

ORGANIC FOOD HEALTH PERCEPTION AND COMMUNICATION AT A CROSSROAD?

MAPP CENTRE FOR RESEARCH ON CUSTOMER RELATIONS IN
THE FOOD SECTOR, AARHUS UNIVERSITY

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR JESSICA ASCHEMANN-WITZEL

p R Æ T S E N

CONTENT



- › 5 questions on consumers, organic and health
- › Organic [and / versus] functional food



WHY DO PEOPLE BUY ORGANIC?

› 'Health' ranges as a major motive in a large number of consumer surveys

(Bruhn, 2002; Guila bert & Wood, 2012; Hughner, McDonagh, Prothero, Shultz, & Stanton, 2007; AC Nielsen, 2005; Magnusson, Arvola, Hursti, Åberg, & Sjudén, 2003; Wier, O´Doherty Jensen, Andersen, & Millock, 2008; Zanoli & Naspetti, 2002)

Table 2. Themes identified among buyers and non-buyers of organic food

I. Consumers' purchasing motives

- Theme 1. Health and nutritional concern
- Theme 2. Superior taste
- Theme 3. Concern for the environment
- Theme 4. Food safety, lack of confidence in the conventional food industry
- Theme 5. Concern over animal welfare
- Theme 6. Support of local economy
- Theme 7. More wholesome
- Theme 8. Nostalgia
- Theme 9. Fashionable/Curiosity

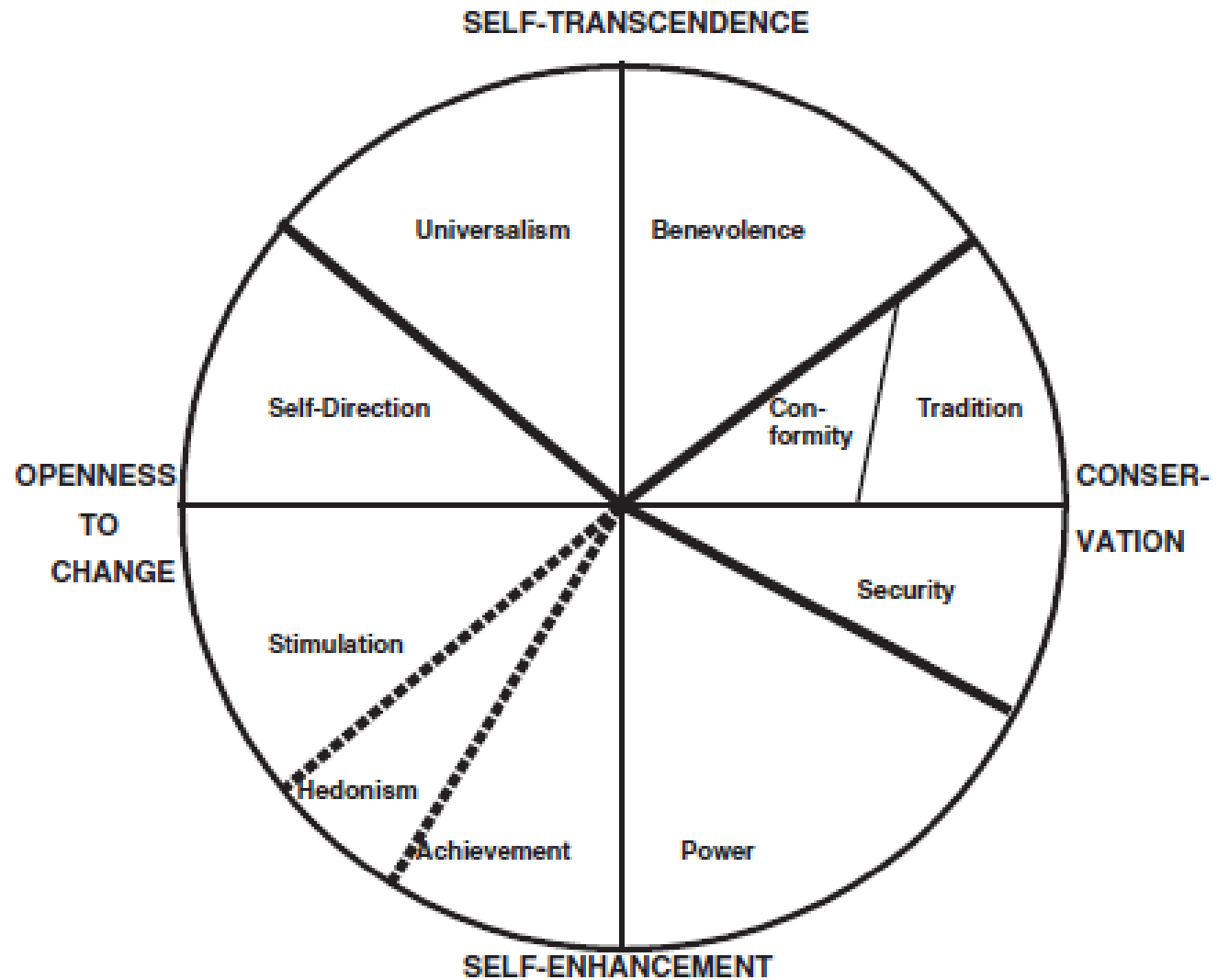
II. Deterrents

- Theme 10. High price premiums
- Theme 11. Lack of organic food availability, poor merchandising
- Theme 12. Skepticism of certification boards and organic labels
- Theme 13. Insufficient marketing
- Theme 14. Satisfaction with current food source
- Theme 15. Sensory defects

(Hughner, McDonagh,
 Prothero, Shultz, &
 Stanton, 2007)

ARE ORGANIC CONSUMERS STATING THEIR 'TRUE' REASONS TO BUY?

- › A DK household panel data analysis shows *"even though households more often assign value to (and additionally assign highest values to) public good attributes, their actual propensity to purchase these goods is in fact strongly related to the extent to which they value private good attributes"* (Wier et al. 2008)
- › An international survey analysis shows
- › *"There is no indication in this large data set that the preference for organic food is linked to selfish values. On the contrary, buying organic food is consistently and positively related to how strongly the consumer prioritizes universalism values"* (Thøgersen, 2011)



ARE ORGANIC FOODS / ORGANIC DIETS HEALTHIER?

- › “..literature lacks strong evidence that organic foods are significantly more nutritious than conventional foods” (Smith-Spangler, et al., 2012)
- › “..evidence is lacking for nutrition-related health effects that result from the consumption of organically produced foodstuffs” (Dangour et al. 2010)
- › ...
- › “... Consumption of organic foods may reduce exposures to pesticide residues and antibiotic-resistant bacteria” (Smith-Spangler, et al., 2012)
- › “..in organic produce the content of secondary metabolites is 12% higher than in corresponding conventional samples” (Brandt et al. 2011)
- › “..production of organic dairy products with different nutritional qualities from conventional ones” (Palupi et al., 2012)
- › (Baranski et al., 2014) => Raija Tahvonen ⁷

ARE ORGANIC CONSUMERS MORE HEALTH-ORIENTED / (LIVING) HEALTHIER?

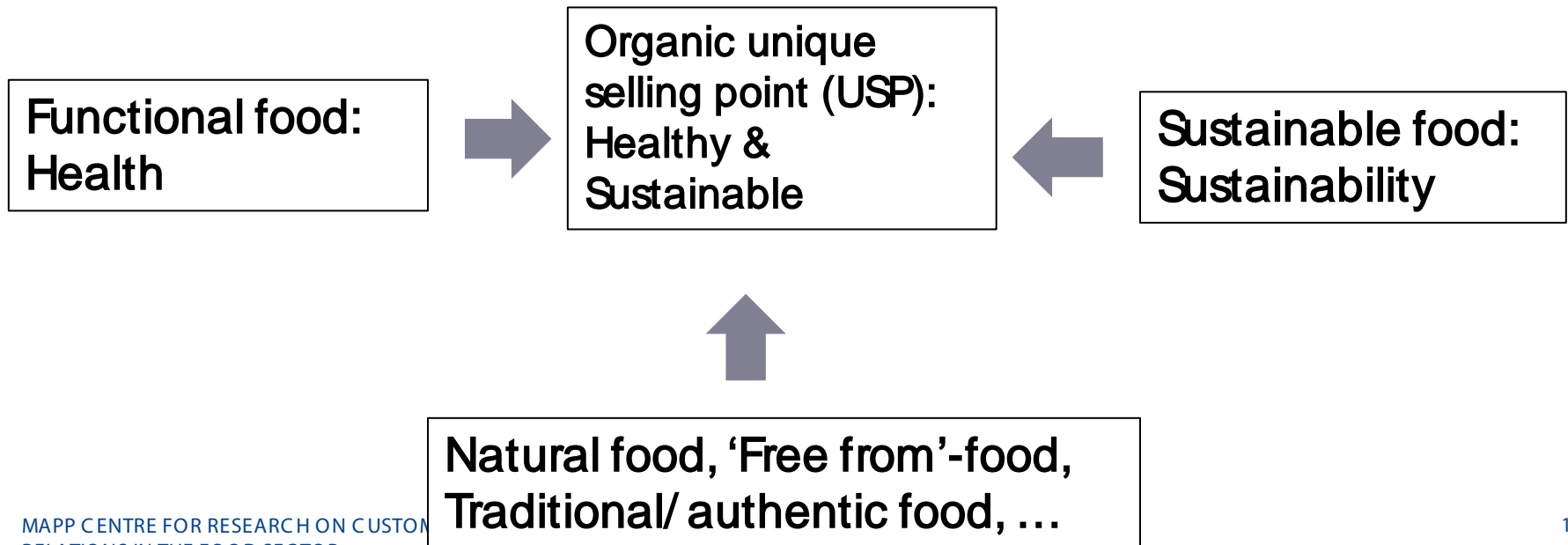
- › Health consciousness, i.e. the attitude towards healthy eating,
- › has a strong effect on the purchase of organic products (Kriwy & Mecking, 2012)
- › (Kesse-Guyot et al., 2013) => see Denis Lairon
- › (Hoffmann et al. 2010) => see organicprints.org



WHAT DO ORGANIC CONSUMERS MEAN WHEN THEY SAY 'HEALTHY'?

- › Consumers perceiving chemicals to be risky have been found to show a preference for natural food (Dickson-Spillmann et al., 2011)
- › Expression of modern health worries (Devcich, Pedersen, & Petrie, 2007) is related to both stated preference for natural and organic food
- › A harmonious balance of 'unity with nature', avoiding 'engineered food' and 'pollution' (Luomala et al., 2006)
- › "For heavy buyers, this question [whether to buy due to health or environmental reasons] might be irrelevant since both buying motives evolved from the same ideology" (Schifferstein & Oude Ophuis, 1998)

ORGANIC MARKET DEVELOPMENT?



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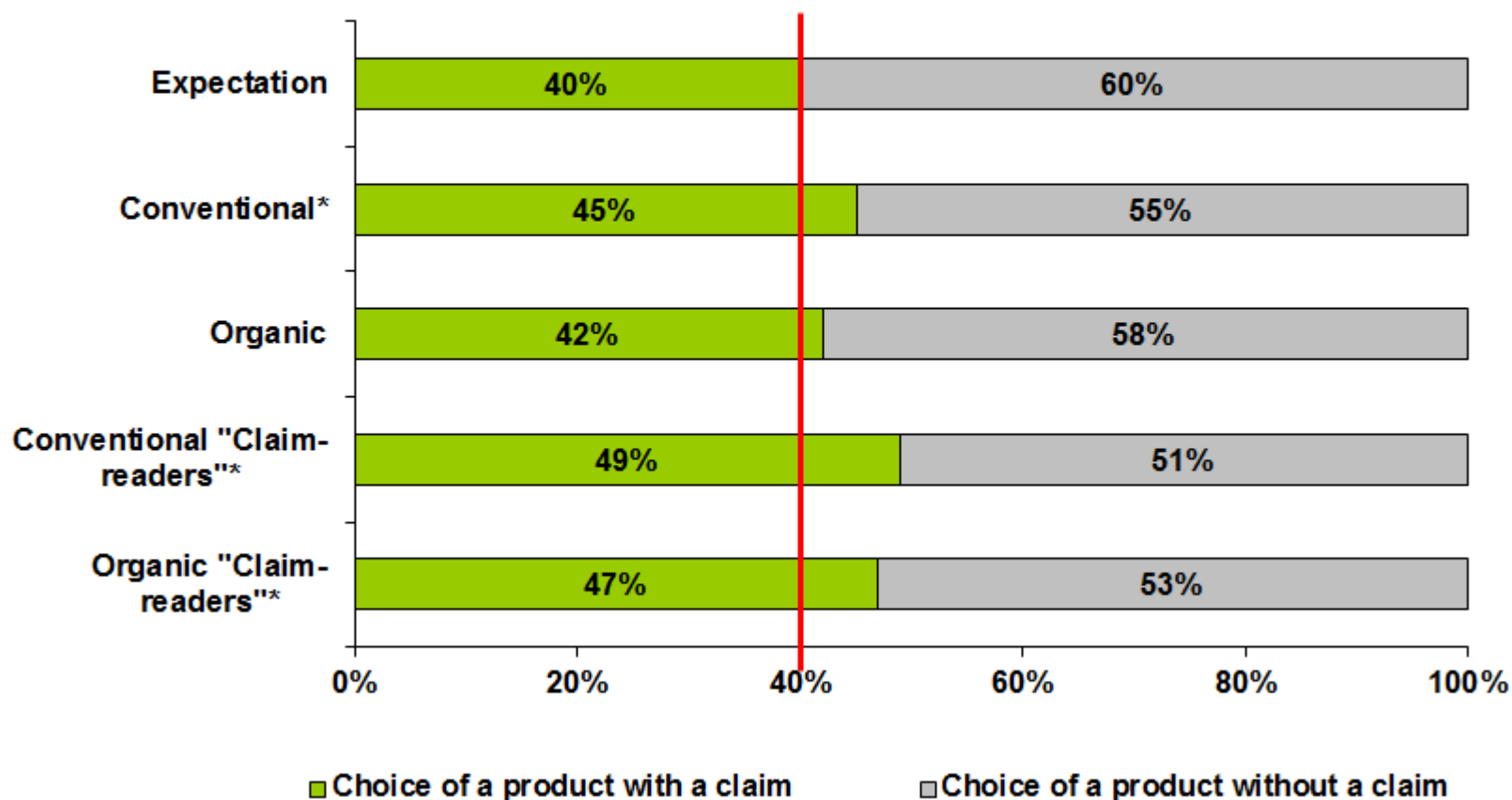
“Two paradoxes become apparent:

the health paradox and the price paradox.

Consumers buy organic food primarily due to its perceived health benefits. This is interesting, as there has been no evidence that organic food is actually healthier”

Hughner, R. S., McDonagh, P., Prothero, A., Shultz, C. J., & Stanton, J. (2007). Who are organic food consumers? A compilation and review of why people purchase organic food.

1. To what extent do consumers actually choose products with a claim?
Are organic consumers more / less inclined to choose a product with a claim?



HOW DO ORGANIC AND FUNCTIONAL FOODS (POTENTIALLY) RELATE?

Fit well:

- › Purchase is driven by similar motive
- › (organic logo: 'effective health claim')
- › Both are premium products
- › Similar consumer segments interested
- › Trend groups such as 'LOHAs'

- › Health claims perceived more credible on healthy food categories

Fit badly:

- › Respective lifestyle driven by different values
- › No 'health claim' possible under the NHC regulation
- › Underlying concept of science/health is incompatible
- › Health claim products perceived as less natural and 'tampered with'

FUTURE ORGANIC SECTOR RESPONSE TO FUNCTIONAL FOOD?

- › **‘Mimic and embrace’**: Find and scientifically communicate evidence, develop organic functional food products
- › **‘Differentiate from’**: Further develop a different approach to health, appeal to modern health worries, communicate the ‘planet health’
- › **‘Segment and sub-brand’**: Do both – apply different strategies for different organic consumer target groups (e.g. occasional, medium, regular)

FOR MORE INFO

<http://badm.aau.dk/mapp/>

Centre Director

Klaus O. Grunert
PROFESSOR



Email: kog@bss.aau.dk
Office: Bldg. 1327-235
Phone: +45 8718 5007
Mobile: +45 40283319

Academic Staff

Jessica Aschemann-Witzel
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR



Email: jaw@bss.aau.dk
Office: Bldg. 1327-131
Phone: +45 8718 5217

Timo Bach Larsen
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR



Email: tbl@bss.aau.dk
Office: Bldg. 1327-422
Phone: +45 8718 5017
Mobile: +45 24222592

Polymeros Chrysochou
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR



Email: pc@bss.aau.dk
Office: Bldg. 1327-424
Phone: +45 8718 4859

Lene Friberg
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR



Email: lf@bss.aau.dk
Office: Bldg. 1327-218
Phone: +45 8718 5038

Alice Gerberl
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR



Email: alg@bss.aau.dk
Office: Bldg. 1327-132
Phone: +45 8718 5042
Mobile: +45 51779297

Rainer Rindler-Sjansen
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR



Email: rrs@bss.aau.dk
Office: Bldg. 1327-215
Phone: +45 8718 5401

Hans-Jens Juhl
PROFESSOR



Email: hju@bss.aau.dk
Office: Bldg. 1327-434
Phone: +45 8718 5043
Mobile: +45 40422592

Athanasios Kyriakidis Kiriakidis
PROFESSOR



Email: ak@bss.aau.dk
Office: Bldg. 1327-415
Phone: +45 8718 4952

Natasha Leebnitz
POSTDOC



Email: nleebnitz@bss.aau.dk
Office: Bldg. 1327-132
Phone: +45 8718 5159

Lisa Lohmann-Meyer
PROFESSOR



Email: llm@bss.aau.dk
Office: Bldg. 1327-235
Phone: +45 8718 5143
Mobile: +45 51492932

Simone Mueller Loose
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR



Email: sml@bss.aau.dk
Office: Bldg. 1327-112
Phone: +45 8718 5157

Jacob Lund Orum
POSTDOC



Email: jlo@bss.aau.dk
Office: Bldg. 1327-133
Phone: +45 8718 5218

Thomas Pleasman
TECHNICAL ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR



Email: tp@bss.aau.dk
Office: Bldg. 1327-235
Phone: +45 8718 5412

Jochim Scholdener
PROFESSOR



Email: jsh@bss.aau.dk
Office: Bldg. 1327-131
Phone: +45 8718 5019

Helle Almas Samdal
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR



Email: hals@bss.aau.dk
Office: Bldg. 1327-239
Phone: +45 8718 5259

Bjarne Touss Sørensen
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR



Email: bt@bss.aau.dk
Office: Bldg. 1327-432
Phone: +45 8718 5128
Mobile: +45 40283329

John Thegersen
PROFESSOR



Email: jth@bss.aau.dk
Office: Bldg. 1327-134
Phone: +45 8718 5008
Mobile: +45 28821817

Ana Alina Tudoran
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR



Email: at@bss.aau.dk
Office: Bldg. 1327-133
Phone: +45 8718 5182

Stephan Zelia
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR



Email: sz@bss.aau.dk
Office: Bldg. 1327-224
Phone: +45 8718 5032

PhD Researchers

Femilia Hougaard
PHD STUDENT



Email: femilia@bss.aau.dk
Office: Bldg. 1327-019
Phone: +45 8718 5404

Lina Jacobson
PHD STUDENT



Email: linaj@bss.aau.dk
Office: Bldg. 1327-017
Phone: +45 8718 5028

Jon Ole Janus Johansen
PHD STUDENT



Email: jonole@bss.aau.dk
Office: Bldg. 1327-027
Phone: +45 8718 5218

Alexandra Klaus
PHD STUDENT




Email: alexandra@bss.aau.dk
Office: Bldg. 1327-113
Phone: +45 8718 5414

Lina Martin
PHD STUDENT



Email: linam@bss.aau.dk
Office: Bldg. 1327-019
Phone: +45 8718 5128

Lilja Narsova
PHD STUDENT



Email: lilja@bss.aau.dk
Office: Bldg. 1327-113
Phone: +45 8718 5208

Susanne Paulsen
PHD STUDENT



Email: suspau@bss.aau.dk
Office: Bldg. 1327-111
Phone: +45 8718 2417
Mobile: +45 52933238

Tina Petersen
PHD STUDENT



Email: tina@bss.aau.dk
Office: Bldg. 1327-113
Phone: +45 8718 5128

Anne Rindler
PHD STUDENT



Email: anne@bss.aau.dk
Office: Bldg. 1327-113
Phone: +45 8718 5202

Research Associates

Kristina Aschmann
RESEARCH ASSISTANT



Email: kra@bss.aau.dk
Office: Bldg. 1327-114
Phone: +45 8718 5212

Morten Fenger
RESEARCH ASSISTANT



Email: mof@bss.aau.dk
Office: Bldg. 1327-215
Phone: +45 8718 5038

Inge Hummelshøj Hansen
RESEARCH ASSISTANT



Email: ihh@bss.aau.dk
Office: Bldg. 1327-214
Phone: +45 8718 5037

Kathrine Nørgaard Hansen
RESEARCH ASSISTANT




Email: knh@bss.aau.dk
Office: Bldg. 1327-232

Stewart Palmer
RESEARCH ASSISTANT



Email: stpalmer@bss.aau.dk
Office: Bldg. 1327-218
Phone: 8718 4941

Viola Strøm
RESEARCH ASSISTANT



Email: vstrom@bss.aau.dk
Office: Bldg. 1327-212
Phone: +45 8718 5018

Kathrine Volke Christensen
RESEARCH ASSISTANT



Email: kvc@bss.aau.dk
Office: Bldg. 1327-238
Phone: +45 8718 5046


Centre Support

Monica Elmann
DEPARTMENT SECRETARY



Email: mem@bss.aau.dk
Office: Bldg. 1327-230
Phone: +45 8718 4922

Charlotta Rasmussen
DEPARTMENT SECRETARY



Email: cr@bss.aau.dk
Office: Bldg. 1327-233
Phone: +45 8718 5027