

OCTOBER 2013



The cost of food



Things are humming at Organic Living, we have more and more customers coming in wanting to make changes to their health through their diet. Whether addressing food intolerances such as dairy, reducing processed foods, going vegan or simply wanting a spring detox, we have the food and the product knowledge to help people through what can be a difficult transition to a new way of eating. And its not always a cheap transition! Sometimes we are asked how the prices of organics and specialty foods can be justified.

'Replacement' ingredients such as gluten-free flours and sugar substitutes are more expensive to produce - this is why sugar and wheat are so overused in the first place! Organic food also costs a lot more to produce. Physical labour (for activities such as hand-weeding and pest removal) costs a lot more than chemical herbicides and fertilisers. There are also the costs of organic certification to ensure the products you are buying are as safe as they claim. However the real question should be –how is other food produced so cheaply? You may have noticed that we spend a lot less on consumer goods as a percentage of income today, including our groceries. In the US for example it is estimated that [average food prices have dropped up to 82% in the last century](#) when inflation adjusted. This is due to industrialisation, mechanisation and technological advances allowing for mass production of food. Although this has greatly increased the quantity of food available and has saved millions of lives, the quality of the food produced is now having the reverse effect. The real cost of the food is then carried by the environment, the workers and the health of consumers. Put simply—you get what you pay for!

New Products!

Co Yo is the ultimate healthy treat - vegan, dairy and gluten-free yoghurt made from coconut, containing plant fed probiotic cultures. In natural, mango and mixed berry flavours. In store soon!



Radico Colour Me Organic Hair Colour uses only certified organic henna and other ayurvedic herbs to create different shades of hair colour. 100% natural, it covers greys, leaves you hair feeling lustrous and lasts up to 30 days. In soft black, dark brown, copper brown, burgundy and mahogany. \$19.90.

NEWS NEWS NEWS NEWS

- ◆ Come along to the **Manawatu Harvest Festival** on Saturday 19th October at Te Manawa. Great stalls, food, speakers and entertainment, with a focus on environmental issues. For more information go to www.maifarm.org.nz

HERB OF THE MONTH: STEVIA

The herb *Stevia Rebaudiana* contains steviol glycoside which is up to 300 times sweeter than sugar. Despite tasting sweet, stevia has almost no calories or carbohydrates making it ideal for diabetics or those reducing their sugar intake. It is most commonly used as a sugar substitute in hot and cold beverages. For baking it is often mixed with a sugar alcohol such as erythritol. You can buy drops, tablets or granules, or you can grow your own plant and simply add a fresh leaf to your cuppa!

OCTOBER SPECIALS

- ◆ With every Living Nature 50ml Balancing Night Gel, receive a free cleansing clay peel. Or buy a 100ml purifying cleanser, receive another for free! While stocks last.

GARDENING?

When you are planting your spring and summer vegetables, don't forget we also have a selection of organic herb seedlings and now is the perfect time to get them established. We have annuals such as basil and perennials like lavender. We also have stevia plants- one fresh leaf is 30-40 times sweeter than sugar!

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Feature product - Spices



As fantastic as whole foods are, it is often the seasonings we add to a dish that really makes it, from a pinch of salt to a complex curry paste. But we may not also know how beneficial these flavours are to health as well. Each month we discuss the merits of a different herb in this newsletter, but did you know that many of our culinary spices can be used medicinally as well?

One you may have heard mentioned recently is turmeric. Turmeric is the vibrant yellow colour found in curry powder that stains your clothes and kitchenware.

Although not strong in flavour it is very strong in health benefits. Its active ingredient, curcumin, is an antioxidant that [early research suggests](#) it may be helpful in treating inflammatory conditions such as osteoarthritis and colitis, and even cancer.

Turmeric's zingier cousin, ginger, can be helpful in treating a number of conditions such as nausea (including morning sickness), dizziness, and menstrual pain. As it is also an anti-inflammatory it has also been found useful in treating osteoarthritis. Its warming benefits are also great for colds and flus and poor circulation.

[Fenugreek](#), another essential ingredient in curry powder, helps slow the absorption of sugars in the stomach, making it useful for people with diabetes. It is also used to help promote milk supply in breastfeeding mothers, increase libido in men and women, and for indigestion and gastritis.

Cinnamon is another superspice being useful in the [treatment of](#) high cholesterol, high blood sugar, for candida infections, arthritis relief and brain health. And it is very easy to take by adding some to your morning cereal or smoothie, or in your baking.

You can take these spices in medicinal doses for specific complaints, but simply using these and other spices in liberal quantities will not only make your food taste fantastic, it will be a very tasty way to enjoy the preventative benefits of these plants. Make sure you use high quality organic spices, and replace them every six months for optimum freshness. For a good mix try our beautiful organic curry powder in the below dahl recipe, or try this [chai tea recipe](#) from our July newsletter.

Recipe - Easy Dahl

1T organic coconut oil
1 large organic onion
2 cloves organic garlic
2cm piece of organic ginger
1/4 teaspoon organic cayenne powder (optional)
1.5 T organic mild curry powder
1 cup organic split red lentils
2 cups water or organic stock
Organic salt & pepper

Heat the oil in a medium saucepan on a medium-low heat. Finely chop the onion, garlic and ginger and sauté until the onion is clear. Add the spices and sauté for another minute. Add the lentils and water. Bring to the boil, reduce the heat and simmer stirring regularly until the liquid has been absorbed and the lentils are soft (20-30 minutes). Season and serve with fluffy rice and vegetables or flatbread, and a drizzle of yoghurt.