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### General News

## Organic meat sales show huge gains, report says

By [Ann Bagel Storck](#) on 11/14/2007 for [Meatingplace.com](#)

Sales of organic meat have increased more than tenfold in the past five years, to an estimated \$364 million in 2007, compared with \$33 million in 2002, according to new research from Chicago-based Mintel.

"The desire for organic meat products is based on a general sense that the food supply has the potential to be unsafe," the report notes. "But demand has more than outpaced production, and the U.S. market for organic meats has become highly import-dependent."

The research cited high production costs, lack of certified slaughterhouses and processing plants and inadequate distribution infrastructure as challenges for the U.S. organic meat industry.

Organic food sales overall have grown 132 percent since 2002, and together the organic food and beverage markets now account for nearly \$6 billion annually, according to Mintel.

"This isn't a niche market full of environmental health nuts and affluent yuppies anymore," says Marcia Mogelonsky, senior research analyst at Mintel. "Organic is now part of the picture for everyone from the Hispanic immigrant mother to the hip suburban teen next door."

Growth in the segment will not continue at its current pace, however, Mintel predicts. Organic food sales are expected to rise 59 percent by 2012.

The prices for organic food and beverages, the research noted, still turn off many consumers, with two-thirds of Americans saying they would buy more organics if the products cost less.

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