

# LOCAL + ORGANIC PRODUCE

What does it mean & where does it come from?

## **Certified Organic** - United States Department of Agriculture

In year 2000, the USDA developed the National Organic Program standards. USDA regulates the standards. Organic labeling and production must meet requirements such as produced with allowed substances, without excluded methods (e.g., genetic engineering, ionizing radiation, or sewage sludge) and is overseen by an NOP-authorized certifying agent.

## **Trusted Organic Distributors**

The Co-op works with local distributors that partner with various certified Arizona and Mexico farms certified by USDA accredited certifiers. The Co-op also works with two produce distributors of primarily California grown organic produce. Since the beginning of the organic movement, these distributors have purchased from small and medium size farms and sold to food retailers, particularly cooperatives and natural food stores.

## **Certified Naturally Grown**

Certified Naturally Grown (CNG) is a grassroots developed certification for farmers and beekeepers. CNG standards are at least as strict as and often go above and beyond already stringent NOP standards. CNG certification of farmers is done by farmers - it is a peer-review standard which promotes knowledge sharing and fosters local networks.

## **Direct Farmer Relationships with Local Farms**

The Co-op purchases fresh produce directly from local, CNG, or Certified Organic farms. Farms deliver directly to the Co-op many times weekly. The Co-op's relationship with the farmer supports a fair price for the farmer and the Co-op shoppers. Local customers make local farms sustainable livelihoods.

## **Conspiracy Garden Grown**

In winter 2013 just behind the Co-op 1/8 mile from where you stand, Food Conspiracy began growing vegetables, herbs, and flowers for sale on these produce shelves. The imperfect produce is featured creatively in Conspiracy Kitchen's prepared foods. Conspiracy Garden is not certified--yet, but grows with organic methods using compost, mulch, drip irrigation, and cover crops.