



MEDIA RELEASE

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Health crisis prompts change in eating habits

Australian shoppers are motivated to change what they eat if they experience a health crisis, according to a recent survey by researchers Mobium Group.

The survey of 1,000 primary grocery shoppers found that 16% of people who buy organic started to do so because of illness.

The preliminary findings have been released in the lead up to the biennial *Australian Organic Market Report* due out in November this year.

Supported by Horticulture Australia Ltd, the *Australian Organic Market Report* is the organic industry's most comprehensive assessment on the state of the sector in Australia, combining data from Swinburne University, the Australian Bureau of Statistics and Mobium Group.

Initial survey results show that half of organic shoppers first bought organics because they became more aware of the positive impact organic food, fibre or cosmetics had on their personal health.

A further 32% said that they first bought organics for environmental reasons and 25% because of animal welfare concerns associated with conventional food producing systems.

Chair of Australian Organic, Dr Andrew Monk, says this is the first time the organisation has asked people why they started to buy organic.

He says, "Anecdotally we hear that people are motivated to switch to organic diets because of health reasons, but this is the first time we've measured it.

"The survey also shows that primary grocery buyers who would otherwise not consider buying sustainable goods, have significantly increased their consumption of organic products.

"This is a major and interesting shift. Overall consumption of organics is increasing and it appears the 'late adopters' are significant contributors to this growth."

Dr Monk expects the trend to continue as more researchers study the difference between organic and conventional foods.

He says, "Results like [RMIT University's study](#) that showed you can reduce pesticide exposure by 90% by switching to an organic diet and a recent [study by UK's Newcastle University](#) showing that organic crops can be up to 70 per cent higher in certain antioxidants are building scientific evidence that many organic consumers already take for granted."

The *Australian Organic Market Report 2014* will be available November 15.

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