

Nordic Association of Agricultural Scientists —



NJF Seminar 422

**Fostering healthy food systems
through organic agriculture -
Focus on Nordic-Baltic Region
- International Scientific Conference**

Tartu, Estonia, 25-27 August 2009

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PROGRAMME

ABSTRACTS

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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Estonian University of Life Sciences
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Nordic Association of Agricultural Scientists

Organic school meal systems – towards a more sustainable nutrition

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Nutritional and health problems related to life style alarm European governments. The interest in school meals as a lever for change is increasing because young people reside longer in public institutions and their often unsatisfactory eating patterns might be counterbalanced by healthy school food. Organic food contributes to sustainable nutrition, and hence is an interesting starting point for healthier menus and food education. The research project 'innovative Public Organic food Procurement for Youth' (iPOPY) studies efficient ways to implement organic food in public serving outlets for young people. The project has four explorative work packages studying policies, supply chains and certification, the young consumers' perception and learning about sustainability and organic food, and health effects of organic menus in Denmark, Finland, Italy, and Norway. Finland and Italy serve a warm school meal daily for all pupils, whereas Denmark and Norway rely on packed lunch from home. Italy and Denmark have ambitious goals for organic food in schools, whereas Finland and Norway have not (yet). Political decisions are required, but not enough, to ensure well functioning organic school meal systems.

Catering for sustainability: building a dialogue on organic milk

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As an industrialised high quality food commodity, organic milk would present a reliable option to feature catering for sustainability. However, its use in schools, hospitals and workplaces is minimal in Finland at the moment. To boost perspective taking on organic milk among caterers, a co-developmental dialogue in terms of organic milk was employed by researchers and practitioners. The first turn of the dialogue was taken by the researcher who invited the caterers to focus on organic milk; the second was offered by practitioners, who disclosed their views about organic milk in individual interviews and focus group discussions. The third turn was taken by the researcher, who shared information with caterers about their issues and suggested the test use of organic milk. As the fourth turn of the dialogue the caterers responded to the researcher by their chosen practices for the (test) use of organic milk. The dialogue as a participatory research method seemed to offer new ways to promote catering for sustainability.