

## MARKETING OF ORGANIC FOOD AND HEALTH

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### ABSTRACT

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The word "organic" refers to the way farmers grow and process agricultural products, such as fruits, vegetables, grains, dairy products and meat. Organic farming practices are designed to encourage soil and water conservation and reduce pollution. Farmers who grow organic produce and meat don't use conventional methods to fertilize, control weeds or prevent livestock disease. For example, rather than using chemical weed killers, organic farmers may conduct more sophisticated crop rotations and spread mulch or manure to keep weeds at bay. Organic food is known to be a healthier way to live rather than eating conventional or non-organic food. It used to only be sold in health food stores but is becoming more popular. We think of organic food to be healthier, but is it more nutritious and safer than conventional food? It all looks the same in the grocery store, but what is really the difference? Farmers grow and process food in a certain way for it to be called "organic." Conventional food may grow with chemical fertilizers, be sprayed with insecticides to reduce pests, manage weeds by using herbicides, and some animals would be given hormones or medications to spur growth and prevent disease. Organic food is brought up in a safer way. Natural fertilizers are used, beneficial insects or birds are used to reduce pests, weeds are removed manually, and the animals are given a balanced diet for natural growth and disease prevention. The U.S Department of Agriculture ensures organic products by making farmers pass tests and pay fees in order to sell organic food. Parents are concerned that the pesticides in organic food with harm the development of their children. Studies support the fact that organic diets lower exposure from the harmful pesticides. Organic food may look similar, but you have to look for an organic symbol (USDA Organic) if you want to eat for a healthier diet. Organic food is safer since they use more natural ingredient within the growth of each product. It is also more nutritious since it is not putting those harmful chemicals in one's body!

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### INTRODUCTION

The market for organic commodities increasing remarkably, the demand of organic foods at household level fluctuates and unstable over the time. To differ-

entiate marketing strategies for stabilizing this food section it is important to know more about consumer's expectations on organic foods and quality aspects. Results from recently published research projects indicate, that organic food consumption is not only

related to health aspects or taste of the product itself but often to values such as altruism, ecology, spirituality and sometimes combined with an alternative lifestyle. Most of the consumers are unfamiliar with organic farming and processing standards but they are aware of its central features such as "chemical free", "cage free" or "natural" and see therefore a "plus" in food quality, a reason to purchase organic foods. The paper discuss if these consumer's expectations are met by the legal framework or guidelines for organic foods especially for processing. It can be concluded that the regulations must be changed in such a way that practices, processes and technologies are more strictly excluded which do not lead to a guaranteed quality claim of organic foods. The aims of encouraging organic foods are-To encourage healthy eating and healthy living.

- To enhance physical and emotional well-being and to promote good mental health.
- To provide opportunities for therapeutic and physical activities, creative and intellectual stimulation as well as relaxation.
- To support peoples needs and welcome their individuality and differences.
- To foster understanding and education promoting good communication to help people develop early intervention methods to mental health issues.
- To provide opportunities for connecting with others, improving self-esteem and experiencing new ideas.
- To be accessible and inclusive but to primarily exist to attract normally excluded people To create volunteering and training opportunities for local people with the project to build up knowledge skills and experience. To promote opportunities for local partnership and networking.
- For this the systematic objectives are required like-
- To organise and run regular events providing a variety of activities in consultation with members.
- Provide nutritious wholesome food as well as information about healthy eating and living.
- Provide a safe, welcoming, open and accessible environment that is a smoke, alcohol and drug free space.
- Creating an environment that fulfils the aims of the organisation.

### **Global Marketing of organic food**

The global market for organic foods is expected to expand from \$26 billion in 2001 to \$80 billion in 2008. The greatest market growth has been in the European

Union, where market revenues were forecast to expand by a third in 2001 to reach \$12 billion, largely due to growth in Germany, Italy, France, and the United Kingdom. In all these countries, except the United Kingdom, growth has resulted from organic foods moving into mainstream marketing channels and from increased consumer interest. Japan is the third largest market for organic foods and accounts for the bulk of Asian organic market revenues. High growth is also occurring in Singapore, Hong Kong, and Taiwan, though these markets remain much smaller than the Japanese market. The U.S. organic foods marketplace reached \$6.95 billion in sales in 2001, up 19 percent from 2000. Sales are expected to increase in the United States, reaching \$20 billion by 2008. The largest market for organic products worldwide is in fresh produce. Other popular organic foods include soy foods, meat, poultry, eggs, and meat and dairy alternatives.

### **DISCUSSION**

When we say organic foods we are referring to those naturally grown foodstuffs. Organic foods are far more expensive compared to their conventionally-grown counterparts in which chemical fertilizers, pesticides and livestock disease prevention had been used as they grow. Because of this, organic foods are of course more healthful than those conventionally produced which makes them worth the high price. But how can we know that such foods are organic? The USDA had set some standards for a food to meet to be considered and sold as "organic." They Have No Pesticides

If you choose organic produce foods, you are not only consuming healthier foods but you can be sure that there is no pesticide residue on the food you are eating. If the foods were produced in conventional farming, pesticides are being sprayed on the crops, leaving a chemical residue on the outside part of the vegetable or fruit. In addition, the USDA noted that organic produce foods has lower level pesticide residue as compared to conventionally farmed produce. In this case, you have lower risk of pesticide exposure with produce like bananas, in which the skin can be easily removed.

### **The Nutritional Value and Benefit**

The belief that the nutritional value of an organic food is much higher than that of a conventionally produced food is unpromising. According to an online article which comes out in December, 2010, MayoClinic.com

reports that a review of scientific articles regarding organic foodstuffs that the nutritional values of organic foods as compared to non-organic foods is quite comparable. Although as of January 2011, they noted that it is not possible to say whether there is a difference between the nutritional value of an organic and non-organic foods but previous research proves that there is only little difference or no difference at all in foods content like carbohydrates, protein, fat or overall the caloric values.

### **The Vitamin Content in Organic Foods**

Christine Williams, a researcher has written in the February 2002 issue of the journal "Proceedings of the Nutrition Society," that the vitamin content of an organic produce food is higher than that of conventionally produce-food. Additionally, Williams mentioned that previous studies consistently found that the vitamin C content of some organic produce is higher than their conventionally grown counterparts. The only difference maybe is the vitamin C content of some noted green leafy vegetables.

### **Lower Nitrate Content is Highly-Favorable**

On the other hand, for the nitrate content, conventionally grown foods have higher nitrate levels than the organically produced foods. The difference is largely remarkable in green leafy vegetable produces. It is thought that nitrate content is not considered dangerous to human health if it's in small quantities only. But once nitrate is consumed through water and foods, this can be converted to nitrites in the body. If this happens, nitrite can badly affect the body's ability to absorb and transport oxygen in the blood. So therefore, we can say that eating organic produces foods with lower nitrate levels can give you a lesser risk of encountering health problems associated with nitrate. Through the discussion above, we realize that organic foods are by far healthier than their regular counterparts.

**Many factors influence the decision to choose organic food. Some people choose organic food because they prefer the taste. Yet others opt for organic because of concerns such as:**

- **Pesticides-** Conventional growers use pesticides to protect their crops from molds, insects and diseases. When farmers spray pesticides, this can leave residue on produce. Some people buy organic food to limit their exposure to these residues. According to the USDA, organic produce carries significantly fewer

pesticide residues than does conventional produce. However, residues on most products- both organic and nonorganic - don't exceed government safety thresholds.

- **Food additives-** Organic regulations ban or severely restrict the use of food additives, processing aids (substances used during processing, but not added directly to food) and fortifying agents commonly used in nonorganic foods, including preservatives, artificial sweeteners, colorings and flavorings, and monosodium glutamate.

- **Environment -** Some people buy organic food for environmental reasons. Organic farming practices are designed to benefit the environment by reducing pollution and conserving water and soil quality.

### **Food safety tips**

Whether we go totally organic or opt to mix conventional and organic foods, there are few tips to keep in mind:

- Select a variety of foods from a variety of sources. This will give you a better mix of nutrients and reduce your likelihood of exposure to a single pesticide.

- Buy fruits and vegetables in season when possible. To get the freshest produce, ask your grocer what day new produce arrives. Or check your local farmers market.

- Read food labels carefully. Just because a product says it's organic or contains organic ingredients doesn't necessarily mean it's a healthier alternative. Some organic products may still be high in sugar, salt, fat or calories.

- Wash and scrub fresh fruits and vegetables thoroughly under running water. Washing helps remove dirt, bacteria and traces of chemicals from the surface of fruits and vegetables. Not all pesticide residues can be removed by washing, though. You can also peel fruits and vegetables, but peeling can mean losing some fiber and nutrients.

## **CONCLUSION**

- It stands to reason that reducing the exposure to toxins and synthetic chemicals can improve human health. Eating foods full of vitamins and minerals will obviously improve the health too.

- The natural conclusion is that organic farming practices will lead to many health benefits of organic food and environment health improvements as well.

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