

## Inferences and assumptions in the market place

When you enter the produce department of a super market, you might see a sign that says “Organically-grown tomatoes.” You might **infer** that the tomatoes will taste better or provide a healthier diet; and **assume** that indeed they were organically grown. When you pass the hair care aisle, you may see a sign reading “Non-allergenic shampoo.” You might **infer** that this particular shampoo would not cause certain allergic reactions.

Now if you discovered that there are certain requirements that have to be met before a food could be called “organically grown”, would that increase or decrease your level of confidence of your **assumption**? Where might you put it on the inference and assumption reliability scale? Or if you discovered that no standard exists for the term “non-allergenic”, and a manufacturer could freely apply this term to any shampoo, would it change your degree of confidence in your **inference** regarding that particular shampoo? Would you move your position on the reliability scale.

If you simply took an inference without checking it out, we would consider that an **uncritical inference**. Uncritical inferences that find themselves at the left end of the inference/assumption scale, become the source of errors, biases, prejudices, etc.

**Critical inferences** remain the product of fact finding, careful observation, verifiable research, etc. Critical inferences provide the platform from which we can launch productive activity.

