Recession-racked shoppers still shop on organic

By the Soil Association Monitor

Raleigh, N.C. — For the past three years, American consumers have been shopping less for organic products.

They cut themselves from the shopping list and, they say, because they have less to spend.

It's that designation that has made organic goods a bright spot for many retailers and a growing number of consumers as they tighten their purse strings.

As the U.S. economy continues to struggle, organic products are providing a bright spot for some retailers and consumers alike.

The Commitment to organics has surprised some retailers who predicted that recession would drive consumers away from high-end products.

Yet despite the ongoing recession, consumers' interest in organic products remains strong.

Last year, average sales for the industry were up more than 5 percent, according to The Organic Consumers Association.

In the first six months of this year, sales of organic products were up more than 5 percent, the same period last year.

Kroger, the Southeastern grocer, said sales of organic products were up 5 percent through the first quarter of this year.

The growth comes amid a general decline in the economy.

Retailers have noted that organic products are among the few categories of goods that are growing.

"It's a trend that's not going away," said a Kroeger spokesman.

"It's a trend that's going to continue and we're seeing growth in all categories of organic products."