

## GLOSSARY OF FARMERS MARKET TERMS

### ORANGE HOME GROWN FARMERS & ARTISANS MARKET

**These definitions are our interpretation to frequently used terms. We encourage you to talk with the farmers who produce your food.**

**Artisanal-** Implies that products are made by hand in small batches, but the term is unregulated and sometimes used by large manufacturers.

**Biodynamic-** Biodynamic farming views the farm as a living organism. In addition to organic practices such as crop rotation and composting, biodynamic farmers rely on special plant, animal, and mineral preparations and the rhythmic influences of the sun, moon, planets, and stars.

**Cage Free-** This unregulated term suggests that eggs are laid by hens permitted to roam in the henhouse (but not necessarily with any access to the outdoors).

**Certified California Producer-** Farmers who sell at Certified Farmers markets are required to post a Certified Producer's Certificate from their county's agriculture department. The certificate confirms that all their products are grown, raised, or caught in California and sold directly by the producer or his or her employee or family member. "Certified California Producer" does not mean "Certified Organic".

**California Certified Farmers Market-** A location approved by a county agricultural commissioner for California farmers to sell their products directly to consumers.

**Closed Herd-** Animals in a herd are all bred from within the herd. No animals are purchased from breeders or other sources and incorporated into the herd. This practice limits entry of disease into the herd.

**Conventional-** Produced using standard practices widespread in the agriculture industry, such as monocropping and the use of pesticides, synthetic fertilizers, antibiotics, and genetically modified organisms. This term is often used in contrast to "sustainable".

**Dry Aged-** Meat (usually beef) that is "dry aged" is hung in a temperature-and-humidity-controlled room for a period of weeks, during which microbes and enzymes break down the connective tissue, making the meat tender. Most beef is "wet aged" in plastic bags, which reduces the amount of water (and therefore money) that is lost and hastens the process. Many people believe dry aging results in superior flavor.

**Dry Farmed-** Grown with little or in no irrigation. Dry farming sometimes requires special techniques to retain soil moisture. Tomatoes, potatoes, and some orchard crops like apples and apricots can be dry farmed.

**Fair Trade-** For products from less-developed countries (like coffee, tea, chocolate, sugar, and bananas), fair trade indicates a trading partnership based on dialogue, transparency, and respect that seeks greater equity. There are multiple certifying organizations and no universal fair trade standard. In general, the term means farmers and workers are justly compensated and treated fairly.

**Farmstead Cheese-** Farmstead cheeses are made by the same people who raise the animals that produce the milk. In other words, that are cheeses "from the farm".

**Free Range-** Suggests that the product came from an animal that was able to roam. The USDA only regulates the term for poultry, not beef, pork, or eggs. Mead birds are required to "have access to" the outdoors, but no amount of time or space is specified. Free-range hens are often kept indoors in large warehouses.

**GMO Free/Non-GMO-** The vast majority of processed foods in the US contain genetically modified organisms (GMOs), whose DNA has been manipulated in a laboratory using genetic engineering. GMO-free products have no genetically engineered ingredients. Certified organic products must be GMO-free. The non-GMO claim is unregulated, but some products are verified by a third party, like the Non-GMO Project.

**Grass Fed-** This label on meat means the ruminant animal (cattle, sheep, goat, or bison) has been raised on a diet of fresh pasture during the growing season and stored grasses (hay or grass silage) during the winter months or drought conditions. It is a voluntary claim. Sometimes the term "pasture raised" is used interchangeably with "grass fed".

**Grass Finished-** Finished refers to the time that cattle are normally fattened up before slaughter. Some grass-fed animals (including "USDA Processed verified") are grass finished, meaning they ate exclusively grasses during the 90 to 160 days before slaughter. Some grass-fed animals, like most meat animals in the US, are grain finished.

**Heirloom-** Heirloom crop varieties have been developed by farmers through years of cultivation, selection, and seed saving, and passed down through the generations. Unlike hybrid crops and GMOs, heirloom varieties always produce seeds with the same characteristics of the parent plant.

**Humane-** Humane implies that animals were raised with compassion in a way that minimizes stress and allows them to engage in their natural behaviors. Humane certifications (like Certified Humane and Animal Welfare Approved) have varying standards; requirements may include nutritious feed, ample fresh water without added antibiotics or hormones, and sufficient space and shelter. The term "humane" is otherwise unregulated.

**Hybrid-** Hybrids are created by cross-breeding parents of different species or varieties to bring out the best traits of both. Seeds saved from hybrids will not "come true"; new seeds must be purchased each year. Hybrids are not GMOs. They are produced by controlled crossing, not by gene splicing.

**Integrated Pest Management (IPM)-** A pest management strategy that minimizes impact on the environment. Pesticides are applied in such a way that they pose the least possible hazard, and are used as a "last resort" when other controls are inadequate.

**Natural-** USDA guidelines state that "natural" meat and poultry products can't contain artificial ingredients or added color and must be only minimally processed; there is no verification system. (Certified Naturally Grown" is a nonprofit certification program for small farms, similar to organic). The claim "natural" on other products is unregulated.

**No Antibiotics-** In conventional operations, antibiotics are routinely fed to cows, hogs, and chickens to promote faster growth and prevent diseases that run rampant in the cramped conditions in which food animals are kept. “No antibiotics” claims are regulated by the USDA and require ranchers to show documentation. The “USDA Process verified” shield means the company paid to have the agency verify the claim.

**No Hormones-** Hormones are used in industrial farming of cows and sheep to increase growth rate or milk production. Some hormones are natural, some are synthetic, and some (like rBGH) are genetically engineered. Like “no antibiotics,” the “no hormones” claim is regulated by the USDA. Documentation must be shown, but the USDA does not routinely test. Hormone use in pork or poultry production is prohibited by the USDA.

**Organic-** Produced without the use of (most) synthetic pesticides or fertilizers, sewage sludge, or genetically modified organisms. Organic meat, eggs, and dairy come from animals fed only organic feed and given no growth hormones or antibiotics. All products sold as organic must be certified by organizations accredited by the USDA. Certification includes extensive record keeping and annual inspection of fields and processing facilities. Organic products must be made with at least 95% organic ingredients.

**Pasture Raised-** Implies that meat or poultry comes from an animal that was raised outdoors on pasture. This term is sometimes used by ranchers to differentiate the product from “free-range” products coming from animals raised indoors. This term is unregulated and there is no standard definition.

**Pesticide Free-** Pesticide free or “No Spray” is an unregulated term that implies that there are no toxic sprays applied, at least not directly on the produce. Unlike the certified organic label, these claims are not verified by a third party. This label can be misleading.

**Raw Milk Cheese-** These cheeses are made from milk that is not pasteurized. In the U.S., raw milk cheeses are required to be aged for at least 60 days.

**Sulfured/Unulfured-** Some dried fruits are treated with sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) to retain color and act as a preservative. Some people have allergic reactions to sulfur. Unulfured fruits are often brown in color. Organic dried fruit must be unulfured.

**Sustainable-** This word means different things to different people and is sometimes used loosely. Generally, it means meeting the needs of the present without compromising the needs of the future. To CUESA, sustainable means socially just, humane, economically viable, and environmentally sound.

**Transitional-** Farmers need to practice organic methods for three years on a given piece of land before the products grown there can be certified organic. “Transitional” means that the farmland is in the midst of that transition period toward organic certification.

**Vine Ripened/Tree Ripened-** These terms are applied to fruit that has been allowed to ripen on the vine or tree. In our industrial food system, fruit is often picked unripe in order to withstand shipping, and then sometimes treated with ethylene gas to “ripen” and soften them. Tree ripening and vine ripening allows the sugars in the fruit to fully develop, yielding better flavor.

\*Courtesy of Center for Urban Education about Sustainable Agriculture (CUESA) [www.cuesa.org](http://www.cuesa.org)

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A guide to typical terms related to farming, animal husbandry, and food processing



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