

## **Organic Foods Not Healthier Than Conventional**

CHICAGO - Organic foods are not superior in nutritional quality or safety when compared against conventional foods, yet organics do have the potential for greater pathogen contamination. Thus, purchasing organically grown produce is not necessary for safety or nutritional reasons, according to the Institute of Food Technologists, an international, not-for-profit scientific society.

“Consumers need to understand that organic production does not mean pesticide-free and pathogen-free production,” says IFT food science expert Carl Winter, the director of the FoodSafe Program at University of California at Davis.

Neither organic nor conventionally grown foods are free from pesticides. And scientific evidence indicates that health risks associated with disease-causing microorganisms are far greater than risks associated with pesticide residues, which are negligible.

In its most recent Expert Report, IFT reveals that scientific information is insufficient to ensure that foodborne pathogens are killed during composting and applying manure, a significant vehicle for pathogens and the major source of fertilizer used for growing organic produce.

“Organics cannot supply foods always free from pathogens or pesticides, and cannot provide our nation with a more nutritional, diverse, and safe food supply than we currently enjoy,” says IFT President Mark McLellan, an expert on agricultural methods and director of the Institute of Food Science & Engineering at Texas A&M University.

“Conventionally grown foods that utilize well-researched techniques including biotechnology benefit all consumers worldwide with a more abundant and economical food supply, foods of enhanced nutritional quality, and fresh fruits and vegetables with improved shelf life,” McLellan asserts.

IFT steadfastly supports the techniques of rDNA biotechnology, which significantly reduces or eliminates the application of pesticides.

Founded in 1939, the Institute of Food Technologists is a not-for-profit scientific society with 27,000 members working in food science, technology and related professions in industry, academia and government. As the society for food science and technology, IFT brings sound science to the public discussion of food issues. For more on IFT, see [www.ift.org](http://www.ift.org).

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