

Principals of organic agriculture and the market place

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The context

- Rapid growth of the market
- Concerns lack of grounding in core values ('conventionalisation')
- Renewed interest in the principles and values of organic agriculture
- Market for certified organic agriculture based on standards/regulation
- Revision of Regulation (EEC) 2092/91

EEC 2092/1 (Organic) Revision

Advise the EU Commission on:

- how to integrate values and principles in standards and regulations
- compare national and private standards with EU Regulation and provide recommendations for harmonisation
- how can dependency on non organic feed and seed inputs be reduced

Work-package organic values

- Identify values from literature
 - Participation in IFOAM process of principles of organic agriculture (POA)
- Focus groups with 119 experienced and newly converted organic producers (AT,CH,IT,NL,UK)
 - Discussion of personal motives and collective 'organic' values
 - Comparison with value elements of POA and with European Regulations 2092/91 and 834/2007
- Report on procedure how to integrate values

Values important to producers

	AT	CH	UK	IT	NL
Food quality	1	X	3	X	X
Environmental protection	3	X	3	X	X
Limiting resource use	X	X	X	X	X
Health	1	2	1	X	X
Sustainability	X	1	2		X
Closed cycles	X	X	X		X
Independence	2	X	X		X

Food quality

Bio is a assurance for products with low residues (CF, Cf)

- Clearly seen as linked to health
 - Absence of residues and food safety
 - Nutritional content
- Taste and enjoyment of organic food
- Direct relationship between consumer and producer/ producers responsibility
- Authenticity of organic food (typical products)

Environment protection

- Conservation of diversity in crops and biodiversity
- Mixed farms
- Genetic diversity
- Landscape diversity
- Working with and learning from nature

*More important to new entrants and consumers
Expected to be more important in the future*

Limiting resource use

- Resource self sufficiency
- Closing production cycles
 - Established producers
- Minimising inputs and resource use
 - Energy use, global warming

*I have never fertilised; I never considered [bought in] fertilisers, only a good rotation, and well-prepared manure
(JJ, Cm)*

Health

*When all values are in balance,
you can be sure the result will be
a healthy product (NL, Em).*

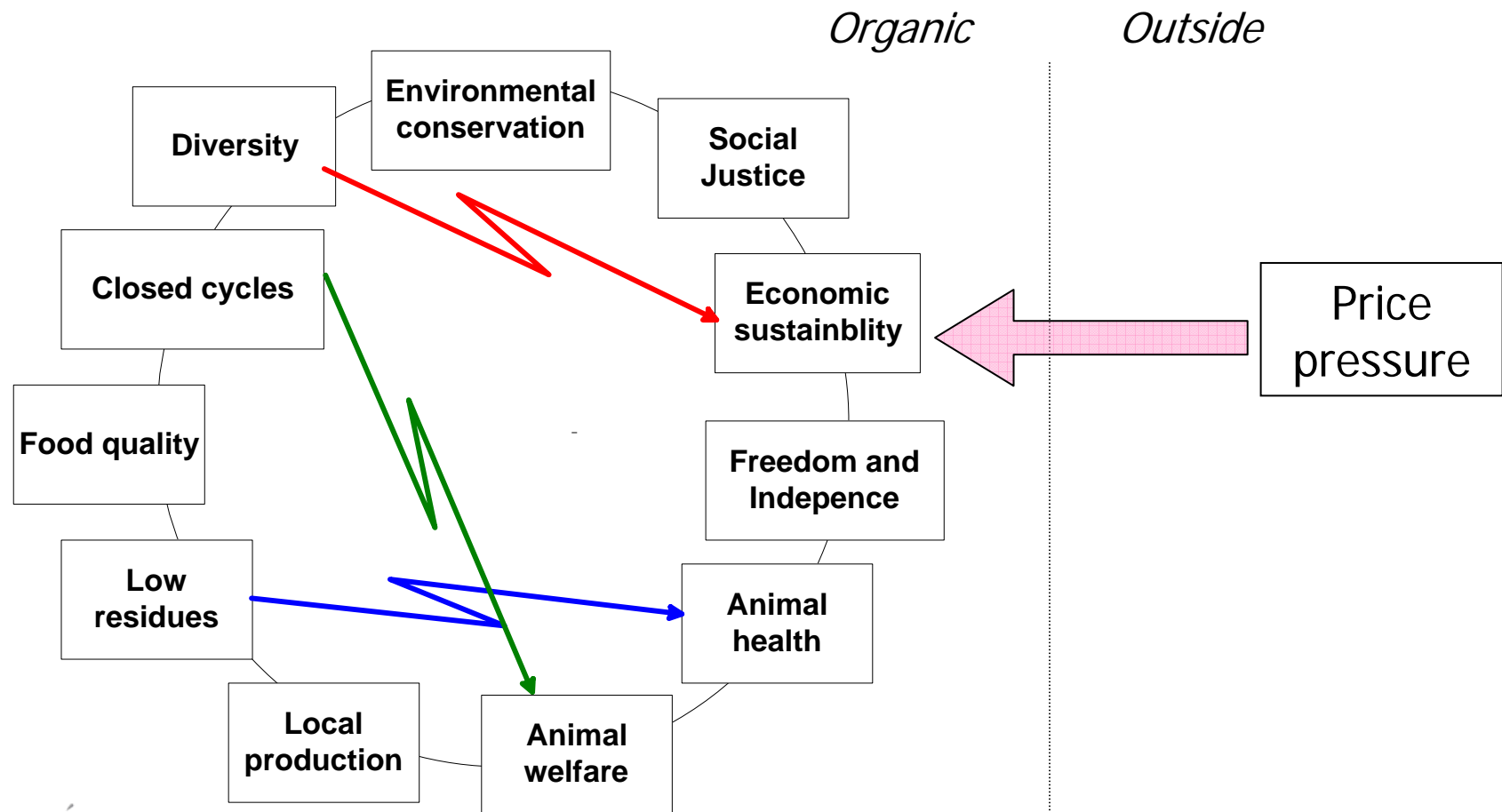
- Concerns for consumers health
 - Healthy products for schools and hospitals
- Personal and family health important motives
- “Systems health” or a “cycle of health”
 - Link between soil health, systems health and the health of the product or product quality

Established producers

Producers' values compared

	POA	EEC 2092/ 91	EC 834/ 07
Food quality	Health		3b
Environmental protection	Ecology		3c
Limiting resources	Ecology		3a
Health	Health	(x)	(3c)
Sustainability	Integrative	X	1.3a
Closed cycles	Ecology		4a
Independence	Health		

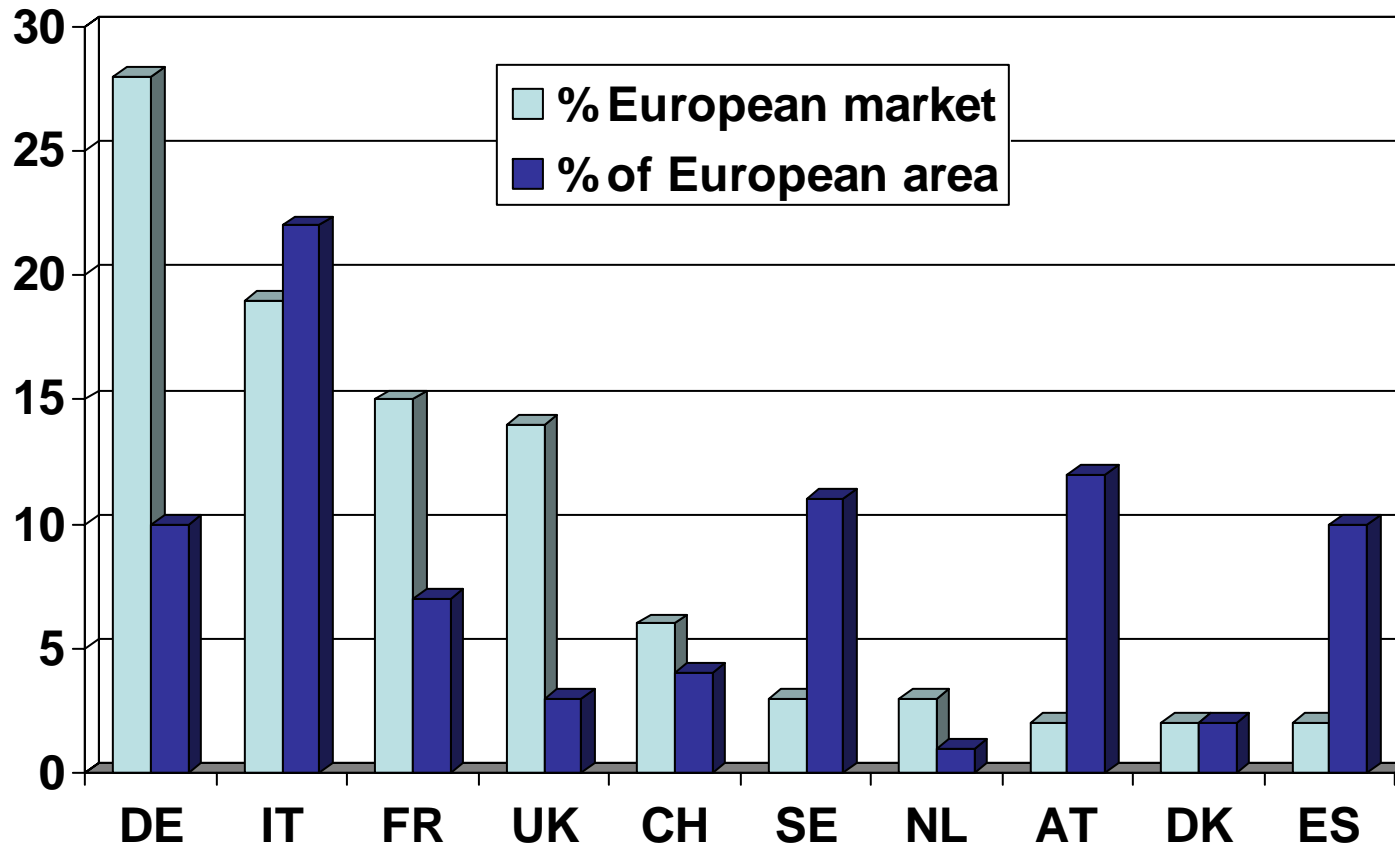
Value conflicts



Localness /regional production

- Preferred by producers and consumers for many reasons:
 - Higher farm income
 - More affordable to consumers
 - Better quality/freshness
 - Traceability and trust
 - Direct communication
 - Reduced food miles, energy use

Market and production



Problems with 'localness'

- Major markets are not major producing regions
- Growth in demand and production often not synchronised
- Disadvantage for producers in marginal regions with few consumers
- Producers and particularly consumers balance many values when making decisions about buying and selling
- Does 'localness' deliver on all expectations?

Conclusions

- Many values important to stakeholders like are **not** part of the current EU Regulation and most standards
 - ecological systems and system thinking, fairness, transparency, social values
- However, practice certified to clear standards important for consumer trust in organic

Value harmonisation using POA

- Principles of organic agriculture (health, ecology, fairness and care) represent basic organic value of most stakeholders
- Value harmonisation in standards and regulations should build on POA
- New EU Regulation (EC/834/2007) makes reference to values of all four principles

How to implement all values?

- POA contain 'difficult' values and aspirations
- 'Local' is important to many organic stakeholders
 - would strengthen functional integration and self-regulation in organic food systems, but
 - simple rules (distance/transport) may conflict with other values
- Labelling of origin of products/raw materials
 - consumers can decide
- **Need for democratic dialogue (procedure) about such ambiguous values and their interpretation**

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Thank you for your attention!

Values in IFOAM principles

