

Dear Recycle Lady



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What is the difference between organic and natural foods? Confused

Dear Confused,

Excellent question. According to many references, there is a significant difference between organic and natural food products. Organic foods are generally considered better for the environment, animal welfare and reducing human intake of pesticide residues and additives. Organic food refers to the food items that are produced, manufactured, and handled using organic methods as defined by certifying bodies such as the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) under its Organic Food Products Act.

While organic foods have to meet very specific standards, natural foods do not. Natural foods generally refers to food items that are not altered chemically or synthesized in any form. At this time, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has no clear definition for “natural” on food labeling. In fact, there are no verifiable standards required. However, the FDA has issued a call for public comments on the use of this term in food labeling.

Dear Recycle Lady,

The week or so before Christmas, newspapers were filled with colorful advertisements. Some of the ads were definitely printed on newsprint, but many of them appeared to be slicks. Do these ads need to be pulled out before recycling the newspaper? Reader

Dear Reader,

The ads that are obviously printed on newspaper are recycled with newspapers. The ads that are obviously slicks are recycled with magazines. The big question, however, is which of the colored ads are slicks and which ads are high quality ink on newsprint. The quality print on heavy paper is usually a slick. One way I use to determine whether or not an ad is a slick is to wet one corner of the questionable ad. The newsprint one then tears easily, the slick does not. Try a magazine corner as an example. I discovered this one morning when my Sunday newspaper was heavily soaked. If in doubt, put the ad in with newspapers.

Dear Readers,

Have you made an environmentally friendly New Year’s resolution this year? Consider the impact that would be made if everyone were to make a New Year’s resolution to add just one new item to their recycling efforts each month. We could help provide a safer environment for our wildlife and marine life, reduce our energy consumption, put reusable goods back to use, and reduce the amount of trash sent to the landfill.

Have questions about recycling, or interesting information about recycling? Send questions or requests to recyclelady@greenbrier-swa.com. Dear Recycle Lady is sponsored jointly by the Greenbrier Recycling Center and Greenworks Recycling.