

Challenge 1 - School Organic Allotment

We are consumers - what does this mean? How does being a consumer impact on others? How does this affect health issues and making informed choices?

It is important to consider the organic/non organic debate.

Read these STATEMENTS

- We are ALL consumers and what we choose to buy affects others.
- What we buy can impact on the environment and the economy.
- We need information to make choices.

What some people say to criticise organic farming -

- Organic food is expensive
- Organic food is no healthier than other non-organic food.
- Organic food can only be produced on a small scale and could not feed the world.
- Organic farming uses pesticides.
- Organic farming is unkind animals.
- Organic farming increases the risk of food poisoning.

Question:

At first glance would you agree/disagree with any of these statements? Why?

Go through each statement, decide if you feel they are true/false.

READ THE FOLLOWING EXTRACT FROM THE SOIL ASSOCIATION

(Myth and Reality Report - Summary)

There are many misleading and incorrect statements about organic farming.

Food produced organically contains fewer contaminants than by any other method.

[Organic farming uses] ... crop rotations, organic animal feed and welfare standards, the use of good husbandry instead of agri-chemicals, and the preservation of natural habitats all result in organic food costing more to produce. **Non-organic food appears to be cheaper** but in fact consumers pay for it three times over - first over the counter, second via taxation (to fund agricultural subsidies) and third to remedy the environmental pollution (or disasters like BSE) caused by intensive farming practices. What is the real cost of non-organic food?

Organic farming can help poor communities produce food, especially if there is no shortage of labour. This increases the chance of poor communities becoming more self-sufficient.

Animals kept on organic farms are allowed to behave more naturally; they have more space and less competition from others.

How does this compare with animals reared in cages or large populations in close contact?

There is a reduced risk of bacterial infection in animals kept in this way, and drugs/antibiotics are needed less.

GO BACK

Look at those statements again - Would you change what you felt about each one of them? This appears to be the same task, why would they have changed their opinion?

The Soil Association use a phrase or saying:

'Food that is good for you and good for the planet'

What does this mean?

Return to the original list of foods that you made, that you buy regularly - are any organic? When did they do this?

What are the differences between organic and non-organic food?

Would you like to buy organic?