

BFA Press Release 8<sup>th</sup> April 2008

## **From little things big things grow - *Children drive organic sector growth***

Children are a big reason for the growth in popularity of organic goods, say major organic industry members.

“A substantial amount - up to a third – of our organic category is estimated to be consumed by a person under eight,” says Rick Carmont, brand category manager with the world’s leading dairy exporter, *Fonterra*.

Don Fraser, consultant to organic retail success story *Macro Wholefoods Market* says consumer concern over food origins and ingredients has parents looking for certified organic alternatives.

“This willingness to invest in a child’s health is occurring despite the fact parents may not consume organic themselves.”

“Some mothers are buying two separate rounds of groceries – conventional product for themselves, but organically produced for their children,” says Mr. Fraser.

Monica Waters of *Nourish Foods* says parents are becoming more aware of a gap in healthy food availability for toddler and above aged children.

“We built a line of kids organic snack food to cater to this. Our research showed while the baby food market is very highly regulated, when it came to food for slightly older children, additives, preservatives, colours and flavours began creeping in”.

BFA spokesperson and nutritionist Shane Heaton says he is not surprised parents are more likely to purchase organic.

“Children are more vulnerable to food toxins than adults – they have a larger intake of food per kilo of body weight and immature organs and detoxification and immune systems,” he says. “And a study released last year found young children exposed to certain preservatives and food colours are more prone to hyperactive tendencies (1)”

Mr. Carmont says young children also are an influencing factor in many farmers’ decision to convert to organic production.

“Particularly where a farming family’s child has health or allergy problems,” he says.

Ulli Spranz, owner of bio-dynamic dairy *B-d. Farm Paris Creek* says she and her husband changed professions to run a chemical free property when they started a family nearly thirty years ago.

“We wanted to provide a safe environment, manage a sustainable system, and provide families with access to quality food,” says Mrs. Spranz.

She says Paris Creek dairy products are a favourite with young customers and growing families.

“Children seem to choose natural products if given the choice from an early age. The most common feedback we get from parents is that their children love the taste.”

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*Images available on request.*

The BFA has a vision for the organic industry in Australia - to grow organic food sales to 10 per cent of the food market in Australia by 2020. Benefits to children is one good reason to buy organic and assist the organic industry to achieve its goal. More information is available at <http://www.bfa.com.au>

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- (1) Data: University of Southampton: [http://www.soton.ac.uk/mediacentre/news/2007/sep/07\\_99.shtml](http://www.soton.ac.uk/mediacentre/news/2007/sep/07_99.shtml)



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