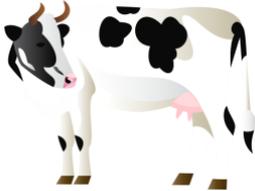


# 5 REASONS TO GO ORGANIC THIS AUTUMN

	<p>Organic means the very highest standards of animal welfare.</p> <p>Animals graze and forage naturally on pasture where natural fertilisers are used, and pesticide use is severely restricted; they are reared on a GM-free diet and without the routine use of drugs; they have better quality living, transport and slaughter conditions.</p>
	<p>Most people don't realise that almost 300 (!) pesticides are routinely used in non-organic farming, which can pollute water, the environment and make their way into our food chain. They are frequently found in non-organic food eat despite washing and cooking.</p> <p>Glyphosate (one of the most commonly used weed killers around the world) is regularly found in British bread, appearing in over 60% of wholemeal bread samples tested by the DEFRA committee on Pesticide Residues in Food, while government figures show the use of glyphosate in the UK has <a href="#">increased by 400% in the last 20 years</a>.</p> <p>Organic farmers are permitted to use just 20 pesticides, derived from natural ingredients including citronella and clove oil, but only under very restricted circumstances. Research suggests that <a href="#">if all UK farming was organic, pesticide use would drop by 98%</a>!</p>
	<p>The overuse of antibiotics is undermining their ability to help treat infection and disease. our current farming model means antibiotics and other drugs are routinely administered to animals to cover up for poor hygiene, husbandry and housing.</p> <p>This is not the case in organic farming, where there is no routine use of antibiotics or growth hormones.</p>
	<p>Intensive farming causes untold damage to our planet - soil erosion, chemical run-off into our water and a growing resistance in weeds and insects to herbicides and pesticides.</p> <p>Our soils are non-renewable, so it is vital we preserve the quality and integrity of the black stuff. Organic farmers use crop varieties with a natural resistance to pests and disease, developing healthy, fertile soil through crop rotation.</p> <p>Organic farming works with nature, not against it: healthy soil is a major store for carbon, which plays a big part in climate change and the reduction of harmful greenhouse gasses.</p>
	<p><a href="#">Research suggests</a> that organic crops are up to 60% higher in a number of key antioxidants than those conventionally-farmed. And the <a href="#">British Journal of Nutrition</a> have found that organic milk and organic meat contain 50% more omega-3 fatty acids than intensively-farmed produce.</p> <p>Organic milk and dairy has a higher concentration of iron and vitamin E, while organically-grown crops have around 70% more antioxidants than non-organic; organic fruit and vegetables also contain <a href="#">lower concentrations of pesticides and heavy metals</a>.</p>