



AMERICAN COUNCIL
ON SCIENCE AND HEALTH

Scientist Debunks Myth of Organic Nutritional Superiority

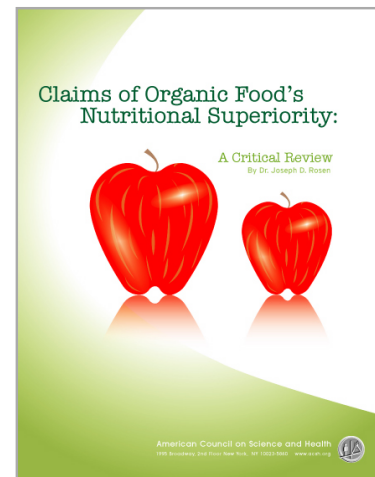
"Organic proponents have...used misleading and inappropriately-evaluated data "

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PRESS RELEASE

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New York, NY -- July 21, 2008. The latest attempt by proponents of organic agriculture to prove that organically grown crops are nutritionally superior to conventional ones has failed, according to Joseph D. Rosen, Ph.D., emeritus professor of Food Toxicology at Rutgers University and a scientific advisor to the American Council on Science and Health (ACSH).



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Dr. Rosen analyzed a pro-organic report by Charles Benbrook and colleagues at the Organic Trade Association's Organic Center and found the data had been selectively chosen and presented to "prove" the desired point. Dr. Rosen's report, *Claims of Organic Food's Nutritional Superiority: A Critical Review*, was published today by ACSH.

In the original pro-organic paper, Benbrook and colleagues had stated that organic produce is 25% "more nutritious" than that produced by conventional agricultural practices. But when Dr. Rosen actually recalculated some of their data, correcting several inaccuracies, he concluded that the conventional products were actually 2% more nutritious than the organic varieties:

- The Benbrook paper had claimed that organically grown vegetables had much more quercetin (a precursor of the antioxidant quercetin) than conventional varieties. But the organic vegetables studied had been sprayed with an organic pesticide that greatly increases plants' production of quercetin -- so of course they beat the conventional plants on that measure.
- Dr. Rosen also points out that the organic proponents included data of dubious validity in their review. They used data from articles that were not peer-reviewed, and in one case included nutrient content from an analysis of whole kiwi fruits -- both the inedible skin and the edible pulp, though this is not what the consumer would eat.

Dr. Rosen's analysis demonstrates how organic proponents have, once again, used misleading and inappropriately-evaluated data to support their agenda. More details on Rosen's own methods and conclusions may be found [here](#).

For more information please contact Dr. Elizabeth Whelan, President, or Dr. Ruth Kava, Director of Nutrition, at ACSH (212-362-7044), or:

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The American Council on Science and Health is an independent, non-profit consumer education organization concerned with issues related to food, nutrition, chemicals, pharmaceuticals, lifestyle, the environment, and health. ACSH, directed and advised by a consortium of over 350 physicians and scientists, urges Americans to focus their efforts on things that matter -- such as maintaining a healthy body weight and not smoking -- rather than the countless pieces of nonsensical or trivial health advice that fill the news.

UPDATE: [Rosen's reply to the Organic Center's reaction.](#)

This information was found online at:

http://www.acsh.org/news/newsID.1713/news_detail.asp