

Farming – Conventional vs. Organic



What is farming?

Farming is the business of raising livestock, cultivating **horticulture**, and growing grains. Raising livestock can include raising sheep, cattle, pigs, and other animals for food and byproducts (i.e. sheep make wool). Horticulture is growing fruits, vegetables, and flowers. Farming is important to society because it provides jobs as well as food.

Interesting Fact!

In the US, Agriculture employs more than 24 million workers. That is 17% of the total US workforce.

What are the different types of farming?

There are many different types of farming. Some of them are:

- **Arable:** Farming that grows crops. For example: wheat, barley, oat, and canola
- **Pastoral:** Farming that raises animals. For example: cows, sheep, pigs, and ostriches
- **Mixed:** Farming that involves both arable and pastoral farming.



There are also different methods farmers can use to grow their crops. Two of these are conventional and organic farming.

Horticulture – the practice of growing fruits, vegetables, and flowers

What is conventional farming?

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Convention Farm - a farm that does use genetically modified seeds, synthetic pesticides, or synthetic fertilizer.

Synthetic – human-made, not naturally found.

Hydrogenation - a chemical process that turns liquid oil into partially solid oil.

Organic Farming - farming that does not use genetically modified seeds, synthetic pesticides, or synthetic fertilizer

Pesticide – a substance used to attract and kill pests.

Crop rotations – planting crops in different locations of the farm each year.

- Are organics healthier? A study in the UK conducted a peer review from articles published from 1958 until 2008. In the review, they compared the nutrient levels in organic and conventional crops and found no difference in the content of 15 different nutrients. Alternatively, a different peer review study done by the British Journal of Nutrition in 2014, found that “organic crops contained higher antioxidant levels than their non-organic counterparts” (Cost of Organic Food, 2015) which would be beneficial to the person eating it.

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Organic farming also comes with a price, literally. In a study done in 2015 by Consumer Reports, they found that after comparing the price of organic and conventional foods, organics cost an average of 47% more.

This is not to say that conventional farming is perfect. Conventional farming often results in the soil being malnourished and the over spraying of pesticides can lead to resistance in the pests, creating ‘superbugs’ that can’t easily be killed. The resistance in pests could lead to the development and usage of a stronger pesticide, which could cause side effects in the animals and people that consume the product.

Reading Comprehension Questions:

1. What
2. What
3. If a farm produces ostrich meat, corn, and wheat. What type of farm is it?
4. Do
5. What is the main difference between conventional and organic farming?
6. Is organic farming better for the planet?

Extension Questions:

7. What does it mean that
8. Taking into consideration the information that has been presented, which method of farming do you think is better?

Watch the following video to answer question 9. The video can be found by accessing the following URL or QR code below.



<https://goo.gl/jWlnA3>

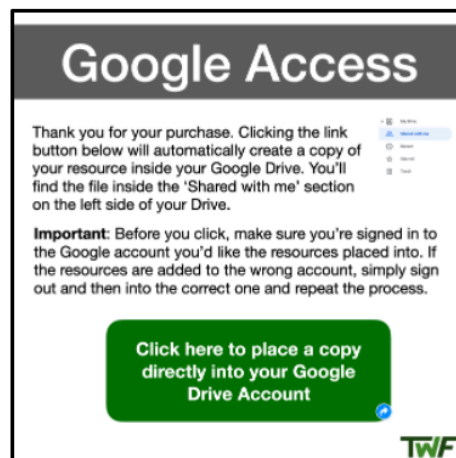
9. There's a lot

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