



# Why go Organic?

## The benefits of Organic Farming

Using organic inputs increases Soil Organic Carbon (SOC) and promotes soil biological activity, with benefits for soil structure. Thus, soils under organic management show the following characteristics:

### **Erosion control:**

High SOC improves soil aggregation, creating a more stable structure that reduces vulnerability to wind and water erosion.

### **Flood control and drought tolerance:**

Organic matter has the ability to act as a sponge & absorb up to 90% of its mass in water. This is then released to the plant when the plant needs it!

This means organically managed soils are less compacted and therefore allow better infiltration and retention of rainwater.

### **Higher biodiversity:**

Organic soils are a paradise for earthworms, which feed on organic matter, turning and aerating the soil to create favourable conditions for microorganisms. Their biological activity makes more nutrients available to plants, increasing productive potential.

### **CO<sub>2</sub> sequestration:**

Soil microorganisms create humus from organic matter added to the soil; humified organic matter is stable and therefore represents a long-term store of carbon.

Organic production is less vulnerable to droughts and flooding because high SOC binds the soil together, improving water infiltration and retention, and preventing erosion.

### **Less Nitrate Leaching:**

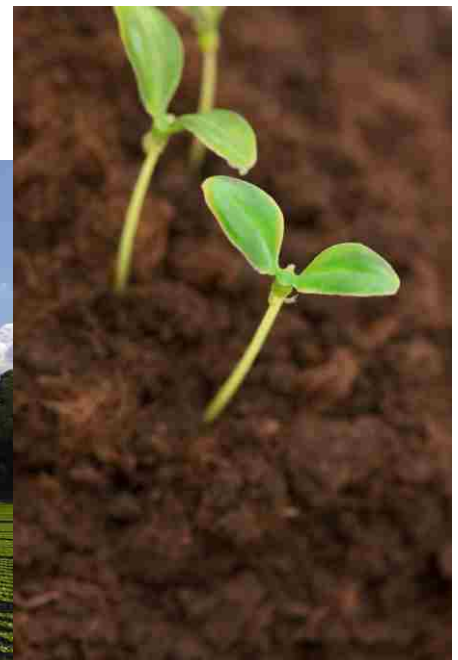
Farm comparisons show that nitrate leaching rates per hectare are lower on organic than on conventional fields by 35 to 65 %. Leaching rates per unit of output are equally low.

**And, yes, better taste! Organic products have won out over conventional in a large number of sensory tests.**

### **The Problem:**

UNEP's Global Environmental Outlook report found that worldwide, 550 million hectares of cultivated land have been degraded by agricultural mismanagement.

Already, an estimated 45% of soils in Europe suffer from depleted organic matter. Organic farming practices protect soil from contamination, compaction, sealing and erosion.



Source:

