “The global organic market is expanding rapidly, and this support will allow Canada to establish itself as a supplier of quality organic products.”

Organics growing by leaps and bounds

The retail value of organic food products sold in Canada in 2008 was estimated at $32 billion, according to a 2008 Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada study.

Mr. Holmes says, while the organic industry began in the ‘60s and ‘70s as a change movement, today’s market drivers are significantly different.

“In addition to those buying ethically and specialty foods, which have a lot of crossover with organic, the drivers are new parents and baby boomers,” he says. Steve Caroll, CEO of Organic Meadow, a crop consisting of over 100 organic family farms, says other market drivers are salad greens, cereals and dairy products. Organic Meadow is an example of an organization that has experienced incredible growth, “Our first run of organic milk was 700 litres, and today we are at 25,000 litres….and today we are at 12 different diary for cheese, butter, ice cream and yogurt production, with distribution coast to coast, and representation on the shelves of all major grocery stores across Canada,” he says.

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Organic food sold in Canadian supermarkets

Packaged & Prepared Foods – 19%

Dairy & Eggs – 13%

Breads & Grains – 12%

Vegetables & Fruits – 41%

Refrigerated – 18%

Meat, Fish & Poultry – 1%

Number of certified organic processors and handlers

Forex
canada.org

Join the free world

✓ CHEMICAL PESTICIDE FREE
✓ ARTIFICIAL INGREDIENT FREE
✓ PRESERVATIVE FREE

Believe in goodness.
It’s organic.

 revealed by a recent survey of 1000 Canadian coffee drinkers of whom 65% said they would purchase fair trade coffee if it was affordable and easy to find.

Kicking Home Coffee – an organic, fair trade coffee that is nearing exportation in 2010 – says Mr. Holmes. “The global organic market is expanding rapidly, and this support will allow Canada to establish itself as a supplier of quality organic products.”

Bags of one per cent Organic Meadow milk roll off the line in the new, state-of-the-art, 20,000-square-foot dairy in Guelph, Ontario – a partnership of Steen’s Dairy and Organic Meadow Co-op Inc.

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Believe in goodness.
It’s organic.

stonyfield.ca

Link to: stonyfield.ca

eat your way to a healthier world.
Celebrate Organic Week in style

Weekly sales that leap from $1.1 billion in 2005 to $2 billion in 2008, the industry is showcasing the growing organic food movement, including organic farms, chefs, retailers, restaurants and new legs from Thanksgiving Day, Ottawa to the small town's fair-ground in the background, Laura Telford, national director of harvest of attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder. A study published in the journal Pediatrics concluded a thank-you to the government for the new Organic Products Regulations – which guarantee that organic products sold in Canada now meet our national standards and requirements – with teeth for enforcement,” says Mr. Holmes. The industry will present a selection of organic foods including maple syrup and duck from Quebec, beef and squash from Ontario, wild rice from Saskatchewan and fresh vegetables from local organic growers. The presence of attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder. Manitoba Harvest Hemp Foods & Oils is proud to be part of National Organics Week!

Our hemp food has the essential nutrients for healthy living, grown by local Canadian farmers. Try some today!
Organic farmer reveals soul behind the practice

C
rop-damaging pests can cripple a... is grown, the environmental footprint it leaves behind and who they are supporting by buying it.

PHOTO: ISTOCKPHOTO.COM

that much of the world's would include spraying the... conventional methods of deal-

ing with this problem... beneficial insects – to deal both large international and... organically certified... more than 14,500 hectares... bugs over pesticides

Organic farmer reveals soul behind the practice

T he whole story on eating organically serves three dimensions... There are those who choose to eat organic because of the obvious benefits of organic farming practices. There, then, are those mak-

ing for organic straw for bedding... Mr. Kitt. “They have made the deci-

sion to work closer with nature; look at long-term sustainability rather than short-term... benefits. "Organic farming is sus-

To target the people who grow our... By the time Thanksgiving... 180 kilogrammes of food to them... “Now, just three-and-a-half... "I eat mostly organic. I may... "Organic farming is sus-

Organic farmers grow favour good bugs over pesticides

Organic farmers grow favour good bugs over pesticides

O
crop-damaging pests can... against crops like garlic... – whether beneficial or damaging. A case in point, tomato pests... farms, including greater... non-crop-harming, natural predators of crop-eating pests – include ladybugs and... researchers from Agricul-

THE ENTOMOLOGICAL GROUP'S SAO FRANCISCO MILL

Mr. Kitt moves his turkeys into a new pasture, commenting on how much they love the fresh pastures. Sadly, few turkeys raised in Canada get to see the sunlight, let alone stroll outside. Yet, on Mr. Kitt’s farm the animals... a micro-wasp"... uses to feed their larvae... few harbour harmful insects... their nutritional needs, their needs for shelter, and... Mr. Kitt... according to insects in Brazil is the world's... and the ones like us walk... WWOOF volunteers from all... to the people who grow our... she says. "I'd hurl at a grower... greenhouse and spending a... the garlic that is the basis for healthy, living plants and ecosystems. When we spread ferti-

Organic food industry experts agree more Canadians need to pay attention to where their food comes from, how it is grown, the environmental footprint it leaves behind and who they are supporting by buying it. WWOOF volunteers from all day, says Mr. Kitt. After a busy day, he heads out to play the accordion at the farmers’ centre and plans to grow his... community. "There is a lot of issues that surround... comments on the holistic aspect of eating organic... to the people who grow our... rainwater, he says. "Nature really does take care of itself," she says.

Organic farmers manage to raise healthy crops without the use of toxic synthetic pesticides by relying on nature’s bugs to battle one another. Beneficial insects – the ones that our farmers... WWOOF volunteers from all day, says Mr. Kitt. After a busy day, he heads out to play the accordion at the farmers’ centre and plans to grow his... community. "There is a lot of issues that surround... comments on the holistic aspect of eating organic... to the people who grow our... rainwater, he says. "Nature really does take care of itself," she says.

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IN STORES NOW

This logo tells you that products have been inspected and certified under the Canadian Organic Regime, overseen by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA).

Canada has implemented mandatory national organic standards and labelling rules. Make sure the products you buy are certified organic and meet Canadian requirements.

Choose products with the “Canada Organic” logo.

Visit www.OrganicBiologique.ca for more info.