

Organic farming may be less energy intensive

A few weeks ago, after a major study showed that organically grown food offers little or no nutritional benefit over the cheaper, conventionally grown equivalent, I began investigating the other major reason people buy organic: saving the environment. The environmental impact of a product is too complex to cover comprehensively in a few hundred words, so I began with one aspect of it, land use, and looked at how recently released data shows that [conventional farming produces more food on less land than organic farming](#).

The [Rodale Institute](#), which promotes organic farming, has been investigating this question for more than 30 years. It grows organic and conventional corn, wheat and soy side by side on test plots and measures the energy inputs for each. According to the nonprofit organization's numbers, farming one hectare (about 2.5 acres) of organic corn requires 10,150 megajoules of energy. (That's the approximate amount of energy in [78 gallons of gasoline](#).) By contrast, one hectare of conventionally grown corn requires 17,372 megajoules, 71 percent more than the organic crop.

View the original article here: [Organic vs. conventional farming: Which uses less energy?](#)