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# Making the "Growing" Trend a Reality: Proof That the Organic Lifestyle is Worth the Money and is in the Reach of Even a College Student's Budget

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## **Introduction**

Although organic foods may be the answer to solving a number of environmental, societal, and nutritional issues that are prevalent in our world today, many people do not understand what the term “organic” means and its implications for our future as an intelligent species. Recent surveys show that up to thirty-five percent of consumers would not purchase organic foods even if they were the same price and as readily available as their conventional counterparts (Duram 99). This statistic proves that people do not understand what it means for food to be organic and do not know the major negative impact that non organic foods have on the world around us. In attempts to breakdown any misconceptions of organic foods, this text will provide the true meaning of organic and the adverse affects on global issues from not growing organically, justify the costs of organic foods, and provide clear examples as to how some one as impoverished as a college student can live an organic lifestyle. Finally, proof will be given that the “deals” given at fast food restaurants prove their product’s lack of quality.

### **I. Breaking the “Trend” Mentality**

Organic food seems to be becoming more and more popular in the past decade. Nearly all grocery stores carry at least a small selection of organic products. According to About.com article, Top 10 Global Food Trends, it is ranked 5<sup>th</sup> overall (Haynes). This statistic seems like a break through for the organic theory. However, the fact that this philosophy of how to grow food is still being labeled as a trend implies that enthusiasts still have a lot of work to do.

The National Organic Standards Board defines “organic agriculture” as “...ecological production management system that promotes and enhances biodiversity, biological cycles, and soil biological activity. It is based on a minimal use of off-farm inputs and on management practices that restore, maintain, and enhance ecological harmony” (“NOSB

Definition”). By breaking down this definition into its components, it can be revealed that organic food is not a trend; instead it is society’s transition from the true trend of convenience back to traditional agricultural methods.

The NOSB quotes organic agriculture as a practice to enhance “biodiversity, biological cycles, and soil biological activity” (“NOSB Definition”). What does this mean, and why is it so important? Well, one must revert back to grade school science class to remember the concept of biodiversity: that for an ecosystem to prevail there must be a varied number of species (“Scientific Facts on Biodiversity”). For example, humans cannot survive without the nutrients that come from countless types of plants and animals. In less species-centric terms, everything needs something else to thrive. Despite this concept taught early in life, corporate farms, which take up the majority of farmland in the U.S., strive to create what is called a monoculture: an environment consisting of one organism. Go driving through rural America, and witness the countless acres of the potato plants of Idaho, the tobacco plants of Virginia, the peach orchards of Georgia. This isolation of one organism to a single locality is unnatural. Although these plants can survive in the mass fields, they deplete the nutrients in the soil and have no counterparts to replace them. In response to this concern, many farmers implement crop rotation: circling through different crops over a course of 2 to 3 years. For example, having legumes in a rotation can supplement the lack of nitrogen in soil after growing other crops, such as corn (Peel). Although this does increase the productivity of the corn on the years it is grown, it in no way promotes biodiversity.

Biodiversity is a necessity in our world, despite all of our technology. It gives us a level of food security. For example, if we grow one specific species of potato over 100 acres and a virus specific to that potato comes through, the entire crop will more than likely be eradicated.

However, grow 10 types of vegetables, and only a tenth of that crop will be killed. This wisdom would have been useful to the Irish in 1845 when suddenly, that September, all of the leaves on their potato crops turned black and shriveled up. Thus was known as “the potato blight,” an airborne fungus that from just one spore could affect thousands of plants in just a few days. It is estimated that this major plague, which caused widespread famine, caused at least one million deaths from starvation over the six year period and another million fled to other countries (Irish Potato Blight). Today, our answer to the “potato blight” and other such crop killers is pesticides. These can be effective in the short-run, however the overwhelmingly negative affects on the environment which will be discussed later, can be detrimental.

Biodiversity affects the health value of the food we consume as well. Take for example salmon. Salmon, like many fish absorb Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) which are a mixture of 209 individual chlorinated compounds. PCBs are artificially produced and are found in coolants, lubricants, and electrical equipment. Farm raised salmon purchased in the United States have the highest amount of PCBs out of the entire global food supply, up to ten times more than “wild caught” salmon. This comes from the feed that farmers give to their fish. This feed is manufactured to promote quick growth, and stop the spread of diseases which is a result of the high volume of fish being held in these tanks and man-made ponds. If there was a higher diversity of animals in these environments, the salmon would be less likely to spread their diseases to each other, and natural feed would be able to be used. However, in efforts to have these salmon survive in such unnatural situations, specific feed must be manufactured, which in the process, picks up high levels of PCBs (Tsang).

Next the NOSB describes that the production of organic food employs “minimal use of off-farm inputs” (NOSB Definition). This phrase refers to pesticides, hormones, and other

unnatural substances that would be used by farmers to cultivate their crops. This may seem unusual to the current generation who has never known anything but a world filled with the aforementioned substances. This too can be explained by the former salmon example. Recall that it is the man-made PCBs that have made their way into the feed. This is not applicable to wild salmon because their diet would be purely natural--only affected by chemical run-off from unrelated man-made processes.

Lastly, the definition of organic food includes “practices that maintain and enhance ecological harmony” (NOSB Definition). This phrase more or less encompasses any other practices that may affect the state of the environment. This includes using as little fuel as possible, by planting, watering, and harvesting by hand which affects the overall quality of the final product. Also, not using genetically modified plants and animals which upset the integrity of the species’ original genetic structure.

To the current member of this technologically advanced society, these things, biodiversity, minimal use of off-farm inputs and practices that maintain ecological harmony may be viewed as a trend since they have known no other way. However, this is a false conception of what is happening in the food industry. In fact, the opposite is true: the market of convenience products, genetically modified foods, and pesticides and hormone-packed products are the true trend. These things have only been popularized in the past few decades as their production has become very efficient with our growing technology. However, as far as food production is concerned, “organic food” is the norm, the method of production for humans for our entire existence, less the past few decades. The environment has always maintained its own biodiversity, had no man made chemicals, and created its own methods for ecological harmony. Now is the time to break from our artificial food trend and go back to the food production of our

ancestors.

## **II. Justification of the Costs**

Many people find it hard to start buying organic after becoming accustomed to the “conventional” product price. After all, organic products may cost far more than their counterparts. On top of that, organic products are harder to find, requiring more homework, to the consumer’s plate. As a result, many people have chosen to use their disposable income towards other things and to spend a minimal amount on food. This prioritization that our culture has adapted seems to be very contradictory, especially when one realizes that most of the money we feel that we are saving by buying ‘conventional’ food products is being taken out of our back pocket through our taxes.

The most direct way we are paying for the cheap price on “conventional” food products is through government subsidies. After World War II, many governments became very anxious about the prospect of another food shortage. They began to try to find ways to prevent them from happening again. During the early 1950s, chemical technologies and agrochemical agriculture skyrocketed in complexity, seemingly as a blessing to the governments’ concerns. The European Union began to promote these advancements because of the large affects they were having on production levels. Many governments began subsidizing farms that had implemented the use of chemicals in their growing practices. Throughout the preceding decades, studies conducted proved the possible dangers of these practices, but the laws have not been altered accordingly (Spevak). Therefore, farms that utilize chemicals are subsidized by the government; farms that don’t (I.e. organic farms) are not subsidized. In 2005, the U.S. government expected to pay \$24 billion on farm subsidies, that’s \$24 billion that American’s could have spent on the products that they wanted, not the products that the government deemed

worthy, or alternatively, tax money that could have gone to fixing the environmental damage that has already occurred courtesy of seventy years of agrochemical agriculture (Charles).

When comparing the cost of something, quality must come into play. Just because one item is labeled as cheaper does not mean that you are getting your money's worth. Agrochemicals were not created with nutrition or taste in mind. The concept was centralized on cheap mass-production. This has led to a far more inferior product. More subjective, but has been agreed upon by many, is that organic food tastes better. Many feel that organic foods contain pure flavor, what some culinarians refer to as "umami." This argument is quite accurate, perhaps not in preference, but by comparison. Obviously the product consisting only of itself, the organic option will be purer than the similar product that has been treated with chemicals.

Nutritional value also comes into play when comparing quality. There have been many studies conducted that support that organic foods have higher nutritional values than their conventional counterparts including products such as strawberries, oranges, apples, and many more fruits and vegetables ("Nutritional Considerations"). That means that when you purchase discounted food, you are cheated out of all the nutrients that you think you should be getting.

### **III. Price of not living Organically**

The problem with "conventional" food products is that they come with many fees beyond the sticker price. One such price is that of our health. It is common knowledge that the current population is the most unhealthy it has ever been. However, we generally think immediately of the gluttonous diets and lack of exercise that have contributed to those problems. Rarely do we analyze the affects our farming procedures have on the human body.

Using any unnatural chemical in our food processes can lead to many forms of damage to our health. According to a University of Arizona study, children who are exposed to

pesticides before birth and through breast milk, “exhibited less stamina, and poorer memory and coordination than other kids” (Cox11). A New York Times article from June 2005 reported the findings of the Center for Children’s Health and the Environment of the Mount Sinai School of Medicine concluded that with exposure to the placenta certain pesticides can “enter the brain of the developing fetus where they can cause learning and behavioral disabilities.” These toxins are believed to attribute to the twelve million American children who suffer from learning, behavioral, and developmental disorders (Pesticide Residues from Non-Organic Food Building Up in Our Bodies).

Internal pesticide presence is much more common than one might think. While conducting a study on pesticides in the average consumer, the Pesticide Action Network North America (PANNA) and partner groups, found that 100% of the people who had both their blood and urine tested, had some level of pesticides in their system. On average, PANNA cited, 13 out of 23 pesticides tested for we present in each person. The study further mentioned that many of these pesticides have been associated with health problems such as infertility, birth defects, and childhood and adulthood cancers. The government has placed safety levels on pesticides individually, but this does not take into consideration the mix of toxins that can occur which, as proven by this study, is common. Children, who are believed to be the most vulnerable to pesticide affects, have the highest pesticide exposure out of any other group. A recent study by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) showed that children from ages 6-11 averaged four times the amount of nerve-damaging organ phosphorus (OP) pesticides than what the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has deemed “acceptable for long-term exposure” (Pesticide Residues from Non-Organic Food Building Up in our Bodies).

Growth hormones, commonly found in “conventional” products (especially meats),

can also cause many health problems. One specific hormone, 17 beta-estradiol, is considered a “complete carcinogen” by the European Union’s Scientific Committee on Veterinary Measures Relating to Public Health. It has been linked to cancer, developmental problems, harm to immune systems, and brain disease. Because of this and similar risks of hormone use, Europe has banned many of the hormones still used in America. Of all the non-organic beef produced in America, ninety percent contains up to six growth hormones that have been banned in Europe. As a result, Europe refuses to buy most American produced beef. (Cox 13)

Many environmental concerns stem from the same culprits as Health problems. For example, pesticides can cause damage to other animals the same way they do for humans. These chemicals are toxic and cause similar diseases in the creatures exposed to them. Exposure can come from an animal eating the toxin: which, of course is the intention of the pesticide. However, it can affect other animals for which the pesticide is not targeted towards. Pesticides have been responsible for killing beneficial insects and predators of pests. When the pesticides wear off, either are not being used or have washed off, the pest will have a much better chance of thriving because it will have access to that food supply again and its natural predator’s population will have decreased considerably, which can lead to overpopulation of that pest (Trautmann, Porter, and Wagenet).

Chemicals can be spread through other natural processes as well. Rain can wash the pesticide off of plants, producing a polluted run-off, which will eventually lead to streams, rivers, lake, and oceans. Also, with our modern monoculture agriculture, erosion has become a big problem with nutrient-rich topsoil eroding ten times faster than it can be replaced naturally. What is left is a less nutritious subsoil. This soil has fewer nutrients for productivity and a weaker water holding capacity. Farmers can temporarily compensate for these issues with fertilization

and irrigation. This trend has led farmers to a short term economical gain, which, so far, has trumped the long term environmental damage that the process is causing (Trautmann, Porter, and Wagenet).

Where does that nourishing top soil go? The eroding soils run off of farms and into streams, rivers, lakes, and reservoirs, which can provide a variety of environmental problems. The build of these eroded soils can clog water systems, which can lead to increased flooding and a decrease in reservoir capacity. With it, the soil brings fertilizers; which on farms are beneficial for maximizing crop production. However, with their introduction to aquatic ecosystems, they can promote excessive plant growth. These ecosystems become imbalanced because the large population of plants dominates the oxygen supply in the water, making it harder for other organisms, such as fish, to thrive, and in some cases, survive (Trautmann, Porter, and Wagenet).

Of all the issues intertwined within our commercial farming practices, the one that tends to be overlooked is the overall affect on society. The hundreds of workers and farmers within this system are treated quite unfairly by the handful of suits who take in all the profit. Commercial farming, like many other industries, has set its self up to take advantage of the little people.

Most people are aware of overtime payment which is mandated by the government: after working 40 hours in a week, the employer must pay the employee time and a half. What people are unaware of is that the agriculture industry is not subject to this law, meaning that workers can be forced to work more than 40 hours per week and not receive any more compensation. Atlanta law firm Buckley & Klein, LLC cites that when it comes to the FLSA (Fair Labor Standards Act), which mandates the federal provisions for overtime, that there are loop wholes in relation to the agricultural industry (Buckley & Klein). While many farms are

covered under FLSA because of their interstate trade, there are still some that are not and have found ways to get out of paying overtime. Farm work can be extremely exhausting, even if only done 40 hours a week. This discrepancy in federal law is taken advantage of by some employers who over work their employees as opposed to hiring more employees, which would be more expensive for them.

All of this disrespect the federal government has for agricultural workers has been absorbed and implemented by some heartless corporations where workers are treated unfairly by these heartless corporations. While this generally only extends to harsh working conditions at low pay, there are some extreme cases. In 2007, one such corporation was even found housing slaves in a U-haul truck who were forced to work on their fields. This sounds like a story that may be from some third-world country somewhere, but in fact this farm was located in Florida. The farm was producing tomatoes that were sold to familiar fast food chains. What is even more surprising is that this was happening just five blocks away from a coalition for workers that had just won an anti-slavery award. It seems absurd that this kind of practice could be continuing in a nation like ours. Elias Lawless, member of the student/farmer worker alliance in Texas stated the problem very elegantly: “we live in an era where the majority of the world’s 100 largest economies are corporations, not governments” (Lawless).

The control that corporations have on society is further displayed by how the farmers who cultivate the crops are treated. A very popular example of this is the Monsanto Corporation, who has made its claim to fame through its line of roundup ready seeds that come in canola, sunflower, cotton, corn, rice, and soybeans. These genetically engineered seeds were produced in attempt to simplify the destruction of weeds. They have the unreal ability to resist Monsanto’s herbicide, Roundup. Due to its uniqueness, the U.S. government issued them a patent for it,

deeming it more of an invention than a “plant variety,” which cannot legally be patented (Duram).

To the oblivious farmer, this seems like a great deal: a seed that won't be killed by their herbicide, leaving a field filled only with their crop, all for a fee and a contract that signs away their soul. With the purchase of any Monsanto seed, the farmer agrees to follow a set of farming rules that contradict everything that farmers have done for thousands of years. Most importantly, farmers are not permitted to save seeds from year to year. This means that only Monsanto seeds purchased from Monsanto may be used. This may seem fair in the eyes of the law, with any patent, only the patent owner has the right to produce the item, however, this does not really apply to a product that reproduces on its own (Kenner).

Monsanto leveraged their legal advantage over farmers by actively pursuing farmers who are not abiding by their contracts. They have gone so far as to produce ads to encourage people to turn in their neighbors if they suspect them of saving seeds, including a toll free number. Unfortunately these lawsuits have not been solely at farmers with contracts. There have been farmers who have gotten Monsanto seeds into their own crop either by nature or being transferred by farming equipment, either way, out of no fault of their own, but are being sued for its presence on their property. These are small farmers who do not have the resources to counter a multi million dollar corporation. Therefore, these cases often have to be settled out of court (Leonard). Because of their unique patent, Monsanto has created an alarming monopoly on their seeds which have put farmers in an uncomfortable situation: use Monsanto seeds, and risk being sued for someone suspecting that you are saving seeds, or do not use Monsanto seeds and risk that they will end up in your crop anyway and be sued.

So uncomfortable with Monsanto's policies and bioengineering, Haitian farmers who

are part of the Peasant Movement of Papay, committed to burning the 475 tons of seeds that Monsanto donated after their devastating earthquake in January 2010. They have seen the effects that Monsanto seeds have had on America from reducing biodiversity, to attacking small agriculture, which Haiti has a deep pride in. Monsanto is becoming more known to push its GMO (genetically modified organisms) globally, although they promised that the seeds donated were not GMOs (Bell).

Even more problems exist in countries without high regulations on chemicals, and treatment of workers. For example, in Zimbabwe ten percent of the population owns ninety percent of the land. The upper-class landowners are concerned primarily with production and profit. As a result, their fields, which are mostly designated for tobacco production (one of the most heavily sprayed and toxically damaged crops) are covered in what ever chemicals are necessary to keep boost production to the highest potential. This has had detrimental affects on the workers of these farmers including genetic, fertility, conception, and skin problems and an alarming number cancer cases Think that there is no connection between these farmers and you? Well, although the United States recently imposed a tariff on imported tobacco, it still imports the addicting substance (“Tobacco Facts”). This is in no way an isolated case. Similar stories can be shared about the coffee industry in Columbia or the Dole banana and pineapple plantations in Costa Rica.

#### **IV. How to Eat on the Cheap**

The biggest issue preventing consumers from choosing organic is cost effectiveness. While the overall benefits greatly outweigh their conventional counterparts, the upfront thirty to one hundred percent increase in price is enough to cause people to shy away from organic foods. Well I would like to present proof that the organic lifestyle is not that far out of reach. The

challenge: eating organically on a college student's budget.

I have constructed my budget by using my college's cost of a meal plan, and then taken off another five hundred bucks to compensate some for time spent. For the past 7 weeks, I have lived according to my \$2000 budget for the school year (that's \$68 per week and \$3.23 per meal, assuming that every college student eats three meals a day, which is grossly untrue).

The first thing to know is where to shop. Those who are not in the practice of purchasing organic foods, may be lost at where to find them. Many believe that they must go to specialty stores to purchase organic foods, when that is just not the case. While these venues may offer a wide variety of organic products, many common grocery store chains are starting to offer organic products in response to its growing popularity. Some have even begun their own brand of organic foods, which can be very low in price compared to name brand organic products. However, the store that I swear by is Trader Joe's. This is a store that has embraced the natural foods trend and is able to offer its products at a consistently low rate by selling only products that will be sold in high volumes (Duram 352-53). But, if you don't have a Trader Joe's, there are many options. I have not gone into a grocery store where I have not been able to find any organic products (Wal-Mart included). In all honesty, these locations are the best places to shop organic because their prices tend to be lower than boutique food shops.

It is true that even the least expensive prices of organic food can be a little threatening, but that just means that you have to be a smart shopper. Organic food often goes on sale, and to make sure that you save money, you have to check the sales before going to a grocery store. I generally base my menu for the week on weekly specials. Before I even leave home, I look to see what sales are available. Most places today have online applications where you can look up any weekly sales they are featuring. My local grocery store often put organic canned products

on sale, such as diced tomatoes, black beans, sweet peas, and corn. Often, this knocks the price down to the same price as the conventional products right next to them on the shelf. Another good sale look out for is on meat, since it is so expensive to raise organic animals. Whenever these products do go on sale, I always purchase them in bulk and freeze them until I am able to use them.

One of my favorite tricks for saving money is by cooking in bulk. It's hard enough to cook for one person, but to save money at the same time is even more difficult. What I do is cook like I am cooking for an entire family. Whatever I'm not going to eat within the next two to three days, I put into plastic bags and freeze. This is great for two reasons: not only does it save money, but also provides a convenient, home-cooked meal in the middle of the week when it may be hard to find time to cook. It's almost like a little organic TV dinner, if you will.

Below is a sample menu and pricing according to prices in my area:

Breakfast:

1. Toaster Pastries (2) and Milk (8 oz Glass)	
Toaster Pastries 6 ea. @ \$2.59 = \$0.43 ea	\$0.86
Milk 1 gal @ \$5.75 = \$0.05 per ounce	<u>\$0.32</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1.18</b>
2. Eggs (2), Toast, Tomato Slice (1/2 ea) , Cheese, and Apple Juice	
Eggs 1 dzn @ \$4.19 = \$0.35 ea	\$0.70
Toast 15 slices @ \$3.49 = \$0.23 ea	\$0.23
Tomato Slice 6 @ 2.99 = \$0.50 ea.	\$0.25
Cheese 8 oz @ 3.99 = \$0.50 per ounce	\$0.50
Apple Juice 64 oz @ 2.99 = \$0.05 per ounce	<u>\$0.40</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2.08</b>
3. Smoothie- 1 banana, 4 oz raspberries, 8 oz yogurt	
Banana @ \$0.29 ea.	\$0.29
Frozen Raspberries 12 oz @ \$3.69 = \$0.31 per ounce	\$1.24
Yogurt 32 oz @ \$2.99 = \$0.09 per ounce	<u>\$0.72</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2.25</b>

Lunch

## 1. Tomato Soup (8 oz) and Grilled Cheese (1.5 oz) and Chicken (2 oz) Sandwich

Tomato Soup 32 oz @ 2.99 = .09 per ounce	\$0.72
Bread 15 slices @ \$3.49 = \$0.23 ea	\$0.46
Cheese 8 oz @ 3.99 = \$0.50 per ounce	\$0.75
Chicken Breast 1 pound @ 6.99 = \$0.44 per ounce	<u>\$0.88</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2.81</b>

## 2. Chicken Salad (2 oz chicken, 1 oz dressing, ½ oz cheese, ½ ounce raisins, 3 oz Spinach)

Salad Dressing 8 oz @ 4.45 = \$0.56 per ounce	\$0.56
Cheese 8 oz @ 3.99 = \$0.50 per ounce	\$0.25
Chicken Breast 1 pound @ 6.99 = \$0.44 per ounce	\$0.88
Spinach 6 oz @ 2.49 = \$0.42 per ounce	\$1.26
Raisins 12 oz @ \$2.79 = \$0.23 per ounce	<u>\$0.12</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$3.07</b>

## Dinner

## 1. Chicken (3 oz) Pasta (4 oz), with Pasta Sauce (3 oz), and Mushrooms (2 oz)

Chicken Breast 1 pound @ 6.99 = \$0.44 per ounce	\$1.32
Pasta 1 pound @ 1.29 = \$0.08 per ounce	\$0.32
Sauce 26 oz @ 2.95 = \$0.11 per ounce	\$0.33
Mushrooms 8 oz @ 1.99 = .25 per ounce	<u>\$0.50</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2.47</b>

## 2. Chicken (3 oz), Black Beans (4 oz), Broccoli (3 oz), Onions (2 oz), Rice (2 oz uncooked),

Chicken Breast 1 pound @ 6.99 = \$0.44 per ounce	\$1.32
Black Beans 15 oz @ \$1.00 = \$0.07 per ounce	\$0.28
Broccoli 1 pound @ \$1.29 = \$0.08 per ounce	\$0.32
Onions 1 pound @ \$1.79 = \$0.11 per ounce	\$0.22
Rice 2 pounds @ \$3.99 = \$0.12 per ounce	<u>\$0.24</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2.80</b>

**V. Final nail in the “Dollar Menu’s” Coffin**

There is large problem in the United States with malnutrition within the lower class. A lot of this issue stems from what these people perceive that they get with their money. For example, it seems to be a great deal to get an entire hamburger for just a dollar plus tax, especially when a head of broccoli can cost twice that. Although the burger may satisfy the superficial feeling of hunger, it does not satisfy the body’s need for vitamins and minerals. That McDouble purchased to fill a child, while it may contain 20% of your daily portion of calcium and iron, 6% Vitamin

A, and 2% Vitamin C, it contains 38% of sodium and 29% of fat for a 5.3 oz serving (McDonald's USA Nutrition Facts for Popular Menu Items). Take a similar serving of Kale, for instance, and you get about the same amount of calcium and iron plus 412% daily vitamin A and 134% vitamin C, with less than 1% fat and 1% daily sodium (Kale, Raw). All this for only \$1.51 per pound (How expensive are Fruits and Vegetables). The McDouble runs about \$3.01 per pound, that's mcdouble your money for mchalf the nutrients!.

While large price tags on organic products may seem like a hassle, there is one upside to their cost: portioning. America suffers from an obesity epidemic which results, among many other things, from a lack of portion control. Eating higher priced foods can help keep portions down to the appropriate level. For example, a serving of meat should be between two and three ounces (Jegtvig). Most Americans eat way more than that, which can be very unhealthy, causing weight gain and several types of health complications. However, since organic meat is more expensive, an individual who switched to an organic lifestyle would be more inclined to eat less meat and therefore be healthier. This goes for portion sizes in general as well. There is no mistaking that America has a portion problem, from the food we consume in relation to what we should, to the size of our waists in relation to our height. Switching to organic foods may help eliminate these problems by controlling portions and providing more nutrients to a nutrient deficient nation.

## **Conclusion**

While sticker shock may be causing consumers to steer clear of organic products, nutritional, societal, and environmental reasons are beginning to persuade more and more people to switch back to the old style of growing food: leaving our technology out of it. Unfortunately, these numbers need to be much higher to stop large corporations from continuing to pollute our

world with their chemical out-puts, nutrition depletion, and social disrespect of workers. It will take the force of all the developed nations to make a difference and change how we view food. But, that all starts with the individual. To stop these monsters of industry, people need to change their buying habits and switch to organic foods. Go to your grocery store and make your opinion count. Every purchase of an organic food tells the world that you will not stand for food being mutilated by a corrupt system. You want food that is truly and undoubtedly pure.

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