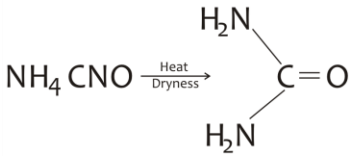
ORGANIC CHEMISTRY

The term, organic chemistry, originally meant the chemistry of compounds obtainable from plants and animals—living organisms. The reason for this belief was because they believed that to produce organic compounds you needed a *vital force*. The idea of a vital force was put in doubt in 1927/1928 when Frederick Wöhler, a German chemist, produced urea (produced by man in urine) from ammonium cyabate ($NH_4^+CNO^-$, a pure inorganic compound).



A more serious blow to the vital force theory was the synthesis of acetic acid (CH_3COOH) by Kolbe in 1854 from its elements. The preparation of methane (CH_4) by Berthelot in 1856 confirmed that the vital force theory had no chemical basis.

$$CS_2 + H_2S \longrightarrow CH_4$$

Today, organic chemistry is effectively defined as the chemistry of carbon together with a few other elements like, hydrogen, nitrogen, oxygen, and sulphur. Today, there are over 3000 organic compounds and more compounds are added to the list either by synthesis in the laboratory or by discovery in nature.