WP 2.3: Focus groups of value concepts of producers:

Draft National report CH

Part A and B

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PART A

1 Introduction

1.1 History, structure and trends of organic farming in Switzerland

Large parts of Switzerland are mountainous, and only suitable for animal husbandry. Animal husbandry accounts for two thirds of farm income, while one third comes from crop production. The average size of farms is still small and is between 15-20 ha but with a strong tendency to grow (similar for organic and other farms), which is small on an international scale (Bundesamt für Landwirtschaft, 2002).

Organic farming has a long tradition in Switzerland. In 1924, Rudolf Steiner outlined the principles of a new farming method, which he himself realized were still theoretical at that time and needed to be developed in practice. The first bio-dynamic farm in Switzerland was founded in 1928. In the same year, Minna Hofstetter, inspired by the 'Reform' movement and vegetarianism, started to publish on the subject of organic gardening. In the following decades, various farmers experimented along these lines, without much coordination. The ideas of Steiner evolved into the biodynamic methods of farming. After the Second World war Hans and Marie Müller have developed the bio-organic movement together with the soil scientist Hanspeter Rusch. They helped to found a first farmer marketing cooperative already in 1946, mainly for vegetables. By the 1970s, farming practices similar to modern organic farming had evolved (Vogt, 2000).

In 1980, five regional organic farmers' organizations decided to adopt common guidelines for organic production. Today, these are known as the standards of BIO SUISSE, and Switzerland is the only country in Europe where all organic farmers' organizations agree on the same, basic private standards (BIO SUISSE, 2003b). The BIO SUISSE standards are similar to EC 2092/91, but have some additional requirements:

- The entire farm must be converted to organic production;
- Minimum requirements for crop rotations;
- Ecological compensation areas;
- Tighter restrictions on copper;
- Nutrient balance.

In 1995, 'Migros-Bio' was founded as a second major organic programme in Switzerland. Migros-Bio standards for production are on the same level as BIO SUISSE, but the standards for processing and for importing are less strict. In 1998, the Swiss Ordinance on Organic Production entered into force. The regulations it contains are similar to the standards of BIO SUISSE. Although Switzerland is not a member of the EU, Swiss law is regularly adapted to the amendments of EC 2992/91 to facilitate market harmonization and mutual recognition.

Over the last ten years, the number of organic farms has increased almost five-fold. But the growth has now almost stopped. In 2005, there were 11.2 % organic farms in Switzerland (=6'420 farms) (FiBL 2005) on 10.5 % corresponding to 112'000 ha. The growth compared to last year was only 2.3 %. The majority of these farms are in the mountains and hills, and produce milk and meat, while fruit, berry, vegetable and wine production are underrepresented due to difficulties in production.

Originally, organic products were sold mainly by the farmers themselves and in health stores. The sales volume increased strongly when the two large supermarket chains, Coop and Migros, began to sell organic products (Coop in 1993, Migros in 1995). In the year 2004 50 % of organic products are sold by Coop, 25 % by Migros and 15 % by health stores and organic shops. In 2004, the turnover of organic products rose by 13 % and totalled CHF 1'188 million (approx. EUR 792 million). Since 2003 the highest growth rates had mainly convenience products, pullets and eggs, whereas the sales of fruits and milk products had even decreased (FiBL 2005).

The prices and price differentials vary greatly for different organic products, depending on production costs. Organic farmers are paid 20 to 100 % more than their conventional colleagues for their products. Together with the subsidies, the result is that incomes of organic farmers are similar to those of conventional farmers.

The Swiss Federal Government has supported organic farming with additional direct payments since 1993. Subsidies are CHF 200/ha for grassland, CHF 800/ha for arable land and CHF 1200/ha for horticultural crops. In addition, organic farms are entitled to payments which are given to all farms which have at least 7 % ecological compensation areas and animal-friendly husbandry systems.

1.2 Motives and attitudes of organic producers in Switzerland

Looking in the literature, there has been no recent study made about motives of recently converted farmers in Switzerland. There is a very old thesis of R. Fischer from 1982, based on interviews with 100 pioneer organic farmers which resulted in the following conclusions:

> "Motives and opinions of organic farmers vary considerably: however they also showed some common basic characteristics. Decisions by farmers to change to an organic system were motivated principally as follows:
> (1) external factors, such as negative experiences in applying conventional methods, disease in humans and animals on the farm, contacts with organic farmers doing well;
> (2) internal factors, such as psychological predispositions, or the search for a new way of life."

It is interesting that at the end Fischer (1982) writes: "None of the farmers interviewed believes that organic systems of farming will become widespread in a short time, because of the change of occupational consciousness said to be required." At that time no direct payments were available. Since 1993, when organic farming has been supported on an ongoing basis and in the same time one major retail chain (COOP) was very engaged to develop the organic product range, the economic motivation to convert has become much more important.

2 Places and participants of the focus groups in CH

Seven focus group sessions were organised in the German-speaking region of Switzerland between November 23rd, 2004 and January 21st, 2005, moderated by Otto Schmid and

assisted mostly by Rahel Kilchsperger. A pre-test was conducted with experts from FIBL (Research Institute for Organic Farming), moderated by Susanne Padel and assisted by Otto Schmid.

Totally 59 people took part to the sessions. Participants were partly recruited through an article and an advertisement in the major organic farming magazine, but the majority were contacted through advisors' list of farmers.

2.1 A short overview on participants

Three group sessions were held with established organic farmers, two groups with newly converted organic farmers, one group involved experts from BIO SUISSE and one group was conducted with students from Agronomy, Environmental Sciences and Geography faculties of Zurich. Mountains farmers were present both in one group session with one group of newly converted organic farmers and a group of established organic farmers.

In order to identify established from newly converted organic farmers, the year 1993 was chosen as it was the year, when direct payments to farmers were introduced in Switzerland.

Table 1 Place and participants of CH groups

Group	Date	Type	No	Full time farming (%)	Position in organic agric. organisation (%)	Age (Av.)	Years in organic farming (Av.)
1	23/11/04	Converting producers (C)	6	60%	20%	50.85	8.5
2	29/11/04	Experienced producers (E)	6	50%	50%	52	17.5
3	29/11/04	Experienced producers (E)	6	30%	50%	45.85	14.3
4	21/01/05	Converting producers (C)	10	90%	20%	46.2	6.4
5	21/01/05	Experienced producers (E)	8	80%	10%	43.15	12.5
6	24/11/04	BIO SUISSE experts (P)	8		80%	45.7	17.7
7	26/11/04	Students (St)	9		0%	24.15	
8	28/07/04	Researchers (R)	6		60%		

Below follows a more detailed description of the participants' groups, as well as their involvement in the discussion session:

a) Producers' groups

Ranking of farms was done on size basis: Small: < 20 ha; Medium: 20-40 ha; large:> 40 ha.

1) The first group session was held in Zurich on November 23rd 2004 with farmers who converted their farms in the year 1993 or later (newly converted producers). All farmers had cattle, even though some of them had also other animals as well as crop and

horticultural productions. Size of farms was mixed. All 6 participants run the farms as main activity. A female farmer was also present. The group was very involved, emotional and interested.

2) The second group session was held in Zurich on November 29th, 2004. Two attending farmers had converted their farms only few years after 1993, whereas the majority converted their farms before 1993. Participants' farms were very different from each other: cattle, different animal husbandry, crop production, horticulture. About farm's size, they were small to medium sized. Five of six participants were full-time farmers, whereas one was already retired. A female farmer was also present. The group was very interested, but one person dominated the discussion.

3) The third group session was held in Olten on the November 29th 2004. Three farmers had converted their farms only shortly after 1993 (they considered themselves still as pioneer farmers in their region), two before that year. One participant was not a farmer but was general manager of a pioneer organic farmer's cooperative and as well in the management board of the Swiss umbrella organisation for organic farming. Only one farmer was without cattle. Several farmers were involved in crop production and horticulture. About farm's size, they were small to medium sized. Three of five were full-time farmers, whereas two part-time. The group was very serious and well-balanced. They raised many topics during the session.

4) The fourth group session was held in Pagig in Canton Grison on the January 21st 2005 with mountain farmers, organised by the local organic farm advisor. All participants converted their farms after 1993 (newly converted organic farmers). Only one farm was without cattle. Some of them had also other animals in addition. Farms' size was for that region relatively large with the exception of one farm. Nine of ten participants were full-time farmers, one was already retired. A female farmer was also present. The group was interested and involved.

5) The fifth group session was held in Nufenen in Canton Grison on January 21st, 2005 with mountain farmers, also organised by the local organic farm advisor. There were farmers from one village, which collectively converted to organic between 1990 and 1992 with their mountain-cheese dairy. All farmers had cattle. Farms' size was medium. All eight participants were full-time farmers. The group was interested and attentive.

b) Other groups

6) The sixth group session was held in Dornach near Basel on January 24th, 2005 with experts of Bio Suisse employees and experts from a special "Label commission for the import of organic produce" to Switzerland. Out of eight participants there were five agronomists of ETH Zurich (Swiss Federal Institute of Technology/University) as well as a natural scientist and two non-academics. Five participants have been working in organic farming for 12 to 32 years. Of the 8 participants 6 were females. This group was very committed and active.

7) Students. The seventh group session was held in Zurich on November 26th, 2004 during lecture' time. Among the nine participants there were six female students from Agriculture faculty, one male and one female student from Environmental sciences and one female student from Geography. Except for two semesters of lectures on organic farming, they haven't dealt further with the topic. This group was very involved.

8) Pre-test group, was held in Frick on July 28th, 2004, at the Research Institute for Organic Farming (FiBL). Six experts composed the group.

Table 2 Characteristic of participants in CH producer groups

Groups	**CH 1**	**CH 2**	**CH 3**	**CH 4**	**CH 5**
Type	Later converted producers Lowland	Established/ experienced producers Lowland	Established / Experienced producers Lowland	Later converted producers Mountain area	Experienced producers Mountain area
Location	Zurich	Zurich	Olten	Pagig	Nufenen
No of participants	6	6	6	10	8
Average year conversion	1996	1990	1984	1997	1991
Average Farm size (ha)	36	18.08	21.2	29.75	24.4
Enterprises present	***% of producers***	***% of producers***	***% of producers***	***% of producers***	***% of producers***
Dairy	100%	83%	66%	70%	100%
Pigs/poultry	17%	50%	17%	30%	0%
Other livestock	33%	17%	33%	40%	25%
Arable	67%	17%	66%	0%	0%
Horticulture	17%	50%	33%	0%	0%
Marketing strategies					
Direct marketing	83%	83%	50%	70%	25%
Multiple retailer	17%	17%	17%	10%	50%
Wholesaler	83%	17%	60%	60%	25%
Other	0%	50%	0%	10%	25%

3 Summary of results following discussion guide

This section is based on summary reports for each group whiche were written based on a script, which was typed after the meetings, handwritten notes and pin wall and flip chart minutes. Furthermore the notes of the participants and the filled-in written questionnaires were collected and analysed.

3.1 Introduction

In all groups the introduction was kept very short, in particular in those 5 groups where the participants knew each other already. It was a help, that in the main organic farming newspaper in an editorial article the relevance of the topic and the idea of the project as well the process within IFOAM have been outlined.

3.2 First associations with organic in the "Warm- up"

The participants were asked to write down a few keywords of what came to their mind when thinking about “organic” and share them with the group afterwards. These notes were during the discussion a kind of memory help; the reflected terms remained important.

In total there were mentioned: 160 positive associations split into 45 different keywords and 133 negative associations split into 46 different keywords. (without pre-test with researchers).

The table 3 summarises the main positive and negative associations. More details can be found in the Annex I.

Table 1 Spontaneous associations of the Swiss focus groups with the term „organic"

Spontaneous association	Prio-rity	In which of the 8 groups was this relevant?
Negative associations		
- Too many rules, too bureaucratic	1	All
- More labour, high workload	2	All, mainly farmers lowland area
- „Conventional „ market development	3	Mainly farmers
- Decreasing or insufficient trust	3	Mainly students
- Too high selling price for consumers	3	Mainly students, partly all groups but less in mountain farmers groups
- problematic crop inputs (e.g. copper)	3	Mainly students and mountain farmers
Positive associations		
- Health, product quality	1	All groups, mainly early converters and students
- Natural farming	2	Mountain farmers, experts BIO SUISSE and students
- Quality of life, professional pride	2	All groups, hardly by mountain farmers
- Animal welfare	2	All groups, mainly students and experienced mountain farmers
- No synthetic crop inputs	3	Mainly students and farmers from lowland area
- Careful soil management	3	All groups except experienced farmers in mountain area
- Sustainability	3	All groups, mainly experts from BIO SUISSE
- Closed (nutrient) circles	3	Experienced farmers, mountain farmers, students

Priority ranking: highest 1: > 15 associations; high 2: 10-14 associations; medium 3 6-9 associations.

Common first associations in Switzerland with the term „Bio" /"organic" were on the negative side: the high amount of often changing rules in standards/regulations, which create a strong bureaucracy. Furthermore the high workload and additional labour and also higher costs are seen as main problem.
On the positive side were mentioned: health and a bit less but still as main issues quality of life, natural farming and animal welfare.

3.3 The own 'organic history' and further development

In all groups participants were given the opportunity to start with their own „organic farming history", which means with their personal motivation for organic agriculture.

For many participants the environmental issue was central. Often mentioned was the conviction, that with organic farming it is possible to realize a more ideal world. An important motive was also the production of healthy food without residues. For a part of the farmers was the demand situation a strong incentive to convert their farm (mainly mountain

farmers). Furthermore organic farming was seen a strategy to survive. Sustainability issues were also relevant motives for conversion.

> *„My personal consciousness told me that I cannot go on with a lot of spraying and afterwards eating the residues of it." (E, m)*

Below the importance of the different discussed issues are described:

- **Personal motives** were predominant like personal conviction, the guarantee for the origin of the self-produced food, and doubts about the conventional agriculture. These motives were less predominant for mountain farmers and students. Furthermore mainly early converters were very much influenced by the personality of pioneer farmers.
- The **health of the ecosystem** was seen as important and fundamental, mainly from farmers in lowland area which recently converted and from experts of BIO SUISSE and students. Related to this issue were often mentioned the healthy environment (the circle of "healthy soil – healthy plants – healthy animals – healthy humans" as well as the ecological sustainability.
- **Social justice and fair conditions** were mentioned mainly by producers, in particular by both groups of mountain farmers. It was mentioned several times hat it is important to build up another relationship, a „social quality", between consumers and the market partners, which is relying on fairness, trade relationships which are socially just and trust as well as a common comprehension.
- Organic farming was and still is seen as a **strategy to survive and a possibility to earn a living**, mainly by mountain farmers. The direct payments and the better prices were seen as very helpful to improve or at least maintain the farm income.
- For mountain farmers it was generally a rather small step to convert to organic farming with little investments as they have farmed already rather naturally.
- Mainly farmers in the lowland area mentioned **professional pride** and meant that to convert to organic farming was a new challenge for them.
- Researchers in the pre-test group mentioned also the **model function of organic agriculture**. For them organic agriculture was a possibility for a professional as well as personal development. Furthermore innovation, self-responsibility and the value-based approach were mentioned.
- **Health and product quality** were mainly important for lowland farmers and students. Here he focus was mainly on the production of high quality food without harmful residues.

Furthermore but less often were mentioned:

- **Animal welfare**: Good animal husbandry und animal health (experienced farmers).
- **Careful soil management:** mainly mentioned by experienced farmers.
- **Ecological integrity/diversity**: mainly mentioned by students.
- **Holism/ System approach**: hereby were mentioned "care for the creation of god", and a personal good feeling (mainly from experienced farmers). The students mentioned the interaction process between humans and the nature, the natural cycles and the idea „to work within and with the ecosystem".
- **Social challenge:** In the mountain area one group were challenged to convert the mountain cheese cooperative and all their farms in the same time period in an act of solidarity. One participant mentioned also the touristic attractivity of organically managed regions.

> *„My motivation was that I like nature, the plants. I have a high respect of nature. The conventional/chemical agriculture is without respect. Organic farming has the vision of sustainability; therefore I can identify myself with it." (P, f)*

3.4 Discussion of meaning of collected values

During the discussion of personal entry points to organic agriculture, the motives of the participants, had been noted on a flipchart or pin wall. In the following discussion participants were asked to discuss whether these points represent organic values of a more general nature. In each group values were written down using terms mentioned by the participants, the terminology in each group differs therefore. At the end of the discussion the participants of most groups (except the pre-test group) were asked to indicate which values they considered particularly as important by sticking 3 "vote" points onto the flipchart.

Table 4 shows the values mentioned in each group and the results of the "voting" in three groups. The values are grouped following the four proposed principles of organic agriculture by IFOAM, but include other terms covered by the producers that were included as own headings in previous drafts of IFOAM.

Table 4 Motives and Values and their importance as voted by the participants (3 votes per person)

	CH 1 cF, LL	CH 2 eF, LL	CH 3 eF, LL	CH 4 cF, M	CH5 eF, M	CH 6, P	CH 7 St	CH 8 R
Related to principle of health								
Health in general		3	3		3			x
Food quality		X					5	
Human health			X					x
Healthy food	2							
Related to ecological principle								
Use of renewable resources							4	
Ecosystem health						X	1	
Ecological sustainability	4		6		4	7	6	2
Lower energy use							2	
Bio-diversity promotion				4	X			1
Landscape diversity				3	1			
Cycling principle		X		1	X			
Fairness principle								
Social sustainability			4					x
Economic sustainability			3					
Fair direct payments				1				
Rural employment				3				x
Family farm				8				
Livelihood		1			5			
Social justice						3	2	x
Fair price		1			2			x
Self-reliance/Independence	X	1	1					x
Principle of precaution								
Avoidance of residues								X

	CH 1 *cF, LL*	*CH 2* *eF, LL*	*CH 3* *eF, LL*	*CH 4* *cF, M*	*CH5* *eF, M*	*CH 6,* *P*	*CH 7* *St*	*CH 8* *R*
Other issues								
Careful processing	2	1						
Traditional farming						X		
Involvement/Engagement	X							3
Multifunctionality		2					1	
Integrity		3						3
Solidarity	2							X
Consumer-oriented approach					2			
Cooperation & networking			X					
Reaction to market & customers' needs			1					
Authentic	4	3			5			
Animal welfare/Ethology				4				1
Low Input animal husbandry	X				1			
Farming with nature	3		X		2	4		
Innovative approach						1		3
Holistic/ Systems approach						3	3	
Whole system management						X		
Soil fertility		3		3				
Soil conservation							X	

3.5 Value conflicts and priorities

In the following section participants were asked to identify conflicts as well as synergies between their main values identified during the group discussion. It was interesting that more positive interactions were found then conflicts (e.g. a healthy soil is promoting healthy animals). Conflicts were mainly seen interfering from outside, between the values of organic agriculture and societal values and less inside the organic agriculture movement.

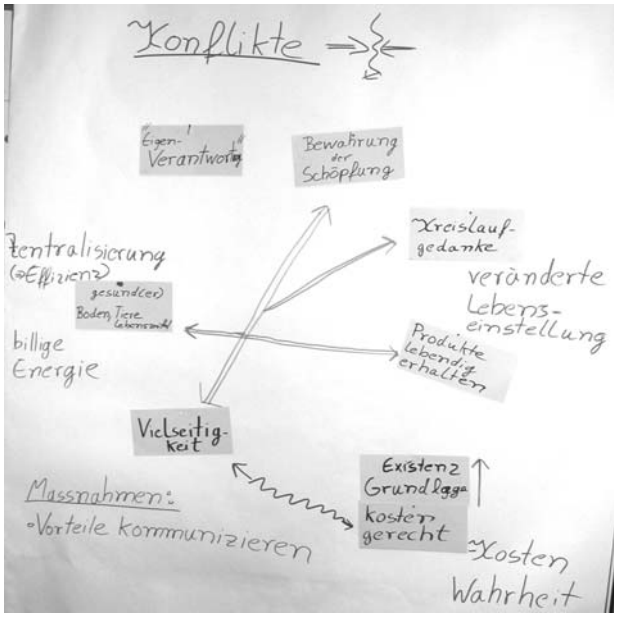
The majority of farmers in the discussion groups see the main **threat for the organic movement** mainly as result of the current world-wide economic development. This does result in more centralization in a globalized market, higher price pressure and cost-efficiency, bigger and more anonymous trade structures (with stronger dependency from powerful buyers). The (re)cycling principle or fair prices are getting more difficult to achieve.

Another external conflict was seen between the consumer behaviour and the values of organic agriculture: The current trends with regard to the consumer lifestyle and eating habits, in particular the trends to more convenience food and fast food as well as the trend to cheap price/discount price, makes it difficult to maintain a high product quality profile for organic produce and fair prices. As example were mentioned by some participants that strict processing standards for organic products of BIO SUISSE were undermined, e.g. by allowing selling UHT milk as organic, and as a result the organic movement might loose credibility of the more committed consumers.

Other conflicts from outside mentioned were:
- Cheap energy and the long transport distances (food miles) which contradicts with the ecology principle;
- The growing workload with inspection and certification which conflicts with the social principles;
- the growing world population and the climate change.

As **interal conflicts between the values in the organic agriculture** itself were mainly identified those, which occur between the 3 dimensions of sustainability, e.g.:
- the necessity of an economic sustainability leads to a stronger specialisation,
- larger farm structures bring a higher workload, which conflicts with the social sustainability as well as with the cycling principle (opening of nutrient cycles) and/or with the ecology principle (reduction of biodiversity on farms).

Figure 2 Positive value interactions and conflict areas within and from outside the organic agriculture movement– outcome from a focus group discussion with organic farmers in Switzerland (in German).



Waves = conflicts, Double lines: positive interaction

3.6 What values will be important in the future?

In the final section participants were asked what values they considered to be important for organic production in the future.

There were 4 main thematic areas, which were mentioned by most of the participants: fair prices, truthful communication/information of the public, solidarity and regionality.

All groups agreed, that **social justice and fairness** will be very important in the future. Particular important was for all producers the fair price which is evident. Often mentioned were: the maintenance of family farms with suitable load of work, cost-prices (prices which do cover the production costs), social justice and social standards not only in the third world but also here in Europe.

Some participants mentioned that if the farmres get a lower price, also the wholesalers should have a lower margin and as a result the consumer really should get a cheaper product.
One participant was in favour of cancelling the direct payments for non-organic farmers.

For almost all groups a major future challenge will be a **better and effective communication strategy and appropriate behaviour on the market place**. The communication in marketing should be improved: better and more trustful positioning of the products, clearer labelling and more advertissments are necessary. Some farmers recommended to focus mainly on young people, explaining them in their language the advantages of organic food and farming.
Several farmers saw still a marketing potential in direct marketing, in regional marketing and in more cooperation between market actors.

Social values and aspects will get more important tin the future. All farmers groups mentioned here the need for a strong solidarity between the organic farmers and the necessity for a clearer common market strategy of their umbrella organisation.
One of the group of recent converted farmers found that also the market actors should be fully converted and selling or handling only organic products.
Some farmers proposed a stronger political engagement for organic agriculture.
Another proposal was to establish a "social learning year" on an organic farm for interested young people.

Participants in all groups found that the local marketing of the products and the regionality will also get more important. Mountain farmers proposed to link stronger organic produce with tourism and furthermore to make a truthful information campaign about the origin of organic products.

In several groups the following issues were mentioned:

- **High quality and health of the products** have to be maintained and should even be improved. Experienced farmers from the lowland area mentioned truthful communication and careful processing combined with a convincing message about the value of the products.
- A **careful management of the ecosystem and the protection of the resources** will remain important. A holistic approach is necessary (mainly mentioned by experts of BIO SUISSE and students).
- The **diversity of farms** should be strengthened. This includes species diversity not only genetic or biotic diversity (mainly mentioned by mountain farmers).
- Mainly farmers and in particular mountain farmers, felt that the standards/regulations for organic agriculture should be better understandable, more focussed, not always changed and in some areas even made easier to fulfil.
- The **self-confidence of the farmers** should grow and be strengthened. (mainly mentioned by early converted farmers/experienced farmers)
- **Animal welfare** has still a high importance in the future (mainly mountain farmers),

3.7 Closing remarks

The final closing round was dealing with the question "How does my farm look like in 10 years?" and "What will be important for me?". Several farmers found this question very important and interesting, although it seemed that some farmer have never asked themselves such a question.

Most of the farmers would like to continue somehow in the same way as they do it now. They hope that they will achieve a sufficient income which allows to cover their costs and enables them to have a living from their farm work. Several farmers feared that none of their children might overtake the farm.

Other perspectives which have been mentioned, were:

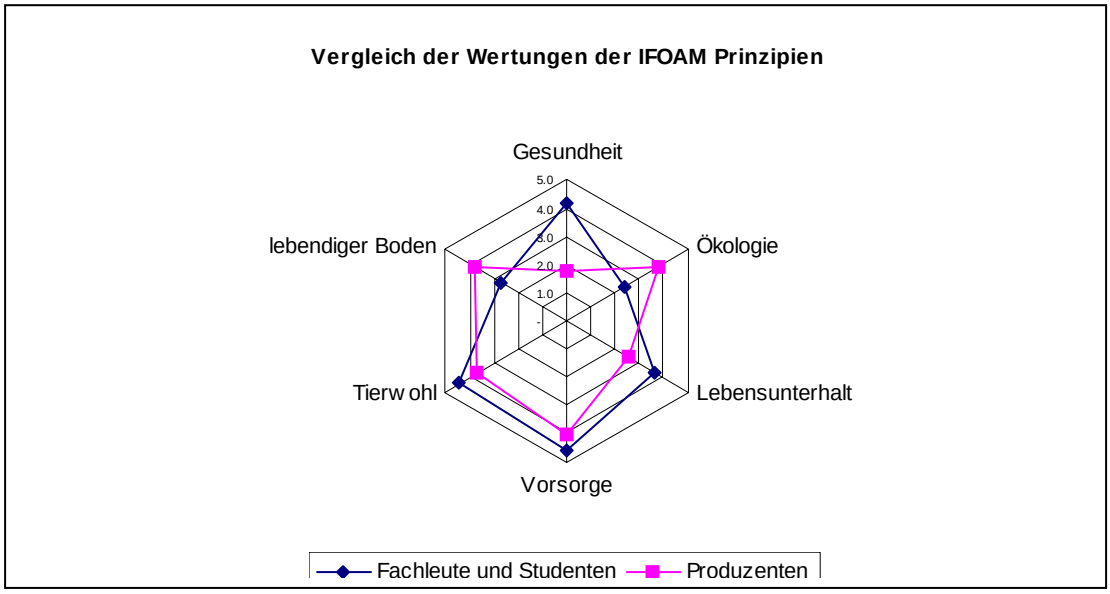
- Farm cooperation with their neighbour;
- More co-workers on the farm;
- Being more costumer-oriented (e.g. with guided farm visits);
- To keep more adapted livestock and breeds;
- Stop with animal husbandry and go for stock-less farming (however being more difficult with organic farming);
- Stop farming.

> *"We should have a farm, where the family feels happy. The doors should be open for our consumers in order to give them an impression and an insight in the organic production, which means looking, smelling, tasting and experiencing." (recent converted farmer, m)*

4 Results of structured questionnaire

After the discussion participants were given the opportunity to score the first set of draft principles of the IFOAM task force (draft of Nov 2004) on a scale 1 (important) and 5 (not important). Figure 1 shows the results for the overall average between the farmers on one hand and the experts and students on the other hand.

Figure 1: Average scores of importance for Draft IFOAM principles in Switzerland



Scores: 1 = very important, 2 = important 3= partly important 4= less important 5 = not important. This means a lower number has a higher importance.

Legend in Englisch: Health = Gesundheit; Ecology = Okologie; Livelihood = Lebensunterhalt; Precaution = Vorsorge; Tierwohl = Animal welfare; experts and students = Fachleute und Studenten; Producers = Produzenten.

It was interesting that there was a clear difference between the scores of the experts and students compared wit the producer values. Health was considered by the organic farmers as very important whereas the experts an students voted stronglyfor ecology and soil acivity. Livelihood and fairness are much more important for producers. With regard to animal welfare and the precaution/care principle there were only small differences in the scoring of the different groups.

PART B

5 Analysis of context and meaning of values through coding

The following sector contains a more detailed analysis of the values that were mentioned by the participants in the focus groups, based on coding of the material. The analysis was carried out with N-vivo, a package for the analysis of unstructured data. The same main codes were used in all countries, but, depending on the discussion in the national groups, each country had the possibility to add extra codes. The codes were grouped in relation to the draft principles presented by the IFOAM task force on "principles of organic production" in May 2005, but contain a number of additional headings that reflect values identified in the literature and in the summary reports of all countries. Important opinions are supported through the inclusion of verbatim quotes, whereby the letters in brackets identify the type (E = Established producers, C= converting producer, R= participant in the group of researchers and professionals) and the sex of the participant.

5.1 Principle of health: values mentioned in relation to health.

All major health value dimensions have been mentioned in the majority of the Swiss groups; it was considered as an important value of organic agriculture. In particular food quality and ecosystem health have been largely discussed.

On the health cycle BIO SUISSE experts expressed some general opinions.

5.1.1 Own health

Both dimensions, the personal health of the consumers as well as the personal health of the farmers were mentioned. In most cases these were individual statements.

Among established producers, one (from lowland area) remarked that his motivation for converting dealt with healthy food production. An established mountain farmer defined organic products as "*good for health*" *(E, m).*

Within the group of recent converted farmers from the lowland area one farmer said that consumers purchasing organic food do think about health rather than about the environment. Organic products are seen as natural and as opposed to convenience foods which are associated to fast eating habits, where no attention is paid to health. (C, m)

In the students' focus group, one female participant told about her intolerance for processed or food with artificial "stuff" (additives). On the contrary she remarked *that to her organic is linked to the fact that organic food assures to be healthy/guarantees healthiness and the absence of harmful residues (St, f).*

One researcher linked individual healthiness to benefits of organic production.

5.1.2 Family health

Concerns for family health seem to be a quite strong reason behind decisions taken by early converted farmers, who turned to organic production in order to assure long-lasting children's health. Established mountain farmers underlined also the lack of attention addressed to children's healthiness.

5.1.3 Food quality

Among established organic farmers the following issues of food quality were mentioned:

- Maintenance of fidelity towards the organic principles;
- Acknowledgment of product's value and the right to declare organic products as healthy:

"The value of a product today is not really paid. We should have the right to declare organic products as healthy" (E, m).

- The organic movement has been established in order to give more value to the food content.

In particular, one farmer expressed quite a disappointed attitude towards organic production: *„Organic does not exist anymore, because they cannot any longer be healthy and each farm cannot produce any longer organically" (E, m).*

When looking in the future, one established producer wishes that his farm will be oriented more towards achieving high food quality and safety. He wishes the organic Swiss logo; the bud (*Knospe*) will become more wide-spread and known, as it does guarantee product quality.

Among recent organic farmers motives for converting farms to organic production system were:

- Production of healthy goods;
- Meeting consumers' expectations:

"It is important to me that Bio is an assurance to have healthy food without harmful residues" (C, f).

- Concerns for the environment:

„For me healthy food was not the primarily motive, the environment was always more important" (C, m).

Organic production should moreover be identified as highly qualitative, because quality foods are produced. One newly converted farmer is worried about large production scale, affecting the qualitative level of organic foods. He states that "*organic products should remain exclusive and have a positive message" (C, m).*

One early converter remarked his uncertainty about processed food, as he has the feeling that when the raw material is sent to the processor, the farmers loose their responsibility and anonymity gains more weight.

Experts from BIO SUISSE reclaim that the expansion of organic food in the market has led to a loss of the originality of the products: *"Today everything is commercialised and has lost its original character" (P, f). …*

Students associate organic food products to general quality and safe ingredients.

In the pre-test, researchers related organic food products to healthy foods and healthy processing of raw material. In addition one stated that if organic farming can not meet consumers' expectations on a content level, "*it will loose its soul" (R, m)*.

5.1.4 Ecosystem health

In general concerns about environmental issues, such as ecological protection, sustainable production, prevention of pollution and preservation of living environment, represent the starting point for converting farms to organic farming (in particular for lowland farmers).

In the groups of established lowland farmers the lack of idealism of some farmers was discussed, who tend to farm on a low intensity level just to get direct payments, rather than trying to preserve the ecosystem:

What I see, e.g. also in the Jura mountain region, is farming on a very low-intensity level. This is not real farming. I am against too many surfaces changed to a very low intensity. I do not like that farms have more then 50 % diversified (ecological compensation) areas; this is only to get direct payments" (E, m).

One established farmer is sceptical about the word "*sustainable*", as he believes it has developed into a trend word, rather than representing a value.

Considering positive opinions on the effects of organic farming, a farmer from the mountain area describes OF as follows: *positive*, *conservative*, *animal friendly* and *conform to societal needs*. In addition organic agriculture he defined as *"healthy sustainable production"* system. Another mountain established farmer mentions the bad image associated with his production site from the closeness to a military exercise area.

One early converter (lowland) expressed his conviction that organic agriculture is "*the only sustainable production system, which allows farmers to be independent from chemical industry* (E, m)".

Among recent converted farmers (lowland) the independence of OF from chemical industry and the sustainability of ecosystem cycles, was mentioned:

"The independence from agro-industry, the own livestock, the self-reliance and the ecosystem cycles is fascinating for me and of course the environmentally sound production" (C, m).

One reason for converting was the abuse of chemicals introduced in the nature, which were destroying the environment:

"We have to protect the environment and respect nature and not to destroy everything" (C, m).

Students think that the arguments behind OF are the intention to reduce environmental damages and the conservation of natural resources.

5.1.5 Health cycle

Statements related to healthiness as a whole were raised only by experts of BIO SUISSE. They underlined the fact that organic farming does imply a series of related issues, such as soil, crop, animal and human health. One expresses the strong link between a healthy body and healthy mind with food, as both are corresponding with each other. However this was criticised by another as this aspect was partly misused by the Nazis. It was agreed that the link between "healthy body, healthy mind and healthy soil" was in former times more important then now" (P, m). 6.54

Another expert complains about the fact that somehow people tend to "assault" nature, even though intending to preserve it. (P, m)

5.1.6 Food safety

In general established organic producers (in particular from lowland areas) tend to link the logo of the Swiss umbrella organisation for organic farming, the "bud" to safe products.

For students safe food products are characterized by absence of residues. Harmful residues in food are seen as problematic for allergic people.

At the pre-test (researchers), it was said, that if people pay more attention to their food, then people having problems with allergens would have a more comfortable life with less nutritional complications. Avoiding poisoning substances is supporting human well-being. One participant mentioned that health, as individual motive, was getting more relevant within the organic movement in the future.

5.1.7 Conflicts of "health" to organic values and society values

No conflicts to organic values came up.

The first conflict to society values emerged among established (lowland) farmers dealing with the lack of awareness about health among people. In particular, they say there are people who do not give sufficient value to the human nutrition. *"The Swiss organic logo is associated to organic, but cannot officially be linked to healthier products; this results as a disadvantage on the market place*" (E, m).

Moreover according to established (lowland) farmers, organic food can not be identified with convenience food, but nowadays more and more people put few effort and time in preparing meals, tending to choose prepared food products:

"The change in society does not stop. We cannot deny that less and less people do cook. More and more convenience food is bought" (E, m). 3.53

Summary of values related to the principles of health

For many farmers health was a major issue for farming organically. Farmers believe that health is very important for consumers. There is awareness that

quality has other dimensions, e.g. an added value. Organic farming was seen as the most sustainable production system. It is interesting that the health cycle (healthy soil- healthy plant – healthy animal – healthy human beings) was only mentioned by BIO SUISSE experts.

Conflicts were only mentioned related to social values, but not within the organic movement. The trend to more convenience food can interfere with the perception of organic food.

5.2 Ecological integrity

Generally recycling was the most often mentioned issue. Genetic diversity and landscape diversity was mainly mentioned by mountain farmers and researchers. Other issues such as mixed farming or minimising the use of energy were not mentioned.

5.2.1 Ecological integrity

In general experts from BIO SUISSE complain about the way some farmers practice OF: producers seem to ignore basic ecological principles.

5.2.2 Recycling

In the majority of the discussion groups the principle of cycling/recycling was discussed. The following aspects were mentioned:

- The cycling approach and animal management within the farm:

  "Positive is the cycling approach as a result of conversion and the inclusion of animal husbandry on an organic farm" (C, lowland, m). 1.22

- Closed nutrient cycles:

  Sustainability in organic farming means closing the cycles. (R, m) 8.33

- Use of resources:

  "Re-use of what farms produce and avoidance of additional fodder from outside the farm is very important" (C, mountain, m). 4.84

5.2.3 Genetic diversity

Only recent converted farmers from the mountain area mentioned the maintenance of old varieties in gardening as a motivation for organic farming (C, m).

Species richness is very important and in particular diversity means better/nicer meadows for the cattle (C, m).

One participant expressed the wish to tie his production up with tradition, for example cultivating old potato varieties, instead of growing animals only (C, m).

5.2.4 Conservation and biodiversity

One established mountain farmer stated that what is fascinating in OF is its conservation of living spaces and the sustainable production for future generation (conservation of natural resources).

One female student mentioned the issue that OF is assuring both food and living space for future generations (E, f).

5.2.5 Landscape diversity

This motive was mentioned only among mountain farmers.

One newly converted farmer underlined the effect of landscape amenities on tourism: tourists can enjoy uncontaminated flora of the Alps. It was stated that "*if the mountain area has to be preserved, a decentralised settlement is needed. Therefore additional financial contributions are still needed in Switzerland for the conservation of recreation areas*" (C, m). 4.26

As a reply to the question "how does your good product reach the end consumer?" the only female participant answered: "*We need to present products through holiday experiences*" (C, f).

Moreover concern is brought up to maintain the Alps attractive for livestock and tourists:

We should take care of our Alps in such a way that our cattle and the tourists enjoy it (C, m). 4.78

We should reconsider the politics not allowing the depopulation of whole valleys. People should have the possibility to sustain/exist in the mountain areas instead of having more and more agglomerations with a too high population density. (C,m) 5.43

5.2.6 Conflicts of "ecological integrity" to organic farming values

To maintain a high species diversity could clash with labour requirements (C, m).

In the BIO SUISSE focus group it emerged the issue on famine. It was argued that "*organic imperialism" is not considering social standards*", as organic trade tends to be extremely fussy regarding imported organic goods. Organic actors tend to claim the need, rather than considering adequately that many people in the world starve because of unequal distribution of food. This is also a conflict with societal values!

To one expert of BIO SUISSE it seems like food production in itself is in conflict with nature to a wider extent! In BIO SUISSE standards therefore is stated that "*agriculture, when cultivating crops for humans methods, is always interfering with nature" (P, m).*

5.2.7 Conflicts of "ecological integrity" to society values:

Conflicts to societal values emerged mainly within established farmers groups. Among lowland farmers one conflict dealt with responsibility. The farmer complains that he would get penalties for using chemical inputs. He believes that advisors and manufacturers of inputs are not charged of any/such responsibility. (E, m) 2.61

Moreover stricter rules for organic production in Switzerland appear to be unfair, as standards are different from the rest of the EU. Among mountain farmers, one complains about this and states that it is not correct to sell imported products in the same way as organic. This might imply that standards differences should be more highlighted. (E, m) 5.34

Some students remarked that world population growth enters in conflict with resources protection and sustainability.

Conclusions:

The main issues were the cycling principle and for mountain farmers biodiversity and landscape amenity in particular with regard to tourism.

The cycling principle was mostly seen related to closing nutrient cycle, sustainable use of resources, and self-sufficiency of feed. The main conflict regarding on organic farming values were that the diversification of the production raises the labour burden.

BIO SUISSE experts reclaimed the contradiction of expanding OF for export/import and food security and that food production is in itself conflicting with nature

As conflicts with societal values the following were mentioned: producers are charged of social responsibilities, much more then input firms.

5.3 Values related to the proposed principle of "Fairness and livelihood"

All major fairness value dimensions have been mentioned in the majority of the groups; in particular securing farm income has been very largely discussed and articulated as three main issues (farm income, price, subsidies). Diversification was mainly mentioned by experienced farmers.

5.3.1 Securing farm income and profitability

Among the reasons for converting, mentioned by organic farmers, was the financial motive. To earn adequately with farming was the main and strongest motive for converting to organic farming. In the mountain area OF was a chance to survive as a farmer.

a) Secure the future of farm: higher profitability

Within group discussions held with established organic farmers, the following issues arose:

- Farming organically does not seem to give any guarantee for a secure existence;

- Direct marketing sales could contribute significantly to cover the production costs through added value and allow reaching consumers easily. (2.67; 4.6)
- Farms becoming larger succeed in reaching higher production outcome at a better price. OF seems to assure a more stable income. (E, m) 2.10
- Motivation for converting is related to the added value getting from a high quality produce. (E, m) 5.1

Within group discussions held with recent organic farmers, the following issues arose:

- Since much attention is addressed to the way animals live, maybe more emphasis should be given to the farm economical sustainability. (C, m) 1.76
- The need to complement the family income with a second job (e.g. as bus driver), although being satisfied with the farm activity. (C, m) 1.35
- Sufficient farm **size** is an economic factor determining income sustainability for farmers' family. (C, m) 1.96

Among farmers from the mountain area, one complains that farming organically in the mountains is not economically sustainable (75 % do not make profit), because consumers are not willing to pay more for food products. (C, m) 4.41

Another interviewee emphasised that without higher direct payments, mountain farmers would not survive. (C, m) 4.56

According to a BIO SUISSE expert, producing a lot and at a low price do not meet the principle of fairness in OF.

b) Getting a better price: Premiums for products.

Several established low land farmers underline that conversion to organic was often stimulated by better price, rather than by conviction:

> *"Pioneers of organic farming have started for ideological reasons. They had neither better prices nor direct payments. They just said that it must be possible to farm otherwise" (E, m).*

According to an established farmer "*it would not be necessary to have a higher price of organic products, if the farm can survive" (E, m) (2.35).*

Moreover it is stated that if farmers can not live of their farming activity, "*rural settlement and landscape conservation will not be achieved through OF anyway*". 2.41 (E, m)

Getting a better price through labelling organic food products was seen as important issue. (E, m) 5.48

Several farmers wished the price of organic food products to increase. One farmer mentioned also that *"in the future the energy price might get higher and as a consequence also the cost of transportation. This might favour the local production of food and even be a mean to reduce the hunger problems in the third world."* (E, m) 5.40

Newly converted organic farmers showed more hope for more price fairness:

- *"The vision of the future for me is a fair price not a price determined by the state, in that way farmers can sustain and develop" (E, m).* 2.65
- In order to guarantee a fair income for the farm, so that the family can live with and develop farm activities as well, the price should be fair and represent real production and processing costs charged to farmers (C, m) 1.75

For students and BIO SUISSE experts price fairness is important to realize fair relationships among the actors of the organic food sector, especially towards producers (students and BIO SUISSE).

c) Getting subsidies

For several farmers the availability of subsidies is a controversial issue, as on one hand they are necessary, but they should also be distributed in accordance to real farmed land and to real needs.

Very low intensity farming was not seen positively; as some farmers think it is done only because of public payments. (E, m) (2.31)

Higher profit achievement is one reason for farming organic and over all "*which farmer would farm without receiving direct payments?"* (C, m) 4.27

In particular one recent farmer suggests that direct payments should be adjusted based on labour requirements rather than on cultivated area. (C, m) 4.34

5.3.2 Rural lifestyle

In almost all groups generally OF was associated with quality of life. However it was also stated in farmers groups that nowadays less attention is paid to quality of life.

An interesting issue was the incoherence of those who "*renounce for 50 weeks a year to things, just for having 2 weeks of good living conditions (C, m)*". Moreover the interviewee thinks that consumers know that "*OF is good, but expensive. Some people are not aware about how much money (in percentage) they spend for other consumed goods*" *(C, m)*. 1.63

In the group sessions with recent converted lowland farmers, "agriculture was getting more attractive when converting to organic farming, also for the family". (C, m) 1.12

In the same group women's condition on farms were also described. *"Farming especially for women is physically hard, and also psychologically, due to possible disappointing incomes. Moreover life standards of female farmers, which have also to care not only for the farm but also for the family and the children, are not comparable with other female workers if the added value of the job is not taken into account*": (C, f) 1.77

About the future *vision* of the own farm, one new converted producer wishes "to have a farm where the family (as social institution) feels comfortable". *(C, m)*

Another farmer (from mountain area) also wishes *"that the non-agricultural population should recognize and appreciate the hard work and life of farmers".* (E, m) 5.45

5.3.3 Reducing costs for input

In the group of established lowland farmers it was said that farmers often do not cover costs of the production.

5.3.4 Family farm and land ownership

For farmers of all groups to keep on farming over generations was an important issue.

Telling about his personal history into organic, one farmer underlines that his convincement was transferred by the father who was a pioneer in organic horticulture. For the son now farming organically is the only imaginable way and motivation for farming. (E, m) 3.8

Some of the farmer's visions for the future follow are described below:

- Also retired, one participant would like to keep being a farmer (E, m) 2.68

- *"The farm should be managed in such a way to sustain a family economically and continue as an organic farm" (C, m). 1.89*

- *"The farm should remain a worth living environment". (C, m) 1.87*

For several farmers to assure sustainability for the next generation is an important issue:

- *My wish is to leave a healthy soil to the next generation. (C, m)* 4.32
- Wish to keep running the family farm. (E, m) 5.39

5.3.5 Diversification of the farm

Among established organic farmers diversification of agricultural production is important. Farming organically needs diversity. There are different motives which were mentioned:

- The diversification was seen as central element of organic farming.

> "*My basic principle for organic farming is to have diversified farms, rather than just focusing on one product (avoiding milk factories)*" (E, m)
>
> *"Diversification means also involving more than one person in the farm, which is also more interesting"* (E, m) 2.72

- Variety belongs to *„God's creation as well as the maintenance of a natural balance"*

- Diversity helps also to decrease infection risks in animal husbandry (E, m)

The future *vision* of farms implies the maintenance of a diversified production and as one farmer stated, he wished to have a diversified production in future as well.

Among the newly converted mountain farmers, one with suckler cows tells about his positive experience by running the farm with different animals. He is positive about the future and is convinced that diversification can be a good opportunity for organic farming (C, m) 4.75

Moreover diversification was seen as a necessity for organic farming by the BIO SUISSE experts. However it was remarked that it might be difficult to market too many different products in a sustainable way. It would be desirable if consumers would buy just what can be harvest seasonally. The reality is different; consumers expect nowadays always (along the year) a product diversification on the shelves. (P, m) 7.28

5.3.6 Rural employment

Many farmers mentioned that organic farming needs more work although underpaid.

Interestingly it was argued that in order to create or justify more work places in agriculture, "*the added value of organic production system should be recognized. This would imply that the real costs should be covered"*(E, m). 2.37

Production diversification could also represent an approach to generate employment. (E, m) 2.72

In order to attract more workers to the land, a motivation would be offering more places for apprentices for young people on organic farms. (R, m) 8.45

However several farmers (from lowland and mountain area) remarked also the burden of working as farmer from a physical perspective and also because of the high workload.

5.3.7 Fair and transparent prices

Social fairness for all actors taking part in production, processing and trade is mentioned as being the general future key issue for organic farming. (P, m) 6.71

Fairness was also mentioned in connection with price transparency.

It was (ironically) said that "*conventional food should cost more, so that with the "profit" (meant: the environment taxes) the damages of nature can be repaired*" (E, m). 2.3.6

5.3.8 Conflicts between "fairness/livelihood" and organic values:

One farmer from the experienced low land group remarked that a difference among farmers exists. There are those who support social justice in OF, whereas others are interested just on profit and success in the business activity they run.

Another farmer wondered whether the principle of sustainability is also economically feasible. (E, m) 3.47

"Economic, social and ecological sustainability are supposed to be understood as a whole" (E, m) 3.50

Other conflicts were mentioned between diversification and the workload on the farm.

5.3.9 Conflicts of "fairness/livelihood" to society values

There was mainly a discussion about the different dimensions of sustainability which might conflict with societal trends. Achieving social sustainability is strongly dependent from economic pressure. (E, m) 3.38

An expert from BIO SUISSE emphasised that "*Agriculture should principally have all external costs internalised. OF will represent the future ideal farming system when the real macro-economic costs - such as environment costs and transport costs - should be reflected in the product costs, This is the logic consequence of organic farming" (P, m).* 6.30

In the students group it was underlined that actually only a small percentage of the available consumer budget is spent for food; this means that many consumers are not willing to invest more for healthy food. (S, f)

In the pre-test one researcher mentioned the possible consequences of communicating the social standards and costs of OF. According to the participant's opinion this would make prices higher and that is also why label organisations have often refused to take social issues in their standards (R, f) 8.47

Summary of values related to the proposed principle of fairness:

Securing a sufficient farm income was a main concern. Economical sustainability is difficult to achieve, but profitability and farm income can be increased with higher direct payments, direct sales initiatives and higher price premiums for organic products for consumers.

Subsidies were seen controversial, as they might be "unfair" but often represent the only incentive for farming organically.

Although farmers' work is hard, organic farming can represent a good working opportunity, in particular for young generations, and be satisfying as it recalls people to the land.

Keeping the family farm at least over a generation is for several farmers a vision.

A certain diversification of organic farms is crucial but might be rise the workload.

Internal value conflicts within organic farming were mentioned regarding diversification and the workload/labour situation of a farm. An on-going conflicting field is the growing economic pressure to produce cheaper food.

5.4 Values related to the principle of care / precaution

Generally the principle of care was not often mentioned. Taking care of nature was however the most occurring issue within this principle, whilst avoidance of residues was slightly mentioned. GMO was not a major issue.

The principle of care/precaution was not mentioned as first associations.

5.4.1 Avoid residues and pollution from the farm

In general farmers as well as non farmers mentioned that the non- use of chemical inputs is one of the major reasons for converting to organic farming over all.

Among established organic farmers, one remarks the dependency of the conventional agriculture from producers of chemicals, who tend to provide a product for any kind of disease.

Among recent converters, one lowland farmer mentioned the risk of eating chemical residues in food; therefore organic farming tries to avoid spraying and poisoning the nature.

One BIO SUISSE expert expressed his opinion about chemical agriculture, which he defines as "not respectful", even though it has been improved during the last years (it became a bit more respectful).

One student expressed his understanding for food safety as absence of harmful residues, which to him represents a serious problem for allergic people.

5.4.2 Avoid GMO

GMO was only mentioned when discussing how to nourish the world. (E, lowland)

5.4.3 Taking care

Care was understood by several participants as respect of the environment or/and as acting in responsible manner. This issue was often associated with sustainability. In general sustainability was perceived as a complex concept, as it involves several spheres of society, such as the protection of what has been created (healthy human and animal beings) and the respect of environment to a wider extent.

In particular for established farmers there were several statements underlying the importance of this value:

"Respecting nature and all creatures is highly recognized nowadays and belongs to the concept of sustainable economy" (E, m). (5.8)

"*Ecology should be aligned with the reaction of market's and customers' needs, so that a synergy exists*", however "*when the market asks for more vegetable production, it does not respect ecology* (balance) (E, m)". 3.40

One farmer defines organic products as a "*close-to-nature produces*" (E, m).

A pioneer farmer emphasised also the responsibility of the farmer himself.

" When I was still a conventional farmer I had commissioned somebody to treat my maize with a herbicide, but then 14 days later on the nearby meadows of my conventional neighbour the grass was severely damaged by herbicide drift. Finally my insurance had to pay compensation to the neighbour, which however did not question the case. But then I realised that it was my own responsibility and not the one of the insurance firm and I converted our farm to organic" (E, m). 2.8

Another established farmer wondered whether consumers are aware of the specific organic production techniques and also whether consumers would consider green house production as sustainable.

In the group of recent converters (low land) one participant stated that "*the environment and the nature should be looked after in a gentle and responsible way and not be damaged*". (C, m)

For an expert of BIO SUISSE *"Agriculture is suitable for humans, when it is sustainable and holistic, so that people can be integrated in the whole concept of OF"* (P, m). 6.67

In the student group, one person mentioned the importance of having uncontaminated drinking water; as resource it should not be polluted.

5.4.4 Conflicts of "care/precaution" to organic values

Conflicts with organic values were only seen regarding the use of inputs. One student was critical about some natural inputs applied in OF, as he believes some chemical fungicides could probably be less harmful than copper.

5.4.5 Conflicts of "care/precaution" to society values

One conflict related to the principle of care was underlined in the BIO SUISSE session:

"The market is demanding high quantity and at a cheap price. This requires a high intensity which creates conflicts with social fairness and sustainability." (P, m) 6.13

Summary of values related to the proposed principle of care/precaution:

The most important link was made between care and taking responsibility for future generations. Respect and protection of nature are attributes linked to this surveyed value. This is corresponding with the sustainability concept. The use of synthetic chemicals interferes with food quality (residues) and was seen as negative.

Conflicts between the market demand for cheep and high quantities of organic food and social values (fairness principle) were indirectly mentioned.

5.5 Values related to the principle of animal welfare

This principle was mainly discussed in the context of animal welfare and health terms. No issues were mentioned related to the preservation of genetic diversity and appropriate breeds.

It was mainly researchers which first associated animal welfare with adequate animal housing to be assured in managing animals organically.

In the pre-test it was also emphasised that the presence of animal belongs to typical organic farms.

5.5.1 Animal health

This issue was mainly important for mountain farmers.

For one established farmer *"parasites problems in livestock appears; but are more difficult to manage when the husbandry is a monoculture"* (E, m). 2.51

An experienced mountain farmer mentioned that they treat the animals themselves - due to the growing economic pressure and because the veterinarian is not interested to come on an alp. (E, m) 2.20

One recent converted farmer realized that veterinary costs are lower in OF. Moreover a mountain farmer underlines that animal health and performance has improved, also thanks to the use of on-farm produced fodder. However another farmer said *"that animal husbandry performance can decline because of the use of natural fodder, if not being complemented with concentrated feeding stuff".* (C, m)

5.5.2 Animal welfare

In several discussion groups it was emphasised that farming organically implies improving animal welfare and accomplishes animal friendly systems. Managing cattle as naturally as possible gives the farmers the feeling that animals are doing better and living in proper conditions.

One experienced farmer expressed his conviction about the fact that "*consumers expect natural animal husbandry systems*" and the best promotion farmers can do is to "*keep animals in their natural environment and in an appropriate way*" (E, m).

Additionally one interviewee told how consumers are influenced by visual evidences. For example, seeing that animals have enough room to move outside (exercise area of the stable) influence positively consumers' perception on organic animal husbandry, persuading them to invest money for food products coming from proper animal husbandry.

Mountains farmers emphasised that it is important to care for the Alps (for the alpine vegetation), which both for animals as well for tourism is beneficial. (C, m) 4.78

In the BIO SUISSE group discussion animal welfare was related to the social responsibility and to a more respectful relation between nature, resources and animals. It was also

mentioned that the way animals are slaughtered, depends largely on people, in particular on their ethical values, whether they want to slaughter animal with *dignity* or *cruelty. (P, f)*

In the pre test with researchers it was said that "*organic agriculture is the only approach to manage animal husbandry in a respectful manner*". (P, m) 8.8

5.5.3 Conflicts of "animal welfare" to organic values and to society values

Only an external conflict was mentioned in the Bio Suisse expert group: "*When consumers ask for white calf meat is contradicting with a respectful care of animal."* (P, m).

Summary of values related to the principle of animal welfare

Better housing conditions and animal friendly agricultural practices guarantee animal welfare, which is seen as a central element of organic farming

No major conflicts to organic or societal values came up.

5.6 Values related to the principle of soil

Only few issues came up under this topic, mainly dealing with soil conservation and fertility. No statement was linked to the value "connected to the land".

5.6.1 Soil fertility

Soil fertility was only for established organic farmers a major issue. One remarked his concern and his sense of responsibility towards long term soil fertility, as individual motive for converting his farm. (E, m) 2.4

"*Farmer activity should imply the maintenance of soil fertility as well as the attempt to reach the optimum, in order not to be "classified" as hobby farmer* 2.32 (E, m)

"More organic production is great for each soil" (E, low land, m)

5.6.2 Soil conservation

The conservation of stable and better soil structures was seen as important for a sustainable preservation of the environment. (C, m) 1.51

"At least soil should not be irreversibly damaged, as it is meant as a substantial heritage for the next generation, in order to assure its survival." (C, m) 4.24

***Summary of values related* to the principle of soil**

The maintenance of soil fertility represents a relevant concern and factor for farming successfully. Soil conservation was only mentioned by newly converted organic farmers, which suggests whereas experienced farmers were more focussing on the soil fertility.

No conflicts to organic and societal values were identified or expressed.

5.7 Nearness and local

Related to this value many statements were coded, especially on 'short supply chains' and 'trust' (within all group sessions). Trust in particular was a largely discussed topic within group of the experienced farmers from the mountain area.

Issues on 'responsibility and care' were only discussed by experts of BIO SUISSE. The motive 'freshness' was not mentioned at all.

In several groups it was emphasised that marketing and processing structures should be transparent, as well as regional dimensions should be taken into account in order to enhance/improve the image of organic agriculture..

Among experienced farmers, one told about his sales improvement since he had started selling his products directly at the farm gate. In that way he could communicate his commitment and build his own loyal clientele.

Another participant from low land expresses his convincement that "*life without farmers does not go on*" (E, m). Nevertheless he realizes that people are not aware of the societal dependence from agriculture.

One established farmer remarked the broad range of special labelled products, which seems to mislead consumers who mix up organic food products with regional identifiable ones.

According to one participant's statement, in Switzerland there is often a more cantonal identification and sympathy towards local production.

One converting producer wishes he could create a direct sale channel and "*realize proximity to consumers"* rather that referring to wholesale traders which often do not pay fair prices.

It was also expressed the wish to be closer to the market and consequently gain satisfaction from knowing how products reach the market and the final consumers (relevance of traceability from producer point of view). Moreover small production scale is supposed to be more *identifiable (E, m) 6*.70

In future agriculture should become a basis of everyday life for consumers. . (C, m) 1.105

5.7.1 Short supply chains

The relationship to the marketer is quite important for several established low land farmers, because it transfer to consumers a stronger feeling of organic production and it gives farmers further satisfaction for the effort put in the production.

One experienced farmer having meat cattle wished to have more small slaughterhouses in the local area, so that animals do not need to be transported for a long time. 2.53 (E, m)

One established farmer told that he opposed "to export organic *Emmentaler Cheese* in the United States as he strongly disagreed with such intention to make the market too large, especially to export to overseas. Globalisation does not seem to appeal organic farmers! (E, m) 3.17

It was also mentioned that it should be calculated if not short supply chains can also be economic. (E, m) 3.55

For several farmers the *vision* on future development of organic market implies:

- **Establishment of regional market**s, where food supply becomes self-sufficient, this can also be expanded to the whole of Switzerland (E, m) (3.45; 3.58)
- **Decentralisation** of commercialisation structures, (E, m) 3.62
- **Relationship** to negotiation partners, in order to realize fair prices (E, m) 3.81

Several participants of the newly converted lowland farmers underlined the importance of short supply chains as being a mean for attracting consumers to the farms and for creating a possibility to commercialize at regional level.

Regionalism is important, because "*it allows products to get closer to consumers"* (C, m) and one complains "*not to have the possibility to sell our products at a regional level"* (C, m); in fact "*what in future will gain importance in the food production, is more regionality within Switzerland"* (C, m).

It was also mentioned that BIO SUISSE logo (the bud) is not seen very well suited for promoting regional products, (C, m) (1.69)

Products sold at farmer's gate taste different from those which have been transported long distances (*food miles*). As example meat was mentioned: animals forced to travel long distances are stressed (C, m)

Open gates of farms allow consumers to have a look at the production: they can *feel, perceive, smell* and *experience*. (C, m) (1.84)

Several farmers wish to invest more time and effort to communicate to their clientele. For instance during guided tours they wish to be efficient in providing information and communicating clearly, not only in favour of themselves, but also in favour of Swiss consumers. (C, m) (1.86)

One newly converted organic farmer (mountain) underlines the initial difficulties in establishing a lasting direct marketing with consumers, but once achieved purchasers can appreciate his products and understand the real value of organic food products. 4.6

Important is also the provenience of fodder. It is stated "*I rather buy Swiss low input cereals than organic fodder from Rumania*". (C, m) 4.51

The slogan "*from the region for the region*" occurs sometimes among participants, although perceived as hard to be completely realized. (C, m) (4.77; 4.79) It represents anyway a wish and a hope from producer, as well as for BIO SUISSE experts.

For several farmers at last the link between regional production and regional consumption is supposed to be the logic consequence of implementing organic agriculture system. This does also contribute to a higher personal satisfaction for the farmers. (E, m) 3.33

One expert of BIO SUISSE expressed his original *vision* of organic farms, as being small and close to consumers, consequently achieving also city proximity to the closest land area.

BIO SUISSE experts underline the importance to build co-operations among consumers who want to work in farms. (P, m) 6.73

In the researcher group the importance of open days on farms was mentioned. *"Nowadays many young families bring their children to visit farms on open days, so that they can enjoy some of the living world."* (R, m) 8.30

5.7.2 Personal trust

It was a general consensus that to a trustworthy attitude towards farmers is the possibility to visit farms and realize what consumers are consuming.

One farmer underlines that when producers are committed to organic produce and shows it, and then they can also reach consumers and build a trustworthy relationship. (E, m) 2.66

Moreover farmers consider as very relevant to establish a good understanding relationship with consumers which helps for a better understanding. (E, m) 2.76

In particular producers seem to be interested in consumers' satisfaction, which makes them also happy. (E, m) 3.34

One mountain farmer expresses his concerns regarding products labelled with *Heidi*, as being natural, but not necessarily organic (fade organic): "*false vision of organic*". (E, m) 5.13

It was also underlined that Swiss logo for organic is fortunately known by consumers. More effort should however be put in communicating and highlighting differences between the *Knospe* and the *Heidi* trademark and on making the distinction between the two logos as clear as possible. *Real organic products should be clearly separated from other products which give the impression to be organic. This will be one of the major challenges for organic food* (E, m) (5.23):

Among trust-builders influencing consumers' image of organic products from the Alps there is the closeness of farms to polluting areas, like roads or military areas (E, m) (5.38), whereas among trust-builders encouraging producers is the unification of organic standards between EU and CH (E, m) (5.18):

On the other hand some farmers complain about imported organic food products from countries which do not follow as strict standards as the Swiss ones. In that way market competition is not so fair (E, m) 5.34

For several newly converted producers it was important to meet the consumers' expectations and get an appreciation for their products.1.14 (C, m) 1.59 (C, m), 4.6

"Making consumers appreciate organic products can represent a motivation for producers to manage the production in the best way" (C, m) 4.13

Another participant expresses his wish to enhance credibility of his products.

According to BIO SUISSE experts, organic farmers interact with the environment in the most respectful way. Involvement in environmental issues started in the 60's when proximity to areas where food was produced started to gain importance/relevance.

In the researcher group it was mentioned that authenticity of organic production best summarizes the way to follow to reach consumers' expectations and gain their long-term trust.

5.7.3 Conflicts "nearness" to organic values

As nowadays consumers can find anything at any time on the market, organic farmers feel "penalized". However they can offer seasonal produce and in particular try selling it as local as possible.

5.7.4 Conflicts "nearness" to societal values

Some conflicts were pointed out by experienced low land farmers, in particular:

- The change in purchasing habits: less time and effort put in grocery shopping**.** (E, m). 2.56

- Concern for not being able to overcome consumers' scepticism against organic food (E, m) 3.21

- Organic food products are too expensive (sceptical are not ready to pay):

- Positive consumer's attitude towards sustainable products and market behaviour. (E, m) 3.23

- Real costs of energy and the complaints about an energy tax (E, m) 2.55

Summary of values related to nearness and local

There was a general view that direct sales and marketing enhance close relationship between producers and consumers. Trust-builders/factors are: close relationship to consumers, traceability, communication, local origin/productions, farm visit (open gate).

Mainly two conflicts were mentioned: Globalisation interferes with organic principle of respect of natural growth (seasonality). Regionalism and the higher costs of organic food products enter in conflict with nowadays lifestyle (fast shopping and fast eating habits, cheap food)

5.8 Holism and systems thinking

General aspects on these issues were mostly expressed by non-farmers (i.e. by BIO SUISSE experts and FIBL researchers). Thinking and managing the whole system was the main topic developed through all group discussions.

5.8.1 Holistic approach to farming

In general, sustainability involves all three major dimensions of the society, which are economic, social and ecological, which according to one participant's statement should be kept and developed together. It is "*strategically successful to keep the three dimensions together*" when farming organically. (E, m) 3.50

Some of the farmers commented the term "human dimension" in a critical way as it could imply that the human being is the central focus point, but this would contradict with the holistic approach and sustainability. There is here an inherent conflict (E, m) 6.5

Other farmers raised that ethics means more then just respecting nature but means an attitude respecting the dignity of living organisms (E, m) 6.5 and 6.79

BIO SUISSE experts expressed the following motives:

- Concern and respect towards nature and it's needs;
- Holism in OF is meant "*to be suitable for everyone and everything*" (P, m);
- A way of visualizing life's philosophy is to create a sphere where it is pleased to produce and consume food products: (P, m) 6.63
- "*Whenever holism and sustainability are accomplished, human beings are satisfied*". (P, m) 6.67

In particular what would raise interests of consumers would is to highlight the positive sides/benefits of OF (P, m) 6.74

For the BIO SUISSE experts it was important that organic agriculture maintains its human dimension that means it still can we cannot handle anymore. (P, f) 6.6. It also was mentioned that the internationalization makes the system more anonymous.

One student was fascinated by the integrity in organic agriculture, in particular how aware the actors are in being part of the whole system, which is not fragmented. She had a positive *vision* of the future development of organic agriculture due to its innovative approach (Student, f).

Also in the pre test with researchers organic agriculture was defined by a participant as innovative sector, where "*growth, confidence and hope reign*". 8.6 (R, m)

One researcher expressed the feeling of responsibility towards landscape, environment. 8.7

At least it was stated that "people feel well in (working in the) organic sector". 8.19 (R, m)

5.8.2 Thinking and managing the whole system

Several participants from almost all group sessions recalled the concept of picturing organic agriculture as a whole (holistic principle).

For instance one farmer described organic cereal production as involving/implying "*healthy soil, healthy animals and healthy food*". (E, m) (2.75)

Some experienced farmers underlined the importance of producers' commitment in the system: "*It's better less, but convinced farmers*" (E, m) 2.78

In addition one lowland farmer said it was convincing for him that in the end only few farm adjustments were needed to convert to organic farming, and that fundamental rules/principles of OF are satisfactory for committed farmers. (E, m) 2.77; 2.80

Mainly for established farmers to follow the basic principles was seen as important.

"*We should keep following the basic principles of OF*" 2.81 (E, m)

"*Organic principles are keynotes in itself*" 2.77 (E, m)

Behind OF there are not only technical skills and management, but there exists also a philosophical approach and a religious dimension. One newly converted farmer, declaring to come from a catholic environment, named the respect for the earth as an example of "*religiousness*" existing in OF.

One of the BIO SUISSE experts mentioned the unavoidable interference of agricultural production and nature and reminded a pessimistic *vision* of the organic farming system. In fact it was stated that "*the respect for sustainability and holism* (in OF) *is limited by interference with nature. Animal domestication, forestry, agricultural practice should be conducted with respect* (on nature), *although they represent an interference (towards nature)"* (P, m) 6.77

In the students' focus group nature was described as "*flexible system, working wonderfully*" and "*present of god*". (7.10) Moreover mankind and nature are seen as a whole, where food cycles should be closed and where there the relationship between plants and their pests should be studied. (St, f) (7.9)

In the pre test with researchers the 68's years were mentioned for promoting "*peace and love movement*" which nowadays seems to be materialized in reality through ideals of OF. (R, m) (8.22)

5.8.3 Learning from nature

In general closeness to nature and respect for nature and environment are positive factors of organic agriculture.

One farmer (established low land) stated that "*it has been a challenge to establish a link to nature*" and "*being independent from chemicals*" (E, m).

One student stated that "*you should work with nature and to bring out the best from nature, without letting chemicals maintain the whole*" (St, f). 7.11

5.8.4 First association "holism and systems"

Two researchers defined holistic system as:

- Respectful towards the planet earth
- In accordance with plants, biology and humans

5.8.5 Conflicts of "holism" to organic values

One conflict underlined by an expert from the BIO SUISSE is that human needs clashes with needs of nature. (P, m) 6.4

Another expert highlighted that „*the more actors are in OF the more the competition increases. The worst will be, when the system will penalize the cooperation between the actors and in this way destroy its own basis*". (P, m) 6.12

Within the concept of sustainability economic, social and ecological dimensions interact strictly with each other. It is however complex to build an economy which is social and ecologically sound. "*It's difficult to reach all three objectives of sustainability*!" (St, f)

5.8.6 Conflicts of "holism" to societal values

The general societal development, especially the growing application of electronics in everyday life, can interfere with organic farmers' activities. (E, m) 3.20

According to one BIO SUISSE expert, faming in a sustainable way is in itself not compatible with the population growth, in particular because human beings often tend to think self-centred and to satisfy their own needs, rather than approaching to productive activities as being part of a whole. (P, m) 6.5

Summary of values related to holism and systems thinking

The holistic approach of organic agriculture was seen as central element and was strongly linked to the 3 dimensions of sustainability. Several participants emphasised the importance of the Principles of OF which should be always respected. Working in harmony with nature can lead to successful outcomes.

Conflicts to organic and societal values were seen to the fact that agriculture focuses often on humans and is interfering in any case with nature. Organic agriculture however tend to be more respectful towards the whole system.

5.9 Professional pride

'Professional specialisation' and 'flexibility and freedom' were the most occurring points mentioned within this issue, mostly by low land producers, less from non-farmers, who commented from a more general viewpoint.

Farmers from mountain areas expressed opinions only related to the 'efficiency of production'.

Conviction about being organic farmers can start from willingness to continue to run the family farm, as previous generations did. 3.8 (E, m)

Commitment and respect to nature represent a *guiding motive* for converting, according to BIO SUISSE experts' opinion. 6.44 (P, m)

Among FIBL researchers it was stated:

- "*I can identify myself and my personality in the organic production system*"; (R, m) 8.1
- "*I feel that running an organic farm is difficult. What makes it really typical is the farmer. He has to be active, has to meditate, has to be smart and to deliver committed work*" (R, m) 8.15
- *"At the beginning of the organic movement protest attitude were the original motives for developing a constructive new strategy, whilst nowadays this is less the case. Today in order to keep people in the organic farming sector, it is needed to maintain a high professional level in any area involved: research, advisory work and practical work. As a matter of fact also farmers have now specialized associations and markets. People working in organic agriculture still are somehow critical and want to do something special but in a very professional way. (R, m) 8.24*

5.9.1 Good husbandry

For several farmers it was important that they had a positive feedback from consumers and the society.

One established organic farmer (low land) remarked the importance of being recognized as a good farmer. In fact he noticed that *"by showing and explaining to consumers the way he manages the farm enhances a positive understanding between producers and consumers ". (E, m) 3.22*

What convinced me was that I was able to do something positive for those consumers which were sceptical towards the traditional agriculture but were interested in a healthy food production. (E, m) 1.5

The idea is, not just doing something but do something which you like and where you have the feeling that you are needed as an organic farmer.

A researcher says that it gives a better feeling to be active in the first line, than lined up in the back (R, m) 8.31

5.9.2 Professional specialisation

For several farmers working as organic farmer is self-defined as "*joyful and voluntary* (choice)", as well as being a big challenge, as it implies a strong commitment into the system itself. In addition one participant remarks his effort put in reading books to broaden his knowledge at the beginning of the conversion period.

According to one established farmer, converting to organic implied also an agronomic challenge, since he felt he is producing something different from others. He stated: "*I experienced many new things*". (E, m)

Conversion is justified by dissatisfaction and lack of hope in the future of conventional farming. ("*conventional agriculture is deprecated*"; R, m) In fact farming organically represents a way of diversifying the production, which also brings enjoyment and pleasure to organic farmers.

Organic farmers picture themselves as being "*interested in new things*" and "*committed to their work*". Organic farming represents "*a chance to develop oneself professionally as well as within the family*". (C, m)

In the students' focus group one recognized that "*you renounce to get the maximum*" and "*you get satisfied with less*"; as it is hard to carry off without applying chemicals. (St, f)

5.9.3 Flexibility and freedom

In general interviewees mentioned some attractive characteristics of organic agriculture such as 'nature friendly', independence from chemical industry and closed nutrient cycles.

It is very important for organic farmers to work independently; this issue was mentioned several times and in several focus groups.

Farming organically "*gives the chance to carry one's own business/work in own hand*" (C, m) (1.20; 1.28), moreover it represents "*a way of farming freely and independently*" (C, m) (2.11). Farmers feel that they take independent decisions and consequently they feel responsible for the way they farm. (C, m) (2.9). The organic seed was mentioned as an example.

I am working independent from industry. Nowadays we have to be careful not to end up where we have been no more being self-determined. We risk that our products are no more exclusive. (E, m) (1.28).

5.9.4 Efficiency of production trough a certain specialization and cooperation

In some of the farmers groups it was discussed that it would make more sense to specialize the production, e.g. in a village that somebody makes bread and another cheese, rather than tending to total independence. (E, m) (3.85)

It was also mentioned that with organic farming it is possible to feed the world (E, m) (2.30)

Several farmers mentioned that an efficient and competitive production is also reachable without using chemicals, which is a big challenge for research as one student mentioned. (St, f) (7.15)

5.9.5 First association "Professional pride"

Working close to nature, respecting it and independent from chemical industry seem to build organic farmers' pride.

5.9.6 Conflicts of "Professional pride" to societal values

Every country should be able to nourish its own population and farmers should be able to provide sufficient amount of food even during critical periods which is in contradiction with the trend to globalization. (C, M) 4.62

Summary of values related to personal pride

An important factor for organic farmers for professional pride was the recognition by consumers and the society. Furthermore for many organic farmers it is important to work independently; which is contributing to the high commitment and involvement in the production systems.

The decision for farmers whether to specialize to reduce the workload or to diversify the production in order to have more income sources was a controversial issue.

No conflicts to organic values arose. On the other hand the efficiency of the production to nourish the world without maximisation of yields was mentioned.

5.10 Country specific issues

Throughout all group sessions several participants mentioned also values-related issues such as solidarity and social dimension of farmers' work, and concern for organic farming standards harmonisation. Conventionalisation of organic sector, organic supply chains and organic market performances were also largely discussed.

5.10.1 Solidarity

Many statements, in particular from farmers, mentioned solidarity. The general understanding behind this major issue was to work together in a cooperative way and following common objectives, but also with a social engagement/involvement of farmers. This was also partly linked to discussions about social sustainability.

Established organic farmers agreed in putting more effort in collaboration between farmers, as the economic pressure from "outside" is becoming stronger. The challengers with the over-supply with organic milk and how important it is that organic farmers have a unified position were mentioned several times. However there were some controversial thoughts about "competition vs. cooperation". On one hand cooperation can help to reach shared goals, on the other hand the competition between the farmers can be challenging. 3.31, 3.34

Social sustainability has for long time been neglected, whilst all three dimensions of sustainability (social, economic and ecological) should be developed together. *"If farmers do not work on the social dimension in following common goals, organic farms will be divided from each other. Organic farmers should not behave on the market like conventional one." (E, m)*

"Organic should grow not only quantitative, but also qualitative; in particular the social relationships should be preserved. Time should be found to develop our contact between ourselves, which also helps to have better contact to the "outside" " (E, m).

Always the same convinced farmers are the active ones, whereas those less committed are taken by market mechanisms (E, m). 3.77

Whereas solidarity in the pioneer phase of organic farming was the main motive newly converted farmers pretended to be more independent from each other and tend to be more competitive rather than building strategic alliances. In fact it was stated that "*big market organisations take advantage of our fights to set low prices*" (C, m).

"Farmers should show more solidarity and consequently defend the basic principles of organic agriculture" (C, m).

One mountain farmers stated strongly that „*individualism destroy collaboration*" (C, m). 4.21

Some researchers had identified pioneer farmers as most socially active. The social dimension of OA is particularly important to them. Moreover they were complaining that the BIO SUISSE standards do not yet imply social standards to a large extent. It would be desirable that *there should be a synergy and cooperation between anti-globalisation movement, farmers' associations in the third world and organic organisations in the first world"* As example they referred to *Max Havelaar* labelled products.

5.10.2 Conventionalisation of organic sector

For many farmers there were strong concerns about the conventional development of the organic farming sector.

Several established organic farmers analysed the development of the last 10 years. One farmer from low land area underlined in particular that those *"converters motivated only by financial support are not committed at all" (E, m).*

In addition values have changed meanwhile and turned to globalisation and neo-liberalism, which represent a counter-stream for the organic farming movement.

"*Growth leads to neglect the social dimension" (E, m);*

"It will be difficult to keep farming organically in a motivated way because of unfair prices, which are getting more and more similar to conventional ones"(E, m).

Also newly converted farmers had concerns regarding the conventional development of the sector. One criticised the loss of seasonality: *"Nowadays vegetable productions are more and more industrialized so that almost anything can be available at any time. In this way, if the sector becomes too big, organic sector will loose its exclusivity* (C, m).

Discount supermarkets were also mentioned as misleading consumer's opinions on food quality. It was stated: "*soon the cheapest food will be good enough*" (C, m). However some farmers also recognized that if the price will be lower, more consumers would buy organic products. There was a consensus that in particular farmers should be able to set the price, rather than intermediaries, which seek profits only.

A newly converted farmer said directly that "*if subsidies are cut, we stop farming organically*"(C, m).

Also several experts from BIO SUISSE were criticising the commercial development of OF and the fact that

"The economic dimension of OF is becoming too commercial: OF is too much globalized; it has lost its authenticity" (P, f)

Pioneers which have leaded the movement with an idealistic view loose influence" (P f).

"OF should move back from the long supply chain to a more adapted smaller scale production with pursuing long term goals rather than short term ones" (P, m)

"OF is getting more a more commercialised and bureaucratic, this has nothing to do any more with nature. This is eco-imperialism" (P, f).

It was also mentioned that many actors who started with organic development but dismissed their activity, because of strong competitors such as *Nestlé* and *Chiquita*, with whom small scale organic producers cannot compete with.

A student and a researcher mentioned that there are also organic productions which are not labelled and have their own concept of organic farming, e.g. in Africa but also some farms in Switzerland having stopped with the certification. 7.19, 8.35

5.10.3 Market cooperation and market development

The organic market cooperation and development was a major issue for several producer groups.

For an experienced organic farmers and *"farming organically makes always sense, because of nature/environment respect, even though market share is small/low. Appropriate market for organic food products is therefore needed." (E, m).* There were different views and ideas how the suitable structure for the organic market should be, in particular, when "*OA is growing within a saturated market*" (E, m). 3.15

Some farmers found that more direct marketing has a higher added value and gives more security.

Some farmers had concerns because of the little growth of the organic market and complained that sales volume has stopped. One participant replies to this, saying that "*we should not only complain, rather react*" (E, m).

Several newly converted farmers found that "*producers should always be aware of the market needs and development and be able to take advantage from its development. The existing market could represent a platform on which organic market can develop*" (C, m). The question is what we as farmers can contribute or what we can do together with others in marketing (C, m).

A conflict was mentioned if *"the market starts demanding more vegetables, then the market becomes les respectful towards ecology" (E, m).*

5.10.4 Communication strategies in marketing

Efficient communication was a „hot" topic for farmers.

Several the established farmers mentioned the relevance of communicating the added value of organic products, so that the society can appreciate farmers' work and understand what's behind OA system:

"*For the future I wish more farmers, more public work, good products, more communication*" (E, m).

Some farmers wished that more emphasis in the communication should be given to environmental issues as well as the regionality ("*Organic is not much present in people's mind*" 4.23). This would help consumers to understand farmers' commitment to their work activity.

There was a discussion about the communication strategies of the 2 main supermarket chains in Switzerland. Coop's strategy was seen as more successful and more helpful for organic production. Several mountain farmers criticised however Migros, in particular because of the new "Heidi" logo for mountain products, but which are processed in the low-land areas.

"Products, like Heidi labelled ones, are cheaper and promoted as being "natural". This misleads to disappointment of consumers who think to be buying organic products" (E, m)

5.10.5 Organic supply chains

Related to the discussion about the conventional development of the organic market several farmers argued for organic supply chains: Commitment, competence, integration, involvement and personal relationship were mentioned as important factors for successful marketing of organic products:

- *"All actors of supply chain should be convinced/ feel to belong to organic supply chain*" (C, m). 1.55
- *Organic products should be marketed by organic actors, as they know more about the philosophy of organic farming (C, m) 1.74, 3.68*
- *Farmers should be integrated in the market structure. (E, m) 3.35*
- *The personal relation to the traders and buyers is very important (E, m) 3.7*

5.10.6 Development of standards and certification

The current development of the regulatory framework and the standards can affect strongly farmers' motivation to keep farming organically. Several farmers criticised strongly the inspection and certification system. In fact they seem to be too complex, too much bureaucracy and not harmonised European-wide. Participants complained about the fast changes in the regulation ("*changes bring often confusion and misunderstanding*"), on the other side they also remarked the lack of harmonisation within the EU.

"What today is allowed can tomorrow be forbidden. Standards change constantly." (4.81)

In the groups of both established as well as converting farmers too much bureaucracy and paper-work was often mentioned.

"We have *increasing prescriptions, decreasing motivations*" (E, m).

"*There are too many rules and prohibitions. The costs are too high*" (E, m).

Further more converters underlined that the BIO SUISSE standards are sometimes too *complicated: too much theory, too little practice. (C, m).* Some felt standards were not regionally adapted. Therefore more advisory activity would be recommended and effective.

Interesting was that the experts of BIO SUISSE complained about both the non harmonised system of standards and inspection, recognizing that bureaucracy is also seen as a burden for producers.

Students criticised the too many different labels and standards on one hand and the neglection of social standards on the other hand "t*oo many different labels bring confusion - what is really organic and what is not?"* 7.15

As a conflict farmers noted that in the future "*Organic and conventional (standards) are becoming closer: there will be less differences"* (E, m) 5.6; Organic could be considered as standard and not as traditional agriculture anymore (P, m) 6.26;

5.10.7 Agricultural politicises

Mainly in the researchers group there was a discussion about the future role of organic agriculture in politics: "Organic farming should be the model for the whole agriculture". It was noted that in the pioneer phase organic farming had a strong political compounded, which now with the globalisation might get again important.

Summary of country specific issues

In particular the conventional development of the organic agriculture sector and the growing bureaucracy and set of norms were seen as the main negative sector. More cooperation, more solidarity, a better communication and a reflection about the political role of organic agriculture in the future will be necessary.

6 Discussion and conclusions

Almost all participants were engaged in organic agriculture based on a certain believe or because they just like organic farming. Not only farmers had strong concerns with regard to the current development. The discussion about the basic values and the over-arching principles of organic agriculture were seen as very positive and a move in the right direction.

The health of the ecosystem were in the discussions several times a fundamental value.

Fair trading conditions were seen for many participants as a core issue. The producers did see the maintenance of their family farm and the farm succession as major issue. Many farmers were against an industrialisation of agriculture and against a too strong

commercialisation of their products. Several farmers and several groups mentioned the problem of the lack of solidarity between farmers. Solidarity should get more importance in the future. Several farmers wished that there will be better cooperation between farmers and market actors as well as a better common strategy with a clear concept.

Another issue was a truthful and careful processing, which is also for farmers very relevant. The farmers as well as the experts found that the added value of the production, the ideologic content of the products, and as well as the special intrinsic quality of the products are very important. Furthermore farmers and experts were in favour of "100 % entirely supply and market chains with only organic product, where not only the producers but also the trader and sales staff is convinced of organic agriculture. Many producers found that the communication with costumers, in particular public relation, will be important to survive on a competitive market and must be improved.

A secure livelihood, surviving on he market and the strong workload were for many producers a major issues. Another central discussion point was the overregulation and inspection. Not only the producers but all main actors wished that the standard/rules are more comprehensive and the inspection work less bureaucratic. This issue is highly relevant not only for organic farmers.

Experts saw a potential for an adaptation of the standards. In particular the health of the Ecosystem and the regionality are seen as key topics.

One recent converted farmer had made an excellent final conclusion at the end of the discussion round:

> *„The great diversity, which we have in Switzerland, is interesting. Everybody has small and other problems. But finally we have to work together and to learn to cooperate. We have also to learn once not using the hay folk and to fight bor our ideas and basic values. We should not put the head in the soil, but we should reflect, what can be made better with what we have. We should not leave the decision to somebody which is sitting in an office, but we should decide ourselves and together with others. But it will be difficult" (Recent converter lowland area, m)*

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8 Annex I Positive and negative associations with the term “organic”

a) The twelve most mentioned issues

The plus and minus before the keyword corresponds to positive or negative associations. In brackets the number represents the times the issue was mentioned.

1. – (22) **Too many rules**: all groups
2. + (17) **Health**: all groups
3. – (13) **More work and costs**: all groups, less mentioned by farmers from mountain area

+ (13) **Animal friendly husbandry**: all groups, in particular students and pioneer mountain farmers

4. + (12) **Quality of life**: all groups experienced farmers from mountain area
5. + (11) **Farming with nature**: mountain farmers, BIO SUISSE experts und students
6. + (10) **No chem.-synthetic substances**: mainly students; not at all BIO SUISSE experts and experienced mountain farmers
7. + (9) **Soil conservation**: all groups except experienced mountain farmers
8. + (8) **Sustainability**: all groups, v.a. BIO SUISSE experts
9. + (7) **Closed cycles**: established farmers, mountain farmers, students.

– (7) **not reliable / authentic**: mainly. (mistrusted by students)

– (7) **Too high selling price**: mainly students (to be interpreted as consumers’ viewpoint)

b) Attempt to structuring spontaneous associations on decreasing relevance basis:

1. **Pos**: the most occurring keywords summarizing the theme of **ecology and protection** counted 55 mentions. Behind it cycling, farm diversification, farming with nature, avoidance of chem.-synthetic substances, sustainability and protection of nature were included in this concept. This issue was arisen from all groups, but in particular by mountain farmers, students and experts.

   Neg: ecology was also mentioned as negative 8 times. Mainly from students, who criticised the use of copper, the avoidance of herbicides and plant protection means. Also newly converted mountain farmers who mentioned plastic wastes of packaging.

2. **Neg**: **economic problem** was the second most mentioned theme discussed (43 times). In all groups the amount of effort needed in OA is higher than in conventional farming. Students underline high selling prices and unstable yields.
3. **Neg**: **OA organisation** was mentioned 44 times. All groups - in particular mountain farmers - complained about too much bureaucracy, work-intensive control system and about the fact that there are too many regulation/rules and that these change too often.
4. **Pos**: **professional pride** was mentioned 26 times. Within this issue life quality is to be included, as well as the impulse to be active and to live/survive from farming activity. Mountain farmers did not mention this theme, established farmers from low land did.

5. **Pos**: **product quality** was mentioned 25 times. It includes product healthiness, its valuation and ideological content. In particular experienced farmers and students did raise the health dimension.

   Neg: product quality was also 4 times negatively associated to organic. Students and one established farmer believe that organic quality is not better than conventional and there are too many labels. One established farmer did not wish organic products to be embodied in the convenience goods.

6. **Pos**: in 17 cases **animal husbandry** was associated to OA. Under it animal friendly practices and avoidance of achieving high performances was included.

   Neg: two mountain farmers noticed a negative influence on animal welfare due to avoidance of the use of bulls from embryo transfer and also for common slaughter.

7. **Neg**: **market development** was mentioned 17 times. Some feared from dependence and globalisation.
8. **Negative**: **lack of reliance** on labels was mentioned 13 times, mainly from students.

   Pos: credibility was also 2 times more positively mentioned from BIO SUISSSE experts.

9. **Pos: economical potential** was mentioned 10 times. Several farmers, also from the newly converted farmers saw in OA the future orientation of agricultural system.
10. **Pos**: **soil preservation** was mentioned 9 times, from all groups except for the newly converted farmers.

In addition:

- **System**: **Pos**: holism, reliability, harmony of human beings with nature and animal belong to organic system.
  Neg: to one expert OA is not anthropocentric enough and with elements of fascism and OA should be more the general standard of agriculture.
- **Nearness and localness** were mentioned 5 times. Organic would have a good image and for someone regionality belongs to organic.
- **Marketing**: **Pos**: organic was mentioned 3 times as being a good potential for marketing, through market growth and sales.
  Neg: an established farmer underlined the existence of marketing problems.

Table 4 First spontaneous positive associations to Organic

Positive Issues			CH 1	CH 2	CH 3	CH 4	CH 5	BIO SUISSE	Stu-dents	Total
Products	Food Quality/ food Safety	Health	2	3	2	1	4	1	4	17
		Added valued products				2	1			3
		Message in products							2	2
		Authentic products		1	1					2
		careful processing	1							1
Credibility/ Authentic		Strict control system	1							1
		Authentic						2		2
Ecology	Recycling	Closed cycles		1		1	3		3	7
		Less feed input				1				1
	Diversity	Multifunctionality/ Diversified farms				1				1
		Biodiversity				1				1
	Protection/Care	Environment friendly	1	1	2	1	2	1	2	6
		Sustainability, general	1	3	2	1	2	4	1	8
		Authentic production techniques						1	1	2
		Landscape preservation			1					1
		No chemical-synthetic inputs	1	1	1		1		6	10
		No GMO				1				1
		Alternative plant protection							1	1
		Respect for nature						2		2
		Farming with nature				4	2	3	2	11
		Appropriate technology/production system				1	2			3

Animal		Better animal health			1		1			2
		Animal friendly husbandry	1	1	1	1	4	1	4	13
		No maximal yields		1	1					2
Soil		Soil preservation	1	2	2		2	1	1	9
Economical potentials		More direct payments				2				2
		Better price				1			1	2
		Future-oriented economy		1	1	1		1		4
		Life saving strategy	1							1
		Less-intensive arable land area		1						1
Market potentials		Market growth						1		1
		Good sales				1	1			2
Professional pride		Societal acceptance			1				1	2
		To be innovative		1			1	1		3
		To be active		2	2			1		5
		Livelihood		2						2
		Professional challenge	1							1
		Social involvement						1		1
		Enjoy food quality	3	2	3			3	1	12
Nearness		Good image			2		1		1	4
		Regionalism		1						1
System		Whole farm conversion		1						1
		Holism						1		1
		Harmony with nature & animal				1		1	1	3
Varia		Biological Agriculture: bio = Life and logic						1		1
			CH 1	**CH 2**	**CH 3**	**CH 4**	**CH 5**	**BIO SUISSE**	**Stu-dents**	**Total**

Table 5 First spontaneous negative associations to Organic

Negative Issues										
			CH 1	**CH 2**	**CH 3**	**CH 4**	**CH 5**	**BIO SUISSE**	**Stu-dents**	**Total**
Products	Quality	Not better than conventional			1				1	2
		Too many labels							1	1
		Trend versus convenience	1							1
Credibility/ Authentic		Not truthful	1	1				1	4	7
		Not real organic farmers		2				1		3
		Diluted basic principles	1	1						2
		Lack of social standards						1		1
Ecology		Use of copper							2	2
		No herbicides, many weeds							2	2
		More pests without pesticides							2	2
		Imported products.							1	1
		Wastes (plastic)					1			1
Animal welfare		No embryo transfer bulls					1			1
		Slaughter of animals				1				1
Economic problems		Too high selling price	1	1				1	4	7
		Luxury goods						2	1	3
		Economic pressure		1	1					2
		Unstable yields			2				3	5
		More work and costs	1	2	4		1	3	2	13
		Sales problems			1	1	1			3
		Decreasing product price			1	1	1		1	4
		Lack of organic premium				1				1
		More expensive production			1	1				2
		Difficult production			3					3
Market problems		Marketing problems			1					1
Problems concerning market development		Non organic customers				1		1		2

		Wholesaler competition						1		1
		Individualism				1				1
		Lack of strategies, general				1				1
		Market not specific for organic		1				1		2
		More organic firms			1					1
		Societal non acceptance of society		1						1
		Too few research in organic		1						1
		Globalisation			1			1		2
		Dependence from big enterprises						3		3
Organisation	Bureaucracy	Too much bureaucracy				5				5
	Standards	Too many norms		2	2	6	7	5		22
		Often changes of standards				3	3			6
		Incomprehensible requirements			1	1				2
		Complicated requests for exceptions				1				1
		Difficult conversion		1						1
		Low flexibility				1	1			2
		Labour-intensive preparation for inspection			1	1	2	1		5
System		Not anthropocentric enough						1		1
		Bio should be standar						1		1
		Elements of fascism						1		1
			CH 1	CH 2	CH 3	CH 4	CH 5	BIO SUISSE	Stu-dents	Total