



**Australian  
Organic**

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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# Ooh it really does get in!

The country's largest organic industry group congratulates RMIT for supporting groundbreaking research into organic diets.

Australian Organic's Dr Andrew Monk says, "Up until now there have been very few studies comparing organic with conventional diets in Australia.

"Most of the work done in this area is produced overseas which has different regulations around agricultural chemical use."

A small study by RMIT's Dr Liza Oates compared a week of eating conventional food with a week of eating predominately certified organic food.

It found that when the participants lived on an organic diet the levels of organophosphate pesticides in their urine dropped by 89%. The peer-reviewed study was recently published in the *Environmental Research* journal.

Dr Oates says, "Conventional food production commonly uses organophosphate pesticides which are neurotoxins that act on the nervous system of insects – and humans – by blocking an important enzyme.

"Our results show that people who switch to eating mainly organic food for just one week can dramatically reduce their exposure to pesticides."

During the research urinary levels of six metabolites of organophosphate pesticides (known as dialkylphosphates or DAPs) were analysed on the eighth day of each phase.

The mean level of total DAP metabolites after eating a diet of at least 80% organic food was 89 per cent lower than the levels after eating conventional food.

Dr Monk says, "Reading the results of this study was like a 'Mrs Marsh' moment for me. Remember the toothpaste commercial that features a teacher breaking a piece of chalk dipped in liquid in front of students and they say "Ooh it really does get in.

"This study reminds us that the stuff that's sprayed on our food does make its way into our bodies."

Australian Organic is concerned that children are more at risk of agricultural chemicals than adults, given their weight and growing patterns.

"This is only a small study but it's enough to prompt further research in Australia and it's great to see that it's finally happening." Dr Monk says.

Australian Organic is funding a follow up study.

For more information about the study go to <http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=e3hoqm8befvj1>

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