

Spørgeskema til FØJO's projektledere

Projekttitle: III.8 The Role of the Distribution Channel in the Establishment and Maintenance of Consumer Trust in Organic Foods: A Qualitative Sociological Investigation (DIS-TRUSTING)

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1. Markante hovedresultater:

Results of the main study regarding consumers are not yet available (data collection takes place during the autumn of 2003).

Results of interviews undertaken among organic farmers and growers regarding their views on direct sale of their products and their experiences in this field indicate 3 main interests:

- The desire to maintain independent decision-making particularly with regard to the quality characteristics of products and product varieties
- The benefit of obtaining direct feedback regarding the quality of their products from consumers.
- The hope of generating more income by cutting the percentage of sales price that would otherwise go to wholesalers and retailers.

Their experiences indicate that much work satisfaction is generated in relation to the first of these concerns. Perhaps the most positive experiences of dealing directly with consumers are experienced by those who use a market stall as point of sale. Some farmers and growers express great uncertainty about methods of establishing contact with consumers, and have pursued a variety of strategies on a trial basis. Time-use is rarely taken into consideration in any systematic fashion when estimating economic benefits that may accrue to the use of direct sales channels.

It would seem that organic farmers and growers have a great need for professional advisory services in the fields of marketing and distribution with specific regard to direct sales channels, as well as a need to establish cooperation among themselves.

2.a Forslag til nye forskningsindsatser:

- Sociological studies of factors inhibiting cooperation between organic farmers and growers and between organic and conventional farmers and growers with specific regard to direct distribution and marketing of products.
- Development of educational programmes in the field of direct distribution and marketing of organic products for the following target groups: (a) organic farmers and growers, (b) professionals in the field of marketing (i.e. cand. merc.), who might potentially be recruited as advisors to the farming community/farmers' organisations.
- It is clear that distribution of organic food is a core issue that is under-researched at present. The issue is so central because it raises so many questions regarding ethical and environmental aspects of food policy as well as issues regarding sustainability, locality and social relationships. Specific suggestions with regard to future research will be proposed when the current project is more advanced.

2.b Begrundelse (perspektiv for økologisk jordbrug og fødevareproduktion):

3. Bemærkninger vedr. forskningens fremtidige organisation:

(F.eks. fordele og ulemper ved "center uden mure")

From my own point of view I see advantages in the organisation of an institution without walls. I would hope to see two developments: that the resources of the secretariat would be strengthened, given the enormous workload that is currently carried by few people, and that attempts would be made to develop the composition of committees and groups of external evaluators, as well as researchers, in a manner that is truly and widely inter-disciplinary.