



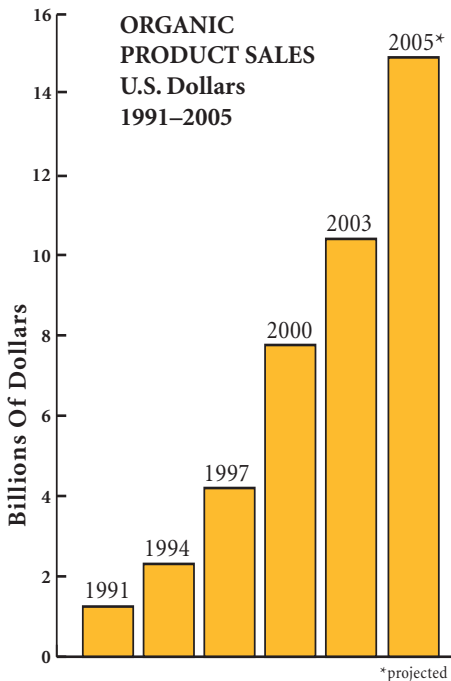
## THE ORGANIC INDUSTRY

Organic refers to the way agricultural products—food and fiber—are grown and processed. Organic production is based on a system of farming that maintains and replenishes soil fertility without the use of toxic and persistent pesticides and fertilizers. The use of genetic engineering, sewage sludge, and irradiation are prohibited in organic production and processing.

- U.S. sales of organic food and beverages have grown from \$1 billion in 1990 to an estimated \$12.2 billion in 2004, and are projected to reach \$14.5 billion in 2005. Total U.S. organic sales, including nonfood uses, are expected to reach \$15 billion in 2005.
- Representing approximately 2 percent of overall food and beverage sales, this continues to be a fast growing sector.
- Organic retail sales historically have grown between 20 and 24 percent each year since 1990.
- Studies indicate that at least 39 percent of the U.S. population buys organic products.
- In addition to foods and beverages, organically grown and produced ingredients can be found in such items as personal care products, apparel, textiles, toys, and pet foods.

## OTA AS A RESOURCE

The Organic Trade Association (OTA), founded in 1985, is the membership-based business association that represents all sectors of the North American organic industry, from farm to retail. OTA produces a variety of fact sheets and resources to answer questions about organic products.



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## COMMON QUESTIONS ABOUT ORGANIC:

### Price: Why do organic products sometimes cost more?

The principal reason is that the price for organic food more closely reflects the true costs of its production, while the price for conventional products does not. Learn more:

- "Buying Organic: considering the real costs," available at [www.ota.com/pics/documents/Issue16.pdf](http://www.ota.com/pics/documents/Issue16.pdf).
- "The Ecology of Pizza," by Dr. Sandra Steingraber, posted on OTA's consumer web site, The O'Mama Report: [www.TheOrganicReport.org](http://www.TheOrganicReport.org), click on the Organic for Kids logo.

### Availability: Where can I find sources of organic products and services?

- The Organic Pages Online, OTA's online directory, provides a way to search for farmers, manufacturers, restaurants, specific products, brand-name products, farm supplies, raw ingredients, mail order sources, and more. Go to The Organic Pages Online at [www.TheOrganicPages.com](http://www.TheOrganicPages.com).

### For Fact Sheets on a range of topics, check out [www.ota.com/organic.html](http://www.ota.com/organic.html).

- Definition of Organic
- Benefits of Organic
- Market Trends
- Questions and Answers About Organic
- Environment
- Food Safety
- GMOs (genetically engineered organisms)
- U.S. Organic Standards.

### Also, visit OTA's Newsroom at [www.ota.com/news.html](http://www.ota.com/news.html) for

- Press Releases
- *What's News in Organic* newsletter

## TO LEARN MORE:

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