

Review: Organic foods may be healthier

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(HealthDay)—Organic produce and grains contain more protective antioxidants, less pesticide residue, and lower levels of the toxic metal cadmium than food raised in traditional ways, according to a new review. However, it's not clear what this means for health, and several agriculture experts claim the analysis missed some important points.

For the new study, published July 14 in the *British Journal of Nutrition*, researchers examined 343 peer-reviewed studies. On average, [antioxidant levels](#) were 17 percent higher in [organic crops](#) than in crops grown in traditional ways, the researchers found. And some levels of antioxidants, such as flavanones, flavonols, and anthocyanins, were significantly higher.

But some food researchers faulted the research and its conclusions. "The important toxicological question is how much cadmium are we exposed to, not whether there are any differences between organic and

conventional forms," Carl Winter, Ph.D., vice chair of the department of food science and technology at the University of California, Davis, told *HealthDay*.

But study coauthor Charles Benbrook, Ph.D., a research professor with the Center for Sustaining Agriculture and Natural Resources at Washington State University, told *HealthDay* that the research offers a clear message. "Organic plant-based foods offer some significant nutritional advantages, and also reduced risks associated with exposures to cadmium and pesticides in food," he said.

Sheepdrove Trust, a charity that supports organic farming, provided partial funding for the study.

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