

FOCUS on FOOD

“27. The right to food, like the right to water, has an important place within the pursuit of other rights, beginning with the fundamental right to life. It is therefore necessary to cultivate a public conscience that considers food and access to water as universal rights of all human beings, without distinction or discrimination.”

Caritas in Veritate, Pope Benedict XVI

Eating Organically

By revering natural cycles, replenishing the needs of the earth and working with nature rather than against it, organic gardeners eliminate the need for synthetic fertilizers and toxic pesticides that harm consumers as well as the earth. Using practices such as composting, crop rotation, natural pest control and diverse planting, organic gardeners achieve their goal while leaving the soil enriched without disturbing the quality of the air and water.

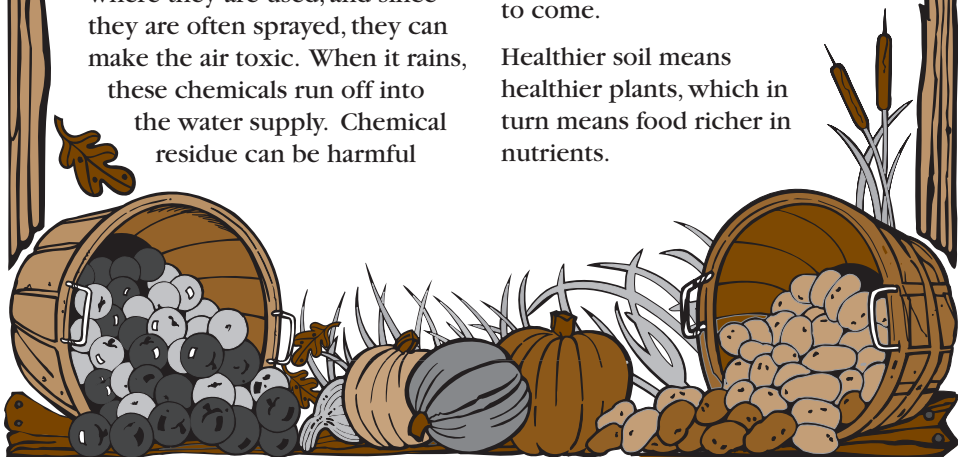
Toxic chemicals used in non-organic farming affect the soil where they are used, and since they are often sprayed, they can make the air toxic. When it rains, these chemicals run off into the water supply. Chemical residue can be harmful

for indefinite periods of time, especially when combined with other known or unknown toxic residues. This is hazardous for field workers and for consumers. Birds and other animals in these areas also suffer.

Animals raised organically are not given hormones or growth stimulants and are not routinely given antibiotics. By eating organic meat, consumers avoid these drugs and they do not pollute the water supply.

Supporting organic growers will help to insure a cleaner and healthier planet for generations to come.

Healthier soil means healthier plants, which in turn means food richer in nutrients.



What to Do:

- Look for food, vitamins and other products made with organically grown ingredients and materials. The U.S. Department of Agriculture has a symbol for organic products:



- Avoid genetically engineered foods. Good information on this can be found at: The Center for Food Safety at www.centerforfoodsafety.org and True Food Network at www.truefoodnow.org
- Use organic measures in home gardens and lawns. Currently, harmful synthetic fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides and fungicides are being used at great rates where people work and play.

- Join a Community-Supported Agriculture (CSA) project. This is done by purchasing shares in a local farm. As a result, the shareholder receives organically grown produce during the growing season. The U.S. Dept. of Agriculture has links to CSA's: <http://www.nal.usda.gov/afsic/pubs/csa/csa.shtml>
- The Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate sponsor a community-supported garden in Godfrey, IL. www.lavistacsa.org



EATING LOCALLY-GROWN FOOD

Locally grown organic items are far better than organic products shipped from a distance. Not only are they fresher, but they use less energy to get to your table. Buying from smaller stores rather than the big chains also insures a stronger, more diverse local economy.



Check Local Harvest for places near you to buy locally-produced food: www.localharvest.org

To learn more about where food comes from, check the Food Routes Conservancy at www.foodroutes.org AND see the film called Food, Inc.: <http://www.foodincmovie.com/about-the-film.php>

There is also a book based on the film.

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U.S. Province • The Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate

391 Michigan Avenue, NE • Washington, DC 20017

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