

10 Reasons to Support Oregon's Organic Agriculture

- 1) **Oregon's organically grown foods must meet strict USDA standards** and organic farms and processors are inspected annually. Oregon Tilth, one of the most respected third-party certifiers in the United States, certifies most of Oregon's organic farms and processors.
- 2) **Oregon's organically grown foods are grown without persistent pesticides or chemical fertilizers.** In the instances where organic farmers use pest controls, they work with a limited number of materials that are carefully selected to ensure that they are safer for people and the environment. Oregon's organic processed foods contain no artificial or synthetic preservatives that would harm the environment and are minimally processed and manufactured using only a short list of additives allowed by the USDA.
- 3) **Oregon's organically grown foods taste great** because they are grown close to home and can be harvested ripe and ready for eating or processing. New studies are also showing that many organic foods contain higher levels of nutrients than their conventionally grown counterparts.
- 4) **Oregon's organic farms are great stewards of our state's farmland.** Organic farming methods help protect our state's most valuable agricultural resources, including our soils and waterways.
- 5) **Oregon's organic farms are managed by families who are active members in their local communities and committed to the success and vitality of family farms across the state.** There are 425 certified organic farms in Oregon, with over 115,000 acres in organic production.
- 6) **Oregon's organic farms are located close to their customers,** allowing processors and distributors, grocers and consumers to receive the freshest products, often within hours of harvest. Personal relationships can be established between farmer and customer, ensuring a more secure food supply and a better overall understanding of where our food comes from.
- 7) **Oregon's organic farms protect the diversity of species and plant genetics in our landscapes.** Organic farmers manage the agricultural landscape with the goal of maintaining healthy, balanced eco-systems for generations to come. The variety of local organically grown foods has been an inspiring influence on our culinary arts, both professionally and in the home kitchen.
- 8) **Oregon's organic farms grow a feast for the senses,** reflecting our state's unique geography. Potatoes from the Klamath Basin, onions from eastern Oregon, apples and pears from the Columbia Gorge, meats from central Oregon, mixed vegetables and cut flowers from the Willamette Valley, dairy products from the coast, wines from more than a dozen appellations, even grass seed for organic lawns!
- 9) **Supporting Oregon's organic farms means ensuring that the state will continue to possess a diverse mix of family farms and that your food dollars will remain in the state to benefit local communities.**
- 10) **Supporting Oregon's organic agriculture allows you to eat with the seasons.** Spring's rhubarb, peas and greens. Summer's berries, stone fruits and salads. Autumn's apples and pears. Winter's hard squashes and soup vegetables. If it can be grown in Oregon, there is an organic farmer growing it!