



**ADOPT SAFE AND
WITNESSED FOOD IN LIFE**

organo
Et
School



Adopt

safe
and
witnessed
feed
IN LIFE





Image Location : Organo Antharam



Good health is one of the basic necessities of life. Food plays a major part in maintaining a healthy lifestyle. In search of healthy food, we look for fresh food that is naturally grown, residue-free, not treated heavily with pesticides or preservatives, and has not traveled or lost its nutrients in transit. This pursuit leads us to find comfort in buying food that is labeled “organic”.

Organic can mean a lot of things. Food that is grown naturally on soil that had no chemicals applied to it for a few years prior to harvest is termed organic. Organic is also food that is free of hormones, antibiotics, and genetically modified organisms; it is not processed

and does not have synthetic food additives. There are many agencies that are providing “organic certification”. Still, there is no certain way of knowing if the food on your table is organic or not. For instance, your organic food may be coming from a farm that is adopting organic methods but is surrounded by farmlands that are treated heavily with chemicals. In such a case, the chemicals may leach into the soil and contaminate the whole area thus defeating the whole purpose of organic farming. Also, your food may have started as organic but it may be treated with preservatives to improve shelf life during transportation or storage, again defeating the purpose.



Image Location: OES Children's Farm



Image Location: Slow Down Place



So, how do you ensure that the food that you buy is safe and healthy? Now, this is where safe and witnessed food come into the picture. Safe food means food that is healthy, nutrient-rich, free from any pesticides or preservatives, and safe for consumption. While witnessed means food that comes from a known source where you know the producers and are aware of the farming practices that are adopted to grow that food. Safe and witnessed ensures that the food that you are consuming is grown using organic practices, is healthy, and devoid of any harmful residues.

Safe and witnessed is a new way forward, but the question is how to adopt this safe and witnessed food in your life. Here are a few ways that can help you procure safe and witnessed food:

- **Grow food in your kitchen garden.**

This is the easiest way to get safe and witnessed food. You can grow your own vegetables in the kitchen garden or balcony adopting safe and organic practices. This will help you get fresh and organic food straight from your garden to your kitchen. You can get your herbs, seasonal vegetables, and leafy greens this way. This is a great way to get safe food but it's a fact that we cannot grow everything in our

kitchen gardens. So, to get a variety of fruits, vegetables, and grains we have to explore other options.

- **Practice collective farming:** One of the ways to get safe and witnessed food is to live in a community that has integrated agricultural land that allows you to do collective farming and grow your own food. You can witness natural methods used to grow food on these farms and be assured about the safety of the food. Alongside, you can do your own backyard farming as well. Organo Antharam and Organo Naandi are such rural communities that facilitate collective farming. In Organo Naandi about two-thirds of the space is used for collective farming where residents join farmers to grow their own produce. About one-third of the space is designated for personal farming where residents can enjoy kitchen gardening and learn about natural methods of farming. The community also runs a goshala to provide safe hormone-free milk to the residents.
- **Build a direct relationship with the producers:** One of the best ways to ensure that your food is safe is to meet the producer and see how they produce the food. You must check out



Image Location: OES Farm



what methods they are using for farming and if it meets your standards of natural farming or not. If it does not, then talk to them and educate them about natural ways of treating the soil. Give them information about biopesticides and biofertilizers like “jeevamrutham” and “panchagavyam”, and try to make them adopt these natural methods.

- **Tie up directly with the farmers:**

This way, the farmers can grow the produce that you and your neighbours want using these natural methods. You may approach the farmers as a collective group of families and try to establish a time-honored relationship between consumers and producers. For example, you can ask a farmer to grow rice, wheat, or pulses using the aforementioned organic methods year after year providing them with an assured customer base. you can establish the terms of pricing in such a way that both the producer and consumer benefit from it. The key is to have direct communication and an understanding of each other's requirements.

- You can also visit the sites frequently for annual quality checks to make sure he is practicing natural farming

methods. In a similar manner, you can approach a farmer to grow vegetables or fruits. You can even approach a farmer to set up a cold expeller unit to supply naturally pressed oil. In this way, you are providing an assured customer base to the farmer and also establishing your source of safe and witnessed food. Also, getting more and more land under the umbrella of natural farming will ensure that no chemicals are leaching into the farmland from neighboring areas and the food indeed is organic and safe.

- You may also tie up with local goshalas to get safe, hormone-free milk. You can do frequent visits to the goshala to check if they are keeping the cows in good condition and giving them natural feed. This will ensure that the milk that you are getting is safe and hormone-free.

Tying up directly with the food producer gives you an assured continuous supply of safe and witnessed food. Also, knowing where your food is coming from and what practices are adopted in growing that food can give you control and the comfort that the food that you are getting is fresh, unadulterated, and safe to consume.



About Organo Et School

Organo Et School empowers people to embrace eco-living mindsets, behaviors, and habits. We recognize that for any positive impact to be sustainable, it must be long-term and inter-generational.

Organo Et School is a learning initiative set up by Organo in 2017 and has been facilitating field visits and workshops for Schools and Interest Groups. Organo Et School has had over 25+ schools, 6500+ students, and 3000+ adults participate over the last 7 years.

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