

Here's a fresh idea

LOOK TO LOCALLY GROWN ORGANIC PRODUCE FOR HEALTH AND FLAVOR

A great trend is happening in local farms all over the United States. More and more people are becoming preoccupied with the notion that eating organic foods is better for them.

Now there is clear evidence that eating organic produce is better for you than produce that is farmed using chemical pesticides and other insecticides that significantly reduce the amount of nutrients that can be derived from the produce.

HARSH EFFECTS

A recent study conducted by Princeton University concluded that "pesticides used in growing common crops such as fruit, corn, cotton, soybeans, and tobacco have been found to have high toxicity to birds, mammals, and fish. Pesticide use kills not only pests, but also their natural enemies, many of which are now endangered due to ingested toxins and loss of food."

We, as human beings, are ingesting the same food as these animals. If they are harming the natural wildlife that severely, what are they doing to us?

The Food Quality Protection Act, which was drafted in 1996, states that most of the chemicals that are used in pesticides, herbicides, and insecticides "present unacceptably high health risks, particularly to infants and children."

The fact of the matter is that no longer is it just relegated to the fruits and vegetables that are grown in America's Heartland. Chemicals also affect the meat and dairy products that we consume because more farmers are feeding their cattle steroids and growth hormone, something that is believed to be safe — but also controversial.

Consuming foods and beverages that come directly from animals that are raised without the use of these hormones is thought to be safer to the overall health and well-being of the population. There are questions about whether the steroids and hormones can be harmful to humans once ingested, and while the debate over hormones is far from settled, organic meats can eliminate worries about it.

CONSIDER ORGANIC

Organic produce allows consumers to enjoy all of the natural vitamins, minerals, and other natural benefits that pesticide-free farming can bring about.

A recent consumer survey completed by students and researchers at Cornell University found that "organically grown apples were less tart at harvest and sweeter after six months of storage than conventional apples." This fact only accentuates the fact that there can be benefits to taste as well as health when you buy organically grown produce.

Another startling fact to note is what diseases you

could prevent yourself from getting if you were to eat only organic foods. A battery of tests by the U.S. Department of Agriculture has found that pesticides have led to cancer, obesity, birth defects, and Alzheimer's Disease. When you consider the amount of produce that is eaten in one year, chances are that most Americans have already ingested trace amounts of dangerous pesticides.

What do we know definitively about the advantages of a diet rich in organic produce? The University of California-Davis recently found that organic tomatoes that are grown in fields without the use of chemical fertilizers have "excessive formation of antioxidants such as quercetin (79% higher) and kaempferol (97% higher)" than tomatoes grown using chemicals and insecticides.

LOOK LOCALLY

As the United States grows ever more health conscious, it is clear that something needs to be done about the non-organic produce being grown in the United States. There are many advantages to eating organic produce that is grown by local farms.

What people need to concern themselves with is having a better knowledge of what they are ingesting because it could eventually be a life-or-death situation. There are too many diseases that can be recognized from ingesting non-organic produce for everyone not to stand up and take notice.

In order to protect from the possible dangerous effects of hormones, steroids and pesticides, it is important that everyone stays informed about what their local farmer is using to grow their crops.

The situation becomes difficult when you talk about getting the vitamins and nutrients that your body needs by not eating fruits and vegetables regularly.

If you can, try to find a local farm in your area that grows everything organically, so you can recognize the health benefits of organic food while not concerning yourself with harmful carcinogens.

