

The Role of the Distribution Channel in the Establishment and Maintenance of Consumer Trust in Organic Foods

A Qualitative Sociological Investigation

**Research Proposal submitted to the FØJO II Research Programme
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by:

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Summary in Danish:

Den planlagte sociologiske undersøgelse skal foretages blandt voksne danskere, som køber økologiske fødevarer gennem en af 3 forskellige distributionskanaler. Udvalget af respondenter (n = 100) bliver stratificeret, og består af 3 undergrupper. Kvalitative data indsamles ved hjælp af fokusgruppeinterviews. Det primære formål med dataanalysen er at sammenligne undergrupperne med henblik på at identificere eventuelle forskelle, hvad angår opfattelse og vurdering af økologiske fødevarer, økologiske producenter og den økologiske produktionsform. Analysen baseres på en fulstændig udskrift af båndet interviews og foretages ved hjælp af et standard computerprogram. Undersøgelsens arbejdshypoteser er, at opfattelsen og vurderingen af økologiske produkter er tæt forbundet med opfattelsen og vurderingen af økologiske producenter, at moralske overvejelser indgår i begge vurderinger, og at distributionsformen influerer på forbrugeropfattelser af såvel producenter og produktionsformen som på forbrugeropfattelser af produkterne. Et af undersøgelsens formål er at gøre op med den snævre begrebsramme, som har domineret den hidtidige udforskning af forbrugernes bevæggrunde til at vælge økologiske fødevarer, og som har afspejlet kortsigtede afsætningsinteresser. Når dataanalysen er gennemført, skal der foretages en vurdering af dens praktiske konsekvenser fra et forbruger- men især fra de økologiske jordbrugeres perspektiv.

1. Summary

It is planned to undertake a qualitative sociological investigation of Danish adults who purchase organic foods through one of three distribution channels. The sample (n = 100) is stratified and includes 3 sub-groups of consumers. Qualitative data will be collected by means of focus group interviews. The objective of the analysis is to compare differences among and between sub-samples in regard to their conceptions and assessments of organic foods, producers and production methods. An empirical analysis will be based on complete transcripts of all audio-recorded data collected in the course of interview sessions and coded by means of a standard computer programme. The preliminary hypotheses are that conceptions and assessments of products are not divorced from conceptions and assessments of producers, that consumer assessments of both are viewed in moral as well as market terms, and that the distribution channel exerts an influence on conceptions and assessments of producers, production methods and products. The study presents a challenge to current consumer research in this area, which tends to be undertaken with a view to serving marketing interests in the shorter term. Following its completion, the attempt will be made to assess some practical implications of its results, seen from the viewpoints of organic farmers and consumers respectively.

2. Research Group

This research proposal is submitted by:

Ass. Prof. Katherine O'Doherty Jensen, who will function as the leader and main contributor in cooperation with a contributing research assistant appointed to this work.

Katherine O'Doherty Jensen is a member of the Coordinating Group for Interdisciplinary Research regarding Organic Foods and of the Research Group regarding Sociology of Food, at:

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3. Introduction

This research project is designed with a view to following up some of the perspectives that emerged in the course of a critical review of social research regarding consumers of organic foods with particular regard to their motives, and the consequences of their shopping patterns for food consumption in the household and for their experienced quality of life (O'Doherty Jensen *et al.*, 2001). Both of the latter themes are poorly explored in the consumer research undertaken in recent decades, while on the other hand very many studies have sought to measure buyer motives. The conclusions drawn in much of this research are of questionable validity, however, and the conceptual frameworks employed often reflect the marketing interests which the results are designed to serve. Specifically, there is reason to question the view, commonly put forward, that consumers are concerned with the issue of product advantages, while remaining indifferent to issues regarding the production process. My task of reviewing the available social scientific literature, as part of a larger interdisciplinary project, left me with many questions which I was unable to answer. Some of these questions are posed in this research proposal. Specifically, I wish to make a qualitative investigation of consumer conceptions of organic foods and of the basis for assessing organically grown food as being more trustworthy than other food products. Some few qualitative investigations of shopping experiences, including studies undertaken among consumers who purchase their food through alternative distribution channels, suggest that the character of the distribution channel plays an important role in consumer trust and distrust of food products. This is the issue taken up in this proposal in regard to organic foods.

4. State of the Art

A tendency to distrust food products is widespread among consumers in the industrialised world, and has been well documented (Meier-Ploeger 1988; Schafer *et al.* 1993; Schödén 1993, Wandel *et al.* 1995; Berg 2000). It is also found to be widespread among Danish consumers (Beckmann *et al.* 2000). A recent comparative study of consumer trust/distrust in food products undertaken in 18 European countries concludes that distrust is considerably more widespread in Denmark than in most other European countries (Berg, 2000). There are two schools of thought which regard the explanation of this state of affairs in the social scientific literature. One of these has tended to dominate the empirical research in this area in recent decades, not least in regard to consumer research with specific reference to organic foods.

The predominant approach, largely inspired by the work of Beck (1992), focuses upon the

character of risk perception among consumers. Distrust in food and food production according to this view are seen as resting upon the discernment of risks related to problems of food safety, food quality, food allergies and other health problems, threats to the environment arising from production methods and further problems of this kind (Kjærnes, 1999; Holm, 1998). Research regarding organic foods undertaken from this perspective takes its point of departure in the idea that awareness of risk is the factor underlying consumer discernment of advantages that accrue to organic foods and methods of production. Accordingly, consumer conceptions of organically grown products are seen as having a *negative* character, in so far as trust in these products is considered to be based upon the belief that they do *not* carry the risks associated with conventional products, production methods and processing.

Much of the available consumer research with regard to organic foods is inspired by this approach to the issues. Apart from the study of risk perception as such, research has focussed upon consumer conceptions of product advantages and disadvantages, willingness to pay for perceived advantages, the extent to which health or environmental concern is the more salient buyer motive, as well as measures of awareness and acceptance of information about products, production methods, technologies, labelling and regulating authorities. An overview of this research is presented by Wier & Calverly (1999). It should be said that there is indeed some empirical support for view that consumers discern advantages of organic products from a perspective that focuses upon negative characteristics (*cf.* for example: Infood, 1997).

A less well known approach to these issues is inspired by an older research tradition, as represented by the work of Polanyi (1957). Central to Polanyi's work was a critique of neoclassical economic theory with particular reference to the concept of a self-regulating 'free market' and to the idea that all goods, including nature and people can and should be conceived within the terms of market exchange, as 'land' and 'labour', respectively (*cf.* Barham, 1997). The relevant point in the present context concerns the conception of the relationship between two sets of economic activities: the production of goods in the private sector of the economy and the consumption of goods in civil life. Consumers, according to this view, may well have good reason to seek to limit the extent to which the logic of market exchange intrudes upon the affairs of civil life (Barham, 1997; Friedmann, 1993). Concerns about food and food production in everyday life can be understood from this perspective as expressions of distrust directed towards the possible ways in which producers may choose to balance priorities between the realization of profit on the one hand and the fulfilment of human needs on the other. Consumers, it would seem, are likely to discern problems of food safety (and all other problems with products or production methods) as indications that producers are "only out to make money", and are not therefore administering their role in a manner that is acceptable from a consumer viewpoint. It follows from this approach that consumer distrust in food products, food production, processing or marketing cannot be successfully addressed by providing them with information, by attempting to solve the problems of food safety, food quality or other problems one after another, nor by seeking to establish consumer trust in a regulating authority. This is the case in so far as none of these initiatives address the underlying issue, which concerns consumer distrust of producer motives and which may very well be expressed as distrust of their products.

This latter approach to understanding and explaining the issues of consumer trust/distrust does not constitute an alternative as such to that which takes its point of departure in the phenomena of risk perception. It should rather be seen as providing a broader framework within which the meanings and consequences of risk awareness can be understood and explained. It is an approach

which recognizes the fact the consumer's appropriation of information in everyday life may be very limited indeed. But it draws attention to an aspect that has been neglected by social research: the likelihood that any information targeted to consumers will tend to be assessed in moral as distinct from market terms.

It also follows from this approach that the issue of consumer trust/distrust in food products cannot be successfully analysed independently of the issue of consumer trust/distrust in food producers. If this is the case, then consumer assessment of organic foods rests upon more than an assessment of products as such. The character of a business enterprise as it is experienced, conceived and assessed by consumers will be a decisive factor and will remain decisive for the establishment and maintenance of consumer trust in its products. Consumers will assess such an enterprise as they encounter it and its representatives, and the character of that encounter will in practice be dependent upon its distribution channels. This approach to the issues of trust and distrust in organic foods also opens the possibility that the products and production methods of organic farming may be conceived by consumers in *positive* terms. That is to say, they may well be assessed as products emerging from an approach to business that is deemed acceptable, or even desirable, from a consumer viewpoint, and is administered by people in whom consumers can place their trust.

This approach has not hitherto been pursued by consumer research regarding organic foods. It is clear from the available empirical research that consumers offer a variety of reasons for choosing organic products (Wier & Calverly, 1999; O'Doherty Jensen *et al.* 2001). The available research in regard to the measurement of buyer motives rests, however, on the supposition that the factors which organic farmers deem to be important, as formulated in readily available accounts of the principles of organic farming, will be reflected to a greater or lesser extent in the factors that consumers learn to deem important. For this reason the possibility that moral considerations play a role in choosing organic food products has thus far only been explored in regard to the issue of animal welfare. The possibility that other aspects of the processes of production, distribution and consumption may also be subject to moral consideration has not been explored in consumer research, although these aspects have received some attention in research regarding producer motives (O'Doherty Jensen *et al.*, 2001:21).

Several empirical studies undertaken within the fields of rural sociology, sociology of food and consumer research regarding technological innovations, indicate that this latter approach to the issues of trust/distrust in organic foods may well prove to be a fruitful point of departure. For example, there is some evidence that interpersonal trust is dependent upon the extent to which face-to-face interaction occurs between the parties involved (Falk & Kilpatrick 2000). There is ample evidence from ethnographic and sociological studies of food to the effect that consumers do indeed experience food practices as constituting a matter of moral concern (Miller 1998; O'Doherty Jensen & Schiøler 1996; Stein & Nemeroff, 1995; Douglas & Wildavsky 1983), and that the norms of market exchange do not play a role within the sphere of food consumption in private homes (see for example: De Vault, 1991). There is growing evidence that the consumer reception of information regarding GM foods, to take an instance from the field of production technologies, focuses upon such (moral) issues as what and whom this technology might be good for, rather than the lines of argument to which the proponents of this technology wish to draw attention (Lassen *et al.* in press 2001).

These two approaches yield quite different points of departure for the formulation of hypotheses

regarding the basis of consumer trust and distrust in food products. It might also be remarked that the question as to whether consumer trust in organic products rests upon the one basis or the other is one that has the gravest practical implications for organic farmers. The present study has been designed to explore some of the perspectives suggested by the older and more neglected approach to understanding and explaining consumer behaviour. The hypotheses to which these considerations have given rise are presented in section (6) of this proposal.

5. Objectives and expected achievements

One objective of the proposed research is to challenge the somewhat narrow conceptual framework that has hitherto dominated research regarding consumer preferences for organic foods, and which has been closely linked to the need for factual points of information that can serve marketing interests in the shorter term. In contradistinction to that approach, this research aims to pose a new set of questions, the answers to which will contribute to the clarification of the social conditions under which consumer trust in organic foods is established and maintained.

These questions are:

- (1) What is the relationship between consumer conceptions and assessments of organic food products on the one hand and of producers and production methods on the other? How are the central features of such conceptions linked together in consumer assessments? Do consumers who regularly avail of direct distribution channels (for example, a vegetable-box scheme) differ on these points from those who more or less regularly avail of retail outlets based upon indirect distribution (for example, a supermarket)?
- (2) What is the relationship between (a) conceptions and assessments of products and/or producers/production methods, and (b) the character and frequency of social interaction between consumers and producers (i.e. the producer, distributor or business enterprise) under direct and indirect forms of distribution respectively?

The character of social interaction refers here to forms of communication and interaction: one-way contra two-way communication, mass communication contra personal communication; direct contra indirect (through a third party) interaction, and face-to-face contra mediated communication/interaction (telephone, letter/newsletter, press, radio, television and Internet).

It is expected that the answers to these sets of questions will in turn serve as a basis for illuminating a third issue.

- (3) What implications do these results have for consumers and for strategic planning among organic farmers and processors of organic foods, with particular reference to the principle that is sometimes termed: 'the principle of nearness' (*nærhedsprincippet*)?

The more specific aims of the proposed research are therefore to collect and analyse qualitative data that will: (a) illuminate the ideas and ideals associated with organically grown foods as conceived from a consumer viewpoint, (b) contribute new and hopefully significant perspectives to the on-going discussion of the principles of organic farming, and © strengthen and clarify the theoretical and empirical basis upon which further research regarding consumer conceptions of the trustworthiness of organic food and farming will be planned.

6. Description of workpackage including methods

It is proposed to undertake a descriptive and explorative sociological investigation using qualitative methods of data collection and yielding a comparative analysis of Danish consumers who avail of different channels of distribution when purchasing organic foods. Data will be collected among sub-samples of adult consumers, distinguished by reference to the channel of distribution through which purchase is made.

Hypotheses:

The preliminary hypotheses to be explored are as follows:

- (1) Moral considerations regarding food products are among the central features of consumer conceptions and assessments of organic foods, although consumers may rarely formulate these aspects as such in explicit terms.
- (2) Consumer conceptions and assessments of the trustworthiness of organic foods influence and are influenced by their conceptions and assessments of the trustworthiness of producers and processors, with particular reference to aspects of the latter's activities that regard moral responsibility.
- (3) Consumer trust in organic foods and organic production methods influence and are influenced by the character and frequency of social interaction between consumers and producers, with particular reference to interaction and/or communication at point of sale.

The study is designed and data analysis will be carried out with a view to exploring the extent to which these hypotheses are supported and not supported by collected data. Further hypotheses that may arise in the course of data collection and/or data analysis will likewise be explored.

Methods of data collection:

The primary method of data collection will be focus group interviews, undertaken among consumers of organic foods who regularly avail of a specific form of distribution. This method of data collection is particularly well suited to the exploration of issues to which respondents have not given explicit consideration prior to the interview. Firstly, explicit consideration of issues is not commonly called for in a focus group session. Rather, the 'focus' of the session is upon undertaking practical tasks as a participant in a group, frequently involving the use of materials that have been specially prepared for this purpose. While group discussion of the particular tasks to be completed constitutes the data to be collected, the discussion as such tends to be spontaneous and is usually experienced by participants as being incidental to the task at hand. Secondly, the group process, in which different views are expressed tends to prompt a clarification of the individual participant's own views (Morgan, 1997). For these reasons, data collected by means of focus group interviews are different in character from those obtained by means of personal depth interviews. Personal interviews or telephone interviews may be employed as a supplementary method of data collection among consumers in the present study, but only to the extent that the experiences, concepts or assessments of individual participants in focus group sessions call for further clarification of given aspects that cannot be obtained within the time-framework of a group interview.

An interview schedule will be developed for use in focus group sessions, and will be standardised for use in each session with a view to yielding data for comparative analysis. Standardised elements of the schedule will include materials for presentation to participants and tasks to be undertaken by them. The schedule will be semi-structured, opening the possibility that specific themes raised by the participants in a single session can be pursued. The duration

of each session will be approximately 2½ hours. Each session will be audio- and videotaped.

Fieldwork will be carried out in the initial phase of this study and will comprise a secondary method of data collection, based on the use of observation methods and personal interviews undertaken with primary producers, processors and distributors of organic foods. This task will be carried out prior to the development of the interview schedule, and data gathered by these means will also contribute to developing the interview schedule that will be the primary instrument of data collection among consumers. It will also contribute direct observations regarding the character and frequency of social interaction and communication at points of sale.

Sample:

The study design will distinguish 3 channels of food distribution. One of these will be supermarket chains, which is the most important channel of distribution in Denmark as seen in relation to the volume of sales of organic foods (ITC, 1999). It is currently planned to select vegetable-box schemes as the second, and CSAs (community supported agriculture) as the third distribution channel to be included in this study. A final selection of the third distribution channel will be made following the completion of fieldwork studies.

The sample (n = 100 approximately) will include men and women, aged 18 years or more, who are no longer residing with the family of origin. That is to say, the population comprise adult consumers who participate in the running of a household on an everyday basis. The sample will be stratified such that sub-samples regard the users of specified forms of distribution, and will be drawn as follows:

- 1a) Consumers who regularly purchase organic foods from at least 4 different food groups (bread and other cereal products, fruit, vegetable, milk products, cheese, eggs, meat products) at a supermarket. Respondents will be recruited to 2 focus groups (2 X 8 participants).
- 1b) Consumers who incidentally choose organic variants among the food groups purchased at a supermarket. Respondents will be recruited to 2 focus groups (2 X 8 participants).
- 2) Consumers who are members of a vegetable-box scheme. Two such schemes will be selected, and from each scheme respondents will be recruited to 2 focus groups (2 X 2 X 8 participants).
- 3) Consumers who are shareholders or active members of a CSA. Two such communes will be selected, and from each respondents will be recruited to 2 focus groups (2 X 2 X 8 participants).

Data obtained from the initial field studies will determine whether this distribution channel should be retained as specified or replaced by the selection of another so-called 'alternative' channel of distribution, such as a farmers' market.

Respondents comprising sub-sample (1a) and (1b) will be recruited by telephone interview, using a screening instrument (standardised questionnaire) specifically developed for the purpose of assigning potential respondents to one of two sub-samples. Recruitment will be undertaken by a market research company equipped with the means of generating randomly selected telephone numbers within a specified geographical area and familiar with the procedure for recruitment to focus group interviews. Randomly selected respondents, recruited by telephone interview and/or personally addressed letter, will also be the preferred method of recruitment to sub-samples (2) and (3). One of the tasks to be undertaken in the course of the initial field studies is therefore to determine whether access will be permitted to membership lists. If this cannot be

achieved in each case, respondents will be recruited by means of the so-called ‘snow-ball’ method of recruitment.

Data analysis:

Complete transcripts will be made of all audio-recorded data. Data will be coded using one of the standard computer programmes designed for the purpose of qualitative analysis. A comparative analysis will be undertaken, designed in the first instance to explore the hypotheses formulated at the outset of the study and with the specific aim of explicating points of similarity and difference within and between sub-samples of consumers, distinguished by the channel of distribution through which organic foods are purchased.

Given the focus of this analysis upon reported experiences, and concepts and assessments as they are verbalised in practice, the analysis will be informed by a theoretical framework drawn from cognitive science, with particular reference to the work of Fauconnier and Turner in the area of conceptual integration theory (sometimes called ‘Blending Theory’), and as developed with a view to its application in the analysis of food practices (Fauconnier & Turner, 1996, 1998 and to appear: 2002; O’Doherty Jensen, 2001a, 2001b, and under preparation).

On completion of the empirical analysis, the attempt will be made to undertake an evaluation of the results in regard to implications for strategic planning among organic farmers with reference to the selection of distribution channels and the stated principles of organic farming. Implications for consumers will also be considered. The ‘principle of nearness’ (*nærhedsprincippet*) will be the focus of this normative analysis.

Table 1: Workpackage list

This research proposal comprises a single workpackage: Consumer trust in organic foods					
	Responsible	Budget: DKK (including overhead)	Start	End	Deliverable nr.
Consumer trust in organic foods	K O’Doherty Jensen	1.494.964	07: 2002	09: 2004	D1 - D10
		1.494.964			

Table 2: Description of workpackage

Consumer trust in organic foods
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Workpackage number:	1
Start date or starting event:	2002, month 7
Responsible person:	Katherine O'Doherty Jensen
Contributing persons:	N N (scientific); NN (technical)
Person-months	26 (24 scientific, 2 technical)

Objectives:

- a) to make the final selection of distribution channels and determine method and means of recruitment
- b) to explicate consumer conceptions and assessments of the trustworthiness of organic foods, organic producers, processors and production methods
- c) to explicate differences between distribution channels with specific regard to forms of interaction and/or communication as observed and reported
- d) to compare conceptions and assessments among and between consumers who purchase organic products through specific distribution channels
- e) to evaluate the implications of the results of the empirical analysis for consumers and for strategic planning among organic farmers in the light of the stated principles of organic farming

Description of work:

Supermarkets and vegetable-box schemes will be included as two of three distribution channels for organic foods. Fieldwork will be undertaken during the initial months of the study with a view to obtaining data by means of participant observation, selecting the third distribution channel and determining appropriate methods and means of recruiting sub-samples of consumers, distinguished by their regular use of distribution channel/purchasing behaviour.

The sample (n = 100 approximately) will include 3 main sub-samples (the sub-sample of supermarket shoppers being further subdivided into a sub-sample of regular and incidental buyers, respectively). Supermarket shoppers will be recruited by means of a screening instrument administered by telephone interview. Other sub-samples will be identified by reason of their membership of a distribution scheme and appropriate methods of recruitment identified in the course of fieldwork.

Qualitative data will be collected by means of focus group interviews (3 channels X 4 focus groups X 8 participants approximately), which will be audio- and video-taped. An interview schedule will be developed for this purpose, designed and administered in a manner that will yield data for comparative analysis.

The data for analysis will be complete transcripts of all audio-recorded data, coded by means of the *Atlas* computer programme.

A comparative analysis will be designed to reach objectives (b), © and (d) as outlined. This empirical analysis, supplemented by the stated principles of organic farming, will subsequently serve as a basis for evaluating some implications of these results for consumers and for organic farmers, respectively.

Deliverables:

- D1 Selection of distribution channels and recruitment methods
- D2 Development of screening instrument
- D3 Development of interview schedule
- D4 Focus group data collected and transcribed (phase 1)
- D5 Focus group data collected and transcribed (phase 2)
- D6 Focus group data collected and transcribed (phase 3)
- D7 Data coding undertaken
- D8 Analysis of empirical data undertaken
- D9 Evaluation of results undertaken
- D10 Dissemination of research results

Milestones:

- M1 Brief report: Data on distribution channels and recruitment methods
- M2 Participants recruited to focus groups (phase 1)
- M3 Participants recruited to focus groups (phase 2)
- M4 Participants recruited to focus groups (phase 3)
- M5 All data collection completed
- M6 Empirical analysis completed
- M7 Brief report: practical implications of results
- M8 Research report completed

7. Implementation, time schedule and deliverables list

	2002 (month:)	2003 (month:)	2004 (month)
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<p>Deliverables: D1: Selection of distribution channels and recruitment methods D2: Development of screening instrument D3: Development of interview schedule D4: Focus group data collected and transcribed (phase 1) D5: Focus group data collected and transcribed (phase 2) D6: Focus group data collected and transcribed (phase 3) D7: Data coding D8: Analysis of empirical data D9: Evaluation of results undertaken D10: Dissemination of research results</p> <p>Milestones: M1: Brief report: Data on distribution channels and recruitment methods M2: Participants recruited to focus groups (phase 1) M3: Participants recruited to focus groups (phase 2) M4: Participants recruited to focus groups (phase 3) M5: All data collection completed M6: Empirical analysis completed M7: Brief report: practical implications of results M8: Research report completed</p>	<p>07 - 10*</p> <p>11*</p> <p>12-----</p> <p>-</p> <p>12*</p>	<p>01*</p> <p>02*</p> <p>03*</p> <p>04*</p> <p>05-06*</p> <p>07-----</p> <p>-</p> <p>02</p> <p>03</p> <p>04</p> <p>05</p>	<p>03*</p> <p>04*</p> <p>05--06</p> <p>03</p> <p>05*</p> <p>09*</p>
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Date of delivery: last working day of month indicated

8. Collaborative partners

Different aspects of this research will be developed and discussed in consultation with individuals, research teams and networks in Denmark and abroad and will be presented in a variety of settings.

Aspects regarding consumer research with particular reference to the sociology and anthropology of food practices will be discussed with the Research Group regarding Sociology of Food, Research Dept. of Human Nutrition, RVAU, the network of consumer researchers who are represented in the Advisory Committee of Experts regarding Consumer Affairs (EMFU), Ministry of Commerce, Copenhagen, members of the Dept. of Sociology at the University of Lund, University College Cork and Trinity College Dublin, and the Consumer Research Network of the European Sociological Association.

Aspects regarding research with specific reference to organic foods will be discussed with the Coordinating Group regarding Interdisciplinary Studies of Organic foods, Research Dept. of Human Nutrition, RVAU, a 4-person team of which Katherine O'Doherty Jensen is a member. An invitation will be accepted to join the network of Danish consumer researchers currently engaged in research regarding organic foods, and which includes research teams at the following institutions: Dept. of Production and Management, Danish Technological University, The National Consumer Council, The Institute for Research regarding County and Municipal Affairs (AKF) and the International School of Business Studies, Copenhagen. Likewise, members of the Organic Farming Group at the Dept. of Agricultural Science, RVAU, have offered to function as a reference group for the discussion of this research. It is expected that current contact with a number of researchers in the field of organic foods at European centres will be further developed in the course of preparing a research project regarding the safety and quality of organic foods under the leadership of Kirsten Brandt, Danish Institute of Agricultural Sciences, Aarslev, for which EU funding will be sought..

Some aspects regarding the theoretical framework to be employed in the analysis of data have been presented and will be further discussed with members of the NTSMB-network, under the leadership of Cynthia Grund, Dept. of Philosophy, University of Southern Denmark, Odense.

9. Budget

	2002	2003	2004	Total
Months (scientific)	6	12	6	24
Months (technical)	0	4	2	06
Salary (scientific)	244,571	446,766	259,466	950,803
Salary (technical)		30,000	0	30,000
Operation - equipment	0	0	0	0
Operation - other*	25.000	220.000	20.000	265.000
Overhead	53.914	139.353	55.893	249.161
Total:	323.485	836.119	335.359	1.494.964

* This item includes: Fieldwork expenses, including board and transport, materials prepared for focus group interviews, recruitment costs (minimum 1/3 to be undertaken by a market research company), rental of equipment and venues for focus group interviews, provisioning of participants, other running costs, and (in 2004) costs incurred in relation to dissemination of results, including conference participation.

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Appendix:

Research setting and CV of main contributor

Members of the Research Group regarding Sociology of Food, The Research Dept. of Human Nutrition and Centre for Advanced Food Studies have extensive and specialised research experience, ranging from large-scale comparative European surveys to small-scale, local qualitative studies. The present research proposal to be undertaken by means of focus group interviews is a study of the latter kind. Katherine O'Doherty Jensen is qualified with regard to project management, has specialised qualifications within the area of consumer research with particular regard to cognitive sociology and the sociology of food practices, and has earlier undertaken projects based upon the collection of qualitative data by means of focus groups. The Department is fully equipped with the software for handling such data. It is expected that a contributing research assistant (four months) will be found among the younger members of the Department or that a similarly qualified person will be appointed.

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Date/place of birth:

20.3.1944, Dublin, Ireland.

Education:

Master of Social Science (M.Soc.Sc.), University College Dublin, National University of Ireland: 1969. Award: *First Class Honours*.

Bachelor of Social Science (B.Soc.Sc.), University College Dublin, 1965.

Award: *The University College Tutorial Scholarship*.

Employment:

RVAU: Research Dept. of Human Nutrition; Assistant Professor, 1998 -
(Previous employment: *Suhr's Educational College*, Copenhagen; Lecturer (1990-98),
Ass. Lecturer (1985-90), Teaching Assistant (1982-84); *University of Copenhagen*:
Teaching Assistant (1977-79;1970-71;), Extern Lecturer (1971-74), Senior Research
Fellow (1974-1977); *University College Dublin*: Assistant Lecturer (1967-70), College
Tutor (1965-67).)

Areas of research:

Food habits and food culture, gender, organic foods, human cognition, consumption patterns as expressions of meaning, consumer conceptions of health-diet links.

Selected professional activities:

- Member: Educational Programmes Committee, FHE:KVL, 1999-
- Member of the Board: Centre for Organic Agriculture and the Environment (CØM), KVL, 2000-
- Extern examiner: The Inter-university bachelor programme: *European Consumer Affairs*, 1997-1998.
- Member of working-group appointed by The Joint-Nordic University of Home Economics to develop the Nordic Master's Degree Programme in Consumer and Household Economics, 1986-90.
- Member of the Board: National Council of Danish Women (DKN), 1986-89; DKN representative in: UNESCO's Science Committee 1986-88, The National Consumer Council (Forbrugerrådet), 1987-89.

Selected publications:

- O'Doherty Jensen K. *et al.*: Food categorization: A key to understanding cognitive difficulties in responding to food frequency questionnaires (forthcoming)
- O'Doherty Jensen K. *et al.*: *Økologiske Fødevarer og Menneskets Sundhed* [Organic Foods and Human Health], Foulum: Research Centre for Organic Agriculture, 2001.
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