



This is France — Living Organic

Vivre bio en France



For many years, it was very difficult in France to find organic products, i.e. grown without any synthetic chemicals or pesticides. And it was even more difficult to find French people interested in them, or aware of the value and advantages of this means of production, and consumers of such products were a minority. However, over the last few years the situation has changed considerably, especially with regards to the consumption of fresh produce. The figures are explicit: in 2007 the French purchased 30% more organic fruit and vegetables than in 2005, 50% more than in 2002 and 70% more than in 1999. According to a survey done by the CSA Institute for the *Agence française pour le développement et la promotion de l'agriculture biologique*, usually simply called *Agence bio*, 42% of French people regularly consume them. And, more importantly, attitudes have changed. Today, 90% of the French recognize that organic products contribute to the preservation of the environment, and most agree

that they are much better for their health.

And more and more farmers are making the switch to organic, to more natural farming techniques – which doesn't necessarily mean that it is simplified, as it often requires rather elaborated methods. Today, there are more than 10,000 organic farms in France that have made the change since the adoption on 4 July 1980 of a law regulating the production of organic products. Although less than 2% of the cultivated land was devoted to organic production at the end of 2006, the number of producers is constantly increasing.

The chains of organic retail outlets themselves are on the increase, particularly those of "Biocoop" and "Satoriz", and more and more one can find at least one organic producer at the local open-air markets. All over the country, there is an increasing number of organic fairs or *salons* held at least once a year or more often in some areas. You will find a list of

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