

# “Organic”, “Natural”, and “Humane” Oh My!

## Food Labels and What They Mean

Today, when we walk into the grocery store or search the local farmers market directory, we encounter labels that say “organic,” “100% organic,” “certified organic,” “made with organic ingredients,” “natural,” or “all natural.” Here's what those labels mean.



**100% organic:** This means that no synthetic ingredients are allowed by law. Organic food label claims made in the United States must now be backed by valid certification according to the National Organic Program Rule.

**Organic:** This means that at least 95% of the ingredients are organically produced.

**Made with organic ingredients:** A label claiming to be made with organic ingredients means that at least 70% of its ingredients are organic. The other 30% are from a list approved by the USDA.



**Certified organic:** This means that a farmer follows national organic program rules for raising crops or livestock. These rules include: no use of artificial pesticides, fertilizers, hormones, or antibiotics. Certification by independent third party ensures the plants or animals are grown, harvested, transported, and processed in ways that follow organic rules. Periodic unannounced inspections are also conducted.



**Natural:** A product labeled natural means that *some* of its ingredients don't contain any synthetic ingredients. However, these claims are not regulated.

**All natural:** is used to inform the consumer that all ingredients are natural, or, that they don't contain any synthetics.



**Certified Humane:** A label specifically found on meat products. This means that the farm which the meat was produced has been certified by the Certified Humane Raised and Handled® program which is an animal welfare label requiring the humane treatment of farm animals from birth through slaughter.