Assessment of the current situation of organic food consumption in the Lebanese emerging market

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Lebanese emerging organic market

Low organic production vs. increasing local consumption

- **Fast emerging organic market**: Highly diversified and distributed organic outlets, availability of almost all types of organic products
- **Organic products supply CAN NOT meet demand**: Imported products are up to 80% in the local market

**Investigating organic food consumption in Lebanon, relating purchasing behavior to human values**

*Using:* Means-end chain theory, by means of: laddering interviews (N: 180 Lebanese organic consumers),

*To reveal:* The most important attributes of organic products for the Lebanese consumers, the consequences of eating organic food, and their association to the consumers’ values
Results of laddering interviews

Lebanese organic consumers

- Attributes
  - Health guarantee 22.6%
  - Low pesticides 22.4%
  - Nutritional value 13.4%

- Consequences
  - Personal health 21.3%
  - Prevent illness 20%
  - Children's health 17.8%

- Values
  - Better quality of life 20%
  - Peace of mind 18.1%
  - Care for family 15.4%

The most prevalent chains (Hierarchal value maps) for the whole sample (N: 180) are shown. These were common for the two groups found in our sample, with some differences in the importance given to each chain.

Two unique chains emerged for Frequent consumers (N: 74) & Occasional consumers (N: 106), illustrating how different levels of commitment to organic food are modulated by different cognitive structures.

Frequent organic consumer
- Respect Nature 11.3%
- Protect environment 13.9%

Occasional organic consumer
- Similar to traditional food (baladi) 11.7%
- Nostalgic 14.7%
- Pleasure 22%

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Impact and Prospectum

Use of appropriate **Marketing strategies** to address established and newly emerging shoppers:

- **Emphasize values** in advertising campaigns to add meaning to consumption of OP
- Address the significant motivations (from SEM): Care for children health & respect for nature
- Integrate traditional & organic food (one label) – stressing geographical indication or using a unified “local-traditional-organic” label, use nostalgic appeal in advertising
- Combination of Med. diet and organic concept as healthier option, *eg.* Societal marketing; agro-tourism

Structural equation modelling results show **Respect for Nature & children’s health** to predict organic purchase behaviour

Evidence of a rising awareness: *Link to environment*

Few of the identified ACV had a significant effect on how consistent Lebanese organic consumers actually buy organic, according to the structural equation modelling.

Focus of marketing positioning methods should shift from product’s attributes to the possible benefits or values that consumer satisfy when buying these products.

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Thank You

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