WHAT YOU CAN SAY WHEN MARKETING ORGANIC FOOD
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Introduction

The organic market is growing and more consumers are looking for organic than ever before. We believe this is a crucial moment for everyone in the organic movement to come together with a clear call to consumers – organic is food you can trust, better for the environment and animal welfare.

For decades, the Soil Association has worked to identify and highlight the key tangible consumer benefits of organic food and farming. It has regularly published guidance on approved statements that can be used under UK Advertising Standards Authority’s (ASA) Code.

In a sea of labels on packaging, single issue products and competing claims, consumers are confused. Understanding organic through a clear and simple proposition, message and benefits will be the difference between them buying, or hesitating and picking up something else. There is strong scientific evidence to back up the benefits that those of us involved in organic farming and food know it delivers. Organic has a lot of positive benefits; we as Brand Owners and Marketers know this. Many are not 100% unique and some are unclaimable - for example, the much wished for ‘better tasting.’ However, there is a lot we can say, and we need to say it clearly and in a way that resonates with the shopper, the chef or the journalist. The research that we at Soil Association Certification carried out in the summer of 2016 brought home the need for a clearly simplified organic message, and that is what this report sets out to support.

We start with our proposition for organic as ‘food as it should be,’ but recognise that not everyone will want to use every statement that sits with this. If, however, we communicate as one voice, it will help to remove the confusion that exists across brands and labels to the consumer, and ultimately, give us all the tools to grow the organic market.

The proposition ‘organic is food as it should be’ and the five point pledge were all consumer tested in spring 2017.

The statements here are to support the industry in communicating about organic in a clear, legal and customer friendly way. This document was prepared following discussion with the Committee of Advertising Practise (CAP), and in reference to the principles of the CAP Code. At times, this has proved challenging, and we have taken legal advice to support us in some instances.

However, we are still bound by the CAP principles, and this guide reflects that. We would advise that you should ALWAYS submit your own advertising copy and materials to Copy Advice (CA) before using them, as much will depend on the context and other statements that you may be using.

While this booklet covers claims which are specific to organic food, there will always be claims which can be made in relation to foods of a certain category. For example: with milk, there are relevant and approved health claims, such as all milk being a source of calcium, which makes it good for our health. This would enable this specific product to use a claim such as ‘good for you’. However, this has nothing to do with the special characteristics of organic and cannot be used to suggest organic milk delivers greater benefits.

The first edition of this guide was greatly used and referred to. Yes, there is always more we would like to say, but we hope you find this updated version of as much use as its predecessor, and ultimately, that it help us all to promote a strong, clear and positive message to consumers, and the public in general.

Clare McDermott
BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR
SOIL ASSOCIATION CERTIFICATION
Promoting the benefits of organic

As the statements in this document show, almost all the positive attributes of organic farming and food can be communicated to customers and potential customers easily and clearly. Organic farming is a system - governed by legal standards, and regularly and independently inspected - that produces food in ways that benefit people, animals, wildlife, society and the environment. No other system of farming and food production gets anywhere near delivering all of these public goods. We believe that by working together as one organic community, we will be able to tell a fantastic and compelling story about the complex and multiple benefits of organic.

Simplifying the organic message

Following our research into organic consumers in 2016 (www.soilassociation.org/certification/market-research-and-data/consumer-research/), we worked with many of you to develop a simplified organic message. The aim is to overcome some of the barriers hindering growth of organic. These were: understanding, availability and clarification about certification. Our in-depth report, which is available free of charge for Soil Association Certification licensees, looks into the six major trends impacting consumer relationships with food, as well as the key motivations for the audience segments analysed as part of the research. Against a backdrop of mistrust in food production and food waste, the visual picture that consumers hold of organic is compelling and positive. It offers a powerful and strong platform for organic brands to leverage.

The statement(s) below were created using insights from the research and have been tested across a range of brands, sectors and consumers. We aim for it to be used on pack and in all marketing materials.

Food as it should be

When you see the organic symbol, you can be sure what you buy has been produced to the highest standards. It means fewer pesticides, no artificial additives or preservatives, the highest standards of animal welfare and no GM ingredients.

Organic always means:

• Fewer pesticides
• No artificial colours & preservatives
• Always Free Range
• No routine use of antibiotics
• No GM ingredients

The above statement and our organic 5 point pledge can be expanded upon, or tailored to your brand or products, using the many statements provided in the rest of the booklet. Use it in your marketing materials, on pack, online or on social media.

Advertising Standards Authority and Copy Advice

In the UK, marketing statements are overseen by a voluntary system, funded by the advertising and related industries, and run by the ASA. The Advertising Codes are also administered by the ASA. Copy Advice (CA) is the self-regulatory body that creates, revises and enforces the Code.
Businesses wanting to know if statements they make about their products are likely to be found to be problematic by the ASA, if a complaint is made about what they say, can check in advance with CAP. CA are linked to, but independent of the ASA, and always take pains to stress that if they advise that a statement is acceptable, it still may be found to be unacceptable by the ASA. Nevertheless, CA’s view carries some weight with the ASA, and certainly provides a useful guide to advertisers. CA is an essential service for advertisers, agencies, media owners and media service providers who want to check how their prospective non-broadcast ads or multi-media concepts measure up against the UK Advertising Codes.

The vast majority of advertisers, promoters and direct marketers comply with the Code. Those that do not may be subject to sanctions. Adverse publicity may result from the rulings published weekly by the ASA on its website. The media, contractors and service providers may withhold their services or deny access to space.

What does the ASA Non-broadcast Code cover?

UK Code of Non-Broadcast Advertising and Direct & Promotional Marketing (CAP Code) is the rule book for non-broadcast advertisements, sales promotions and direct marketing communications (marketing communications). Visit the ASA website (www.asa.org.uk/) for a full breakdown of what is included in the Code.

In summary:

The Code applies to: all non-broadcast marketing communications including national and regional newspaper ads; magazine ads; posters; Video on Demand advertising; ads on music streaming services; cinema commercials (scripts are usually pre-cleared by the Cinema Advertising Association); banner ads, pop-up and other ads on the Internet; commercial e-mails; commercial SMS text messages; direct mailings; point of sale material that consumers can retain; sales promotions, including those on-pack and on the Internet; and ambient media (the Introduction to the CAP Code, section I).

The Code does not apply, among other things, to: television and radio advertisements, which are subject to the UK Code of Broadcast Advertising (BCAP Code) and are usually pre-cleared by Clearcast (TV) or Radiocentre (radio); editorial material; press releases and other PR material; private classified marketing communications; marketing communications in foreign media; health-related claims in marketing communications addressed only to the medical, dental, veterinary and allied professions; fixed point of sale materials including shop window displays; sponsorship; customer charters and codes of practice; packaging, unless it is visible in an ad or constitutes a sales promotion; marketing communications for causes and ideas in non-paid-for space unless they contain a direct solicitation for donations and private correspondence (the Introduction to the CAP Code, section II).
What about online?
Since 2011, the CAP Code has applied to advertising on a company’s own website or in other non-paid-for space online under their control (see ‘Remit: Social Media’), but this doesn’t mean that the Code covers everything online. Read the online remit to find out what is covered here: [www.asa.org.uk/advice-online/remit-general.html#online](http://www.asa.org.uk/advice-online/remit-general.html#online).

You can’t say everything that is true!
The rules governing what you can say to sell a product, as administered by the ASA, do not simply rely on a statement being true. For example, you are not allowed to say something that the ASA might feel ‘denigrates’ other products.

A few years ago, the European Union introduced strict rules about any statements implying that a product has nutritional benefits or will make people healthier – such statements are now extremely difficult to make. The EU Register has a useful searchable directory of authorised health claims, and the Annex lists acceptable nutrition claims and their conditions of use: [ec.europa.eu/food/safety/labelling_nutrition/claims/health_claims_en](http://ec.europa.eu/food/safety/labelling_nutrition/claims/health_claims_en).

There is certainly more we could say and there is always more we would like to say
This collection of statements is always a work in progress and if anyone feels there are other statements about organic farming and food which result from the application of organic standards, or for which there is good scientific evidence, we would be delighted to hear them and to check them with Copy Advice.

How to use the statements in this document
1. Once you have decided to use a statement, we strongly recommend you then check your specific advertisement with Copy Advice. The context in which the statement is used, and any associated imagery, can alter the meaning of the words.

Copy Advice can be reached via their website at [www.asa.org.uk/advice-and-resources/bespoke-copy-advice.html](http://www.asa.org.uk/advice-and-resources/bespoke-copy-advice.html) and proposed statements can be submitted via the website for free advice. Copy Advice always undertake to respond within 24 hours, and in the Soil Association’s experience, their staff are generally helpful and willing to explain the basis of their advice. However, remember that Copy Advice will always qualify their opinion by stressing that it does not bind the ASA itself.

2. You need to hold any evidence that might be required to substantiate the statements you make, when you make them. The Soil Association has a fully referenced version for the statements in this document, some referring back to the Soil Association’s own organic standards, and where appropriate to the relevant scientific research. This information is available to SA licensees on request. Please contact: [marketingsupport@soilassociation.org](mailto:marketingsupport@soilassociation.org) if you would like a copy.
WHAT IS ORGANIC?

- Food as it should be
- Food you can trust
- Organic: a symbol of trust
- All organic products come from trusted sources
- Whatever you’re buying, when you choose organic, you choose products that have been produced to the highest standards
- Food you can trust - organic food must be certified by law, so you can be assured that the product and ingredients come from verified sources
- The standards for organic food are laid down in European law, so a licence is required to grow, process and market organic products, plus all organic farms and companies are inspected at least once a year
- All organic farms and food companies are inspected at least once a year. The standards for organic food are laid down in European law, and in places, these are exceeded by the Soil Association’s stricter standards
- Soil Association certify over 70% of organic food in the UK, and all organic farmers and processors are inspected at least once a year - it is the most rigorous of any independent food standard audit process, so the organic label is the best way of assuring that the food we eat has been produced to a standard you can trust
- Wherever you see the organic symbol, you can be sure that the food has been produced to the highest standards
- Organic certification and labelling is agreed nationally and across Europe, and is a guarantee of food quality, independently inspected and certified all over the world
- Choosing organic means that you are supporting farming practices with a more traceable production process and you’ll always know what’s in your food
- It means higher levels of animal welfare, lower levels of pesticides, no manufactured herbicides or artificial fertilisers, and more environmentally sustainable management of farmland and the natural environment – this means more wildlife!
Organic farming and food production is not easy, and takes real commitment and attention to detail, backed up by rigorous, independent inspection and certification.

Farming for the future

No system of farming has higher animal welfare standards than farms working to Soil Association organic standards.

No system of farming has lower pesticide use.

No system of farming is more bee-friendly.

No system of farming does more to protect natural resources like fresh water and healthy soils.

Organic farming works with nature, using crop rotations and clover to build fertility in the soil.

In organic farming, natural methods are relied upon to control pests and disease - these include well-designed crop rotations, encouraging natural predators, and developing good soil and healthy crops which have natural resistance to pests and diseases.

Organic farmers don’t use manufactured (or artificial) fertilisers, herbicides or GM feed.

Organic farmers aim to select crop varieties with natural resistance to particular pests and diseases, with the aim of reducing or avoiding disease problems and the need to control them with chemical inputs.

Organic farms do not use manufactured chemical fertilisers. Instead, crop rotation is at the core of organic production. Crops and livestock are rotated around different fields within the farm on an annual basis.

Organic farmers are, on average, younger than non-organic farmers.

The organic food supply chain requires workers who are highly experienced and well-qualified.

Organic farming creates more jobs.

Organic farming is attracting younger people into farming, compared to the farming industry as a whole.

Reasons to choose organic farming:

- Organic farming and food production is not easy, and takes real commitment and attention to detail, backed up by rigorous, independent inspection and certification.
- Farming for the future.
- No system of farming has higher animal welfare standards than farms working to Soil Association organic standards.
- No system of farming has lower pesticide use.
- No system of farming is more bee-friendly.
- No system of farming does more to protect natural resources like fresh water and healthy soils.
- Organic farming works with nature, using crop rotations and clover to build fertility in the soil.
- In organic farming, natural methods are relied upon to control pests and disease - these include well-designed crop rotations, encouraging natural predators, and developing good soil and healthy crops which have natural resistance to pests and diseases.
- Organic farmers don’t use manufactured (or artificial) fertilisers, herbicides or GM feed.

Organic farming and food production is not easy, and takes real commitment and attention to detail, backed up by rigorous, independent inspection and certification.
REASONS TO CHOOSE ORGANIC

1. Knowing what’s in your food

- Avoiding pesticides and additives in food is the biggest motivation for purchase with organic shoppers
- Choosing organic is an easy way to avoid pesticides, herbicides and many additives and preservatives
- Organic standards prohibit GM crops and ingredients, hydrogenated fats and controversial artificial food colours and preservatives
- GM ingredients, hydrogenated fats and controversial artificial food colours, and preservatives including sodium benzoate, aspartame and food colour tartrazine are banned under organic standards
- Only 55 of the 338 food additives approved for use across the EU are permitted in organic food
- Amongst the additives banned by the Soil Association’s standards are hydrogenated fat, aspartame (artificial sweetener) and monosodium glutamate; generally, permitted additives are derived from natural sources such as citric acid from lemons

REDUCED ANTIBIOTIC USE

- Compassion in World Farming say that intensive livestock farming relies on a greater use of antibiotics to treat stressed, disease-prone animals
- Use of antibiotics in Europe remains more than twice as high in animals as in humans
- No system of farming has overall lower use of antibiotics
- Soil Association standards ban the routine use of antibiotics
- Organic free range systems encourage healthy animals avoiding the need for routine antibiotics

GM FREE FARMING

- No GM crops
- No GM ingredients
- Non GM
- No use of GM
- GM ingredients and crops are banned under Soil Association Organic Standards.
- Genetically modified crops and ingredients are banned under European Union and international organic standards
- GM animal feed is prohibited under organic standards
- Organic farmers are not allowed to use GM
- The use of genetically modified organisms is banned under organic standards
- To meet organic standards, farmers and processors cannot use GMOs and must show that they are protecting their products from contamination with prohibited products from farm to fork
- Most non-organic British chickens, pigs and cows are fed with imported GM crops
Less pesticides
Virtually no pesticides
Organic food is produced with virtually no pesticides
Organic farming uses virtually no pesticides
Almost 300 pesticides can routinely be used in non-organic farming in the UK and pesticides are often present in non-organic food
Many pesticides remain in some of the food we eat, despite washing and cooking
Pesticides were detected in almost 43% of the foods tested by the UK Government in 2015. Only 5% of organic foods tested the same year, were found to have traces of pesticides. Many of these contain more than one pesticide - for example, 87% of pears and 79% of grapes contained traces of multiple pesticides
The UK government tests both organic and non-organic foods on a rolling basis - in 2015, just 5% of organic samples contained any traces of pesticides, compared to 43% of non-organic foods
One way to reduce your exposure to pesticides is to eat more organic food
Research suggests that if all farming in England and Wales was organic, pesticide use would drop by 98%
In 2015, over 17,800 tonnes of pesticides were used on British farms to kill weeds, insects and control crop diseases
In the 20 years between 1994 and 2014, the use of glyphosate on British cereals increased by 700%
Over a third of UK cereal crops were sprayed with glyphosate in 2013
The best way to reduce your exposure to pesticides in all food is to buy organic; certified organic food, including all fruit and vegetables, processed food and dairy and meat products will overall contain less pesticides
Non-organic food production makes wide use of pesticides, which can pollute water and the environment
In organic farming, the use of herbicides is completely banned - there are a small number of pesticides that organic farmers are permitted to use, all of which are based on naturally occurring substances, and are carefully selected and approved by the EU
There are up to 4 times more detectable pesticides in non-organic crops compared to organic crops
In organic farming, all weed killers are banned - a very limited number of fungicides and insecticides are permitted, but these are naturally occurring and their use is severely restricted
Soil Association organic farmers are able to use just 20 pesticides, derived from natural ingredients, including citronella and clove oil but only under very restricted circumstances
No herbicides (weed killers) such as Glyphosate are allowed in organic farming
We can, however, make the following statements:

• Organic farming affects the quality of the food we eat
• Organic is different
• How we farm affects the quality of the food we eat
• “What you feed farm animals and how you treat them affects the quality of the food. The hard work organic farmers put into caring for their animals pays off in the quality of the food they produce, giving real value for money.” – Helen Browning, CEO of The Soil Association
• The difference in Omega 3 is because organic animals eat a more natural grass-based diet containing high levels of clover - clover is used in organic farming to fix nitrogen so that crops and grass grow (instead of manufactured/chemical fertilisers)

NUTRITIONAL DIFFERENCES

Following the three major meta-analyses which looked into the nutritional differences between organic and non-organic crops, meat and dairy, we have worked closely with the team at Newcastle University and have sought legal advice to establish whether it is possible to make advertising claims in relation to the results, which demonstrate significant nutritional differences.

However, whilst organic milk and meat do contain up to 50% more omega 3 fatty acids, these fail to meet the minimum requirements needed to make a nutritional claim for these products, which requires organic milk to not only provide much more omega 3 than non-organic milk, but also to supply 30% of the Required Daily Amount of omega 3, which it does not. For milk, this is due to the lower fat content (around 4% for whole milk). We will continue to work with Newcastle University to ensure we evaluate each study as it is released to establish whether we can make nutritional statements on a product by product basis.
Better for animals

- Organic farming has the highest standards of animal welfare
- No other international farming standards deliver higher standards of animal welfare than organic
- As well as requiring that animals are genuinely free range, organic standards cover living conditions, food quality, transport and slaughter
- High animal welfare
- Soil Association standards for meat and animal products rigorously protect all aspects of animal wellbeing from rearing, feeding and shelter, to transportation and slaughter
- Animals are raised without the routine, preventative use of antibiotics and wormers, and they graze naturally on a GM-free diet
- Animals are reared without the routine use of drugs, antibiotics and wormers common in intensive livestock farming
- Animals are raised in conditions that suit their natural behaviour and are fed a mainly organic diet
- Organic standards ban the use of cloning and embryo transfer
- Organic standards ban the routine use of antibiotics and wormers
- More fresh air for the animals (accompanying text must explain the headline)
- Animals are reared without the routine use of drugs, antibiotics or wormers, animal feed is GM-free and poultry, pigs and cattle are always free-range
- Nanotechnology is banned under Soil Association organic standards
- High standards

FREE-RANGE

- Always free-range
- On average, organic cows spend more time outdoors, grazing than the average amount of time spent outdoor grazing by cows producing ‘free range’ milk
- More than just free range (organic standards also cover other aspects of livestock production, such as diet, stocking densities, transport and slaughter)
- Animals reared organically are encouraged to forage and graze
- Organically reared animals are fed a more natural, mainly organic and completely GM-free diet
- Organic standards insist that animals are given plenty of space and fresh air to thrive and grow – guaranteeing a truly free-range life
- Organic animals have more space to play and roam

PIGS

- Organic systems for pigs and poultry are free-range, and encourage the animals’ natural behaviour
- Under Soil Association standards pigs must be free range and allowed to forage without painful nose rings
- Pigs reared in organic systems are weaned much later than standard ones, at 40 days rather than as early as 21 days. The Soil Association advises its farmers not to wean pigs until they are eight weeks old
COWS

• Happier, healthier cows

• More than just free range – organic cows must be at pasture whenever conditions allow – over 200 days on average per year

• Cows are fed a grass-rich, GM free diet (minimum 60% grass-based)

• ‘Zero-grazing’, where cows are kept indoors and cut grass or other feed, such as cereals and soya is taken to them, is banned by organic standards

• According to EU regulations all organic herds have to be outside for as long as conditions allow and on average, our cows are out on grass for over 200 days per year

• A better life from birth: Soil Association standards do not allow the sale of calves to continental style veal systems, and our standards specify that licensees must have a plan to end the practice of culling new-born male calves

• Organic dairy cows are generally not pushed to their milk producing limits in the same way other cows can be - yields in organic milk production are on average 20% less than in intensive systems

CHICKEN & EGGS

• Organic chickens, turkeys and other poultry birds are raised to organic standards, which not only means free-range, but a whole lot more

• Organic chickens must be completely free range. They live in smaller flocks, have better access to fresh air and grass, and more space in their houses than non-organic chickens

• Organic standards cover not just the bird’s housing, the amount of space they have and the way they are treated, but also what they are fed, how they are transported and eventually slaughtered

• Organic chickens are not allowed to be fed on GM feed (which is common in free-range and non-organic hens)

• Chickens must not have their beaks trimmed to try and prevent feather pecking and are given plenty of opportunities to express their natural behaviours such as foraging, bathing in the dust outside, and pecking at insects and worms on grass fields

• Organic chickens are usually breeds that are slower growing, and more robust. Organic meat chickens live twice as long as most intensively farmed chickens

• Soil Association certified organic laying hens are kept in smaller flocks with more space (max 2,000 vs 16,000 in free range systems). Poultry raised for meat must also be kept in small flocks – maximum 1,000 birds
Over half of Britain’s wildlife species have declined since 1970, and more than one in ten are currently facing extinction. Intensive farming practices have been identified as the primary drivers of these declines.

Organic farmers don’t use herbicides at all and fungicides and insecticides are severely restricted. This is good news for the birds and bees that live on organic farms.

Organic farms support more wildlife.

Overall, organic farming supports more farmland wildlife than non-organic farming because of the way farmland is managed and treated.

The UK government has said that organic farming is better for wildlife, causes lower pollution from sprays, produces less carbon dioxide and fewer dangerous wastes.

Organic farms are havens for wildlife and provide homes for bees, birds and butterflies. On average, plant, insect and bird life is 50% more abundant on organic farms. Organic farms are also home to 30% more species on average.

Birds, mammals, spiders, earthworms, beetles, butterflies and plants benefit from organic farming.

On average, organic farming supports more farmland wildlife than non-organic farming.

Organic farms have been found to have a higher abundance of bumblebees, partly due to greater number of flowers on organic farms.

Encourages wildlife.
COMBATING CLIMATE CHANGE

• If all UK farmland was converted to organic farming, at least 1.3 million tonnes of carbon would be taken up by the soil each year – the equivalent of taking nearly 1 million cars off the road

• Organic farming has significant potential to help tackle climate change

• If half of all farming in the European Union converted to organic by 2030, we could cut almost a quarter (23%) of the EU’s greenhouse gas emissions simply by increased soil carbon sequestration and reduced use of mineral fertilisers

• Organic agriculture can help fight against climate change by sequestering carbon in soils

• Organic farms have higher soil carbon levels compared to non-organic farms

• Organic farming releases less greenhouse gases per hectare than non-organic farming

• Choosing organic, local and seasonal food could help to reduce your carbon footprint

• Organically managed soils and organic farms emit less nitrous oxide and take up greater amounts of atmospheric methane (two potent greenhouse gases) compared to non-organic farms

• Overall, organic farming uses less energy

• Organic farming does not rely on artificial fertilisers made from finite fossil fuels

• Organic farms fare better in times of drought and are therefore more resilient to the impacts of climate change

REASONS TO CHOOSE ORGANIC

5 Better for the planet

Environmental claims such as those below tend to be assessed in the context of an ad for a specific product. Therefore, you must make sure you hold evidence to support the environmental claim in question, for the product you are advertising, taking into account its entire life cycle, and whether the ad makes clear what specific product it’s being compared to. If in doubt, consult these sections of the code (11.3 and 11.4): www.asa.org.uk/advice-online/environmental-claims-general.html.

• Organic means working more with nature, not against it

• Organic farming minimises disruption to the natural environment

• Organic farming takes account of local and regional balances and encourages the use of on-site resources

• Organic farming enhances soil life, natural soil fertility and water quality

• Soil Association organic avoids most synthetic pesticide sprays, which promotes biodiversity

• Organic production aims to maintain a healthy living soil, and positive plant and animal health

• Food produced organically encourages more wildlife and generally releases fewer greenhouse gas emissions than non-organic food

• Organic food is produced with natural fertilisers, less energy and more care for animals

• Organic farming reduces environmental pollution and the release of greenhouse gases from food production by severely restricting the use of manufactured chemical fertilisers and pesticides. Instead, organic farmers rely on developing a healthy, fertile soil and growing a mixture of crops
- Organic farming builds soil fertility naturally using compost and clover.
- Natural, sustainable soil fertility is encouraged through composting and crop rotation with legumes to provide nitrogen, rather than synthetic fertilisers.
- Organic agriculture helps reduce our dependence on mined phosphate, a non-renewable resource that is becoming increasingly scarce and expensive.
- Organic farming is better for the long term health of the soil.
- Organic farms have healthier soils.
- Organic farms have a more diverse range of microbes living in the soil - this helps the crops to grow without the expense of artificial fertilisers.

**LOOKING AFTER OUR SOILS**

- Soils store more carbon than the atmosphere, and all of the world’s plants and forests combined, which means that soil is one of our most important weapons in the fight against climate change.
- It takes a hundred years for just one or two centimetres of topsoil to form, and soil that is lost to pollution or erosion will need hundreds or even thousands of years to recover on its own.
- It takes around a hundred years for just one centimetre of topsoil to form, and it’s estimated that we’re losing the equivalent of 30 football pitches of fertile soil every minute.
- Over the last 40 years almost a third of the world’s arable soils are lost to erosion or pollution.
- Organic farming creates a healthy living soil.
- Healthy soils protect underground water supplies by neutralising or filtering out potential pollutants. Increasing soil organic matter levels (through methods used by organic farmers) can improve this function.
Reasons to choose organic

European Commission marketing statements – statements from the Organic Farming section of the Agriculture and Rural Development pages of the European Commission website (as amended by UK ASA’s Copy Advice – and in the UK, for the first four statements, the advertisement would need to explain how the claim is justified).

- Organic farming - better for nature
- Organic farming - be more natural!
- As nature intended
- Organic farming - in nature we trust
- Organic farming - it’s in our nature
- Organic production promotes animal health and welfare
- Organic production has strict standards to help meet the specific behavioural needs of animals
- Organic products meet consumer demand for authentic, high quality food
- Organic labelling offers consumers confidence that their goods are produced under controlled organic standards
- Organic production offers diversified varieties of products to the market, available through various distribution channels
- Organic production offers consumers the guarantee that all enterprises in the organic sector are regularly inspected by authorities
- Consumer demand for organic products is growing, offering increased business opportunities for all sectors of the food supply chain
- The growth in organic farming is creating more employment opportunities and wealth for rural economies, and contributes to the maintenance and improvement of rural landscapes
- Organic farming allows opportunities for members of the food supply chain to reconnect with consumers
MAKE SOME NOISE ABOUT YOUR ORGANIC PRODUCTS!

This booklet is designed to support your marketing communications around organic and your products, but that’s not the only support available. We want to help you make as much noise about your brand and products as possible and we have an exclusive marketing support package available for all Soil Association Certification licensees.

We also have a dedicated, consumer facing section of our website, designed to highlight the benefits of organic and showcase your business and products to consumers. The ‘Organic Living’ Section (www.soilassociation.org/organic-living/) is the most visited area of the site and there are a number of opportunities to feature your content. Find out more on our website, or contact the Marketing Team for more information.

JOIN THE CONVERSATION USING #CHOOSEORGANIC

Share your content, product launches and social media content using #ChooseOrganic, and we’ll promote wherever possible. Follow the conversation here: www.soilassociation.org/organic-living/chooseorganic/