Consumer Reports says FDA should get rid of 'natural' food label

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis.

A recent Consumer Reports National Research Center nationally representative survey(PDF) of 1,000 adults finds that more people purchase "natural" foods than organic foods—73 percent versus 58 percent. Nearly 70 percent of the people in the survey believe that organic foods are more expensive than "natural" foods. "We've seen time and again that majority of consumers believe the 'natural' label means more than it does," says Urvashi Rangen, Ph.D., the director of the Consumer Reports Food Safety & Sustainability Center, "and by buying 'natural' foods, they may think they're getting the same benefits as organic, but for less money."

The term "natural" is organic's imposter. Consumers attribute all sorts of benefits to the term—no antibiotics, no artificial colors, no GMOs, no synthetic pesticides. Organic means all those things but "natural" does not. In fact, there is no standard definition for "natural" foods at all.

"It's time for the 'natural' label to go away," says Rangan. "There's a lot of evidence that consumers are confused about what the claim 'natural' actually means. And our surveys clearly show that consumers are being misled. The Food and Drug Administration has the responsibility to ban the use of the term on processed food packaging, or define it so it means what consumers expect it to—100 percent organic."

And now we have a real opportunity to make that happen. In November 2015, the FDA asked for public comments on the use of "natural" on food labels, prompted in part by Consumer Reports' efforts to ban the term. . . .

Read full, original post: The Difference Between Labels on Organic and 'Natural' Foods