

Organic food: motivation of Finnish restaurants to use

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<p>The thesis has been written and survey conducted for practical reasons. The author of the thesis works in an organic farm currently growing organic strawberries and keeping a café but planning to expand its business into growing organic herbs in a greenhouse. The farm in question would like to know how big the restaurants' demand for the organic herbs is and whether there is a need for a year-round farming of these herbs.</p> <p>The objective of the thesis is to find out 1) how much restaurants in Southern Finland are currently using organic ingredients, namely herbs, in their menus, and how much they are willing to use them in the future, and 2) should organic farms invest into heated greenhouses to provide organics to restaurants also in winter season. The study looked into the motivation of restaurants in regards with using organic ingredients in their menus, which in turn is based on the consumers' willingness to buy organic food, and try to provide an answer for producers whether it is reasonable to invest into growing organic produce all year round or not.</p> <p>Organic market both in Europe and Finland is growing. The Finnish market share for organic products is currently 2,1% but growing every year. More than half of Finns buy organic at least once a month and a quarter buy organics at least once a week. The main reason why consumers buy organic food is firstly no chemical substances used in the production chain, secondly comes good taste, followed by health reasons. The majority of consumers expect to find organic food on a restaurant menu and they are ready to pay more for organic food if it was offered. There are several motivators for restaurants like Steps to Organic programme to excel and dare to offer organics. 17% of the professional kitchens were using organic on a daily basis in 2016. The only obstacle that is slowing down organic consumption is the price.</p> <p>Studies show that customers' food choice habits can be influenced, because they develop over time. 48% of Finns are LOHAS consumers who make sustainable and ethical purchase decisions. They buy from brands that are honest and authentic. LOHAS are a promising group of consumers, opening up markets worth of billions of euros.</p> <p>The theoretical part and questionnaire results prove that there is a big group of customers who are willing to buy organic food and pay higher price for it, but the obstacle is the restaurant's uncertainty to buy organics from providers. 17 surveyed restaurants out of 29 are currently using organics and 7 out of 12 non-users are willing to start using them. Taste of organics dominated in both survey groups over other attributes, but when compared origin and nutrition value with the taste, origin and nutrition value of the herb win.</p> <p>Despite the survey results showing rising demand for organic food and restaurateurs willing to increase or start using organic ingredients in their restaurants, recent changes to EU regulations do not favour Finnish organic farmers who grow or want to grow produce all year round. In the light of it, building a greenhouse for a year-round usage is currently not advisable, although there is a market need for organics also in wintertime as study shows.</p>	
Keywords Organic food, food choice, consumer behaviour, LOHAS	

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1 Introduction

There are many doubts and fears on the market when it comes to growing and selling organics. Producers of organic food are afraid of expanding their production due to rising expenses and lack of knowledge whether their increased expenses meet the needs of their current and prospective consumers. What more, professional kitchens are afraid of not adding any value to their menus when organic ingredients are being used. Although studies show the need for more chemical-free, GMO-free and tasty food on our tables, and that there is a steady-growing trend of organic food consumption, the doubts still exist whether growing all year round is profitable or not and whether organic ingredients add any value for restaurant menu items and whether consumers find any value in restaurant organic food. This thesis is trying to look into these problems and find the answer for the thesis question.

The thesis has been written and survey conducted for practical reasons. The author of the thesis works in an organic farm currently growing organic strawberries and keeping a summer café but planning to expand its business into growing organic herbs in a greenhouse. There was a need for some research into the field. Various studies conducted in Finland and published by ProLuomu (The Finnish Organic Food Association), Luomuliitto (The Finnish Organic Association) and other organisations have indicated the growing interest of consumers in organic foods in general. The target group of organic herbs would have been restaurants in Southern Finland. Therefore, the farm would like to know how big the restaurants' demand for the organic herbs is and whether there is a need for a year-round farming of these herbs. The ultimate question for the farm is whether the farm is going to start investing into a heated greenhouse.

The author of the thesis has taken a keen interest in health issues and nutrition for many years and is currently studying phytotherapy (healing with herbs). Therefore, the topic of the thesis was developed alongside the work at the organic farm and developing its concept since spring 2014. The survey among the Southern Finland area restaurants was conducted in May-June 2014. The results of the survey were published in the Luomuliitto magazine Luomulehti (The Organic Magazine) in January 2015 (Hirs 2015). Since then, the developing of the farm's business plan and clearing of the ideas has been taking place. The actual work on the thesis started in autumn 2015 after the busy first season at the farm had finished, but then the work was put aside because another project on the farm, the summer café, took most of the time, until in autumn 2017 the greenhouse project was reopened again.

The objective of the thesis is to find out how much restaurants in Southern Finland are currently using organic ingredients, namely herbs, in their menus, and how much they are willing to use organic ingredients in the future. Therefore, the study is trying to find out whether organic food is just a marginal trend and farms should not invest into all-year-round solutions to grow organic food, or there is a continuous growth in the demand for organics and farmers can consider investments into heated greenhouses to provide organics to restaurants even in winter season. The study will look into the motivation of restaurants in regards with using organic ingredients in their menus, which in turn is based on the consumers' willingness to buy organic food, and, based on all that, try to provide an answer for producers (i.e. farmers) whether it is reasonable to invest into growing organic produce all year round or not.

The organic market environment chapter will look into the organic food, market and farming in Europe and in Finland. When Europe is discussed, then the 28 member states of the European Union are usually being taken into consideration. All the data about the organic market in Europe is usually coming from statistics page Eurostat which is the statistical office of the European Union, or a yearly publication *Organic Farming in Europe*. Various studies made about European organic market by different scientists are ordered by the European Commission, but many studies are also conducted by the IFOAM EU Group (the European organisation of International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements) which is the European umbrella organisation for organic food and farming. So, although the EU is always in the focus, the statistics about the whole Europe is also presented. Requirements related to organic production are specified in the EU legislation. Since 2006 organic farming in Finland is being certified and inspected by the Finnish Food Safety Authority Evira. It steers and plans the monitoring of organic farmers. All organic farmers are inspected by Evira at least once a year (Evira 2017).

Consumers choose organic products because of the environment and animal welfare issues, no chemical residues and the benefits to personal health they can bring. They are getting more and more educated about eating healthy but also various nutrients in their food. Food trends nowadays favour healthy food; more and more consumers prefer healthier choices in food stores but also when eating out, and even burgers or sweets are getting healthier. A growing number of restaurants introduce healthier meal options adding organic ingredients into their shopping list and a few restaurants cooperate with organic farmers to get fresh produce straight from the fields. According to the European organisation of International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements organic food is slowly but steadily moving out of niche and it does not take long until it becomes mainstream (IFOAM EU 2015, 3). There is a clear increase in the need for introducing organic food

options into restaurants menus because the number of health-conscious clients is on its rise.

The Finnish Organic Research Institute states that organic food chain differs from conventional food chains mainly in terms of production input, i.e. organic production does not, for example, involve chemical fertilisers or synthetic chemical pesticides (Luomuinsituutti 2014, 7). Therefore, one can say that organically farmed produce supports sustainable farming and reduces allergies due to no chemicals or GMO-s present in ingredients. The amount of organic fields in Finland is growing slowly but steadily and the same trend is in the whole European Union (EU) territory.

Several consumer behaviour studies will be analysed and theories compared in the consumer behaviour studies chapter. Numerous studies on organic food consumption have been conducted within the last 20 years and they are all based on consumer behaviour literature. There are many attributes that lead consumers to make sustainable and ethical purchase decisions. This part of the thesis is studying various factors that lead to a personal food choice process and also a market-dominating consumer segment group that values the lifestyle of health and sustainability.

The empirical part of the thesis discusses the results of the questionnaire which was administered to 84 chefs in Southern Finland, mainly Helsinki area, through a self-administered questionnaire in May and June 2014. The purpose of the survey was to map what Finnish restaurants think about using organic herbs at their kitchens, why organic herbs are not used and, therefore, whether restaurants are willing to cooperate with organic farmers. Although the survey is concentrated on herbs, the survey results can be applied to organic food in general. The survey helps revealing what the motivations behind organics purchase decisions for restaurants are and whether consumers influence chefs' purchase decisions. The survey supports and mirrors back the various motivations of consumer purchase behaviour. Ultimately, the survey with the support from consumer behaviour studies will help answering the research question in the discussion part whether and how much restaurants are willing to buy organic produce from farmers all year round, and, hence, whether farmers are willing to invest into producing organic food also during winter season.

Due to the limited scope of the thesis some aspects were left aside in order to concentrate on the needs of the commissioning party to find out what causes the interrelations of need and trends between consumers, producers (i.e. farmers) and providers (i.e. restaurants). For example, retailers and competitors were decided to be unstudied as that could be a

topic for a completely new research paper. The survey questions were limited to organic herbs only as the purpose of the commissioner was to start a herb greenhouse project. The data collected on which herbs are being currently used and could be potentially used at restaurants will not be discussed in the study as the results do not fit within the scope of this study.

2 Organic market environment

According to European Commission (2014b), organic farming is a way of producing food that respects natural life cycles. It should minimise human impact on the environment and function as naturally as possible. They define organic farming as follows:

Organic production is a system of farm management and food production that combines best environmental practices, a high level of biodiversity, the preservation of natural resources and the application of high production standards in line with the demand of a growing number of consumers for products produced using natural substances and processes. (European Commission, 2014a)

When compared organic farming with conventional then organic farming does not use Organic farming is actually part of an extensive supply chain, which also includes food processing, distribution and retailing. Consumer confidence is built upon a solid foundation, therefore, standards and certifications are necessary to increase trust in one's product. Organics produced in a sustainable way are ethically grown, therefore, organic farming should be encouraged and farmers supported in all steps of the production. The EU organic logo in food packages is a guarantee to the consumers that the production chain has been duly controlled. Organic production is strictly regulated and defined in the EU legislation (Council Regulation EC No 834/2007) and in international agreements (Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry 2014, 7).

This chapter introduces the current environment of organic farming in Europe and Finland, looks into the consumers of organics and restaurants that use organics, but also the organic food trends in Europe and Finland, and points out the need for organic, healthy, tasty, ethical and environmentally friendly approach towards food.

2.1 Organic farming in Europe and Finland

There were 11,2 million hectares of organically cultivated land in the EU countries in 2015 representing, yet, only 6,7% of total utilised agricultural area in the EU. In the whole Europe: 12,7 million hectares and 2,5% respectively (Willer, Schaack & Lernoud 2017, 210-212, European Commission 2017a). However, the growth of organic agricultural land has been considerable in the whole Europe over the last decade doubling from 6,9 million hectares in 2007. The largest areas of organic agricultural land can be found in four EU countries: Spain, Italy, France and Germany with more than 1 million hectares in each of them (Figure 1). Naturally, the countries with biggest territories have more organic agricultural land. Finland with its 225 235 hectares of organic agricultural land dropped from the 12th

position in 2013 among the EU member states to the 13th position in 2015 and respectively from the 15th to the 17th in the whole Europe.

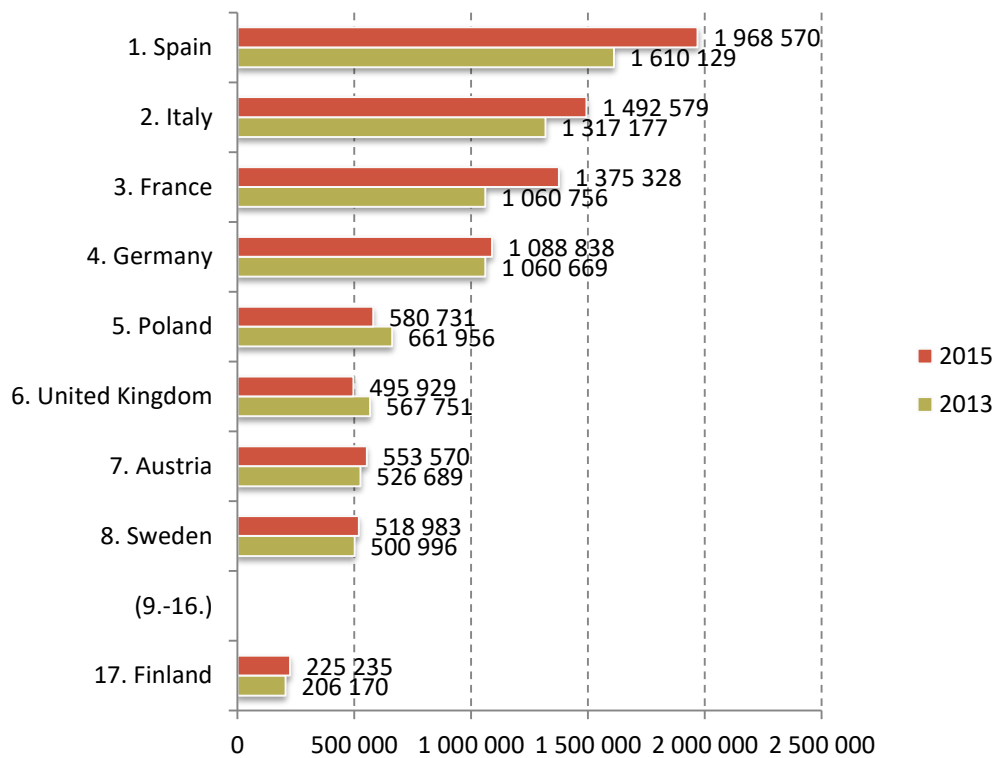


Figure 1. EU countries with more than half a million hectares of organic land (Willer, Schaack & Lernoud 2017, 211)

The highest organic land growth percentage since 2013 until 2015 was in France (22,9% of growth) compared to for example Finland where the organic land growth percentage was much smaller (just 8,5%). Still, not everywhere in Europe the hectares of organic land is growing. For example, the UK and Poland faced a decrease in the hectares of organic land hectares (by 12,3% and 12,7% respectively).

However, when considered countries with highest share of the organic land, then different countries emerge (Figure 2). Smaller countries like Austria, Estonia, Switzerland, Czech Republic and Latvia emerge:

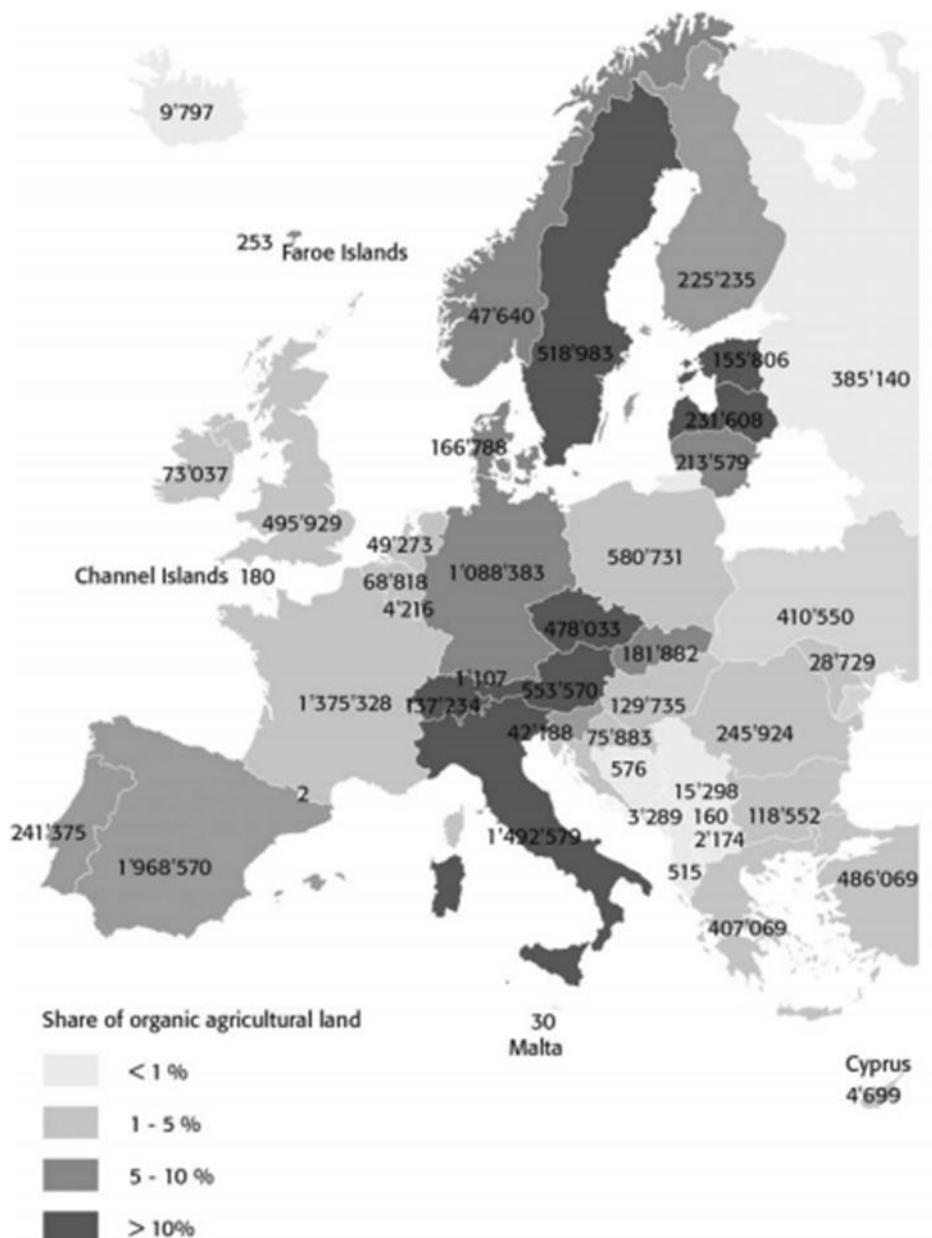


Figure 2. Share of organic agricultural land in Europe 2015 (Willer & Lernoud 2017, 197)

In eight EU countries more than 10 percent of the agricultural land was organic in 2015. The countries with the highest shares were Austria (1/5 of its agricultural land), Sweden, and Estonia (Figure 3). Finland with its 10,5% is currently positioned in the eighth place right after Italy.

Compared to 2013 the biggest rise in the share of organic agricultural land in 2015 happened in Austria and Latvia (1,8 percentage points in both). Liechtenstein can also be found in this graph. The territory of the country is just 160km² and, therefore, the share of organic land is very high while in reality they are at the very bottom of the table with its 1107 hectares of organic farmland.

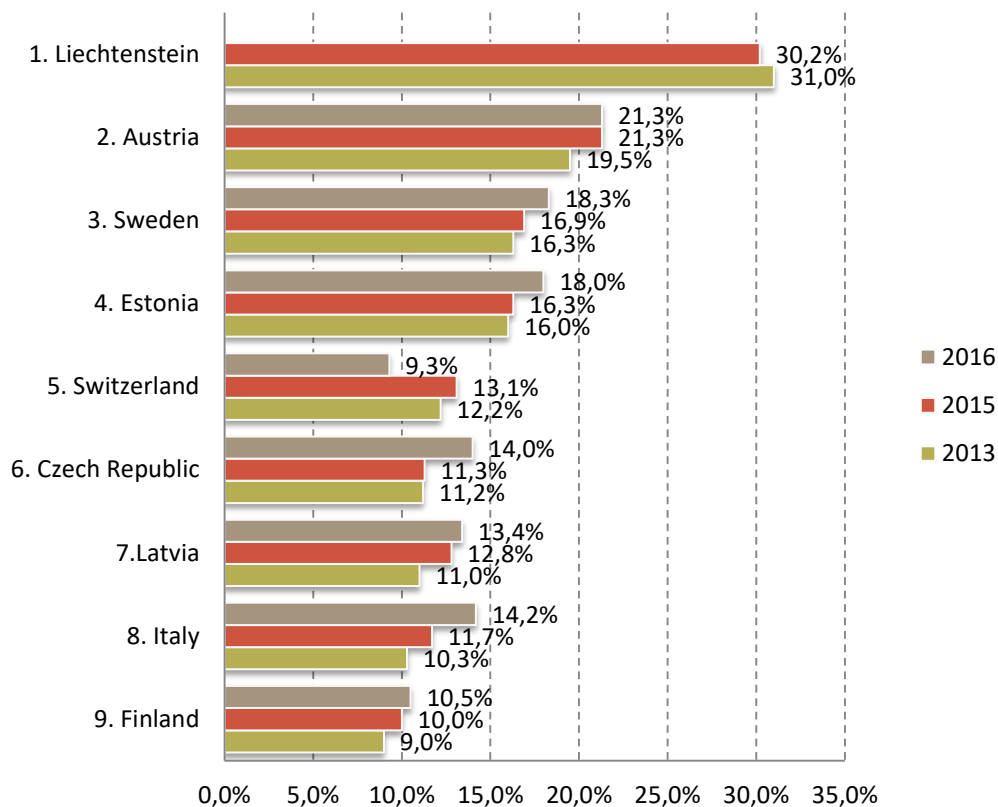


Figure 3. EU countries with highest share of organic land 2013-2016 (Source: Willer, Schaack & Lernoud 2017, 213; Eurostat 2017)

The amount of organic agricultural land is growing every year as there is more land converted organic year by year. Particularly in Italy, Spain and Poland (plus Turkey outside the EU) large areas are under conversion and, therefore, a major increase in organics supply is expected from these countries in the near future (Willer, Schaack & Lernoud 2017, 212).

There were 349 261 organic farms across Europe in 2015, almost 270 000 of them were situated in the EU member states (Willer, Schaack & Lernoud 2017, 223). In 2015 Turkey was the country in Europe with the largest number of producers (69 967), followed by Italy (52 609), Spain (34 673), France (28 884), Germany (25 078), Poland (22 277), Austria (20 976), Greece (19 604) and Romania (11 869), followed by the rest of the EU Member states (Willer, Schaack & Lernoud 2017, 225). Finland had just 4328 producers in 2015. So, of all the EU member states, Italy has the most organic farms. Eight out of 28 EU countries have more than 10 000 organic farms (Figure 4).

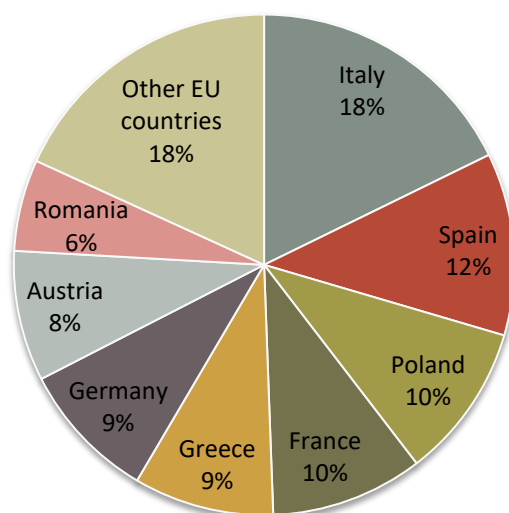


Figure 4. The share of EU organic farms by countries in 2015 (Source: Willer, Schaack & Lernoud 2017, 240)

The area of the organic farm land in the EU has been growing at a fast rate over the period of past ten years (Table 1). The growth in Europe was very fast during the years 2007-2009 (up to 15% growth), but since then, due to the world economic downturn, the growth has slowed down. In Finland, however, the European recession has not influenced the increase of the organic farm land as much as the whole EU. The year 2009 saw a good increase in Finland (11% compared to the EU average 15%), but since then the dropdown has not been as drastic as in the whole Europe (10% compared to the EU average 6,1%). So slowly, but steadily Finland has increased the area cultivated in a sustainable way. Within a decade (2005-2016) organic agricultural land in Finland increased by two thirds.

Table 1. The growth of organic land area in Finland compared to the EU (Willer, Schaack & Lernoud 2017, 209; European Commission 2016, Pro Luomu 2017b)

	Finland (ha)	growth (%)	EU (ha)	growth (%)
2005	147 588		6 475 828	
2007	148 760	0,8	7 268 843	10,9
2009	166 172	11	8 549 001	15
2011	184 768	10	9 613 500	11,1
2013	206 170	10	10 232 947	6,1
2015	225 235	8,5	11 139 595	8,1
2016	240 600	6,4		

Organic farmlands in Finland are growing slowly but steadily currently covering 10% of the arable land in Finland (including areas in transition), whereas in the European Union (EU) organic fields form only 5,4% of all the arable land (Luomuinstituutti 2014, 7; Pro Luomu 2017b). In 2016 Finland had 240 600 hectares of organic farmland and the trend is growing. The Finnish Government's quite ambitious objective is to increase the organically farmed area to 20% by 2020 along with France, Sweden and Denmark who all have the same target (Luomuinstituutti 2014, 8-9).

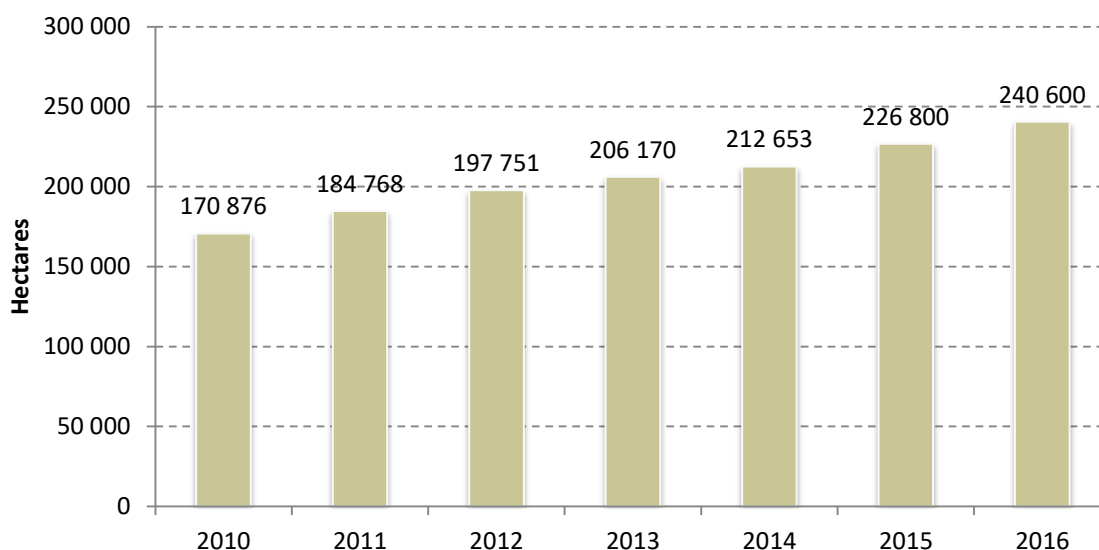


Figure 5. Organic farming land area in Finland (Pro Luomu 2017b)

Even though in 2013-2014 the number of farms in Finland started slightly decreasing due to economic downturn, in 2015 the number of farms turned to increase again surpassing the peak number of organic farms in 2012 (Figure 6).

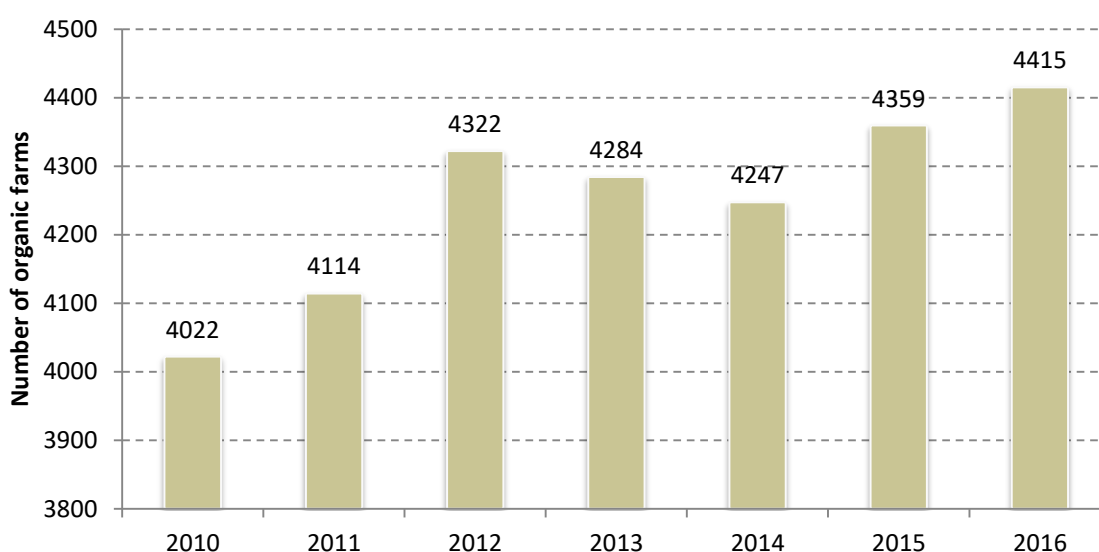


Figure 6. Number of organic farms in Finland (Pro Luomu 2017b)

Although the number of organic farms and the organic production sector are increasing, Finnish consumption of organic products lags somewhat behind many other EU Member States. For example in 2015 the greatest annual consumption per capita was recorded in Switzerland (€262), Denmark (€191) and Sweden (€177) (Willer, Schaack & Lernoud 2017, 229). The latest corresponding figure from Finland is from 2014 when it was just €41/year/pp, reaching 1,9% of the total value of the daily consumer goods trade (IFOAM EU 2016, 29).

There are many actors in organics in Finland that promote the development of organic production and consumption. All of them cover a niche in the field of organics and yet work together to promote organic food in Finland. Pro Luomu is like an umbrella organisation that collects research data, organises seminars, while Luomuinsituutti conducts the researches, Luomuliitto connects the farmers and EcoCentria connects professional kitchens (Table 2).

Table 2. Finnish organics promotion organisations (web pages of these organisations)

Pro Luomu The Finnish Organic Food Association	Luomuinsituutti Finnish Organic Research Institute	Luomuliitto The Finnish Organic Association	EcoCentria The Finnish Organic Catering Centre
1) an association for the cooperation of actors in the organic sector; 2) drafting statements and commenting on important current issues; 3) organising expert seminars and educational events; 4) organising working groups for different actors in the field; 5) has about 50 member organizations 6) is a member of IFOAM EU	1) a multidisciplinary research organization; 2) operating under the University of Helsinki and Natural Resources Institute Finland Luke; 3) organising research, science communication, education and development projects	1) an interest group representing organic farmers and a member of Pro Luomu; 2) offering mentor programmes to new organic farmers; 3) publishing its own magazine Luomulehti; 4) has 13 local organic associations as members; 5) issuing Ladybird label	1) development unit that functions within the Savo Consortium for Education; 2) promoting sustainable food chain with projects and development services; 3) promoting organics to professional kitchens via Steps to Organic (Portaat Luomuun) programme

The organic market in Finland was worth 273 million euros in 2016. Organic sales in grocery stores increased by 14% compared to the year before (Figure 7). The organic market grew very fast in 2011 and 2012 (50% and 20% respectively). However, during 2013-2015 the economic recession in Finland slowed down the growth (just 6% and 5% respectively).

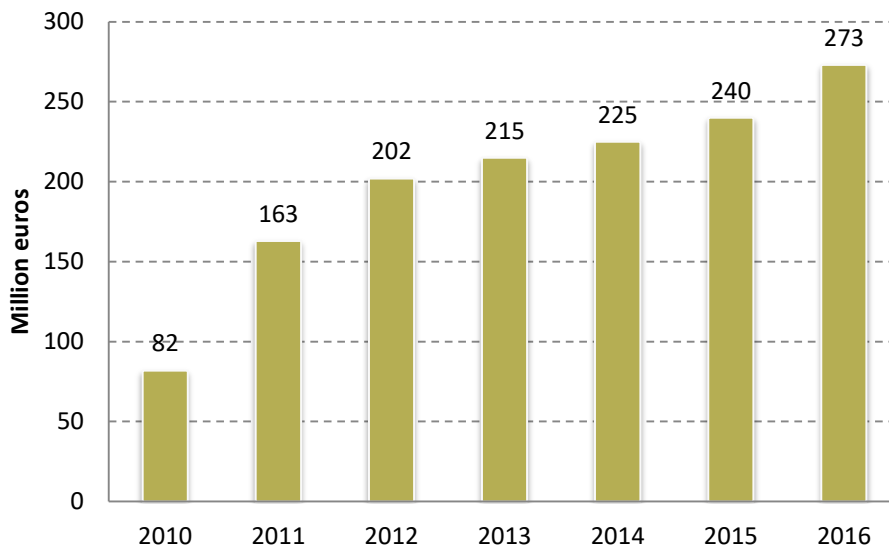


Figure 7. Organic market in Finland in million euros (Pro Luomu 2017b)

According to Pro Luomu (2017b) the market share for organic products is currently 2,1% in Finland compared to Sweden (7,3%) and Denmark (8,4%). Nevertheless, the organic market has been growing faster than the mean sales in retail shops. Trade specialists evaluate that organic food sales will have increased to 410 million euros by 2020. The previous forecast to have organic food sales up at 330 million euros in 2015 did not come true, but the forecast for 2020 might come true. According to Pro Luomu executive director Marja-Riitta Kottila organic food is not luxury that is easily switched to a cheaper option during economic recession (Pro Luomu 2015b). Organic food is becoming a staple option for many families. About 2/3 of all the organic products sold in Finland are domestic production. Kottila claims that the growth can be seen if new organic products come to the market or the prices are lowered because that will attract new consumers for organics (2015d).

2.2 Organics consumers in Europe and Finland

According to Willer & Schaack the per capita consumption of organic products is higher in the EU than in other parts of the world. Consumer spending on organic food products reached 29,8 billion euros in 2016 in Europe, while 27,1 billion euros in the EU. European consumers spend about 36,4 euros on organic food per person (EU 53,7 euros) (Willer, Schaack & Lernoud 2017, 209).

The number of consumers buying organic food products is growing also in Finland. The latest organic consumer survey shows that more than half of Finns buy organic regularly, at least once a month (Pro Luomu 2017b). The proportion of regular organic consumers since 2010 has increased by some ten percentage points.

According to the latest Finnish consumer barometer on organic products issued in October 2017 the most active organic food consumer is a woman with higher education, aged 30-49, has a family with school-aged children living in capital area (Kallinen, Salmenhaara & Saarnivaara 2017). Organic consumption is concentrated in the Helsinki city area, where organic products are bought more than in small municipalities. Most organic produce is bought at ordinary grocery markets (Pro Luomu 2017b).

The latest consumer barometer study (Kallinen et al. 2017) shows that a quarter of Finns use organics frequently (i.e. at least once a week) (Figure 8). Another quarter of Finns use organics seldom (i.e. at least once a month). About half of Finns buy organics only occasionally or not at all. However, one has to notice that the number of people who buy organics frequently has been steadily increasing over the past seven years (from 21% to 28%).

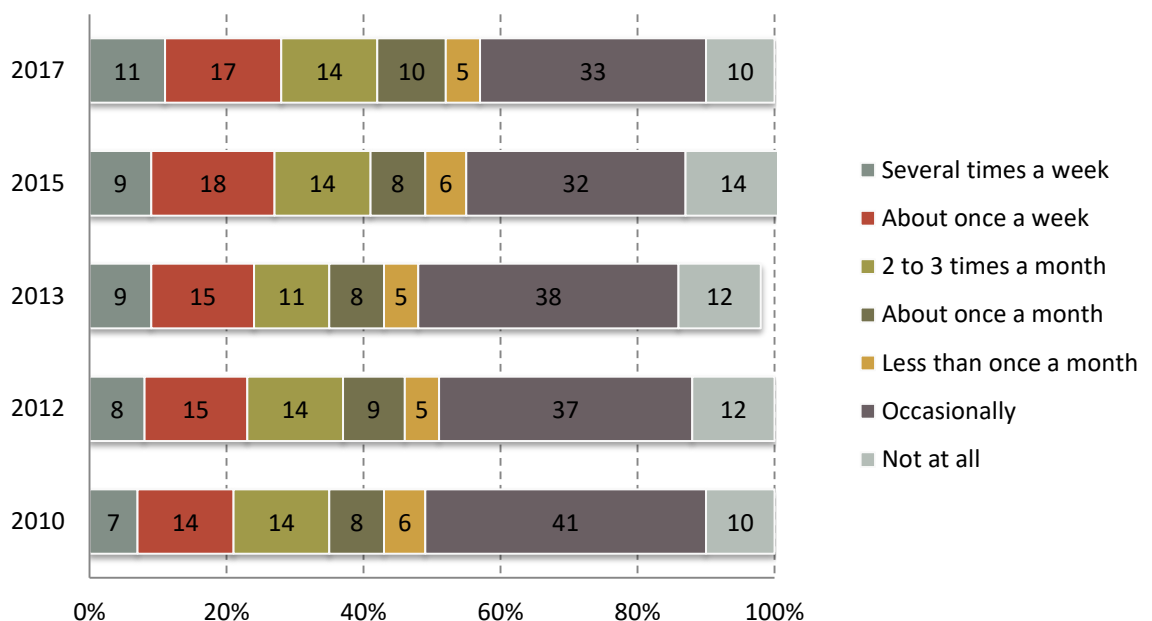


Figure 8. Frequency of buying organics (Pro Luomu 2017b & Kallinen et al. 2017)

Based on the consumer barometer study, a vast majority of respondents buy their organics in regular grocery stores (Figure 9). Markets and specialists shops (i.e. organic or local food stores) hold a strong position after them. Buying straight from a producer on the farm stands fourth in the list, but also the REKO buying groups (Rejäl konsumtion / Reilu kuluttaminen) are on their rise because there are new circles formed all the time (Töyli 2015). Currently there are more than 150 of them all over the country. Consumers prefer buying straight from a producer because then they can be sure that the products and produce they buy directly from farmers is fresh and has smaller carbon footprint.

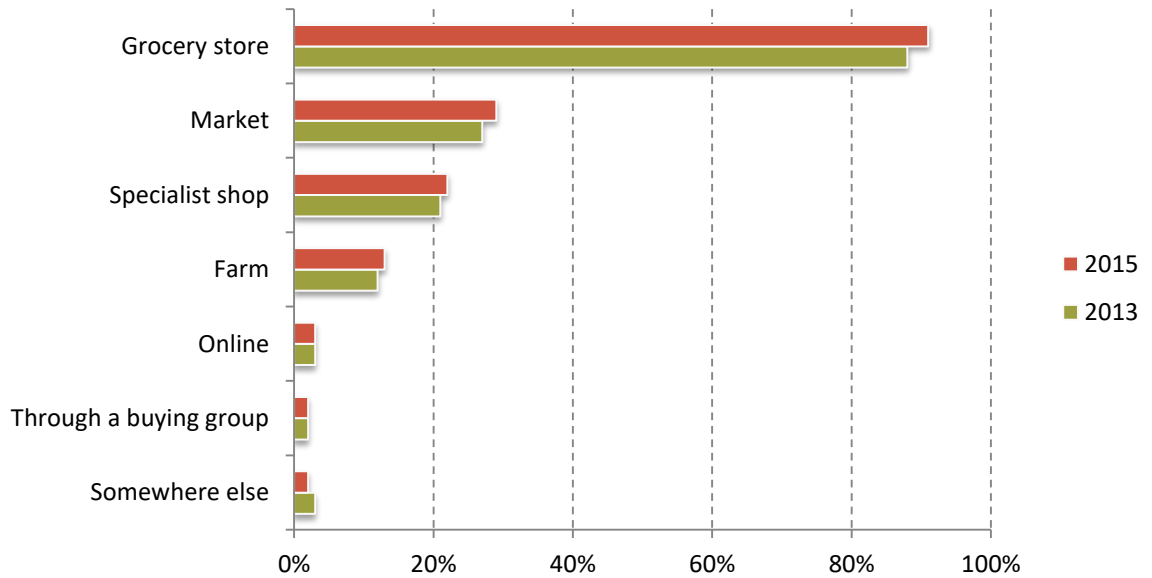


Figure 9. Where consumers purchase organics (Pro Luomu 2017b)

People who have joined local and organic food circles (Fin. lähiruokapiiri) around Finland generally prefer organic food when there is an option. Also a study based on the “Accessibility of local and organic food in Northern Ostrobothnia (RuokaGIS)” project (Kotavaara 2014, 38), which aim was to analyse local and organic food in Northern Ostrobothnia, has revealed the same trend. According to the given study the so-called circle people are more aware of the difference between local and organic food, because they do not always equal (i.e. not all the local food is organic and not all the organic food is always local).

The consumer barometer study (2017) shows that the main reason why one should buy organic food is the fact that there is no chemical substances used in the production chain (26%), second comes good taste (15%), followed by health reasons (13%) and that the food has been grown organically (Figure 10).

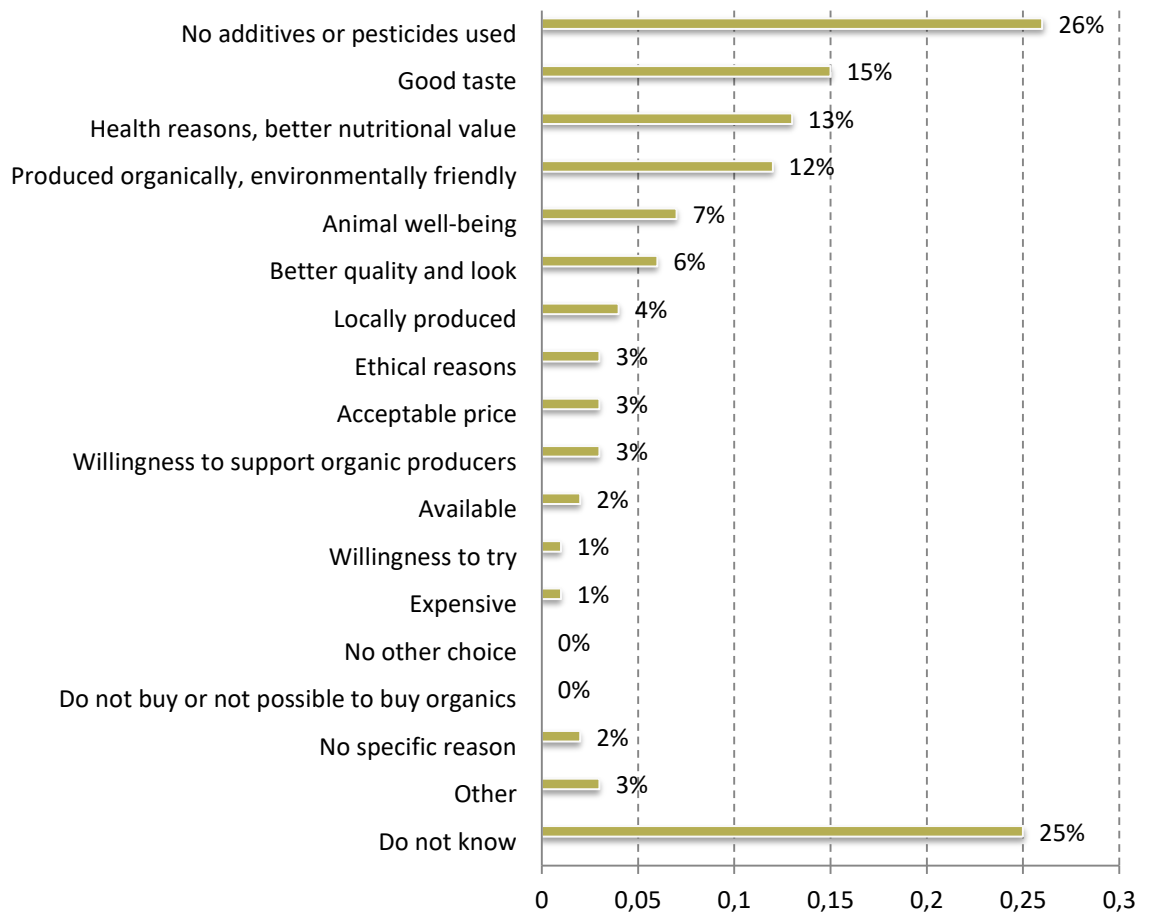


Figure 10. Reasons to buy organics (Kallinen et al. 2017)

As for expectations for professional kitchens, then according to the latest consumer barometer study (Kallinen et al. 2017) the majority of consumers expect to find organic food on the menu (Figure 11). When consumers were asked how important it was for them to have an organic food option offered at work, restaurants, school or kindergarten, then slightly higher expectations were laid on schools/kindergartens (57%) and restaurants (56%) than on workplace canteen (51%). Number of consumers willing to see organic option on the menu has been growing just slightly over the past four years (2013-2017). The change is not big, but the rising trend is still noticeable. The amount of those who believe organic food is not important to be offered at schools/kindergartens, restaurants and workplace canteens is decreasing. Steve Brooks (2009) has said that "if you're serving organic food, conserving water or using renewable energy, they could become your best customers: "sustainable consumers."" Greenwashing does not work, but honest sustainable way of doing business will increase customer numbers.

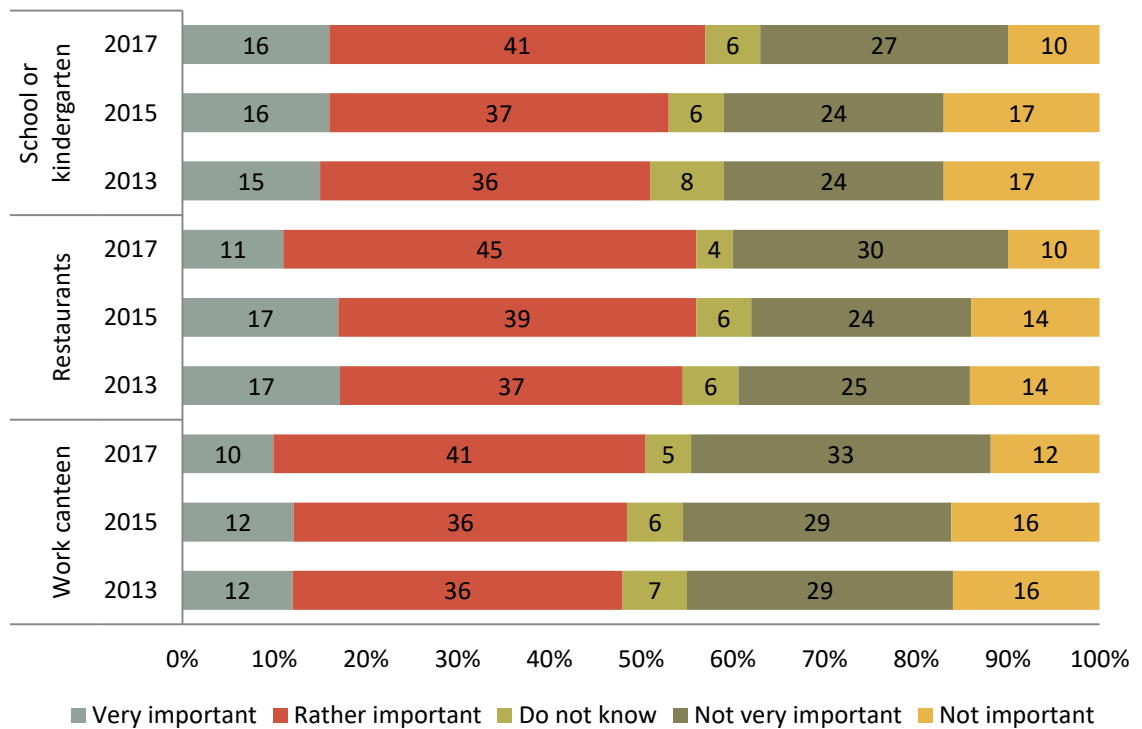


Figure 11. The importance of having organic food (Kallinen et al. 2017)

Also according to the survey made about the access to local and organic food in Northern Pohjanmaa about 50% of the subjects were ready to pay more for organic food if it was offered at a restaurant or a canteen (Kotavaara et al. 2014, 41).

2.3 Organics in restaurants and catering industry

Restaurants and cafés could have a standardized system or requirements when using organic ingredients in their kitchens like Michelin stars for restaurants. That could increase their visibility and reassure consumers that organic starred food provided is healthy and free of chemicals. Michelin awards zero to three stars on the basis of the anonymous reviews since 1930s (McConnell 2017). The tradition started in France, but has now spread all over the world. The reviewers concentrate on the quality, mastery of technique, personality and consistency of the food when making the reviews. That means Michelin stars are awarded based on solely food offered. According to McConnell (2017) one star is awarded for a "good place to stop on your journey, indicating a very good restaurant in its category, offering cuisine prepared to a consistently high standard". Two stars are given when a restaurant is "worth a detour, indicating excellent cuisine and skilfully and carefully crafted dishes of outstanding quality". While three stars are granted to a restaurant which is "worth a special journey, indicating exceptional cuisine where diners eat extreme-

ly well, often superbly” and their dishes are ”precisely executed, using superlative ingredients”. So also organic restaurants are able to acquire the renowned Michelin stars.

A Finnish voluntary programme called “Steps to Organic” (Portaat Luomuun) created by EkoCentria / Savo Vocational School, funded by the Finnish Agriculture and Forestry Ministry since 2002, is mainly created for industrial and professional kitchens, but it is also promoted to restaurants who provide fine or casual dining (Luomuravintola 2016). Participation in the programme requires a yearly fee payment. The programme has six levels, and by proceeding from step to step, the kitchens gradually increase their use of organic products. By advancing step by step it is easier to develop the kitchen procedures as well as product availability and customer expectations at the same pace. The programme awards stars based on how many organic ingredients are being used in a restaurant (Figure 12). There is a minimum number of items that need to be used and the rest could be organic whenever possible. The first star will be awarded if minimum two ingredients are organic on the menu on a regular basis and the rest are used whenever possible. Two stars are awarded when at least eight ingredients are organic on the menu on a regular basis and the rest are used whenever possible and three stars when at least 20 ingredients are organic on a regular basis and the rest are used whenever possible.

More than 2432 professional kitchens have joined the “Steps to Organic” programme by now. For example, Silvoplee or Pupu, Helsinki-based vegan restaurants, or Härmän Rati from Järvenpää are just a few of the restaurants participating in the programme and who have acquired the highest amount of Organic Stars (i.e. three stars) because they mostly use organic ingredients. The latter of the tree won the 2017 Organic Championships in Finland. Since 2014 the number of restaurants participating in Steps to Organic programme has risen only by 4, but the reason behind it seems to be that restaurants also fall out of the programme or some restaurants stop their business activity. From a customer point of view a kitchen with more organic stars is more inviting for those who value sustainability, chemical-free and healthy food. The more kitchens join the programme the higher the need for organic ingredients and that opens up more opportunities for organic farmers to increase their production and selection.

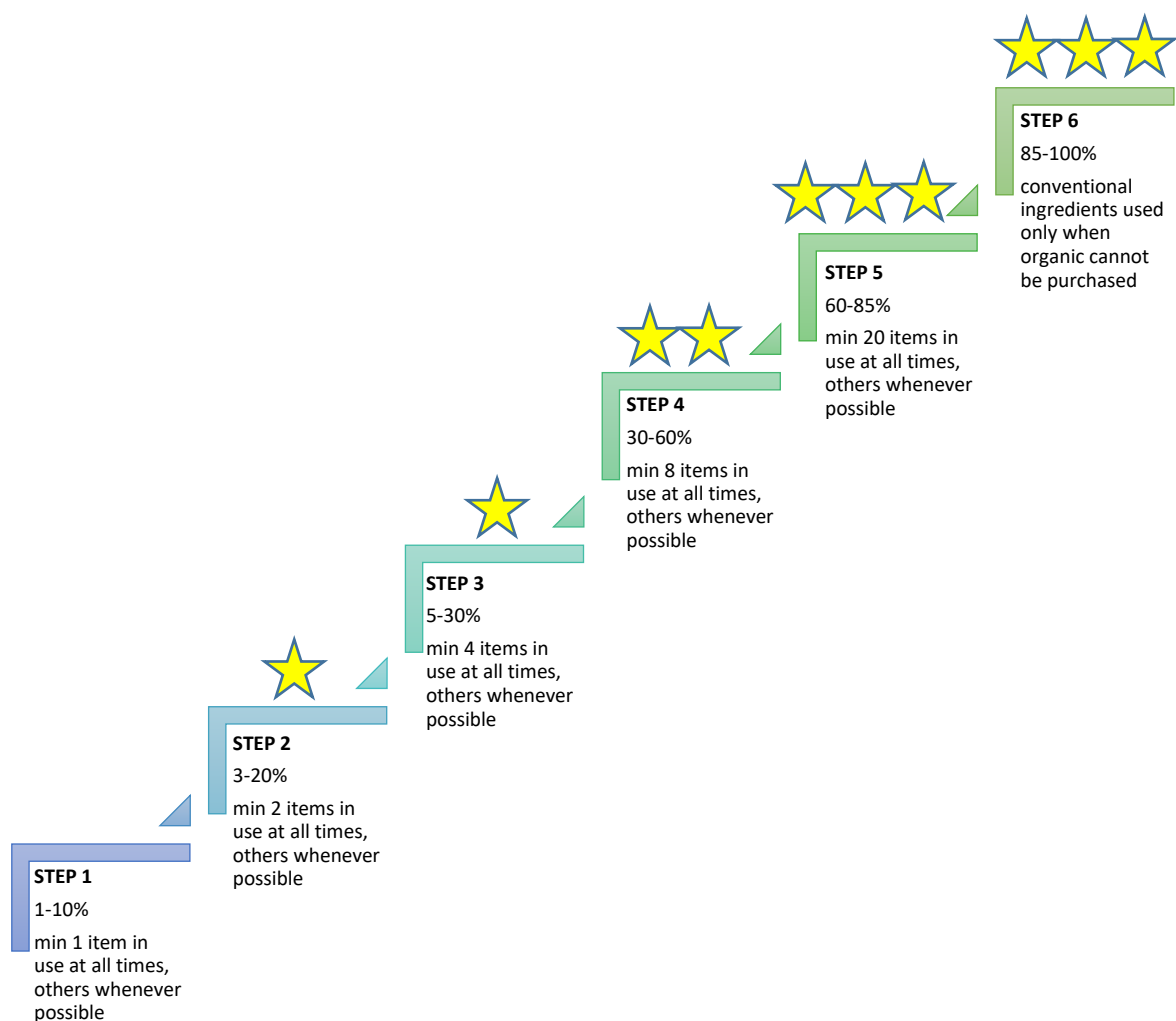


Figure 12. Star system by Steps to Organic (based on Luomuravintola 2016)

So far, restaurants use relatively little organics as less than 1% of wholesales in HoReCa (i.e. Hotel/Restaurant/Catering) sector comes from organic products, while in the public catering (e.g. in schools, day cares, elderly houses, companies etc) the share of organics is about 5% of the ingredients used (Pro Luomu 2017b). The percentage is hopefully rising because of the good work EkoCentria is doing with professional kitchens. Currently, the biggest share of the organics (10% of all ingredients used) is served in kindergartens. According to the Food Service Feedback 2016 (previously as Suurkeittiötutkimus) 17% of the professional kitchens used organics on a daily basis last year (Pro Luomu 2017a). The goal of the Finnish government is that 20% of all the food offered in professional kitchens would be organic by 2020 (Luomuravintola 2016).

However, according to Suurkeittiötutkimus 2016 (Pro Luomu 2017a) the number of public caterings using organic raw materials at least once a week is slightly growing reaching 37% of all the professional kitchens in Finland (6% more than the year before in 2015)

and the amount of professional kitchens using organics on a daily basis has reached 17% (Figure 13). Almost half of the surveyed professional kitchens used organic ingredients occasionally (44%) and the rest did not use organics at all. The last 6 years clearly prove that professional kitchens are using more and more organic ingredients despite some downfall during the economic recession in 2013-2014. The biggest users of organic ingredients in private sector are restaurants. In the public sector, the biggest users are kindergartens.

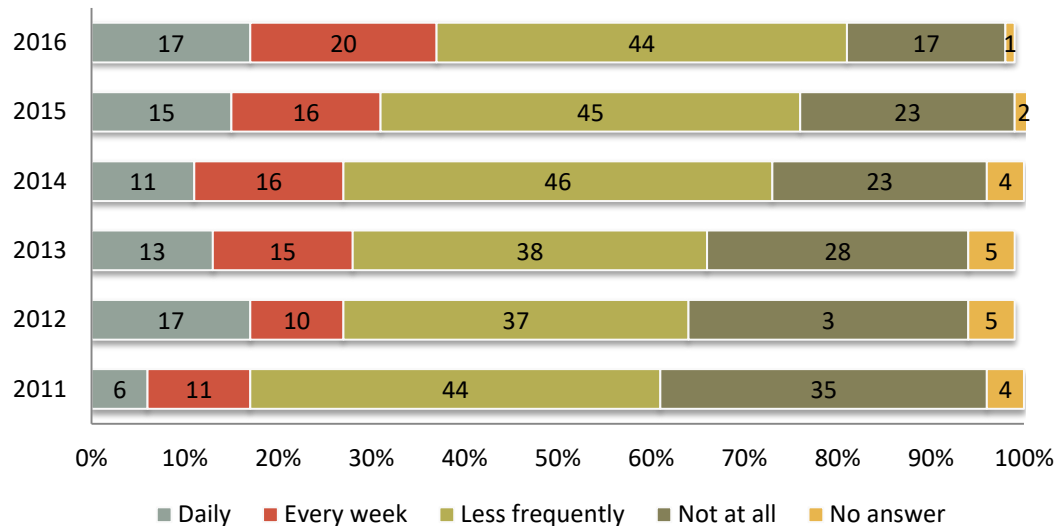


Figure 13. Frequency of using organics in catering industry (Pro Luomu 2017b)

2.4 Trends of organics in Europe and Finland

Although it is difficult to predict the trends in economy, still, if there are some certainties then predictions can be built on them. Over 300 experts in organic food have contributed into the vision where European organic food and farming sector should be in 2030. The result can be found in a publication called “Transforming Food and Farming: an Organic Vision for Europe in 2030” issued by an European organisation advocating organic food and farming providing a framework of “steps the organic movement should take to define a clear pathway for achieving its vision” (IFOAM EU 2015, 4). Although the population in Europe is projected to decline from 525 million in 2035 to 517 million in 2060, food demand is expected to rise by 35%, because worldwide the population will grow. There will be eight billion of us by 2030 and over nine billion by 2050. A growing population goes hand-in-hand with increasing food demand (IFOAM EU 2015, 18). What more, the elderly, who now account for 40% of Europe’s population, and the growing number of one-person households contribute to the importance of a healthy diet and disease prevention. There are many scenarios which direction Europe is choosing when working on legislation. The worst case scenario is when fresh organic food becomes scarce and too expensive for the majority to consume. However, when healthy food becomes rare, people start seeking

shorter supply chains to buy food directly from local farmers, they start preferring restaurants that provide food made from ingredients bought directly from a farmer. The best case scenario is when the origin of products is becoming increasingly important for consumers. Hopefully, local communities start collaborating and supporting local producers buying their produce, because it is “strengthening the farmer’s role in the food chain” (Augère-Granier 2016; Michalopoulos 2017). It is also a growing trend to grow your own food in the form of urban farming.

Based on all the reasons described in the previous paragraph and people’s growing interest in health issues within the past 10 years the number of people searching for the key word luomu (Eng. organic) on Google has been rising slowly but steadily from average 40 times per week up to 70 times per week (Figure 14). That trend shows the slow but steady increase in interest for organic food also in the future.

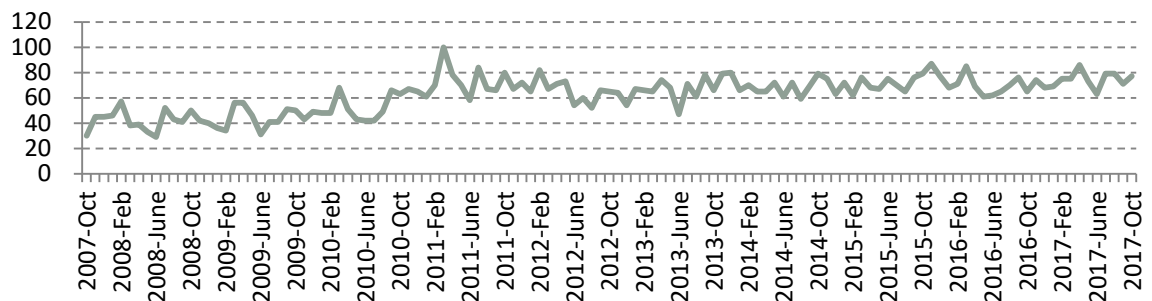


Figure 14. “Luomu” search in Google Trends in 2007-2017

Although organic market in Europe is growing, current trends indicate that organic production in Europe is not moving at the same speed in every country. All European countries have an organic regulation (or are drafting one). The EU regulation on organic farming was a heated topic among the European Parliament, Agriculture Council and European Commission in 2016. The talks remained deadlocked at the end of 2016, but moved forward in 2017 when common agreement was reached among the three parties. The new regulation will apply from 1 July 2020 (European Council 2017, EUbusiness 2017). It regulates among many other things also organic greenhouse beds for Sweden, Denmark and Finland putting them at a disadvantage compared to the Southern European farmers. European Commission has stated that “the new Regulation confirms the link with the soil as a basic principle, and as such the use of “demarcated beds” is not considered compatible with broader organic principles” (European Commission 2017b). The organic farmers of the three countries are continuing the fight for their right to grow organic herbs all year round in pots and lifted beds (Ala-Siurua 2017, Pohjala 2017).

However, on the brighter side, the total value of the European organic retail market almost tripled from 11 billion in 2004 to almost 30 billion euros in 2015, compared to the EU organic market which was 27,1 billion euros (Figure 15) (Willer et al. 2017, 198; IFOAM EU 2016, 24; IFOAM EU 2014).

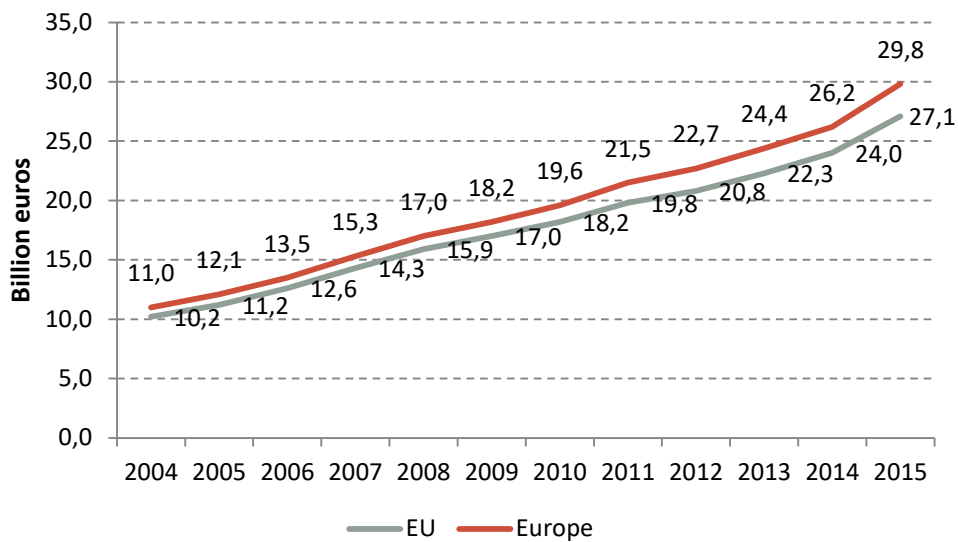


Figure 15. Growth of organic retail sales in Europe, 2004-2014 (Willer et al. 2017, 198; IFOAM EU 2016, 24; IFOAM EU 2014)

According to the latest Organic Barometer study from 2017 the majority of the consumers (53%) estimate that their consumption of organics will at least slightly increase in the near future (Figure 16). Organic consumers are willing to increase the consumption of organic milk products, vegetable and fruit (Kallinen et al. 2017, 5).

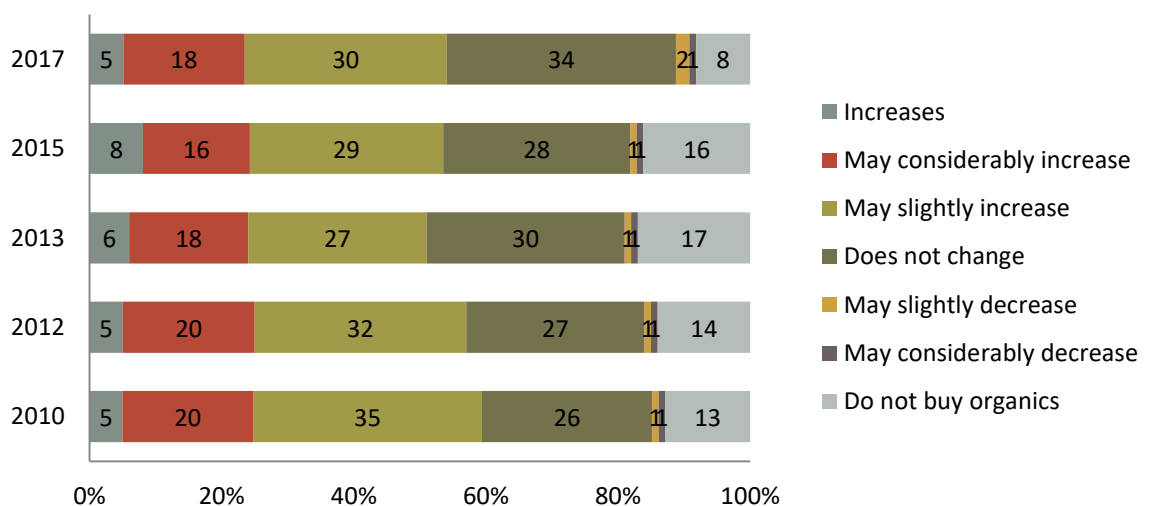


Figure 16. Future consumption of organics (Pro Luomu 2017a; Kallinen et al. 2017)

The main obstacle that is slowing down organic consumption is the price. However, there is a concern that quite many consumers even today do not know the difference between

organic and conventional products and in what way organic produce is better than conventionally grown alternative. If fair information is patiently provided, more customers might switch to organic produce.

2.5 Need for organics

There are several reasons why there is a need for organics, but the two main reasons why customers buy organics and farmers grow them is the fact that organic food is healthy and tasty. Customers may be price-sensitive, but if organic food tastes better and it is healthier than conventional food (e.g. no harmful additives, GMOs or pesticides), then organic plate would win over the non-organic one. For example a large meta-analysis based on 343 peer-reviewed publications, which was published in the British Journal of Nutrition in 2014, found that organic crops (ranging from carrots and broccoli to apples and blueberries) have substantially higher concentrations of a range of antioxidants, minerals and vitamins (Barański *et al.* 2014, 794). According to the study organics contain 18 to 69 percent higher concentrations of antioxidants (2014, 801). That means an organic eater consumes approximately two extra produce portions of antioxidants every day, without altering food intake. Based on that, the health benefits of organics are clearly present. Charles Benbrook, one of the contributors to the given study, has said that “the study likely says more about nutrient decline in conventional food than it does about a miraculous quality of organic food” (Albright 2014).

When a plant grows organically without pesticides its taste is enhanced as well. Studies considered in the British Journal of Nutrition paper show that higher antioxidant levels affect food’s organoleptic qualities (i.e. taste, aroma and mouthfeel) and how the human senses detect a food’s unique flavour. “People are yearning for more intense flavours, and there’s good news that organic farming accentuates flavour in fruits and vegetables”, Benbrook explains (Albright 2014).

It is a never-ending debate whether organic food is healthier and nutritionally superior to conventional food. According to a report where 236 valid matched pairs across the 11 nutrients were compared (Benbrook *et al.* 2008), the organic foods within these matched pairs were nutritionally superior in 145 matched pairs (i.e. in 61% of the cases), while the conventional foods were more nutrient dense in 87 matched pairs (i.e. in 37% of the cases). There were no differences in 2% of the matched pairs. There are some others who have looked into this matter and found that sometimes organic food is not superior over conventional food (Bourn & Prescott 2002; Dangour 2009). Most of the critique, though, is concentrated on antioxidant, vitamin and mineral levels compared to conventional food, not so much on chemical traces present in conventional food.

Organic produce is not as much available as produce from conventional farming. In conventional agriculture farmers use chemical fertilizers and pesticides allowing yield to be bigger than in organic farming. That may explain why yields from organic farming can be even 34% lower compared to conventional farming yields (Seufert 2012). Organic farmers increase yields through land-management practices, such as planting them in rotation with leguminous crops (like beans and peas) or oats that release nitrogen into the soil. Therefore, the yield differences can be partly attributed to nitrogen deficiencies in organic systems (Seufert 2012).

As organic food is grown without artificial fertilizers and pesticides, the yield is smaller than in conventional farming. Restaurants who use chemical-free ingredients, should, therefore market their menus. Restaurants face challenges to find a good balance between higher expenses and the intense flavour of organic food. A few Finnish restaurants (like Silvoplee in Helsinki) have started providing information about the origins of their ingredients (be it in the backyard or grown by a local farmer) to educate its current and potential customers. It is expected that in the future more ethically and environmentally minded restaurants start promoting the origin of their ingredients. By buying organic food customers support organic farmers and chemical-free farming, take responsibility for the environment, start a new norm of growing food naturally, invest into the health of our future generation.

In the future, the ethical values of professional kitchens start playing an important role whether customers order food from them or not. Environmentally-friendly food providers gain a positive image in the eyes of environment-conscious customers, the so-called lifestyle of health and sustainability consumers (LOHAS). These consumers are a former niche market segment that has grown dramatically in recent years. These people look for honesty, authenticity and advocacy of ethical principles and values. That is why we have seen the fast increase in natural, organic, local, non-GMO, and even wild foods (e.g. mushrooms, berries, honey) sales. It is estimated that in Sweden almost 35% of the population (LOHAS in Sweden 2016) and in Finland 48% percent of consumers consider themselves either a heavy, medium or light LOHAS consumer. 10% of Finnish population consider themselves heavy LOHAS consumers, 20% belong to the medium and 18% to the light segmentation (Heinonen 2012). In the United States one in four adult Americans (25%) is considered to be a LOHAS consumer (Ethos 21.7.2017).

3 Consumer behaviour studies

The purchase decisions of customers are driven by various reasons, but the current study is mainly looking into the ethical and ecological attributes, but also the origin of a product, because one of the reasons why customers prefer local food/product is the desire to support local producers. For farmers and restaurant managers to know better their customers they need to follow the trends and influences in the market. There have been many studies conducted in the field of consumer behaviour and many terms have been coined to describe consumers who are ethical and environmentally conscious (Ray & Anderson 2000; Furst *et al*, 1996; Sobal 2006; Natural Marketing Institute 2008; French & Showers 2008). Yet, there has been mainly one consumerism style on the market standing out for almost ten years now: the LOHAS consumer segment. There are many attributes that influence consumers to make sustainable and ethical purchase decisions. This chapter is studying various factors that lead to a personal food choice process and also a market-dominating consumer segment group that values the lifestyle of health and sustainability (LOHAS).

3.1 Food choice process

Food choice means choosing food and beverages based on when, how, where and with whom people eat, but also other aspects and behaviours. Food choice is symbolically, economically and socially important process because it reveals a person's preferences, identity and cultural background. Restaurant-goers make food choices quite often based on their habits to eat at home, and there are many reasons for that. Food choices create demand for food suppliers: what needs to be produced, where distributed to, etc. And food choices determine which nutrients we consume.

Furst, Connors, Bisogni, Sobal & Winter Falk (1996) have developed a model of a food choice process (Figure 17) where factors that influence food choice come from three sources: life course events and experiences, various influences during lifespan and personal food choice system (Furst *et al*. 1996; Bisogni 2004, Sobal 2006). What generates the process or pathway leading to the point of food choice is the inter-relationship of all the three major components. The life course events and experiences, but also social, cultural and physical environments determine how a person thinks, feels and acts in relation to food. Food choices are in constant dynamic and evolve over time, because of the accumulation of events and experiences over time. Sobal, Bisogni, Devine & Jastran (2006, 5) have stated that "each new food choice experience adds to a person's life course and shapes subsequent food choices". A person's life course generates a set of various influences like ideals (e.g. expectations, standards and beliefs related to food and eating),

personal factors (e.g. biological needs, food preferences, psychological needs), resources (e.g. money, time, space, skills, knowledge, equipment, etc), social factors (e.g. roles in the society, responsibilities, relationships) and context (food available, information about food and food environment). These influences inform and shape people's personal food systems, i.e. at this stage they negotiate between taste, cost, physical well-being, managing relationships and convenience. These value negotiations happen deliberately and dynamically, while the next step, building strategies, is more routine and automatic. People classify their foods and eating according to their own meanings. With all the previous steps passed, routines and rules develop (e.g. for shopping, preparing food and eating).

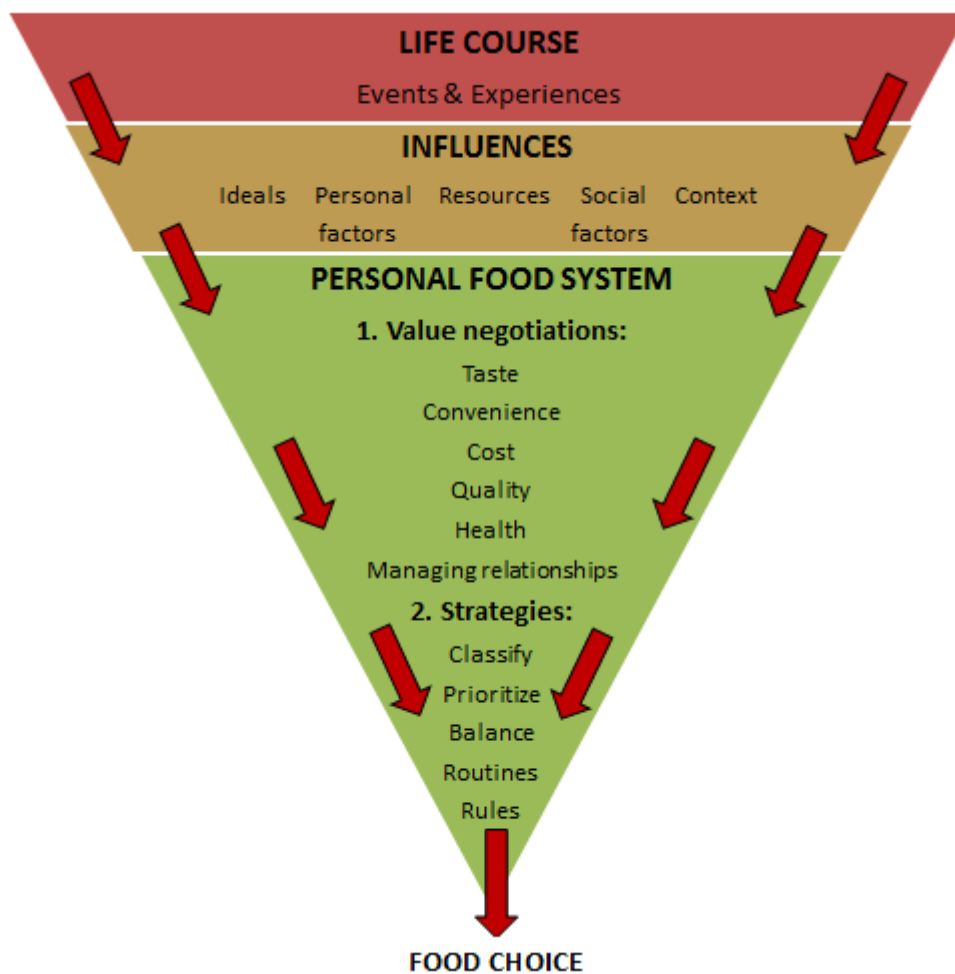


Figure 17. A food choice process model (adapted from Furst et al. 1996; Bisogni 2004; Sobal et al. 2006)

When we talk about a life course, then we mean changes and developments of food choice processes over a time span. A person moves along a food choice trajectory over his lifespan. Childhood eating habits may carry on through the end of a life turning it into a pattern. So food choice trajectory provides momentum leading to habitual food selection, but there are transitions (i.e. shifts) in a person's life that lead to changes in food choice

patterns (Figure 18). Major life-changing events like entering or leaving school, losing a job or changing employment, entering or leaving important personal relationships, migrating to a foreign country and culture, falling ill or recovering from illness, being pregnant or nursing a baby may all affect money situation, health or life role leading to minor or radical food choice pattern changes over time.

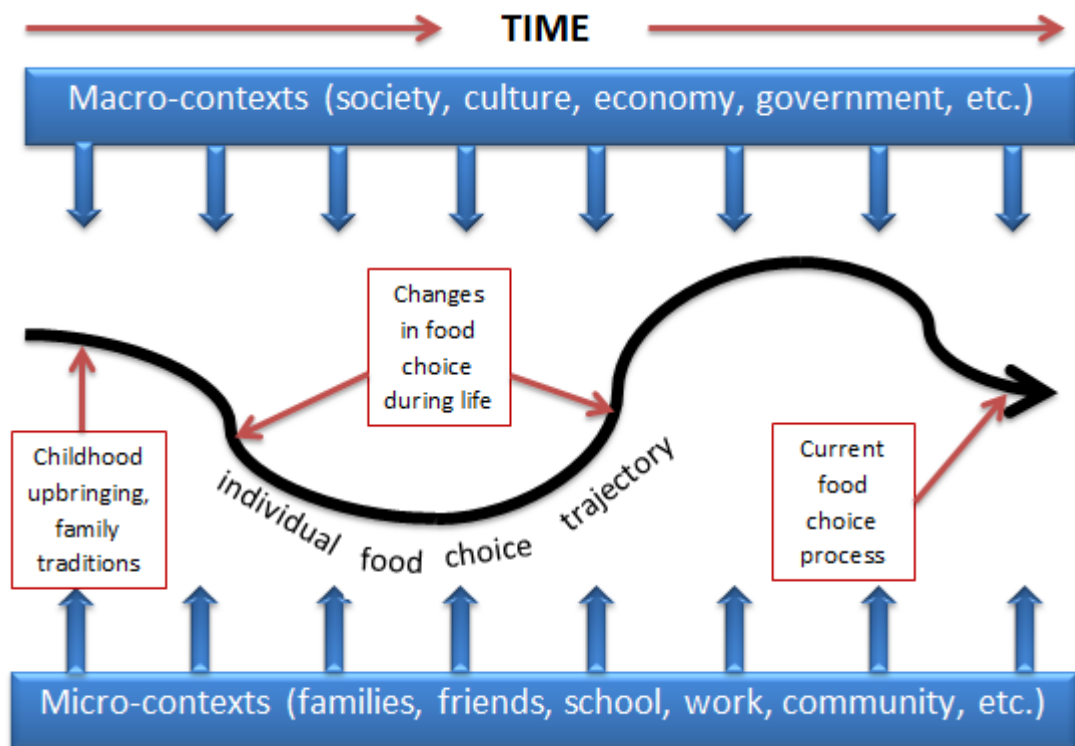


Figure 18. The food choice trajectory model (adapted from Bisogni 2004; Sobal et al. 2006)

Both macro- and micro environments influence changes in one's food choice process. Society and culture, governments and economic situation, historical and epidemiological environments during the period when a person is growing up, lives through mid-life and becomes elderly within a specific family pattern common to that time, but also employment and financial conditions, local community, friends and family, they all develop our eating habits.

Besides life course events and experiences that determine how a person thinks about the food, consumers' food choice is shaped by many other influencers (Furst et al. 1996; Bisogni 2004; Sobal et al. 2006). Influences that shape the food choice may come along from childhood when holiday traditions, special occasion meals and rituals shaped the ideal food image (Figure 16). For many people ideals about proper meals play a crucial role how food choices are made. Ideals are the standards people have learned through

socialization. Personal factors is another attribute that influences food choice. Physiological factors like person's age, gender, health status and state of hunger, but also psychological and emotional traits like taste sensitivities, cravings, addictions, moods and phobias shape the boundaries of food choices. Resources are also influencing food choice. They can be tangible, such as money, equipment for preparing food or storage space, as well as intangible, such as skills to grow and prepare food, knowledge what nutrients food has or time to prepare healthy meals. When making food choices people are also influenced by social factors like family members. There can be different diets and health problems within a family and that makes them compromise or change diets, sometimes making sacrifices in his/her own food choices. In addition to that, also workplace or entertaining others may influence one's choice of food, because then you tend to eat food unconventional from everyday practice. Influences on food choice are larger than may seem. Nowadays people eat in an increasingly wider range of environments (workplace, cafés, canteens and restaurants); also seasonality of food and marketing of certain foods influence the choice of food.

The next step on the way to food choice (Figure 16) is creating personal food system, i.e. constructing food choice values, classifying foods and situations according to these values, balancing competing values and developing strategies (Furst et al. 1996; Bisogni 2004; Sobal et al. 2006). There are several interconnected values that are considered during the personal food system process. Taste usually comes first because sensory perceptions are mostly driven by taste and varies widely among individuals. In addition to that, taste preferences may change over the life course. Quite often taste overweighs convenience, like for example a cake from a market shelf does not have the same delicious taste as a home-made cake. The only reason when convenience wins over taste is time. Time is an important commodity to spend or save. So when weighing the values of convenience in terms of time, then convenience quite often wins. The cost of food is another very important factor that funnels one's food choice. Price often conflicts with and accommodates other values, particularly taste and quality. People's understanding of quality appears to depend upon their feelings about the standard of excellence. Yet, at the same time, better quality is usually associated with higher price. However, according to Furst et al. (1996, 259) findings, when price and quality conflict appear, quality seems to be more relevant for that situation. Health and nutrition values represent food choice considerations built on physical well-being. Food may cause immediate reactions (like digestive discomfort, allergic reactions, energy levels and athletic performance) or longer-term reactions (like growth, weight control, illness management or chronic disease prevention). Food choice includes also overall nutrient balance, low fat and salt, etc. When serving others food, well-being of others comes to play. Managing relationships value represents

how someone considers the interests of other people because in this relationship you consider the needs, preferences and feelings of others. Personal needs and preferences are often compromised just to build, maintain or repair relationships.

Food-choice decisions depend on a complex interplay of multi-level determinants. Strategies that develop when people construct their own food behaviour after they have classified, prioritized and balanced their salient values, simplify every following food choice they have to make. Food routines and rules develop only in recurring situations. People who have developed a variety of strategies (that they employ in different situations) tend to be more adaptive eaters or food providers than those who have only a few strategies (Falk et al. 1996).

3.2 LOHAS consumers

Nowadays there is a huge number of customers who do not only think about their own benefits, but also about the effects their lifestyles have on other people and the environment (Nyrhinen et al. 2011). The consumers with lifestyle of health and sustainability are concerned about the planet, authenticity, personal fulfilment, holistic health, and social conscience (Ethos 11 May 2017). They have strong ethical values and, therefore, can be highly loyal consumers. Therefore, for example, they tend to buy organic products, consider ethical standards, fair trade and sustainability (Heim 2011). They do not believe in empty slogans and unethical greenwashing companies (Ethos 21 July 2017). They are “green” consumers and, therefore, they have appeared to be an important customer group in the foodservice industry. For LOHAS consumers words and actions need to match or they will turn back to the companies who just greenwash or are dishonest. LOHAS consumers want real things starting from the ingredients in their food to the photos on a company’s Instagram account (Ethos 11 May 2017).

The early signs of the LOHAS movement were detected in the middle of the last decade (Mayer 2017). It was evident in the growing interest in sustainability, ecology and social consciousness and focus on green energy and a range of environmental concepts. The profile of a LOHAS consumer was developed at the beginning of the new millennium by a research and consulting firm the Natural Marketing Institute (NMI). They segmented consumers based on their “attitudes toward and behaviors regarding personal and planetary well-being” (French & Showers 2008, 31). 15 lifestyle and product dimensions (like recycling, product-attribute drivers and eagerness to do more to protect environment) were tested. Ten countries were surveyed and five consumer segments emerged: LOHAS consumers, naturalites, drifters, conventionals and unconcerned (Figure 19). According to the

NMI, the percentage of LOHAS consumers and drifters has been growing (by 2% and 6% respectively) over the years (from 2005 to 2007).

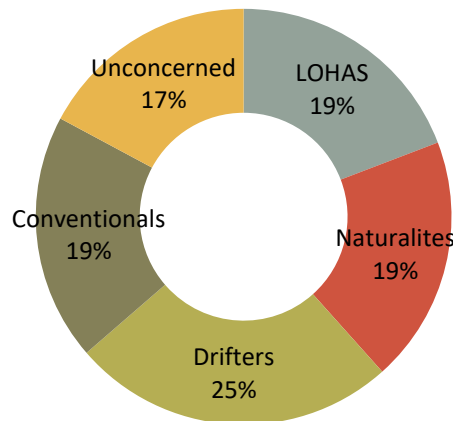


Figure 19. U.S. consumers in NMI defined consumer segments based on their lifestyle (French & Showers 2008; Natural Marketing Institute 2008).

LOHAS consumers according to NMI are environmental stewards who act in socially responsible ways. They have the highest consumption rate of green products and organic food compared to all the other groups and they influence other consumers. They are generally not price insensitive, because they have the highest median income. LOHAS consumers are loyal to brands that carry the same value as they do. LOHAS consumers are early adopters of new products and, therefore, free marketing tools for companies whose products they push into the mainstream by being the first to advertise it on social media. The second segment, the naturalites consumers are primarily motivated by their own personal health and wellness. They are a "lighter shade of green" than LOHAS consumers and they have little interest in environmental protection, society and health issues. The third segment, the drifters are motivated by the latest trends, but lack the commitment to any issue including sustainability. Drifters are price sensitive and tend to be less active in environmental movements than general population. However, they have an interest in boycotting companies with environmentally unfriendly practices, support recycling and sustainability. The fourth segment, the conventionals live on the fringe of the environmental movement. They are driven by rationality rather than morals to stand up for environmental issues. Their motivation is rather personally-centred than environmental protection oriented. The fifth segment, the unconcerneds do not seem to care much about the environment. They have little (if any) sense of environmental responsibility and they use few (if any) eco-friendly products. They are unlikely to engage in any environmentally friendly acts or participate in any community activities.

Over the years the greenest consumer group, the LOHAS consumers have been studied thoroughly by scholars and marketers, as they are the ones who may become free ambassadors to companies and influence other customers. More specifically, LOHAS consumers are those who are passionate about the environment, the planet, social issues, health, human rights, relationships, fair trade, sustainable practices, green building, peace, spiritual and personal development, natural and organic foods and personal care products, and other socially responsible and environmentally friendly products (Urh 2015). They tend to make their purchasing decisions based on their values of social and environmental responsibility.

Marketers are having troubles locating that consumer segment because these people are coming from all socio-demographic groups. There has been a division of opinions as for what kind of demographic characteristics do LOHAS consumers have. Some marketers believe LOHAS consumers is a cross-section of all socio-demographic groups: young and old, male and female, urban and suburban (Ethos 11 May 2017). While others believe a typical LOHAS consumer is a well-educated female living in a city (Heinonen 2012, Mäki 2013, New Marketing Institute 2008). According to Nyrhinen and Wilska (2012) the seniors in Finland are very price sensitive, while for example the U.S.-based Natural Marketing Institute's study (2008) shows that they are not. For example Asian (Kim, Lee, Gon Kim & Kim 2013), Hungarian (Szakály et al. 2017) and French (Mora & Jiang 2014) seniors are willing to pay extra for organic food.

A US Maine-based marketing company Ethos (11 May 2017) is describing these people as consumers who are looking for more than organic (and sometimes they are not even looking for organic at all) because the LOHAS consumers care about values, not just ingredients. Therefore, restaurants that communicate their sustainable practices have more chances to invite LOHAS customers to purchase their meals (Hu et al. 2010). They buy from brands that are honest and authentic. In the eyes of marketing experts, LOHAS are a promising group of consumers, opening up markets worth of billions of euros.

LOHAS consumers are a very active, holistic and multi-dimensional consumer segment that represents a prime target for many marketers (Natural Marketing Institute 2008, 17). Marketers call this group by many other names including: lohasians, conscious consumers, progressive consumers, tree huggers, humanists, responsible consumers or green consumers, but none want to be labelled as such (Urh 2015, 172). Because they think local, they are distrustful of large organisations and rather support small and local. Because they believe in authenticity, they easily detect greenwashing of products (Natural Marketing Institute 2008, 101). LOHAS consumers can be defined as people who focus

on enhancing a lifestyle of health and sustainability by promoting movements that support the production of local and organic food (Chou, Chen & Wang 2012). According to researches LOHAS consumers regularly purchase organic products (Fares & Zhang 2017; Marknadsrapport 2016). One needs to mention, that only limited research has been conducted to explore the healthy food choice behaviour of LOHAS diners within a restaurant context. Chou et al (2012) claim that LOHAS diners actively seek healthy food when eating out. That happens because they care for the environment and prefer green products. In addition to ethical and ecological reasons they also care for the country of origin of the food because they want to support local producers or they believe that local food has a better quality (Nyrhinen & Wilska 2012, 31).

Figure 20 gives an overview of various values LOHAS consumers have which have been divided into 4 bigger groups: health, sustainability, society and people. Naturally, not every attribute is 100% true for every lohasian, but for example healthy organic food, work-life balance, social and environmental issues, the transparency and authenticity of the stories behind the products they buy, and also the ethical values and the culture of the companies they are loyal to help them pursue a way of living that nurtures every aspect of their physical and spiritual wellbeing.

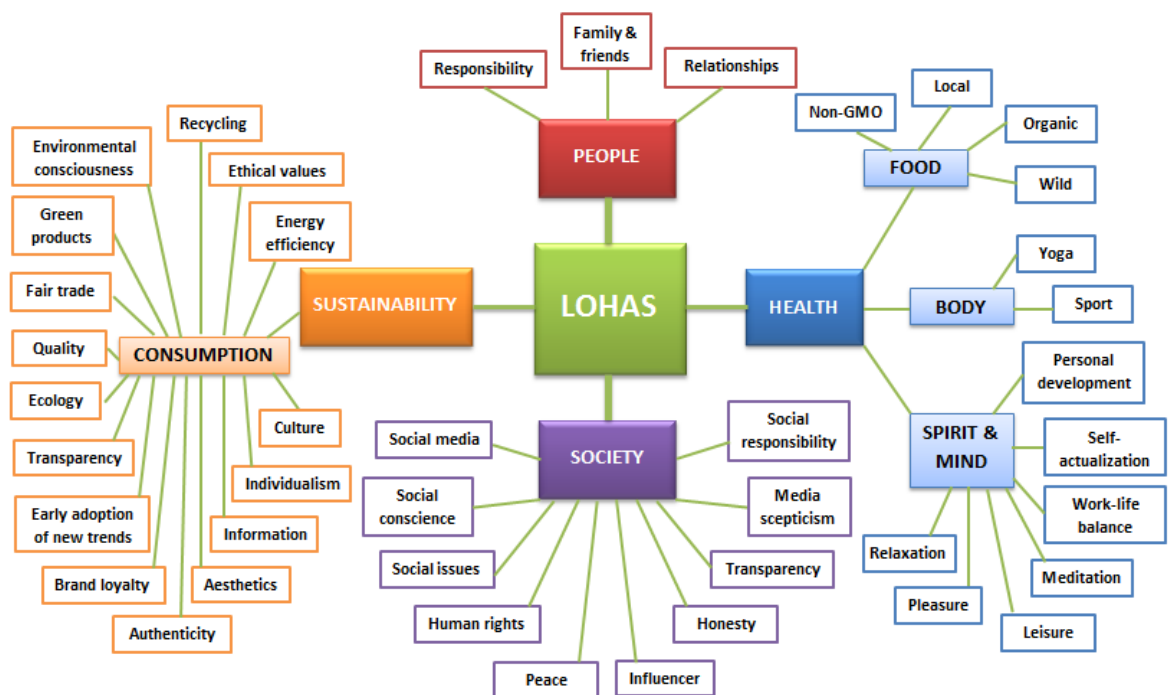


Figure 20. LOHAS mindmap (modified from Mayer 2017)

Ethical consumption entangles so many aspects, but for example fair trade, organic and non-GMO food from local farms reflects the self-identity of a LOHAS consumer. If a LOHAS consumer believes that by buying healthy food from a local farmer or preferring or-

ganic dishes at a restaurant is an ethical act, then he turns the society into a better place to live in. Lohasians are good at convincing other consumers to buy certain green products because they are good at networking and spreading the word in social media. They tend to be brand loyal once they have found a product they share the same value with; hence, they feel responsibility for channelling everyone about their new discovery. They are true influencers when it comes to people relationships.

4 Restaurant survey

This chapter presents the commissioning party, survey approach and methodology, describes the study's process of collecting data and also explains why the quantitative research approach was relevant for this study. Further, the description of procedure is presented.

4.1 Beneficiary of the survey

The organisation behind the author is the reason why survey was conducted. The author of the thesis works in an organic farm that has a plan to expand its business into growing organic herbs in a greenhouse. The target group of the organic herbs would have been restaurants in Southern Finland, but mainly Greater Helsinki, as the farm is located in Uusimaa region in close proximity to Helsinki. The farm itself is not big, currently growing organic strawberries on 4 hectares, expanding to 5 hectares in 2018 by adding organically certified blueberries into its product line. Herbs would be a new product in its selection of organic produce. Partly the herbs would be used in the farm's own summer café, but mostly sold to partner-restaurants. The intention of the commissioning party is not to start selling herbs to retailers but rather targeted restaurants. Wholesalers' purchase prices are not attractive to small-scale farmers, unless you sell in great quantities.

The farm would like to know how big the restaurants' demand for the organic herbs is and, correspondingly, whether there is a need for a year-round farming of these herbs. Therefore, there was a need for some research into the field.

4.2 Survey approach and methodology

The purpose of the study was to collect the opinion and attitude of restaurant managers and chefs concerning the use of organic herbs in their restaurants. There were two survey approaches considered at the beginning phase of the thesis: in-depth structured interviews (qualitative method) or a self-completion questionnaire (quantitative method). The data retrieved via a qualitative method of structured interviews would have allowed the interviewer ask additional questions that would have emerged during the contact (phone or face-to-face). However, the method would have perhaps been too subjective and the process too time-consuming. Therefore, that method was set aside. Instead, a more objective, cost- and time-efficient way to collect and analyse the needed data was implemented. The electronic survey composed allowed the author to send the questionnaire to many respondents at the same time, ask more questions, yet at the same time, save the respondent's time because the questionnaire offered fixed-response-options with optional

fields for additional answers and it could be answered whenever the respondents found time during their busy day.

The questionnaire contained four types of questions like dichotomous questions (i.e. the so-called “yes/no” questions), descriptive questions (i.e. open-ended questions) that require respondents to type their answer into a comment box and don't provide specific pre-set answer options, multiple-choice questions that allow respondents to check off all the choices that apply to them, and one Likert scale question that gives respondents a range of options (e.g. starting at “not important” scaling all the way up to “very important”) measuring opinion or attitudes. Most of the questions were multiple-choice questions because they give a higher chance of receiving answers and they are less time-consuming than open-ended questions. Most of these questions asked respondents to pick all the applicable answers. The questionnaire also had “filter questions” (the so-called “yes/no” question) that would direct the respondents to the right section based on their answer (Appendix 1).

The questionnaire had 18 questions in total, but in fact, 25 questions were composed, because 2 different groups were given different questions depending which group they belonged to (Figure 21). The questionnaire started with a “filter” question and it separated respondents into groups of those who “are already using” and those who “are not yet using” organic herbs in their restaurant. Once separated, different questions were asked from both of these target groups until a certain question in the middle of the survey after which these two groups started receiving the same questions again. The questions for two separated groups were not completely different but modified to the group. The last ten questions were developed so that they would fit for both groups.

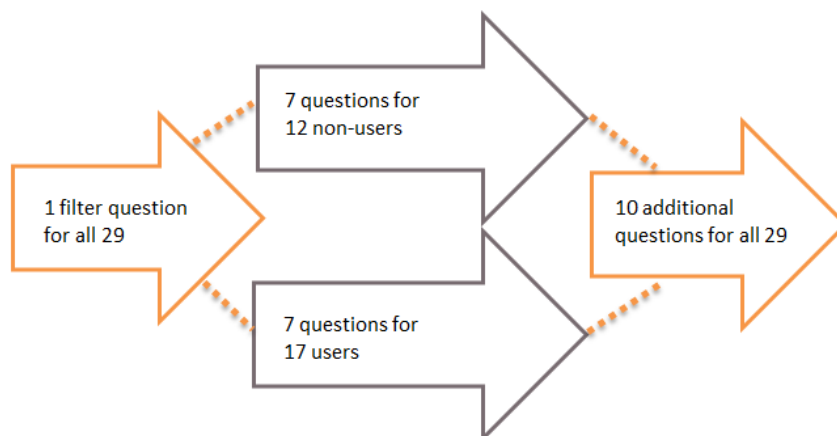


Figure 21. Questionnaire structure.

4.3 Description of procedure

Based on Bryman & Bell (2015, 161-185) the planning of a quantitative research is long and time-consuming, but if all the steps are covered, process should go right (Figure 22). At first the survey planning is very wide and not focused, but the more steps done, the more narrowed down it becomes. Then a need to formulate research questions comes, i.e. what the ultimate goal is and what is wanted from the target group. As the questionnaire was planned for practical reasons to retrieve information from as many restaurants as possible, the research issue was present, and after reviewing the relevant literature research question was formulated. Then the target group of the questionnaire was determined, the delivery channel was decided upon and questions were developed.

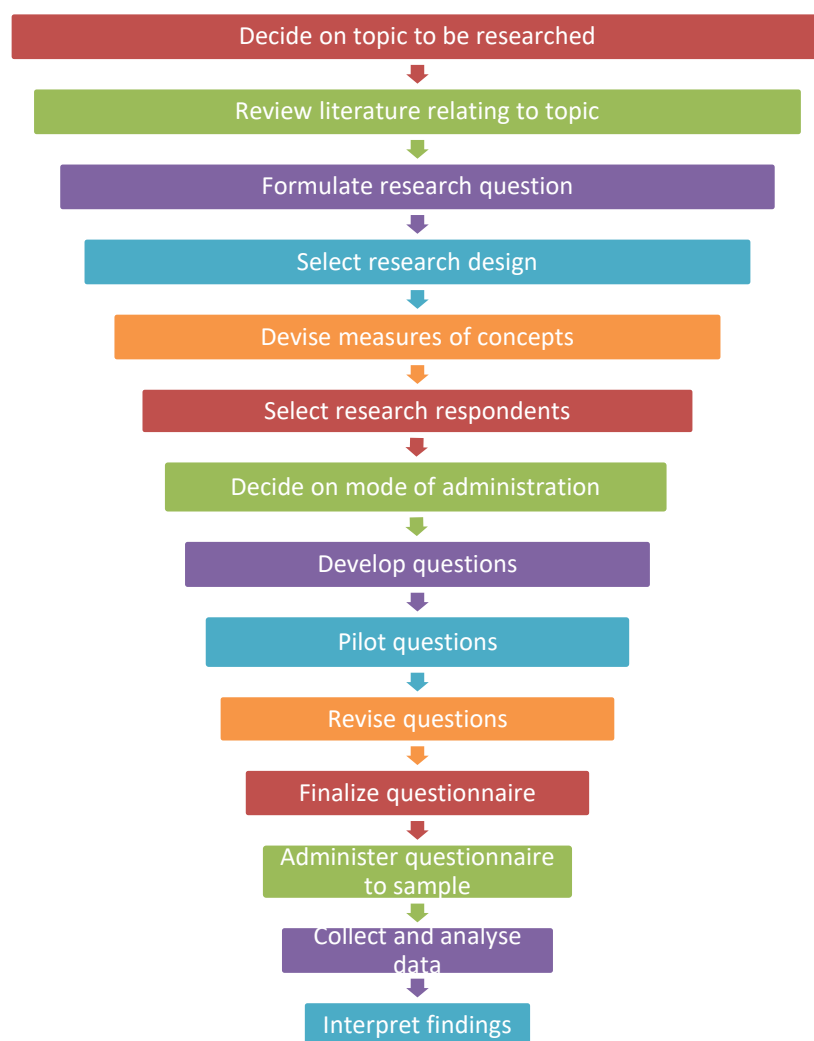


Figure 22. The process of quantitative research (Adapted from Bryman et al. 2015)

The first version of the questionnaire was pilot tested by an acquainted restaurateur who gave valuable feedback on how questions could be improved so that they would be clear and easy to understand. Based on that feedback some changes were made and the ques-

tionnaire improved. For example the option of “none” in multiple-choice questions was missing in the questions with the list of herbs. The finalized version of the questionnaire was then composed and sent to target subjects via Webropol.

The Internet questionnaire of 25 questions in total was composed and data was collected in May-June 2014. The overview of the survey was published in January 2015 in a specialized magazine called “Luomulehti” (Hirs 2015) issued by the Finnish Organic Association. The target group of respondents were Greater Helsinki area restaurant managers and chefs, the ones who in reality made purchase decisions for their restaurants. The restaurants were picked among the ones who used organic ingredients, but also those who might, potentially start using organic ingredients in the future by using Google search to find Greater Helsinki restaurants including individually owned restaurants but also various restaurant chains. Eventually, a list of 90 restaurants was made. The e-mails of the restaurants or managers/chefs were all found on the websites of the restaurants. The survey link and an explanatory letter was sent directly to a respondent via Webropol. When the questionnaire was not answered within two weeks, follow-up e-mails were sent because a close overview was kept of who had received the questionnaire and who had answered it. A total of 86 questionnaires in Finnish and 4 questionnaires in English were sent out and 29 of them were answered. The response rate was 32%, which was a good result when considering the questionnaire was sent from a person unknown to the recipients and it was relatively long to answer (18 questions per respondent).

The questions about the cultivated and wild herbs are not discussed in the current study because they are not relevant for the current thesis. There were two main research questions of the thesis. Firstly, how much the restaurants are currently using organic food (namely herbs) in their menus, and how much they are willing to use organic ingredients in the future and; secondly, should farms invest into all-year-round greenhouses to provide organics to restaurants even in winter season. Hence, the list with cultivated and wild herbs is valuable only for the commissioner when planning a new product line and when conducting negotiations with potential partner-restaurants. The comparison of which herbs should be grown in the future might be of potential interest to someone who would like to write a thesis in the field of agronomy, but for that purpose a new survey should be conducted.

5 Results and analysis

The fifth chapter describes the results of the questionnaire. The research subjects were divided into two groups: organic users and non-users; hence, the analysis is done based on these two groups. The purpose of the survey was to study, firstly, what Helsinki area restaurants thought about serving organic herbs grown by certified organic farmers. Secondly, why organic herbs were used or not used. Thirdly, what kind of herbs were used, and last but not least, willingness of restaurants to cooperate with organic farmers.

Eleven of the questionnaire respondents were casual restaurants, eight were fine dining restaurants and the rest were either bistros, brasseries, buffet or fast food restaurants. One restaurant was operating in Hanko and one in Tampere, all the rest were from Greater Helsinki area. Two of them were Michelin star restaurants and five restaurants were located outside the Helsinki area. The respondents were either the owners of the restaurants, kitchen managers or head chefs. 17 of the respondents out of 29 were currently using organic herbs in their dishes and almost half of them had been using organics for more than three years. 12 of the respondents were currently not using organic herbs, however, seven of them were willing to start using organic herbs in the near future. Yet, five restaurants were sure they would not start using organic herbs because they did not know what organics were available, or they believed locally grown herbs was enough and there was no need to look for organic options.

The majority of all the non-users (62%) complained about the difficulty to find organic herbs. The poor choice of organics was claimed to be the fault of Finnish wholesalers. Quite many respondents (38%) complained about the high price of organic herbs.

5.1 Organic non-users

The survey tried to find out which reasons would be important to restaurants when considering organic herbs for their dishes on the menu. Although the non-users had no experience in using organic herbs, the survey asked them to imagine and express their thoughts if they had bought and used organic herbs. The questions might have set them into an uncomfortable and hypothetical situation. However, all of the 12 non-users mentioned the importance of taste when they would consider buying organics, 75% of them also mentioned the cost, 50% of them pointed out the environmental issues (Figure 23). Clearly, non-users admitted that organically grown produce had a better taste and is more environmentally friendly, but realized that they would need to pay more for it. Public image and health reasons were chosen by less than a half of the non-users. Surprisingly, health

reasons were not that important for most of the non-users when considering buying organics. A few of the non-users believed that using organic produce might be a trend.

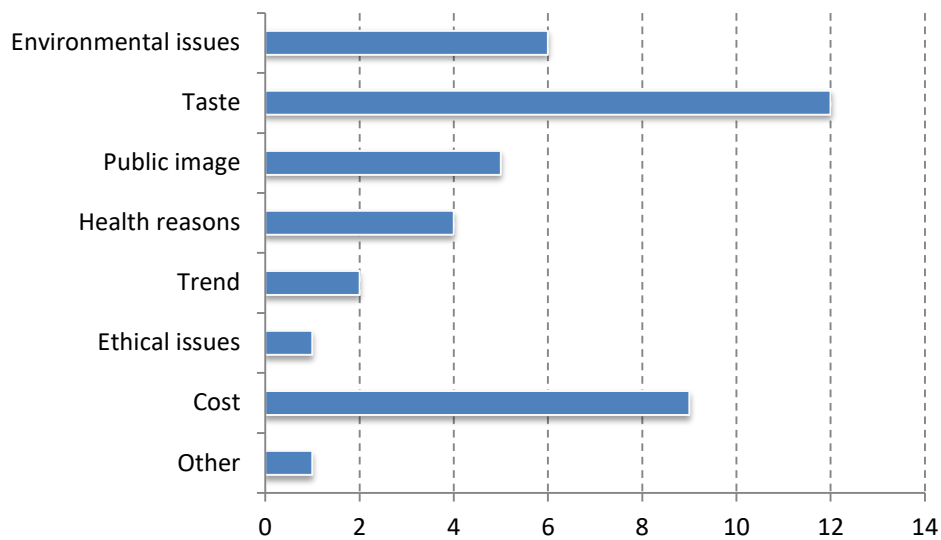


Figure 23. Non-users: reasons to buy organic herbs

When explanation was asked why they were not using organic herbs chefs explained that they buy local herbs, so there is no need to buy organics, or no organic farmer can deliver them herbs five times a week, but expensive price was a challenge for most of them.

Even though the taste of organically produced herbs seems to be better than that of conventionally grown herbs as the questionnaire proves and various studies on organic food (Barànski *et al.* 2014, Albright 2014) show, high price and availability of organics make restaurant chefs prefer the mass produced herbs. However, the majority of non-users (58%) believe that organic herbs would add value to their restaurant menu if they just used them. Yet, the value would be seen if customers are informed about organics being used. The rest of the 12 are convinced that using organic herbs in their meals would not have its return on customers. The reason behind it lies in costs as indicated by the majority of the non-users.

When asked where non-users would like to get their organic herbs from, then ten out of 12 would buy them from wholesalers just because it would be easier to buy all the needed produce from one provider (Figure 24). Only four restaurants out of 12 would be willing to buy directly from a farmer and the reason for that would be the quality and freshness of products because they come directly from the farm with no middlemen in between. Three currently non-users would be willing to grow their own organic herbs or pick wild herbs in the nature, however, it was mentioned that the lack of time would set its limits.

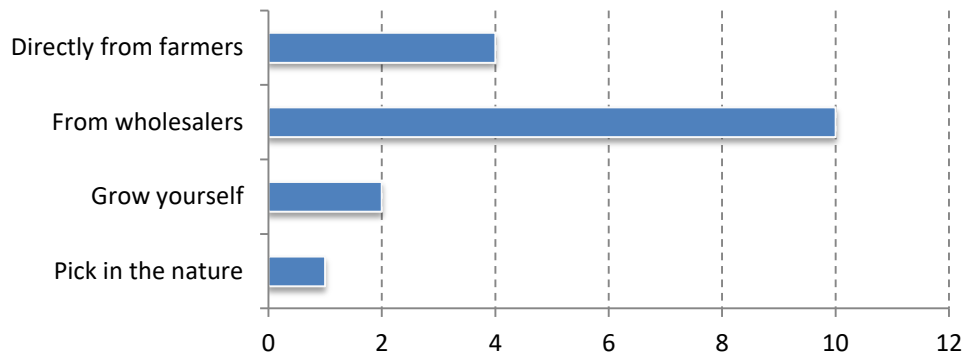


Figure 24. Non-users: where would you buy organic herbs from?

So when not yet using organic produce (be it vegetables, fruit or herbs) you are willing to have them on the menu, but you are not buying them because of the higher price. There is a clear interest and willingness because organic produce would lift their menu on the next level, but money constraints withhold them from purchasing organics.

5.2 Organic users

While most of the non-users would get the organic herbs from a wholesaler (the easiest place to get them from), then the users' sources for organic herbs are more varied: besides buying from wholesalers, they also buy directly from farmers, grow herbs themselves or pick wild herbs themselves in the nature (Figure 25). When compared to non-users, restaurants that use organics clearly do not rely only on wholesalers, but find other ways to get organic herbs, because leaving out middlemen when possible and having the shortest possible way from the garden to the customer's plate adds value to their menu. The majority of the organic chefs (9 out of 17) pick their own herbs in the woods.

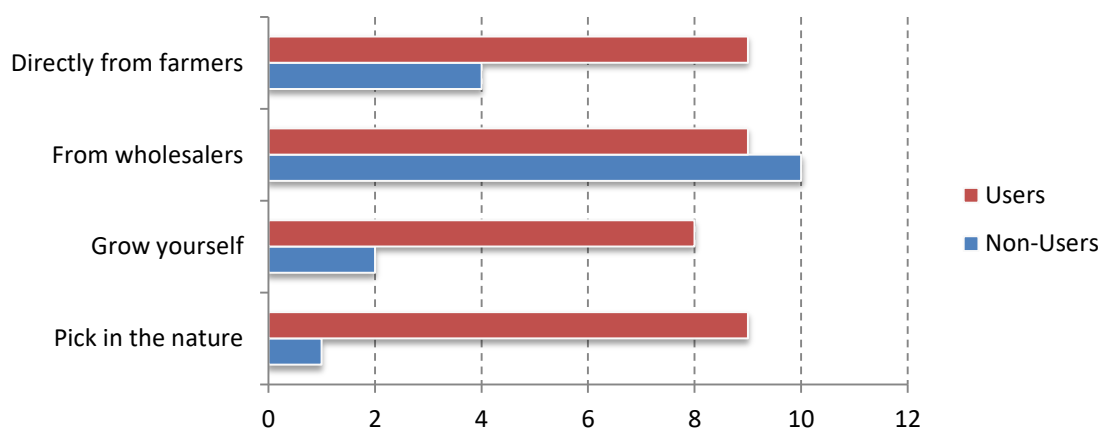


Figure 25. Where would you get organic herbs from?

Restaurants using organic herbs have many places to get their herbs from. Eight restaurants grow their own herbs either in the city (on a terrace, rooftop garden, back yard) or on

a partner-farmer’s land in the close vicinity. Some argue that food grown in the backyard or on top of the roof might not be clean enough (Meharg 2016; Duží 2017). Most likely it is not, but then it is grown in a sustainable way with no fertilizers added. Nine restaurants buy their herbs straight from a farmer because they know where and how they are grown, the good taste and freshness is guaranteed. When asked to explain why they grow themselves or buy directly from their partner-farmer, the chefs say: “you learn a lot when you grow yourself, it boosts your self-esteem and adds humbleness”, “we love gardening”, “staff is passionate about it”, “good co-operation with the farmer and understanding helps building a partnership”. One of the restaurant’s herb garden is part of the EcoCompass programme which is a city-governed environmental management system. It needs to be mentioned that organic farms that restaurants partnered up with are usually small producers; yet, chefs trust farmers to deliver good-quality fresh produce and the co-operation works perfectly when both parties are passionate about what they do.

The difference in what restaurateurs consider important when choosing organic herbs for their dishes clearly shows when comparing costs and ethical questions attributes. When non-users consider cost as an important factor why not to buy organic herbs, then just one respondent out of 17 using organic herbs think cost is an issue (Figure 26). Ten organic herbs users compared to one non-user value ethical issues when opting for organic ingredients. However, both surveyed groups consider taste as the most important factor when deciding whether to buy organically or conventionally grown herbs. When asked for explanation, some mentioned that organic herbs fit into their ideology and they use them for the sake of genuine taste.

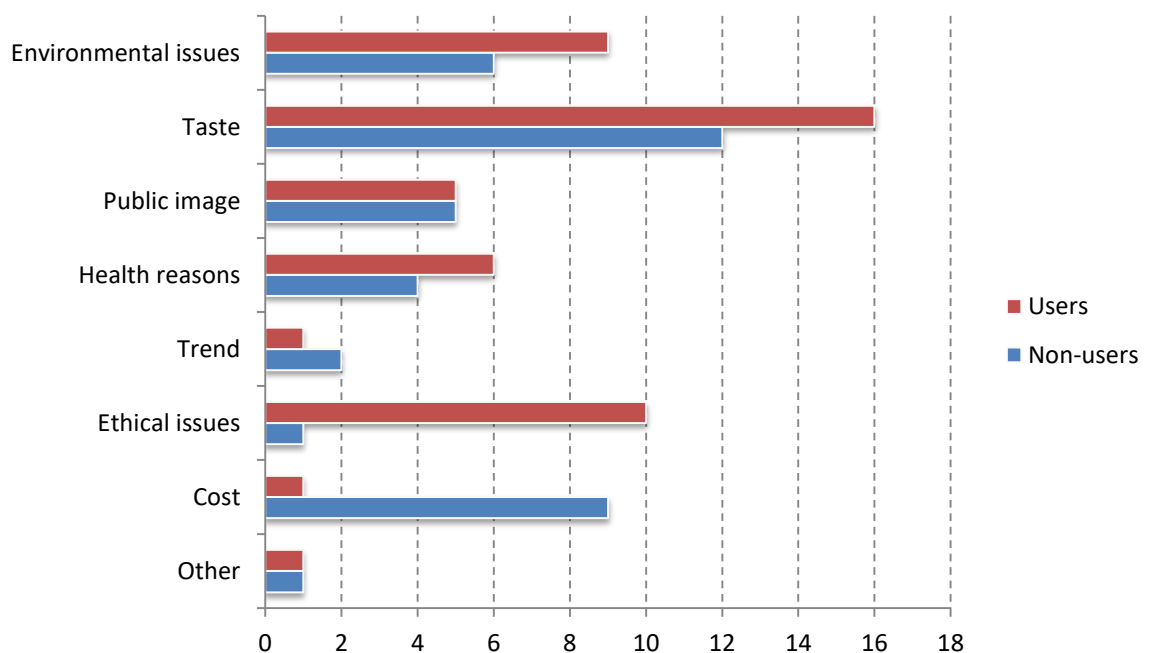


Figure 26. Reasons to buy organic herbs

5.3 Surprising findings

When asked to grade how important it was where organic herbs were grown then 14 out of 29 answered that the most important attribute was being grown in Finland (Figure 27). The fact that the herbs are grown in a sustainable way (10 out of 29) or grown on organically certified fields (8 out of 29) does not seem very important for most of the respondents. The distance from where the herbs are transported is not that important to most of the respondents, so local food is not an argument to most of the respondents as long as the price is acceptable and they are delivered daily. According to both survey groups (i.e. users vs non-users) organically grown produce is important, but not as important as being grown in Finland and in a sustainable way, which are actually both true for Finnish organic produce.

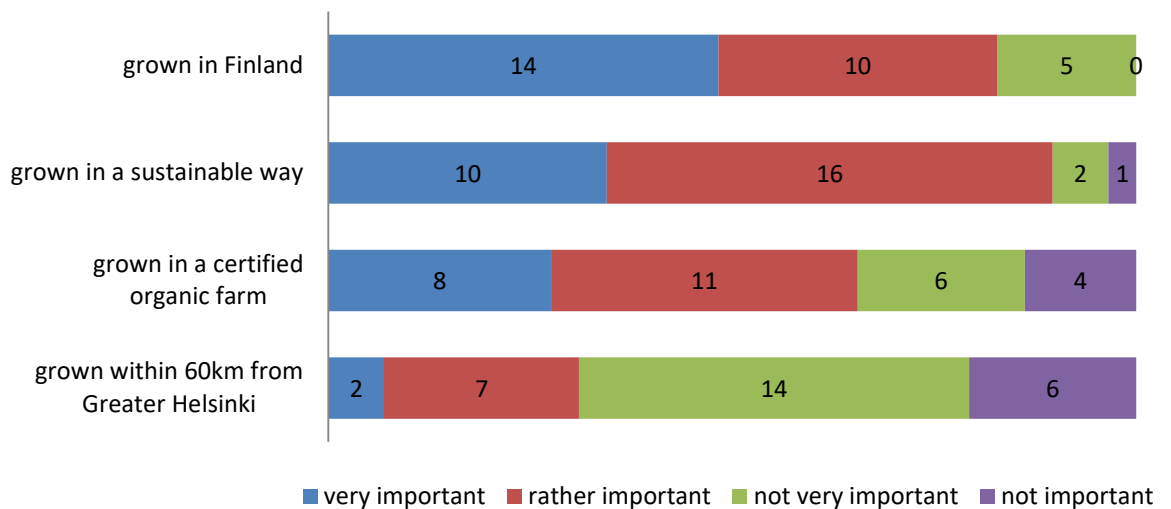


Figure 27. Important factors when buying herbs

According to the survey, taste should come first when buying organic herbs (Figure 26), but when respondents were asked to choose between the origin of the herb and its nutrition value or the taste, then majority of those who currently use organic herbs in their restaurant considered the origin and nutrition value of the herb more important than the taste if they had to choose between these two; while most of those not using organic herbs in their restaurants preferred taste over origin and nutrition value (Figure 28). No doubt, both attributes are very important, but if you know the place where ingredients originate from and the nutritional value in ingredients, then these factors can create an additional value in addition to the great taste organics have because experiences sell. As Joseph Pine and James Gilmore (1999) wrote in the book “The Experience Economy”, experience would be the new economic genre and a next step from the service economy. Experiences are created, for example, through stories behind food. According to the respondents “taste is number one, but the origin is so important that nothing can surpass it”, “knowledge is al-

ways good, customer always wants to know the origin of the food” and “if you don’t know the origin and nutrition value of the food, you don’t know anything” . However, those, preferring taste over origin and nutrition value, are also right when they say that “customers care for taste”, but that extraordinary taste usually comes from organic soil.

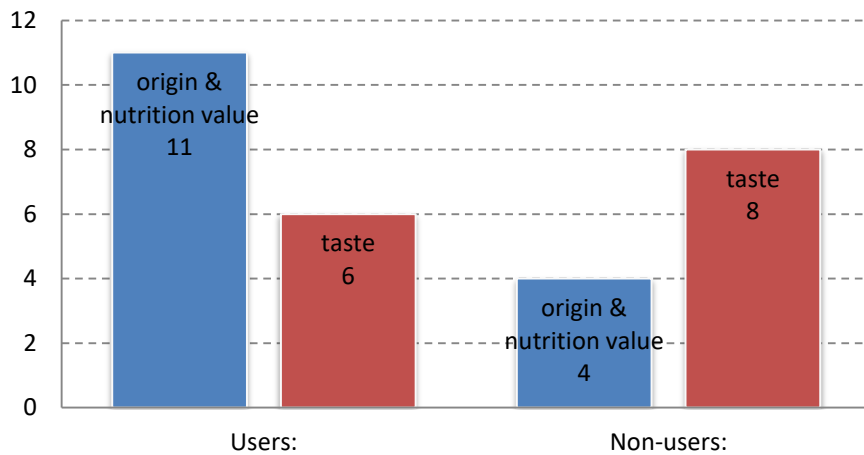


Figure 28. Origin and nutrition value vs taste

5.4 The future for organic users and non-users

When many of the surveyed restaurateurs complain that it is rather difficult to find organic producers, yet local food is easy to be found. However, some restaurateurs are sure that in the future more and more organic producers are coming to the market and, therefore, it will be easier to find organic produce. Some restaurateurs mentioned complications with year-round availability of fresh organic produce hoping for an improvement for the future.

When asked whether restaurateurs feel pressure to use local and organic herbs then the majority of responses (27 out of 29) were negative; however, restaurateurs understand that their customers would like to eat more organically grown food, so indirectly, they do feel the pressure if only suppliers could provide the produce, and in a way, it is trendy to serve dishes with organic ingredients. Two of the restaurateurs who do not currently use organic herbs in their kitchen also feel the public pressure to start using local and organic herbs.

One of the ways to introduce more local and organic food into restaurants is to have your own so-called “adopted” farmer. When asked whether restaurants would be interested in cooperating with organically certified farmers and growing new herbs with them then the arguments in favour of it are following:

- good to expand the range of products
- desired quality and product range

- anything new is good
- exciting to develop food culture
- new exciting taste combinations

Those not in favour of partnering (41%) with a farmer explain it with the lack of time, but also any co-operation with a farmer would be too binding, time-consuming and complicated. Restaurants have voiced that they would do business with organic farmers in the future if they were more professional and efficient in presenting and selling their produce. The additional plus would be a year-round delivery possibility.

The number of professional kitchens using organic ingredients is growing every year. According to the current survey the number of restaurants using organic herbs will grow in the future (Figure 29). Seven restaurants currently not using organic herbs have expressed their willingness to use them in the future. Five of them are convinced they would not start using organic herbs in the future while one of the respondents does not use herbs at all (not even conventional).

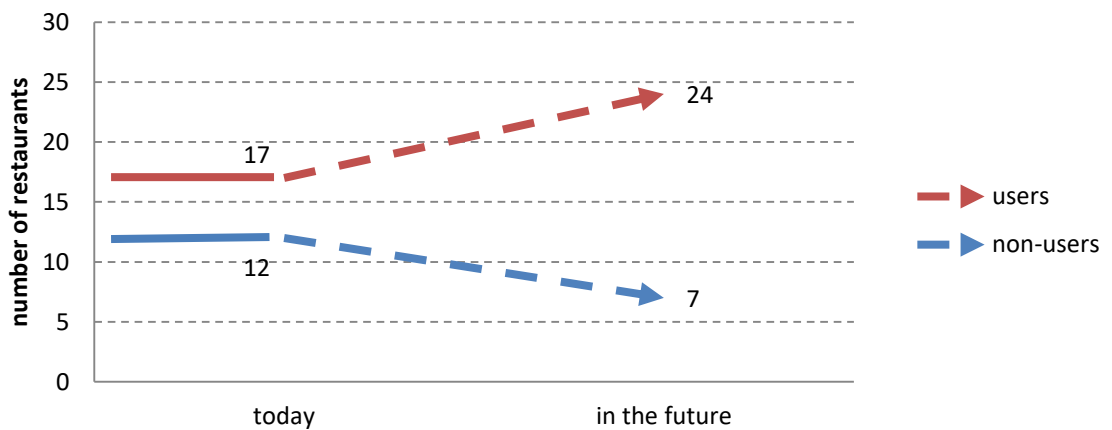


Figure 29. Trend of using organic herbs in restaurants

6 Discussion

This chapter discusses the results of the questionnaire conducted among restaurant managers and chefs. The discussion is linked with the theory discussed in Chapter 3. Challenges of the survey will be also discussed and, last but not least, suggestions are made for the organic farm in question but also for all the other organic farms in Finland who are considering building greenhouses for all-year-round growing of organic produce.

The farm in question would like to know how big the restaurants' demand for the organic herbs is and, correspondingly, whether there is a need for a year-round farming of these herbs. The objective of the thesis was to find out

- how much restaurants in Southern Finland were currently using organic ingredients, namely herbs, in their menus, and how much they are willing to use organic ingredients in the future, and,
- should organic farms invest into heated greenhouses to provide organics to restaurants even in winter season.

The study looked into the motivation of restaurants in regards with using organic ingredients in their menus, which in turn is based on the consumers' willingness to buy organic food, and, based on all that, try to provide an answer for producers (i.e. farmers) whether it is reasonable to invest into growing organic produce all year round or not.

Having studied the organic market environment, it is possible to see, that organic land area is continuously growing in Finland and in the whole Europe and it is becoming a new norm to have more and more organic food available in various food segments all year round. That in turn increases the number of consumers who prefer organic over conventional ingredients. And that in turn must influence restaurants to start gradually switching to organic ingredients in their kitchens to meet the needs of their customers. There are several state-induced programmes in Finland (like "Steps to Organic") that help professional kitchens take up organics. These platforms help promoting the restaurants participating in programmes designed for professional kitchens. Organic stars awarded via this programme would make the restaurants more visible and stand out. The only drawback of the programme is charging a yearly fee from its participants. Even the prestigious Michelin stars come for free.

According to the statistics in Finland the biggest share of the organics is served in kindergartens (Figure 11); however, they might not be the main target group organic farmers should be focusing on, because kindergartens do not use as much herbs as restaurants

do based on children's habit to eat bland food. Although in the public sector the biggest users of organics are kindergartens, the biggest users of organic ingredients in private sector are restaurants (Pro Luomu 2017b). The trend nowadays is cutting costs by shortening the supply chain and buying directly from producers, because it is "strengthening the farmer's role in the food chain" (Augère-Granier 2016; Michalopoulos 2017). Restaurants that grow their own food in urban settings which some people doubt is clean enough (Meharg 2016; Duží 2017) or buy directly from farmers who grow outside the urban setting are becoming more common. That goes side-by-side with the popularity of urban farming among consumers. The served food acquires added value because behind every dish there is a (farmer's or chef's) story how produce was grown. Customers who lead healthy and sustainable lifestyle will find the restaurants that value ethical values and use organic ingredients. This consumer segment is usually very active on social media; so, with their help others will also find the restaurants offering organic food.

For both parties co-operation requires an extra effort, but in the end it is beneficial for both, because restaurants can acquire the desired herbs that are otherwise not available from wholesalers, while farmers learn what customers need and what the new trends are, plus farmers' know-how would make it easier for restaurants to get the desired results than growing on their own.

If structured interviews (via telephone or face-to-face) had been conducted for the given study instead of self-completion questionnaires sent out, the results would have been somewhat different, as the number of respondents might have been much smaller and the answers received could not have been so detailed. Due to time limit fewer questions could have been asked and fewer interviewees could have been met which would not have served the author's purpose because opinions of many would be more beneficial at the planning stage. However, subjective opinions collected during a face-to-face interview are very useful from the general point of view and it would give an opportunity to learn about the manager's and chefs' personal opinions about using organic ingredients or, more specifically, herbs in their restaurants, but also develop the conversation and learn something new that otherwise would not emerge in a questionnaire. Still, with almost every question in the questionnaire an opportunity was offered to express additional information or explanation. Therefore, the given format of the survey was the best one in the given situation, as besides being sent to so many recipients at the same time, it offered recipients an opportunity to express their opinion in free-format sections of the questionnaire.

6.1 Challenges

As organic farms are smaller than conventional farms and they have smaller yields from their fields because the land is not used as intensively as in conventional fields (Seufert 2012), they also need to do more paperwork and present various certificates for the officials, and spend more time finding organic seeds/plants which are scarce, the price for their produce is naturally higher. The chefs' concern about the availability and the high price of organic herbs is understandable, but at the same time it is difficult for small-scale organic farmers to please the restaurants' demand of delivery frequency. As restaurants need fresh produce daily then quite often small producers find it easier to sell their produce to wholesalers or private persons instead. Kitchen managers depend on what wholesalers provide and they tend to buy from those who sell cheaper. However, according to the survey, some chefs believe that price is not as important issue as locality of ingredients, but local is not always the healthiest option.

The challenge of the survey was to get as many respondents to answer the questionnaire as possible. It was especially difficult to receive answers from restaurants that were using organic ingredients and Michelin-star restaurants, especially, because they were the main target group. After all, they are the foregoers in the Finnish market. For example, there were five Michelin-star restaurants in the list, but only two responded. There could have been several reasons why some did not answer. Firstly, the questionnaire had 18 questions. One could not see all the questions at the same time; hence, decide visually whether it was worth filling it out or not, instead, the questions opened up one by one. However, one could still see the progress of the questionnaire in percentages and that might have made someone change his mind. Secondly, it must have been difficult to find time for filling out the survey. Kitchen managers, chefs and owners have all tight time constraints; therefore, 61 did not answer. Some restaurants received several e-mails with the link to the Webropol survey and still no answer was received. In some cases a phone call was made to a restaurant prior to sending a questionnaire link because there was no e-mail available on a restaurant's homepage. That gave an additional opportunity to introduce oneself and also learn who the person was in charge of purchase orders in that particular restaurant. The introductory text at the beginning of the questionnaire is usually never enough.

In order to be able to generalize findings from the study sample to all the restaurants in Southern Finland, the sample must be representative. Some might argue that 29 responses in not suffice to get objective data as that few cannot represent all the restaurateurs in Southern Finland. However, the author of the thesis has neither means nor oppor-

tunities to get answers from all of the restaurants in Greater Helsinki, not even from all the 90 in the list. Besides, the survey was a very specific survey covering only a small segment of a wide range of ingredients used in restaurants. As the questionnaire was tailored for restaurant managers and chefs because only they could give information needed for the commissioning party, no traditional demographic questions (i.e. respondents' gender and education) were asked because that was not relevant for the given research. Although the sample number of 29 is not high, the response rate was 32% and, therefore, the survey is still reliable.

There are obstacles on the way of growing organic food all year round imposed by the European Commission, but hopefully there will be ways Nordic countries can equally compete with the Southern European farmers. According to the studies organic food has substantially higher concentrations of a range of antioxidants, minerals and vitamins (Barański *et al.* 2014). Health conscious customers (like lohasians) vote with their feet when health issues become important, not to mention the superior taste of organics. Food gourmards and LOHAS consumers are ultimately the reason organic farmers will need to start increasing their production line and bring new items to the market. Not every customer is a LOHAS consumer, so by educating consumers and helping them developing their personal food choice restaurants will gain new customers. However, looking at the brighter side, 48% percent of consumers in Finland consider themselves either a heavy, medium or light LOHAS consumer (Heinonen 2012). They may become free ambassadors for restaurants and start influencing other customers if they only wanted, because they care about values, not just ingredients, and they are good at networking and spreading the word in social media.

6.2 Opportunities

Based on the survey, there are a lot of improvement opportunities for organic farmers but also for restaurants. Quite often restaurants that do not currently use organics are just too comfortable in their decision to buy ingredients from wholesalers, but the latter do not usually offer organic ingredients. As long as wholesalers do not add organic food into their product list, non-users will not consider buying organic produce. Organic farmers have an opportunity to sell their produce directly to non-user restaurants to fill that gap, but a lot of marketing needs to be done.

Therefore, there would be a need to a state-induced programme (like Steps to Organic for producers) or a non-profit community organization (e.g. like Food+Tech Connect) that connects producers and restaurants which would offer a platform for discussions, news

exchange and help for promoting high-quality and healthy organic food. This kind of platform could also connect food innovators. A New-York-based quick service restaurant chain Dig Inn could be an example to any Finnish restaurant on how to get fresh produce directly from farmers onto their plates. The founder of Dig Inn Adam Eskin has said: "We have direct relationships with our farmers that enable real dialogue and partnership. We have a seat at the table when it comes to our mindful sourcing standards – quality, transparency, and sustainability – and we come up with creative ways to be a better partner with our farmers, which ultimately results in lowering our costs over the long term" (Meijers 2015). Finnish restaurants and farmers would need a platform like that to get connected, benefit from each other's' knowhow and find business partners. But that would be someone else's thesis project.

The questionnaire asked both organic users and non-users if they already use or would like to use also wild herbs in their kitchen. 10 out of 29 surveyed chefs pick their own herbs in the woods. Finland is a great land where Everyman's Rights are widely used and enjoyed; no taxes need to be paid for picked berries, mushrooms or wild herbs. Some may argue that wild herbs are not organic, but they are in the sense when you do not pick in the close vicinity of roads and residential areas, but pick in the wilds. Wild herbs cannot be certified organic, but in practice they are. So if 1/3 of the chefs surveyed pick herbs in the nature (Figure 25) then there is a hope that cultivated organic herbs will be needed also in the future and it shows the positive attitude of restaurateurs towards organic food.

6.3 Suggestions

After having studied the environment, conducted the survey and analysed the questionnaire answers, the author of the study suggests that restaurant operators should develop and advertise healthy menu items that emphasize natural and organic ingredients, but also disclose information regarding the origins and nutritional values of organic products, and also their environmental practices (e.g. recycling) through public relations because especially LOHAS diners and any other environmentally and health conscious customers pay a close attention to environmental practices when eating out. There is a clear need for good quality, ethical and green food in restaurants. Organic is trendy, but it still needs to be promoted. One of the ways is tell stories of the food offered in the restaurant. Narratives always help selling better (Pine & Gilmore 1999).

Jennifer Chait (2016) has composed a very useful list of tips for organic farmers how to sell their produce to local restaurants. An organic farmer needs to be proactive by being time-efficient, following trends, considering branching out, planning ahead, giving free samples of new products, growing more than needed, maintaining many relationships,

being professional and being willing to partner with small food venues and eateries. These tips are valuable regardless of the size of a farm, crop they grow or whether the farm is operating only nine months of the year. The list of tips is good to follow for small-scale farms because selling is not easy. Therefore, even if the beneficiary farm is not going to grow herbs all year round, sales during the warmer season should be high enough in order to manage well also during off-season.

However, the ultimate question of the study was whether the farm was going to start growing organic herbs all year round. Restaurants have voiced that they would do business with organic farmers if the farmers were more professional and efficient in presenting and selling their produce. The additional plus would be a year-round delivery of fresh produce. There is a potential in growing through winter season, because chefs have expressed their opinion that there is a need for constant produce delivery. However, most of the organic farmers cannot deliver all year round for various reasons (i.e. unheated greenhouses, too high production costs). There are only a few organic producers in the whole country that can deliver all year round, but looks like there is a bigger demand according to the chefs' opinion. However, a new organic regulation was passed on 20 November 2017 concerning organic farming and regulating among others growing organic in greenhouse beds (European Commission 2017b). Organic produce will not be able to be grown in lifted beds and pots anymore, which means that during winter season in Scandinavian countries (like Finland) is not possible starting from 2030. However, there is a possibility that the regulation will be changed, as the Nordic countries will be placed in an unfavourable position compared to other European organic farms. It seems like the commissioning farm has three options to choose from:

- 1) check the progress of the European Commission regulations and postpone the heated greenhouse project until there is more clarity to the subject,
- 2) proceed with the greenhouse project, but the herbs grown in there will not be organically certified,
- 3) start developing ways how to heat the ground in order to grow organic herbs in greenhouses also in wintertime.

Although there are three options to choose from, considering all the facts and after having collected and analysed the data from the questionnaire and latest European news, building a greenhouse for a year-round usage is currently not advisable. It should be postponed until possible changes to the new EC regulation are made by 2020.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Questionnaire

ORGANIC HERBS

in your kitchen

The purpose of the survey is to study 1) what Helsinki area restaurants think about serving organic herbs grown by certified organic farmers. We would like to learn about the reasons 2) why organic herbs are used or not used, 3) what kind of herbs are used, but also about the 4) willingness of restaurants to cooperate with organic farmers. The results will be used in a thesis talking about farming organic herbs.

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1. Do you use organic herbs in your restaurant? *

YES

NO

2. Would you like to start using organic herbs in your restaurant kitchen? *

If yes, then why would you start using organic herbs?

YES _____

NO

3. What is the reason you are not yet buying organic herbs? *

4. Which of the following would be important to you when considering organic herbs for your dishes? * Choose as many as applicable.

Environmental issues

Taste

Public image

Health reasons

Trend

Ethical issues

Cost

Other _____

6. Where would you prefer to get your organic herbs from? And why? *

- Directly from farmers. _____
- From wholesalers. _____
- Grow yourself. _____
- Pick myself in the nature. _____

7. What kind of fresh herbs would you use in your restaurant kitchen? *

- Dill
- Basil
- Parsley
- Coriander
- Thyme
- Oregano
- Tarragon
- Marjoram
- Chives
- Rosemary
- Lemon balm
- Mint
- Lovage
- Chervil
- Sage
- Hyssop
- Anise
- Starflower
- Red-vein dock
- None
- Other: _____

8. What kind of fresh wild herbs would you use in your restaurant kitchen? *

- Nettle
- Dandelion
- Broadleaf plantain

- Yarrow
- Meadowsweet
- Sweet gale
- Wormwood
- Fireweed
- None
- Other: _____

9. How long have you been using organic herbs in your restaurant kitchen? *

- Less than a year
- 1-2 years
- 2-3 years
- More than 3 years

10. Where do you get your organic herbs from? *

- Directly from farmers. Please name suppliers: _____
- From wholesalers. Please name them: _____
- Grow myself. Where? _____
- Pick myself in the nature.

11. Why do you prefer your current organic herb supplier or why do you grow yourself?

12. Why did you decide to start using organic herbs?

13. Which of the following have been important to you when choosing organic herbs for your dishes? *

- Environmental issues
- Taste
- Public image
- Health reasons
- Trend
- Ethical issues

- Cost
- Other: _____

14. What kind of fresh herbs do you currently use? *

- Dill
- Basil
- Parsley
- Coriander
- Thyme
- Oregano
- Tarragon
- Marjoram
- Chives
- Rosemary
- Lemon balm
- Mint
- Lovage
- Chervil
- Sage
- Hyssop
- Anise
- Starflower
- Red-vein dock
- None
- Other: _____

15. What kind of fresh wild herbs do you currently use? *

- Nettle
- Dandelion
- Broadleaf plantain
- Yarrow
- Meadowsweet
- Sweet gale
- Wormwood

- Fireweed
- None
- Other: _____

16. Is it easy to find local or organic herbs in the market? Please comment *

- YES _____
- NO _____

17. Do you feel the pressure to use local or organic herbs? Please comment *

- YES _____
- NO _____

18. Please grade how important these factors are for you. *

	not important	not very im- portant	rather im- portant	very important
Organic herbs were grown in a certified organic farm	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Organic herbs were grown in a sustainable way	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Organic herbs were grown in Finland	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Organic herbs were grown within max 60 km from your restaurant location	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

19. What would be a deciding factor to buy from a NEW local and organic producer? *

- Price
- Quality
- Wide variety of herbs
- A unique herb
- Daily delivery
- Other: _____

20. Would you like to cooperate with certified organic farmers and have an option to grow your own new & innovative herbs? Please comment why. *

- YES _____
- NO _____

21. Which one would you rather choose? *

- You know where the herb was grown and what nutritional value it has. Please comment

- Herb's origin is not important as long as the taste is excellent. Please comment

22. Do you have any thoughts/suggestions concerning the use of local and organic herbs in your restaurant?

23. What type of restaurant do you own or work for? Please choose one that best describes it *

- Fine dining
- Casual restaurant
- Fast food restaurant
- Bar-restaurant
- Buffet restaurant
- Bistro
- Brasserie
- Café
- Cafeteria

24. What is the name of your restaurant you own or work for?

25. What is your position in your organisation?

