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Organic food - discounted ?

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Trust the Greens on true organic food

Organic agriculture - a benchmark for sustainable development

Over the past decades organic agriculture has become a benchmark for sustainable farming practices and responsible consumption of food. Organic farming includes the protection of nature and animals as well as the conservation and use of biodiversity. Consumers have rewarded organic farmers with realistic food prices for their efforts to reintegrate important aspects like public health, local food culture and animal welfare in their production practices. The development of organic markets is a success story in Europe and around the world.

Organic food - a reference for quality

Frequent food scares provoked by factory farming have made consumers suspicious of conventional food. However, stricter food safety rules tailored for the food industry have not solved the problem of a generally decreasing food quality. Organic food has become an unquestioned reference for a reliable food quality. It offers better taste and nutritional value. It does not carry residues of pesticides and other chemicals. And it excludes the use of GMOs.

Increasing demand - a success story

The demand for organic food is growing fast. Being confronted with allergies and health risks, young parents prefer organics for their babies. High standard restaurants, school canteens, retailers and caterers use organic ingredients to underline their commitment for premium quality. In countries like Austria organic food has reached 15% of the overall food supply. A growing share is also marketed through fast food chains and supermarkets.

Limited offer - a growing risk

While the increasing demand and success of organics is remarkable, there is also a risk that the integrity of organic food production and quality is undermined. Many food discounters have dumped food prices down to a level that raises doubts about the food quality they can offer. They have now taken organic food into their stores in order to regain the lost reputation. The risk for organic producers and consumers lies in the limited available quantities of reliable organic production in relation to the enormous demand of the food discounters and increasingly anonymous marketing schemes.

Responsible consumption - a growing challenge

Organic food must not be discounted. It must stay a benchmark and a reference for sustainable farming practices and consumption patterns. The real costs of healthy food must become more transparent for everyone. Organic farmers and consumers should actively oppose the race to the bottom in food prices, conventional and organic. Farmers and consumers must take care of short distance marketing. In order to get fresh and healthy food, consumers must demand to know where their food comes from. Farmers must get better organised in processing and marketing their food through food chains which do not practice dumping. Organic food should not become the decoy of food discounters or a window dressing to hide their dumping practices.

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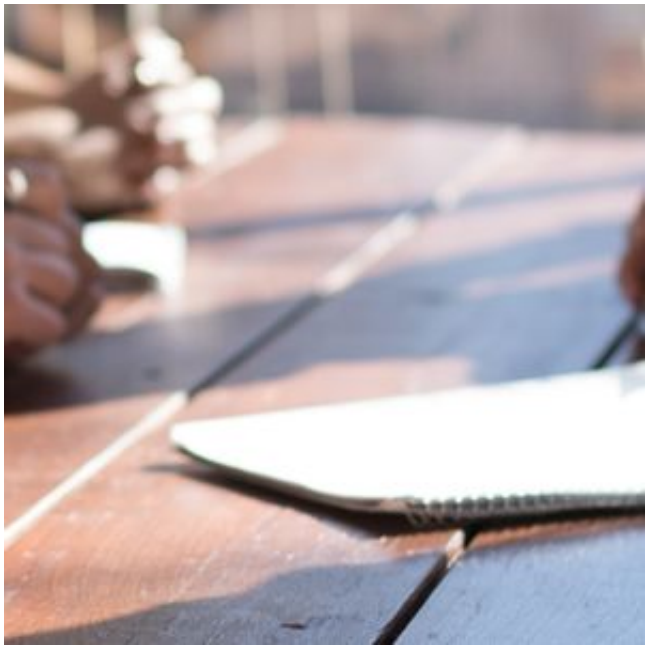
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