

HEALTH NEWS:

Organic bread better for the health of the planet by half the footprint

Austrian based research has discovered organic bread can be twice as good for the planet.

Research has found the CO₂ output required to produce wheat for one organic loaf of bread (from organic wheat) in Austria is just half of the CO₂ footprint of bread using non-organic wheat (1).

129 g of CO₂ was required to bake 1kg of bread using organic wheat compared to 270 g of CO₂ for a loaf from conventional production systems.

According to the research, organic farming came out of the oven with more energy efficiency mainly because it does not use chemical fertilizers.

It stated organic production fared better because it did not have to account for the high energy input required to produce synthetic nitrogen fertilisers (commonly applied in conventional agriculture).

Nitrogen fertiliser has been identified in separate studies as the single most energy intensive input in agriculture. Around 35.3 MJ of energy on average is required to produce each kg of N in fertilizers (2).

According to the Institute of Science in Society (ISIS), nitrogenous fertilisers are also a source of nitrous oxide, contributing globally as much as 10% of total annual nitrous oxide emissions - a greenhouse gas up to 310 times more potent than carbon dioxide (3).

Organic farming improved the health of the planet again for its ability to increase the content of organic matter in the soil, with the report finding soils under organic farming could lock up to 1.5 tons CO₂ per hectare each year.

Operations using biological production methods were also likely to be more robust in the face of climatic variation, due to a combination of highly fertile soil and greater biodiversity of plants, animals, and microorganisms.

To add to the good news, previous studies have found organic wheat could be better for your health.

An American study in 1993 found that organic wheat had on average over 90% more nutritional elements - including Boron, Calcium, Copper, Phosphorus, Potassium and Zinc - than similar non-organic commercial counterparts (4).

Certified organic bread is also guaranteed not to contain calcium propionate (282) a common preservative used in bread. According to the Food Intolerance Network the cumulative effect of the preservative has been connected with a range of reactions including irritability, restlessness, inattention, migraine and headaches, irritable bowel, and eczema.

That's more than one good reason to make sure your bread is baked organic!

Data:

(1) Study FibL Austria in Cooperation with Hofer KG, 2009: [Click here](#)

(2) Research link: ISIS Mitigating Climate Change through Organic Agriculture and Localized Food Systems, 2008: [Click here](#)

(3) Research link: ISIS Feeding the World Under Climate Change, 2004: [Click here](#)

(4) Research link: Organic Foods vs Supermarket Foods: [Click here](#)