



How “organic” is it?

A new federal law governs standards for growing, processing and handling organic products. Products that make any claim to being “organic” must be certified by a USDA-approved organization*. This procedure assures consumers that the product was grown and processed organically. There are now several different “levels” of organic, and new labels are already appearing in stores. It can be a little confusing, so here is a guide to help you choose the type of organic product you want. Look also for a mark that identifies which certifier guarantees the product.

<i>If the label says...</i>	<i>Then you can be sure that...</i>	<i>It may...</i>	<i>It may <u>not</u>...</i>
“100% ORGANIC” 	Everything in this product was grown and processed according to Federal organic standards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Say “100% organic” or “organic” on the front label • Include non-organic salt and water • Use the USDA ORGANIC seal 	Contain any ingredients that are non-organic., except water and salt. www.ams.usda.gov/nop/nop2000/Final%20Rule/regtext/reg-natlist.htm
“ORGANIC” 	95% or more of the ingredients were grown and processed according to Federal organic standards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Say “organic” on the front label and tell what % • Include non-organic salt and water. • Include up to 5% ingredients that are non-organic agricultural products or are additives on an approved national list. • Use the USDA ORGANIC seal 	Include anything (even in the non-organic portion) that was grown using genetically modified organisms, sewage sludge or ionizing radiation (also sometimes called “cold pasteurization”)
“MADE WITH ORGANIC INGREDIENTS”	70% or more of the ingredients were grown and processed according to Federal organic standards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Say “made with organic ingredients” and show the % organic on the front label • Contain up to 30% ingredients that are non-organic agricultural products or additives on an approved national list. • List <i>up to 3</i> of the organic ingredients or food groups on the front label 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • include anything (even in the non-organic portion) that was grown using sewage sludge or ionizing radiation (also sometimes called “cold pasteurization”) • Use the USDA ORGANIC seal

*Operations that produce less than \$5,000 organic product/year are exempt from the certification requirement, but must still follow the law.

Products that are less than 70% organic may not use the word “organic” on front panel. They may identify organically produced ingredients on the ingredients panel.