

Consumer awareness and perception of organic standards and logos

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 **CERTCOST**
economic analysis of certification
systems in organic food and farming

Organic certification and the consumer

Product attribute 'organic product' consumers at the POS

- ☉ Third-party inspection to guarantee compliance with organic standards
- ☉ Organic logos as tools to communicate to consumers that product complies with organic standards
 - è Consumer trust in the certification scheme crucial



Objective of the study

To explore consumer awareness and perception of different organic standards and logos



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CERTCOST
economic analysis of certification
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Methods

- ☉ Qualitative approach to explore the range of different views and the 'reasons why'
- ☉ Focus group discussions with consumers of organic food
 - ☉ 7 study countries CH, CZ, DE, DK, IT, TR, UK
 - ☉ 3 group discussions per country
 - ☉ 8 to 15 consumers per group
 - ☉ 218 participants in total
 - ☉ data collected in May and June 2009



Focus group discussions

- ☉ Most common organic logos (country-specific) were presented to participants

- ☉ Central questions:

- ☉ “ Do you prefer products with products with other labels? “

- ☉ “ Are you aware of any difference behind these labels that are important to you? “



Awareness of different organic logos

	Well-known	Known by some	Mostly unknown
CH	 		 
CZ			
DE		  	
DK	 		
IT		 	   
TR			  
UK			   



Awareness and perception of different organic standards

- ☉ Low level of awareness in all study countries
- ☉ No knowledge about actual differences

CH, DE	Some people distinguished between 'higher' standards of farmers' associations and 'lower' standards of other farmers' associations
CZ, DK	Governmental standards believed to be higher than EU standards
IT, UK	No awareness of differences between different standards
TR	No awareness, but some people speculated that foreign standards were higher
CH, CZ, DE, DK, IT, UK	Domestic standards believed to be higher than standards in other countries



Preferences for particular organic certification schemes

Great differences between the study countries

CH	<ul style="list-style-type: none">☉ Several participants preferred products with the governmental logo☉ Several participants had no preferences
CZ, DK	<ul style="list-style-type: none">☉ Most participants preferred products with the governmental logo
DE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">☉ Several participants with different preferences: Demeter / farmers' association products☉ Several participants had no preferences
IT, UK, TR	<ul style="list-style-type: none">☉ Most/all participants had no preferences for products of a particular organic certification scheme



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Preferences for particular organic certification schemes

Different reasons for preferring particular organic certification schemes

	CH	CZ	DE	DK	IT	TR	UK
Familiarity with the logo	J J	J J	J J	J J		J	
Perceived stricter production standards	J J	J J	J J	J J			J
Perceived stricter control system	J J		J	J J	J		
Perceived domestic origin	J J	J J		J J			
Greater trust	J J	J J	J J	J J	J	J	

J J = Aspect mentioned by several people

J = Aspect mentioned by a few people



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No preferences for particular organic certification schemes

Reasons for not preferring products with a particular organic logo

- ☞ Differences behind the logos unknown
- ☞ Differences behind the logos not relevant
- ☞ Other criteria more important, such as
 - ☞ Retailer / seller
 - ☞ Brands
 - ☞ Price



New regulatory framework

New mandatory EU label for organic food

Perspective of producers and retailers

- ☞ Space on packages limited
- ☞ Marketing budget limited

A d d i t i o n a l o r g a n i c l o g o s v i a b l e
a s s o c i a t e a n ' a d d e d v a l u e ' w i t h

Recommendations for different standard owners

- ☞ Governmental logos
- ☞ Farmers' associations and umbrella
- ☞ Private inspection bodies



Recommendations for governmental logos

7 n Y W \ ' i ; f Y Y b ' N Y V f U b X ' 8 U b] g \ ' i

Great consumer trust in the governmental logo

è Governmental logo should be used in addition to the EU logo

; Y f a U b -G i] 6 Y] [c Y ` D

Controversial views: 'Bio-Standard'
'Bio-Siegel' = central feature for

è Transition phase with Bio-Siegel in addition to the EU logo



Recommendations for private standard owners

- ☉ **U f a Y f g D ' U g o g o s W p U e i r] s t a n d a r d s**: In DK, IT and UK low consumer awareness, in DE mixed picture
- ☉ **Certification bodies** and their logos: In IT, TR and UK low consumer awareness
 - è Private standard owners need to raise their profiles and offer an added value
 - è Communication to consumers crucial



www.certcost.org

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- ☞ Journal article on the study with the results from Germany forthcoming (Berichte über Landwirtschaft)
- ☞ Journal article with the results of all countries in progress



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