

The True Benefits of Organics

Agriculture plays a crucial a role in the clockwork of our global economy. Isn't that reason enough for us to ensure its sustainability? Many would question the feasibility of going organic to feed the seven billion or so mouths in the world, but the fact that this is entirely possible is unfortunately not commonly known. As with every change, this shift in approach from chemical-intensive agricultural practice to organic farming will take time and patience.

For those who still doubt, the great news is that the road to going organic will naturally reap long-term environmental and financial benefits. Aren't these what we hope to achieve – creating a better world for the future generations?

Health Benefits

With crops being treated heavily with chemicals like growth enhancers or pesticides, it is all but expected that these substances will find their ways into our bodies, albeit in small quantities each time. As consumers, the idea of how a negligible amount of artificial compound causing health problems may seem like a far-fetched thought.

However, the truth of the matter is that while we don't find ourselves rushing to the hospital after consuming these produce smothered in chemicals, the long-term effects on our health are very real. With studies proving the carcinogenic properties of some pesticides and herbicides used in our food, it is now perhaps understandable why people are beginning to adopt an organic diet.

According to the World Health Organization, studies have shown that exposure to pesticides on a daily basis can increase the risk of health complications like lowered immunity, development of hormone-related disorders and cancer.

Going organic does not only benefit us, the consumers, but the producers, too. The people who toil and make a living from agriculture will find themselves going back to the basics and relying on what nature has to offer. The lack of chemicals employed in organic farming will without a doubt see farmers facing considerably fewer health hazards.

Environmental Benefits

The news of how GMO agriculture and chemical pesticides are killing nature's little pollination helpers, the bees, isn't new. Agriculture watchdogs sounded the alarm years ago when bee colonies began vanishing in the United States around the turn of the century, about the time when new insecticides were introduced into the market. The tip in the balance of our ecosystem can trigger a ripple effect, causing environmental consequences on a global scale – some of which we are already experiencing.

In order for sustainable agriculture to be possible, it is beyond vital that we maintain healthy and fertile soil. However, with the constant application of chemicals to the land, how does one expect the earth below to be toxin free? Albeit crops may be susceptible to pests and ever-changing weather, organic farming certainly ensures the “cleanliness” of the ground.

Economic Benefits

Despite being the alternative farming method, the organic farming industry is well worth over £1 billion a year. Imagine how much that figure will jump by when it becomes the only way to go?

With GMO agriculture, everything right down to the seeds requires a costly initial investment. Needless to say, equipment used for releasing the chemical pesticides also cost

money. As a result, even before a crop can be harvested and sold for profits, a farmer needs to come up that large sum of money to get things going. Imagine the devastation a small farm located in a developing nation experiences when crops don't grow.

One of the many unfortunate consequences of GMO farming is it being the cause of countless suicides when crops fail in third world countries.

Consider organic farming. What is actually involved in this method that would require massive investments? Not much, really. While it is always more costly to go the alternative route, it is undeniable that when organic farming becomes a common practice, cost of resources and products will surely decrease.

Why Not Organic Farming Then?

Having said all these, the truth is that organic farming is not in a popularity race of becoming the more well-liked option for those in the industry. Instead, it has to be the only method of farming as we move forward. In order for our natural environment to sustain us, it is imperative that we ensure that it is toxic free and healthy, for the sake of our future and the generations to come.

Further Reading:

- Understanding and Detoxifying Genetically Modified Foods
- My Journey into Organic Farming
- Can Progressive, Cutting-edge Organic Agriculture Feed Everyone?
- Permaculture Agriculture : The Transition to a Sustainable Future
- Why Conventional Agriculture Has To Stop

Sources:

- *Organic Farming* – BBC
- *Agrochemicals, health and environment* – WHO
- *GMO Agriculture and Chemical Pesticides are Killing the Bees* – Global Research
- *Chemicals in Food* – Breast Cancer Fund