**What is organic products?**

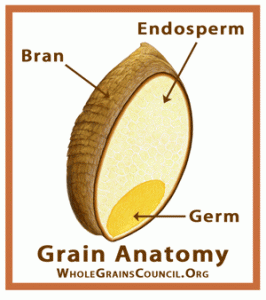
Organic farming entails:

* Use of cover crops, green manures, animal manures and crop rotations to fertilize the soil, maximize biological activity and maintain long-term soil health.
* Use of biological control, crop rotations and other techniques to manage weeds, insects and diseases.
* An emphasis on biodiversity of the agricultural system and the surrounding environment.
* Using rotational grazing and mixed forage pastures for livestock operations and alternative health care for animal wellbeing.
* Reduction of external and off-farm inputs and elimination of synthetic pesticides and fertilizers and other materials, such as hormones and antibiotics.
* A focus on renewable resources, soil and water conservation, and management practices that restore, maintain and enhance ecological balance.”

Organic production is not simply the avoidance of conventional chemical inputs, nor is it the substitution of natural inputs for synthetic ones. Organic farmers apply techniques first used thousands of years ago, such as crop rotations and the use of composted animal manures and green manure crops, in ways that are economically sustainable in today's world. In organic production, overall system health is emphasized, and the interaction of management practices is the primary concern. Organic producers implement a wide range of strategies to develop and maintain biological diversity and replenish soil fertility.”  
*Organic Agriculture Overview*, USDA, Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES), 2007

**What is whole grains?**

All grains start life as whole grains. In their natural state growing in the fields, whole grains are the entire seed of a plant. This seed (which industry calls a "kernel") is made up of three key edible parts – the bran, the germ, and the endosperm – protected by an inedible husk that protects the kernel from assaults by sunlight, pests, water, and disease.



The Bran

The bran is the multi-layered outer skin of the edible kernel. It contains important antioxidants, B vitamins and fiber.

The Germ

The germ is the embryo which has the potential to sprout into a new plant. It contains many B vitamins, some protein, minerals, and healthy fats.

The Endosperm

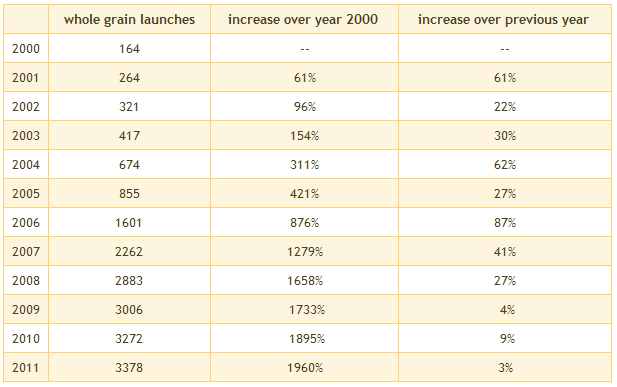
The endosperm is the germ’s food supply, which provides essential energy to the young plant so it can send roots down for water and nutrients, and send sprouts up for sunlight’s photosynthesizing power. The endosperm is by far the largest portion of the kernel. It contains starchy carbohydrates, proteins and small amounts of vitamins and minerals.

**Advantage of Whole Grains**

Whole grains contain all three parts of the kernel. Refining normally removes the bran and the germ, leaving only the endosperm. **Without the bran and germ, about 25% of a grain’s protein is lost, along with at least seventeen key nutrients**. Processors add back some vitamins and minerals to enrich refined grains, so refined products still contribute valuable nutrients. But **whole grains are healthier**, providing more protein, more fiber and many important vitamins and minerals.

**Whole grain market**

Whole grain market from 2000 to 2011. New product launches of foods making a "whole grain" claim have grown sharply since 2000. In fact, according to the [Mintel Global New Products Database](http://www.mintel.com), in 2010 almost 20 times as many new whole grain products were introduced worldwide as in the year 2000.



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| **Year** |  |
| 1920s – 1940s | Writers in the U.S. and Great Britain published influential works introducing the basic idea of organics - that the health of plants, soil, livestock and people are interrelated - and advocating a fundamental approach to farming based on understanding and working with natural systems rather than trying to control them. |
| **1940's** | Synthetic pesticides and herbicides were introduced to American agriculture in the 1940s, and like many new inventions of the era, were embraced and used wholeheartedly. |
| **1940's to 1950's** | A loose network of farmers—including J.I. Rodale, Ehrnefried Pfeiffer of Kemberton Farm School, and Paul Keene of Walnut Acres Farms—shunned chemical agriculture by farming organically and writing about their experiences. |
| **1953** | Natural Food Associates (NFA) was formed in Atlanta, Texas, to help connect scattered organic growers with fledgling markets for organically grown foods. |

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| **Year** |  |
| **1962** | Rachel Carlson's Silent Spring was published, documenting some of the negative consequences associated with chemical use in agriculture. Its publication gave rise to environmental consciousness and a renewed focus on organic agriculture. |
| **1970s** | In the early 1970s, the growth of the organics industry prompted activists across the U.S. to form regional groups and create organic standards by which to certify farmers and their crops. A group of farmers formed California Certified Organic Farmers, becoming the first organization to certify organic farms in North America.  Some point to the United States' ban of the pesticide DDT in this year as the start of the modern environmental movement. The organics industry grew appreciably due to an expanding consumer opposition to chemical pesticides coupled with a desire for food that was produced without harming the environment. |
| **1980s** | Safer Way Natural Foods and Clarksville Natural Grocery join forces to open Whole Foods Market in Austin, Texas with a staff of only 19.  The National Resources Defense Council (NRDC) released their report on the carcinogenic growth regulator Alar, which was used on apples. |
| **1990s** | The organic industry had estimated sales of more than $1 billion and Congress passed the Organic Foods Production Act of 1990, which established the framework to create National Organic Standards. |
| **1995** | Margaret Wittenberg, Vice President of Government and Public Affairs for Whole Foods Market, appointed as the sole retail representative on the 14-member National Organic Standards Board (NOSB). |
| **2000** | Organic industry members and consumers—including Whole Foods Market customers—sent over 275,000 comments to the USDA on their proposed National Organic Standards, which included provisions not recommended by the NOSB.  The USDA's Economic Research Service released a major study on the status of organics in the U.S. showing that certified organic crop land more than doubled during the previous decade and that some organic livestock sectors— eggs and dairy—grew even faster. |
| **2001** | USDA passes the Final Organic Rule after reinstating prohibitions on irradiation, sewage sludge and genetically engineered seed.  Whole Foods Market ended the fiscal year with 126 stores operating in 23 states and the District of Columbia and almost 21,000 Team Members. |