

Organic vs. Non-Organic

This debate has been one that has been in contention for over 100 years. There have been many separate, and valid, issues concerning this battle. One could argue that organics have been around, and the use of, documented for over 400 years. Non-organic farming has been practiced and studied for about 120 years.

At Alaskan Organics, our job of educating the public about the benefits of organic farming has become much easier over the last 20 years. With so much media attention being given to the environment, funds have been released for existing programs to continue studying organic farming. The education about the benefits of organics and exactly why and how they work has created many new avenues of research. For example, the study of microbes and how they work together to naturally inhibit growth, production, and reproduction. However, Alaskan Organics considers the most important single issue is the fact that organic farming and gardening practices increase the nutritional value of crops.

All these benefits, without doing damage to the environment, or the the growing number of people who consume organic produce. It would seem like a simple decision to choose a product that is going to increase harvest size, increase the quality, and quantity, of nutrients in what is being grown, and will never damage the environment. To top it off, it cost less. Sounds like a win-win situation.

Alaskan Organics has two primary principles that dictate how we do our business:

First, do no harm. Just like doctors, we have also adapted that creed in our business. We use marine by-products, and wood ash, all from Alaska. We use a cold-process dehydration method that preserves the natural nutrients, micro-nutrients, and the life giving microbes. Since it is all from our oceans and forests, it can go right back into the oceans and forests with out doing any damage. The fruits and vegetables grown with our products show high Brix levels. (Basically, the measurement of sugars, and nutrients present in vegetables, fruit and all living plants.) Finally, we are utilizing, what traditionally was a waste product, that cost the seafood processor handling, and disposal charges.

Second, teach as many people possible about the absolute necessity to use organics and immediately cease using non-organic or CHEMICAL fertilizers. CHEMICALS KILL! No longer will the arguments of economics, or cost effectiveness of chemical fertilization hold water. It has been proven in many studies, that not only are organic plant foods less expensive at purchase, (our plant food application rate is 30-60 % less than that of our chemical competition) organic plant food keeps feeding all season long remaining in the rhizosphere (root zone) where it is utilized, long before reaching the water table. By the way, even if it did get in the water, it would “cause no harm”.

A pioneer in the development of Bio-energetic farming (an organic farming, application technique), Rudolph Steiner, was asked by the leaders of multiple European countries to research and work with their farmers to discover what they were doing wrong. First noticed, was a loss of the life force with the crops, and, most evidently in livestock and the consumer. The reported cases of anemia increased 130%, in families and individuals with no previous, nutritional issues.

Steiner discovered that the application of chemicals on farmed crops was killing the dirt. I would imagine in 1924 that statement went over like a lead balloon. However, Steiner proved, with the help of a microscope, that soil was indeed a living, breathing, life giving substance. It could be enhanced and supplemented to create a microbial heaven, whereby the crops flourished, and those consuming these crops flourished as well.

He also proved that soil can be damaged, degraded, and eventually killed. The primary culprit on European farms was the use of chemical phosphates. When the crops began to lose their vigor they applied more fertilizer. This process continued until phosphate and nitrate levels in soil samples tested 100 times, higher than what was considered acceptable. Steiner had scientifically proven to the farmers, and the various agricultural departments who had hired him, they were literally feeding their crops to death. Costing more and more every year, and getting less and less return at harvest time. Furthermore, and most important, the crops they did grow, were nutritionally useless.

They learned that phosphates and all chemical fertilizer gave the crops a small amount of the nutrients and micro nutrients they needed, and ignored the very foundation where they were planting. Within three years, under an intensive organic feeding program, they returned the soil back to life. Most chemical fertilizers are banned in European agricultural farming practices today.

There have been many Rudolph Steiners through the years, and because technology has greatly improved microscopes and other testing and lab equipment, biologists now know there are literally billions of microbes, both bacterial, and fungal, as well as millions of others living organisms all living, and working together harmoniously, to give life to the plants that in turn give life to the microbes. A community, where everybody works together, each doing their specific task to allow others to do the same and on and on.

Advantages: Economic- Initial costs may be slightly higher, but after the first year, and for sure by the end of the second year that cost factor changes significantly. Feeding requirements decrease with organic plant food, as the soil builds and increases the microbial presence. The amount and type of food needed to sustain soil life changes, and basically feeding the dirt becomes the goal.

Plants do not consume the food applied to the crop, they eat what the soil, and it's microbes have consumed and excreted. The rhizosphere is a magical area where the plants either get what they need, or not. So keeping the root zone loaded with microbes is what grows world record cabbage, cucumbers, zucchini, pumpkins and other members of the same family including squash.

The economic benefits of an organic farm cannot be touched by a non-chemical counter-part. There are literally hundreds of side-by-side studies being conducted. The results have clearly shown chemical farming/gardening practices are not only more expensive, and less productive, than organic farms, they are clearly harmful to our environment. In addition, the USA, and all countries that still use chemical farming practices, spend billions annually from medical side effects created by run-off, ground water saturation, airborne contaminants, and many new medical issues are being discovered almost daily. One of the side effects that seems to follow organic farming communities, is a huge increase in recycling food products, lawn clippings, leaves, almost all marine by-products, suitable for compost making. Of course, this makes for much less garbage that has to be barged, or disposed of in some manner that cost the producer.

The Kenai Peninsula Borough budget for solid waste is 7.1 million dollars, if this could be lowered by just 1%, that is \$71,000.00 that could be used for education, road maintenance, and other areas needing extra funding. The same can be true for your community.

Disadvantages: There are no known disadvantages of using organic plant food vs. non-organic/chemical fertilizers, unless the odor of seafood by-products is considered a disadvantage. Once our product is mixed with water, it comes to life, literally and microbes start feeding. Within a short period of time the microbial food supply is consumed, and the waste is odoriferous.