

## Whole Foods Market Bows to OCA Pressure, Promises to Sell More Organics in 2010

The emperor of natural foods, Whole Foods Market (WFM), has no clothes. Throughout summer, 2009, OCA has been alerting organic consumers to the troubling fact that the overwhelming majority of grocery items (approximately 2/3) sold by WFM, even their private label "365" brand, are not certified organic, but rather so-called "natural" products that are typically just conventional products in disguise. After being defensive and unresponsive at first (basically saying "we sell more" organic food than any other retailer), and after putting pressure on OCA's advertisers to stop supporting us, WFM seems to finally be seeing the light.

After thousands of emails from OCA members demanding that the company stop selling so many bogus "natural products" and embrace its stated mission to sell healthy organic foods, WFM's executives apparently realized last week that OCA will not shut up, and that they have a major problem on their hands. You can't just simply proclaim that you are a leader in selling organic foods, you must actually walk your talk. Last week, WFM announced it was launching a new "healthy eating" initiative with a greater emphasis on organics. In a highly publicized speech in the UK, John Mackey confessed the company's product selection had veered off course. The OCA will be monitoring WFM's practices closely to make sure that the giant retailers' actions match its rhetoric. Instead of 2/3 of its sales being so-called "natural" products, (with only 1/3 certified organic), OCA wants to see 2/3 of WFM's sales be organic by the end of 2010. [organicconsumers.org/articles/article\\_18793.cfm](http://organicconsumers.org/articles/article_18793.cfm)

## How Can You NOT Afford Organic Foods?

OCA web forum user Greg B. posted the following: "Invariably, when I encourage friends and relatives to eat organic, the response is 'I can't afford it'. My reaction is 'You can't afford *not* to'. Two sayings come to mind in this regard: 'Penny-wise and pound-foolish' and 'An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure'. Need I elaborate? Americans eagerly guzzle rivers of soda pop, which I recently learned is the #1 source of dietary calories in the US! Yet, when confronted with actual food, say an organic apple, the price all of a sudden becomes a big obstacle. Meanwhile, we all pay through the nose for all the hidden costs of industrial food production. Health costs, environmental costs, subsidies to agribusinesses that put family farmers out of business (agribusiness = aggravation!). It's quite a racket, really. The food industry makes us sick, the health care system fixes us up and everyone make out like a bandit—well, almost everyone... Read more: [organicconsumers.org/forum/index.php?showtopic=2881&hl=](http://organicconsumers.org/forum/index.php?showtopic=2881&hl=)

## Urine Luck! Pee May Be the Fuel of the Future

Scientists at Ohio University have stumbled on a major break-through that could be the key to bringing hydrogen fuel cells into wide-spread use. Scientists discovered that placing a nickel-based electrode in a pool of urine and applying a small electrical current produces hydrogen gas. "One cow can provide enough energy to supply hot water for 19 houses," Ohio University professor Gerardine Botte said of the discovery. The scientists are hoping to make commercial version of the technology available by next year. [organicconsumers.org/articles/article\\_18776.cfm](http://organicconsumers.org/articles/article_18776.cfm)

## Washington Post Reports Meat Eating is 'Huge Contributor' to Climate Change

Last week, the *Washington Post* summarized a number of recent reports indicating that one of the best things you can do to reduce your carbon footprint or greenhouse gas pollution is to reduce your meat consumption. Here are some quick highlights:

- ✦ A Carnegie Mellon study found that the average American would benefit the planet more by being vegetarian one day per week than by switching to a totally local diet (heck, why not do both?).
- ✦ A University of Chicago study found that switching to a vegan diet would have a bigger impact than trading your gas guzzler for a Prius.
- ✦ The head of the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change recommended giving up meat one day a week to take pressure off the atmosphere.
- ✦ According to a 2006 UN report, livestock accounts for 18% of worldwide greenhouse gas emissions.

Although we've reported similar studies in *Organic Bytes* over the years, it's refreshing to see a mainstream media outlet finally bring attention to the topic. Americans seem okay being told they should recycle, drive less, and weatherize their homes, but something short-circuits when you ask them to reduce their meat consumption.

[organicconsumers.org/articles/article\\_18688.cfm](http://organicconsumers.org/articles/article_18688.cfm)

## Headlines of the Week

### The Impact of Common Foods Before They Reach Your Plate

Check out this interactive web tool that shows you how some of the most popular foodstuffs in the US are made, with an emphasis on how fossil fuels enter into the production chain. The amount of fossil-fuel energy used to make a steak, potato, soda and an organic salad may surprise you. [organicconsumers.org/articles/article\\_18781.cfm](http://organicconsumers.org/articles/article_18781.cfm)

### Organic Farming Can Feed the World

"Studies shows organic techniques can provide much more food per acre in developing countries than conventional chemical-based agriculture..."

### USDA Proposes Bio-Based Product Consumer Label Rule

Ag Secretary Vilsack announced that the USDA is making it easier for consumers to identify products derived from plant matter. This regulation will allow bio-based product manufacturers to participate in a voluntary labeling program to identify Bio-based products on retail shelves.

### How We Became a Society of Gluttonous Junk Food Addicts

"Frito-Lay is the snack-food peddler to the world, with over \$43 billion in revenue in 2008... Behind the enigma of Doritos' dominance, and the lure of junk food to even the most refined palates in the world, are the wonders of food science. That science, in the service of industrial capitalism, has hooked us on a food system that is destroying our health with obesity-related diseases."

Read these articles & many more: [www.organicconsumers.org](http://www.organicconsumers.org)

## If Only Money Grew on Trees

Times are tough for everyone. That's why OCA continues to work for consumers, family farmers, our environment, and our children. We want to continue fighting the good fight, as well as bring you *Organic Bytes*, but we need your donations to survive these financially difficult times. Any donation is helpful and appreciated. [organicconsumers.org/donations.cfm](http://organicconsumers.org/donations.cfm)

### QUOTE OF THE WEEK



### Whole Foods Boss: We Sell a 'Bunch of Junk'

"We sell a bunch of junk. We've decided if Whole Foods doesn't take a leadership role in educating people about a healthy diet, who the heck is going to do it?" -John Mackey: Whole Foods Market Founder, *The Telegraph* (UK), August 6, 2009 [organicconsumers.org/articles/article\\_18764.cfm](http://organicconsumers.org/articles/article_18764.cfm)