

MEDIA RELEASE

Organic is More Nutritious-The French Agency for Food Safety

'The French Agency for Food Safety (AFSSA) has published an up-to-date exhaustive and critical evaluation of the nutritional quality of organic food and has found organic foods have higher levels of minerals and antioxidants.' Andre Leu, Chairman of the Organic Federation of Australia stated

'The AFSSA study has been published in the peer reviewed scientific journal *Agronomy for Sustainable Development* ensuring that it has met rigorous scientific standards.' Andre said.

The major points of The French Agency for Food Safety study are:

1. Organic plant products contain more dry matter (*more nutrient dense*)
2. Have higher levels of minerals
3. Contain more anti-oxidants such as phenols and salicylic acid (*known to protect against cancers, heart disease and many other health problems*)
4. Organic animal products contain more polyunsaturated fatty acids (*protect against heart disease*)
5. Carbohydrate, protein and vitamin levels are insufficiently documented
6. 94–100% of organic foods do not contain any pesticide residues
7. Organic vegetables contain far less nitrates, about 50% less (*high nitrate levels are linked to a range of health problems including diabetes and Alzheimer's*)
8. Organic cereals contain similar levels of mycotoxins as conventional ones

In 2001, the French Agency for Food Safety (AFSSA) set up an expert working group to perform an exhaustive and critical evaluation of the nutritional and sanitary quality of organic food.

They aimed for the highest quality scientific standards during the evaluation. The selected papers referred to well-defined and certified organic agricultural practices, and had the necessary information on design and follow-up, valid measured parameters and the appropriate sampling and statistical analyses.

After more than two years of work involving about 50 experts from all specific areas including organic agriculture, a final consensus report was issued in the French language in 2003.

The current study published in the peer reviewed journal, in English, is a summary of this report and the relevant studies that have been published since 2003.

The conclusions of this study are different from the recent UK Food Standard Agency Study that was widely criticised by international experts for using flawed methodology and a conclusion that contradicted its own data.

-ENDS-

The full scientific report can be found at http://swroc.cfans.umn.edu/organic/ASD_Lairon_2009.pdf