

ROLLING PRAIRIE

notes from rolling prairie farmers alliance

WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 27
2009

Coming Up

Early October



In early October we usually have some combination of apples, beans, cilantro, cucumbers, eggplant, garlic greens, hot peppers, mushrooms, okra, radishes, rhubarb, pears, peppers, salad mix, summer squash, sweet potatoes, tomatoes, turnips, and winter squash.

Is organic better?

This summer, you may have read about an overview of published research that suggested organic foods do not have significant health advantages over those that are conventionally grown.

A former researcher at K-State, Dr. Xin Zhao, who is now at the University of Florida, and Jane Sooby of the Organic Farming Research Foundation wrote a letter to the publication, *Science*, questioning such conclusions.

“Drawing definitive conclusions about the possible nutritional benefits of organic foods based on analyses of the published literature is premature for the simple reason that so few valid studies, particularly long-term trials, have been conducted to date,” their letter stated.

Dr. Zhao and other researchers supported by OFRF continue their work on the higher levels of phytochemical compounds in organic fruits and other possible contributors to healthy effects of organic food. Some of this research is taking place at K-State.



MICHAEL POLLAN :
IN DEFENSE OF FOOD

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

EAT FOOD * NOT TOO MUCH * MOSTLY PLANTS

EAT EVEN MORE KALE!

My eye doctor, Dr. Jay Burlingame, thinks I should eat even *more* fresh fruits and vegetables—for the health of my eyes. I can forgive him for forgetting that I grow these things, eat them every day, and provide them to lots of other people through a CSA.

The important thing is that he is informing other patients, and he has the science to back it up. Fruits—especially grapes, blueberries, and blackberries—are high in bioflavonoids. These and other antioxidants not only help prevent cancer, they also reduce the risk of macular degeneration (a serious eye disability) by 36% when you consume more than 1 1/2 servings a day.

Vegetables—especially dark, leafy greens like kale, spinach, arugula, and collards—have zeaxanthin and lutein. These antioxidants also have the inter-

esting effect of filtering the high-energy wavelengths of light in the blue range, which can promote free radical damage of eye and skin tissues. Filtering these wavelengths helps reduce such damage, and therefore help reduce chances of conditions such as macular degeneration and skin cancer.

Interestingly, Dr. Burlingame also pointed out that your body’s absorption of these carotenoids is enhanced by consuming them with good vegetable oil, such as olive oil. The greens need to be cooked to get the full effect, so cooking them in oil high in Omega-3, such as olive oil, is recommended. Of course, you should limit your intake of “pro-inflammatory” foods high in Omega-6, such as fatty fried food cooked in corn or soy oil.

Now you have even more reason to “eat your greens!”

