

# Organic? It's kids' stuff

Thanks to the hard work of some young parents, fresh organic baby food is now within easy reach of everybody

PSYCHOLOGISTS FROM THE University of Birmingham recently proved that a baby's eating habits will often shape the diet of later childhood. Exposure to a wide range of foods, particularly fruit and vegetables, during these formative years can stimulate a greater willingness to try new tastes and textures. Variety and fresh produce are therefore critical at an early age.

Dr Vyvyan Howard, a toxicopathologist at Liverpool University's department of Human Anatomy and Cell Biology, agrees: 'We need to educate children's palettes from a young age. A child's early years are a period of imprinting in all areas, including taste, and therefore we should introduce children to subtle flavours as soon as possible.'

Dr Howard believes feeding babies organically offers them the best start in life. 'A baby's immune system is very vulnerable and research has shown that consumption of food with low levels of pesticides can have a negative effect. Some pesticides tested on animals have been shown to impact on neurological levels.'

But in response to frustration at the lack of fresh, additive-free organic babyfood available, a number of small producers have taken matters into their own hands.

Bentom Foods was started by two mothers. Their Mums4 organic children's yoghurt, sweetened by fruit purée rather than concentrates, is suitable for babies from six months and comes in two flavours (banana, and apple and pear) packaged in four small, 85g pots. They also make organic rice pudding, custard suitable for babies from 12 months and are soon to launch organic cereals and crisps without added salt for toddlers. Available from selected Tesco, Waitrose, Asda stores, and independent health food shops; home delivery from [www.ocado.com](http://www.ocado.com). For more information, visit: [www.mums4.com](http://www.mums4.com).

Truuly Scrumptious produces meals for babies of four months and upwards. Available in 100g, 160g and 220g pots, the range goes from puréed vegetables like butternut squash and sweet potato to cottage pie and spaghetti bolognese for 12-month-plus babies. All products are additive- and GM-free, contain neither salt nor sugar, and come in tamper-proof



Clockwise from top left: Miniscoff burgers and All Good Stuff purées; Fresh Daisy; Truuly Scrumptious. Photograph by Romas Foord

microwave pots. Stockists and details: 01761 239300; [www.bathorganicbabyfood.co.uk](http://www.bathorganicbabyfood.co.uk). You can also get Mums4 and Truuly Scrumptious at [www.graigfarm.co.uk/babyfood.htm](http://www.graigfarm.co.uk/babyfood.htm)

Angus and Shoo Oliphant, a young couple with small children, spotted a gap at the older end of the children's food market and set up Miniscoff at their home in Holt, Wiltshire. Aiming to bridge the gap between weaning and later life, they offer home-cooked, ready-to-serve organic meals for children from 12 months to 12 years. Meals include Mash Bang Wallop, Chilli Yum Yum and Sweet Chicken Noodles, and include gluten-free, egg-free and dairy-free options. Details and stockists: [www.miniscoff.co.uk](http://www.miniscoff.co.uk) and [www.olimia.com](http://www.olimia.com) for deliveries outside London or [\[foodferry.com\]\(http://www.foodferry.com\) for deliveries within the London area.](http://www.</a></p>
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Easyfreezy, created 18 months ago in Sussex by mum Emma Treasure, presently delivers trays (10 x 25g cubes) of frozen, pureed food in the south east, but hopes to go nationwide soon. Each tray contains two flavours, such as apple and pear or sweet potato and courgette, for a choice of colours and textures. For stockist details, call: 01403 710935 or [www.easyfreezy.co.uk](http://www.easyfreezy.co.uk).

In the north west, All Good Stuff makes cleverly-packaged, frozen mini-portions. In an effort to convince supermarkets of the importance of additive-free nutrition, owner Christine Mealing has embarked on her 'Educate their taste buds' campaign. Details: [www.allgoodstuff.com](http://www.allgoodstuff.com). Available in selected Asda and independent stores.

Fresh Daisy offer Easy Weaners, suitable from four months, and Simple Combos suitable from five months. Their products contain no hidden salt, sugar, or anti-browning agents and they all come in convenient microwave tubs. For details and stockists: [www.daisyfoods.com](http://www.daisyfoods.com); for mail order: [www.dining-made-easy.co.uk](http://www.dining-made-easy.co.uk). Co-founder Gerrie Hawes has written *Feed Me! The Fresh Daisy Cookbook for Babies and Toddlers* (Kyle Cathie, £14.99) with over 150 recipes including such unusual items as broccoli, leek and basil ice-cream. With simple recipes and even tips on what to eat while breastfeeding, *Feed Me!* is a useful manual for new mums. Internet-friendly mothers can use [www.ulula.co.uk](http://www.ulula.co.uk) to find a variety of bottled organic products. **OFM** Research by Nicki Sprinz