2-2-2009

Organic Produce: Consumer Perceptions and Practices

Aaron Bos
Lawrence Dagrossa
Rachel McEntee
David Morrow
Erin Perko

See next page for additional authors

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.uvm.edu/comphp_gallery

Part of the Community Health and Preventive Medicine Commons, and the Health Services Research Commons

Recommended Citation
Bos, Aaron; Dagrossa, Lawrence; McEntee, Rachel; Morrow, David; Perko, Erin; Vu, Anthony; Wlodarski, Jennifer; Homan, Caroline; and Luby, Robert, "Organic Produce: Consumer Perceptions and Practices" (2009). Public Health Projects, 2008-present. 12.
https://scholarworks.uvm.edu/comphp_gallery/12

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Public Health Projects, University of Vermont College of Medicine at ScholarWorks @ UVM. It has been accepted for inclusion in Public Health Projects, 2008-present by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks @ UVM. For more information, please contact donna.omalley@uvm.edu.
Authors
Aaron Bos, Lawrence Dagrossa, Rachel McEntee, David Morrow, Erin Perko, Anthony Vu, Jennifer Wlodarski, Caroline Homan, and Robert Luby

This article is available at ScholarWorks @ UVM: https://scholarworks.uvm.edu/comphp_gallery/12
Organic food is the fastest growing sector of the U.S. food market. It is a common belief that organic food is healthier and more environmentally friendly when compared to food grown and processed conventionally. Despite presumed benefits, our objective was to answer the following questions:

• Why do consumers choose organic, especially when faced with a higher average price?
• Is there scientific evidence that organic foods are healthier than their conventional counterparts?

This project built on a previously conducted demographic and shopping habits survey by our partner agency, City Market, of Burlington, VT.

Although survey results indicate that consumers were knowledgeable of organic food and farming practices, several discrepancies between consumer knowledge and regulations/published data were revealed:

• Many participants were unaware of USDA guidelines for the use of synthetic pesticides and fertilizers for organic produce.
• Despite inconclusive scientific evidence, participants believed organic produce was safer and more nutritious.

Future Directions

City Market looks forward to continuing their newly formed partnership with the UVM College of Medicine. Avenues for future pursuit include:
• Develop cost effective shopping strategies for the consumer to help “shop organic on a budget”
• Research health benefits of organic in specific populations, such as pregnant women
• Expand upon top survey reasons for choosing organic for further consumer education
• Address other health issues in food production, such as genetically modified organisms and irradiation

References
