

**Myth**

Organic food is pesticide-free.

**Myth**

Chicken labeled “hormone-free” or “raised without hormones” is healthier than chicken without those labels.

**Myth**

GMOs can cause food allergies.

**Myth**

“Cage-free” and “free-range” mean the same thing.

**Myth**

Beef cattle are a major cause of greenhouse gas emissions.

**Fact**

Organic farmers can and do use pesticides, even some synthetic pesticides (which aren’t naturally-derived). But fewer kinds of pesticides are approved for organic farming than conventional farming.

(source: <https://findourcommonground.com/food-facts/organic-and-local-foods/>)

**Fact**

The FDA prohibits using artificial growth hormones to produce chicken (or pork). So all the chicken or pork you buy was raised without hormones, regardless of the brand.

(source: <https://findourcommonground.com/food-facts/hormones-in-meat-and-milk/>)

**Fact**

Tests haven’t found any allergens in the GMOs approved for human consumption. Plus, food safety standards call for checking new GMOs against all known allergens.

(source: <https://sitn.hms.harvard.edu/flash/2015/allergies-and-gmos/>)

**Fact**

“Cage-free” means that hens were free to move around inside, but didn’t necessarily spend time outside. “Free-range” means hens also had the option of going outside for part of the day.

(source: <https://unitedegg.com/egg-terms/>)

**Fact**

According to the EPA, methane emissions from beef cattle are only 1.8% of the U.S.’ greenhouse gas emissions. The rest of the agriculture industry as a whole was responsible for an additional 6% of GHG emissions.

(source: <https://www.beefresearch.org/resources/beef-sustainability/fact-sheets/methane>)

**Myth**

Natural pesticides are always less toxic than synthetic ones.

**Myth**

If meat isn’t labeled “no antibiotics,” it could have antibiotics in it.

**Myth**

GMOs are dangerous for people to eat.

**Myth**

“Free-range” and “pasture-raised” mean the same thing.

**Myth**

It takes thousands of gallons of water to produce one pound of beef.

**Fact**

It depends on which pesticides you’re talking about. Some natural pesticides, like copper sulfate, are more toxic than some synthetic ones. The same goes for some synthetic pesticides compared to some natural ones.

(source: <https://blogs.scientificamerican.com/science-sushi/organicmythsrevisited/>)

**Fact**

Animals treated with antibiotics can’t be processed until they’ve gone through a withdrawal period, to make sure any traces of antibiotics in their meat are below the FDA’s safety standards. “Raised without antibiotics” is a more specific label indicating the farm never gave animals antibiotics, even if they were sick.

(source: <https://findourcommonground.com/food-facts/antibiotics-and-animal-health/>)

**Fact**

Major public health groups such as the World Health Organization have stated that GMO foods are safe. And studies from the last two decades haven’t found evidence that eating GMOs had any harmful effects.

(source: <https://sitn.hms.harvard.edu/flash/2015/will-gmos-hurt-my-body/>)

**Fact**

Both labels refer to raising hens with some access to the outdoors. “Pasture-raised” generally means that hens also got most of their food from the grass and bugs they found outside.

(source: <https://unitedegg.com/egg-terms/>)

**Fact**

Estimates of beef’s water use vary widely depending on what region you’re looking at and whether you count natural rainfall (which falls whether or not the land supports beef cattle). Some estimates actually go as low as 317 gallons of water per pound of beef.

(source: <https://www.beefresearch.org/resources/beef-sustainability/fact-sheets/water>)