

—organic

# Making the Leap

Consumers keep organic movement driving forward

By Janice M. Kresin

**K**NOWING AND DOING ARE TWO DIFFERENT THINGS.

You can know what path you want to take, but the action steps don't always come as quickly as the knowledge. When it comes to organic produce, the knowledge has been on consumers' plates' for a while now. Moving to action is now here.

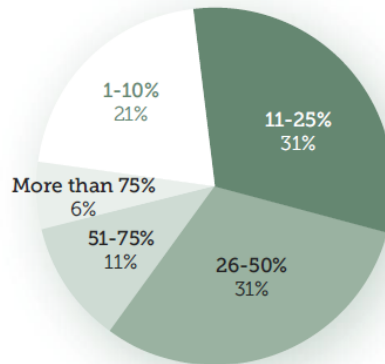
Not only are most consumers aware of organic products, but studies show that more than 80% of consumers periodically buy organics. This new wave of what are being called "health-minded consumers" generally are educated adults, often with children in the home, and those that value their health—either by prevention or treatment by natural products whenever possible.

Many consumers consciously try to incorporate organic fruits and vegetables into their meals. Nearly one-third of respondents to *Fresh Trends 2020* (31%) estimated that 25-50% of their total fresh produce purchases were organic, and the same number guessed that they purchased one-tenth to one-quarter of their produce as organic. Six percent said they bought at least 75% of their produce as organic.

Cost is the main barrier to making organics a 100% choice all the time. Thirty-five percent of shoppers said they would be willing to pay 10% to 25% more for organic produce, and another 33% said they would pay up to 10% more. Nearly half of consumers (46%) said



Consumers' estimate of what percentage of their total annual fruit and vegetable purchases are organic



they would buy organic if price was not a concern.

## Organics at the Point of Purchase

Retailers who devote whole sections of their departments to organics seem to be choosing the right strategy. Nearly 70% of shoppers (69%) said they preferred to see organics displayed as their own section within the produce department as opposed to intermixed by commodity.

When asked how they decide whether or not to buy organic fruits and vegetables, packaging ranks as a top reason—88% of those surveyed said that organic product is packaged more conveniently and that helps convince them to buy.

Larger retailers were more likely to be the source for organic shopping this year. One-quarter of consumers

said they sought out organics at chain superstores like Walmart or Target, and the same percentage looked for organics at their regional grocer (Safeway, Kroger or Publix).

*Fresh Trends 2020* shows that six in 10 shoppers opted for organic produce because of issues like trying to avoid chemicals. Forty-two percent said they chose organic for its nutrient content, and slightly fewer (36%) cited social responsibility as a prime reason for buying.

Papayas were the top item shoppers bought as organic at least some of the time in *Fresh Trends 2020*, followed by Asian pears and sprouts. Kale and kiwi rounded out the top five. Kale continues to be one of the top items that consumers choose to always buy as organic, with one-fifth of buyers saying they always selected organic. 🍌

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