



Wellbeing

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Beyond Organic

Organic meat, poultry, and dairy products are now available at your supermarket—which is a change for the better. When you see the organic label, you know the food is going to be free of many pesticide residues, synthetic hormones, genetically modified organisms, and a long list of questionable additives. You also have the satisfaction of knowing that raising animals organically causes less harm to the environment. But when it comes to animal production, organic is not enough. We need to be raising animals on their species-appropriate diets.

Few consumers realize that many producers of “organic” or “naturally raised” animal products raise their animals in confinement and feed them grain—just like the operators of conventional feedlots. Feeding large amounts of grain to a grazing animal decreases the nutritional value of its products whether the grain is organic or conventionally raised. The reason is simple. Compared with grass, grain has far fewer omega-3 fatty acids and less vitamin E. Therefore, grain-fed animals have less of these important nutrients in their meat and dairy products. Grain feeding also interferes with the creation of a cancer-fighting substance called conjugated linoleic acid or CLA.² A test by an independent lab determined that milk from one of the largest organic grain-fed dairies had no more omega-3 fatty acids or CLA than milk from ordinary dairies. Similarly, meat from organic grain-fed beef has the same nutritional profile as meat from the largest Kansas feedlot.



Photo Courtesy of Pexels

Depriving our livestock of fresh greens and vastly increasing their consumption of grain has jeopardized our health in ways people never imagined. Although feeding organically raised grain reduces our reliance on pesticides and synthetic fertilizers, it does not provide the food that nature intended us to eat. - *Jo Robinson, Pathways*

Eating Right for Sleep

Diet is critical for children’s health and everything that we eat affects us. However, it affects each of us a little differently, depending on our individual makeup and metabolism. For instance, some children are highly sensitive to sugar and any form of sweets in their diet. For them, sugar consumption can aggravate many problems such as hyperactivity, anxiety, nervousness, irritability, and poor concentration— all of which can lead to sleep difficulties.

Healthy Tips:

- Provide your family with a variety of food from all of the food groups.
- Offer your children ample amounts of good drinking water. Even slight dehydration can cause feelings of anxiety.
- Stock your refrigerator with organic vegetables as possible. Food additives can also be detrimental to sleep.
- Make meals with complex carbohydrates, rather than processed carbs. Replace processed grains with complex grains and veggies.
- Make sure your child gets enough calcium; it enhances the synthesis of serotonin, the chemical that induces feelings of well-being. Low levels of calcium can cause irritability and nervousness.
- Food sources include milk, yogurt, cheese, broccoli, sunflower seeds, carob, spinach, and other greens.
- Don't use sugary treats as a reward or to console a child when he or she is upset. If you don't have them in your pantry, you cannot offer them!

For recipe inspiration visit *Pathways* recipes: recipes.pathwaystofamilywellness.org/

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