



Which Growing Method is Best?

Whether you are buying organic, non-organic, local, or imported, your food has almost certainly been grown with the help of pesticides.

Which growing method is best for the environment and our health?
It's not a cut and dried answer – here's an example of why:

Both organic and non-organic pesticides can disrupt the environment, beneficial organisms in the soil and non-target species if not used according to **label instructions**. Even if a pesticide is comprised of only naturally occurring chemicals, it may not be the most sustainable choice.

For example, when farmers detect powdery mildew in organically grown grapes, sulfur dust is applied to the fields every seven to 10 days. With non-organic products for conventionally grown grapes, farmers apply pesticides as needed once every 21 days or longer. With less control in organic fields, farmers need to do more tractor work in the field, increasing the **energy and carbon footprint** of organically grown food, and rely more on hand labor for **weeding**.

Each growing method offers different benefits. Farmers who choose to grow organic can reach **new markets** and garner **different customers**.



Farmworkers handweeding

Untreated blueberries



Blueberries treated w/ herbicide

Bottom Line

While there are many differences between organic and conventional farming, there are also many similarities further illustrating there is no “right” or “wrong” way to farm. All growers must make the best decision for their specific land and crop. It's all about choice!



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