ORGANIC FOOD IN THE CONSUMER PERCEPTION

Orboi Manuela-Dora, Băneș A.

USAMVB Timișoara, Facultatea de Management Agricol, Calea Aradului 119, Timișoara, 300645, Timiș, manuela_dora@yahoo.com

Key words: organic food, consumer, quality food

SUMMARY

According to several studies, purchasing organic food is based on major environmental and ethical reasons. Consumers play an active part in keeping themselves fit. As they grow old and medical costs go up, many turn to organic food to avoid pesticides or post-crop chemicals. This tendency suggests the continuous growth of the organic market.

The reasons for buying organic food vary with consumers segments. Those with more idealist visions and higher buying frequency are driven by environmental and political reasons, but they are only a small part of the whole number of organic consumers. Conversely, the groups driven by health concerns have a lower buying frequency, but represent a higher proportion among consumers and the highest organic demand, including ready to eat food and convenience foodstuffs.

Although not very important initially, the notion of “clean food” has become a more and more influential and decisive factor of food demand. The main motivating factors behind the consumer’s interest in organic or similar quality food and agricultural produce are the following: safety, health, taste, environment, society.

It is imperative to notice that reasons like general health, the environment and animal welfare should become increasingly important in Europe, both on the organic and the conventional market. Similar reasons have led consumers to buy organic food. In Great Britain, a poll examining the consumers’ attitude towards organic agriculture has revealed the following: 59% consider that organic food products do not contain chemicals, additives or pesticides; 53% buy organic products because “they are healthier”; 43% of those who buy organic products do it for their better taste, 28% for environmental concerns and 24% for animal welfare concerns.

The consumers’ complete trust is crucial for the future of organic agriculture. Therefore it is essential that all aspects regarding production standards — especially inspection — should be developed according to consumers’ expectations, as they are themselves involved in the standard development process.

BIBLIOGRAPHY