



Delphi study first round, WP7 Results

Focus – Balkans MT6

Trieste, Italy, 24th June 2010

Experts

- 6 invited
- 5 confirmed participation and questionnaires sent to them
- 4 responded
- Background: Faculty of Veterinary sciences, Ministry of Agriculture, Federation of Producers of organic products of Macedonia, one firm for certifying of organic production

What are the most important influences that have shaped the development of the organic market in your home country in the past 10 years?

- The most important influence is changing the Macedonian agricultural policy in direction of providing subsidies for organic production. All government politics were in direction to stimulate organic production. Before that organic agriculture almost it is not exist except in subsistence form.
- Cannot speak of a developed market. Organic products can be found in small quantities in the major markets. What the state does in the previous period is financial support of the primary organic production which is increasing every year. From 2009, Ministry of agriculture introduced new measures aimed at supporting processors and traders with organic products, wherewith the expected is increased demand for processing and sale of organic products and a good basis for development of organic market.

How would you describe the current state of the organic market

- Macedonian market of organic product nowadays is almost undeveloped. It is very difficult, and impossible, to find row organic products in supermarket which is appropriate declared. There are only few organic products like different kind of grain, wild products like different forestry berries and plants, goat cheese, honey and honey products, some traditional fruit products like compotes etc. The distribution is unorganised, also
- Within the campaign MAFWE has a position of mediator between organic farmers and traders in the Republic of Macedonia. In this respect, additional efforts are being done to provide markets for organic products as additional motivation of organic farmers to enlarge their production capacities, while increasing the motivation for traders to sell organic food at same time
- There are organic products but no place for sale. In the moment in phase of development is sale from farms (consumers buy directly from the organic farms). Also small quantities are offered in small shops for healthy food in few towns in MACEDONIA

How do you expect the organic market to develop over the next 10 years?

- Organic production and market developed in accordance with measures and activities of the National Strategy with Action Plan for organic production in the Republic of Macedonia (2008-2011). In this document are listed activities for development of the market:
- Measure - Market Development – National market:
 1. To increase market transparency;
 2. To increase public awareness and recognition and visibility for Macedonian organic products;
 3. To increasing sales of organic products; and
 4. To stimulate ecotourism development with organic products.
- Measure - Market Development – Export market:
 5. To increase sales of Macedonian organic products on export markets; and
 6. To increase the knowledge on export markets and competitiveness of Macedonian organic products.

Describe the motives you find in organic food consumers behaviour

- Vast majority of organic product consumers are concerned for their health. Hence, motive for maintaining good health or recovering from some certain illness dominates among population which is regular customer to organic products. As far as the customers' profile is concerned it is a bit difficult task, as there is a full mix of age, gender or income. But, by small margin the population with higher revenues are the group that represent main consumer group, since they tend to provide healthy food for all family, while in opposite situation where the family revenues are smaller, only the person which is in a need for organic food is organic food consumer.
- For small percent of consumers, motive for consuming organic food is in purpose to contribution in preserve of environment.

Have organic food initiatives had an influence on economic, ecological or social development in disadvantaged areas of your country?

- Unfortunately, the volume of area on which organic agriculture is practiced cannot provide any data necessary for such comparison. Main certified areas were previously considered as 'clean', mainly due to lack of human influence on that territory. Those areas are usually pastures, forests, meadows, on high elevation and the population that lives in these areas are mainly elderly people. On the other side, the areas in which fruits are grown there is significant impact on the economic status, as the families that grow organic food had improved their way of living (not substantially, but still improved), have less worries over marketing.
- Although it is a small progress, still, families – organic producers started to live better economic live and stay to live in their villages , so it is some contribution in social development of those villages and areas.

What characteristics make an organic food distribution channel chain successful?

- Supply chain is the biggest weakness in the organic production. Especially, distribution is the weakest part of the whole chain. The distributors somehow must be motivated.
- Although the production volume is still on lower side of the scale, the processing industry is still not following the volume of products the farmers are producing. The largest pharmaceutical company in Macedonia, almost 14 years ago initiated organic tea program which is still running, and even expanding. That provoked smaller entrepreneurs to invest in processing facilities and now these persons are running a full scale of activities in order to satisfy their own needs for quality, quantity and marketing as well.
- So, it could be concluded that in the past the big 'player' was a leading (and only) group leader, but now there are several companies that successfully run the business establishing cooperative relationship with local population. Regardless the level of achievement, the situation is far to be satisfactory and yet more to be done in the area of promotion and farmers education on markets demands and needs.