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Discussion on lecture 1

[Dominika Srednicka-Tober](#)

29 May at 12:56
25

I would like to raise a question for discussion: How do you think – does organic food impact on human health? Why do you think it does / it does not?

This topic was edited by [Marianne Erichsen](#)

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30 May 2017

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According to the article by Reginald and Wachter, and to the best of my knowledge, the organic products contains equal or a higher nutrition content, and contains less to no pesticide residues then conventional products. Since we don ´t know the possible adverse effect of consuming pesticides, its hard to use this as a solide argument for avoiding conventional foods (in relation to health). Also if we look at the higher nutrition content, e.g. the article by Branski et al. suggests that organic products for example contains more vitamin C than conventional. The average intake of micronutrients for danish people fulfil the nordic recommendations for all micronutrients, exept from iron and vitamin D (according to a report on the danish eating habits from the national food institute), so therefore im not sure if this extra nutrients can benefit us. Therefore, in my opinion, it is hard to make arguments for choosing organic products only based on health benefits. And to answer your question, i actually dont know, but i don ´t think it can harm us.

Any other opinions?

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31 May 2017

I totally agree with Marianne.

Studies show, that organic products contain equal or higher nutrition content. An interesting aspect is the higher amount of polyphenols in organic plant foods, which have beneficial effects on human health and which can protect from chronic diseases (f.e. cardiovascular diseases). Another advantage of organic plant food is the lower pollution with pesticides. But as Marianne said, we don't know yet if consuming pesticides residues has harmful effects on our health, it's not easy to use it as an argument. Besides, we have strict boundary values for pesticides in Germany that should eliminate the risk of negative health effects. The differences in health aspects aren't as considerable, so that the argument with health benefits for organic products would be difficult.

I think the main advantage of organically grown foods is, that it provides a possibility to feed our future generations and to improve the condition of the environment. If I would promote organic food, I would argue with aspects of sustainability, especially ecological aspects, like f.e. enhancing the quality of soil, supporting biodiversity..)

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2 Jun 2017

Interesting limit this...but if organic produce has the indirect effect of a need for more various varieties, in the sense that it's sometimes the biodiversity that provides protection for the plants and not an increasing quantity of pesticides, it could be possible to argue that organic produce is providing healthiness in the long-term. Without arguing for a need of higher intake of nutrients, it ensures us a more diverse intake. As is said in the introductory video about sustainability and health concepts, the WHO concept of healthy diets include resilience and diversity in the diet.

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2 Jun 2017

I personally struggle when I have to consider myself the higher nutritional impact of organic food on our diet, since the studies published on this topic up to now are not consistent and do not use the same measurements (Baranski et al.). I guess what is sure since now is that the avoidance of pesticide and synthetic fertilisers is beneficial to our environment and to the farmers which otherwise would be in contact with these substances on a regular basis.

And regarding what Marianne said, even though no clear evidence of the negative effect of consuming pesticides can be shown, the less residues found in the organic food it is still one of the strongest reasons why I mostly eat organic.

I guess I consider as "safer" eating something not contaminated with unnatural and synthetically produced substances, because I do not know the possible effect of them on my health.

 [Clarisse Fineline-Olesen](https://absalon.ku.dk/courses/21676/users/157254)

<https://absalon.ku.dk/courses/21676/users/157254>

3 Jun 2017

Good afternoon,

I think there is probably not enough proof to link specific diseases and pesticides residues but we can't say it is safe either. According to WHO "They **may** induce health effects including cancer, effects on reproduction, immune or nervous systems". Also, we can't forget that ADIs (Acceptable daily intakes) or Acute Reference Doses (ARfDs) of residues pesticides set by national and international regulations are calculated regarding toxicological review (FAO/WHO). According to this statement, regulations (based on current scientific knowledge) are aimed to protect the consumer, so food on the market can be considered as safe for human health, even conventional food (until proof to the contrary then, and review of the thresholds). But, at least, there is enough doubt to create a specific regulation for baby food with lower threshold based on the precautionary principle.

Then, farmers are highly exposed to pesticides and there are, currently, diseases directly linked to these exposures in developing countries and developed countries (so why not pesticide residues when bioaccumulation may increase concentration in the body?). For example : Parkinson, leukemia in France. So less we eat contaminated food, more we decrease exposure: as for the consumer than for the farmer (because of supply and demand).

So, to this point of view, organic food may have direct positive impacts on human health for a part of the population but may also have indirect positive impacts (beyond positive facts on environment). Indeed, despite the fact that organic is still marginal (according to the percentage of the arable lands dedicated to organic production in Europe in 2015-2016) the rising of social awareness conveyed by its philosophy drives positive changes on food systems even in conventional ones, increasing sanitary (and environmental) preservation.

Beyond pesticides (which sometime are found in organic food because some agricultural issues don't currently have alternative responses) there are also bacteriologic and mycotoxin issues which are also regulated. Organic or conventional products deal with the same issues for the health of the consumer. But I

totally agree with Gloria when she says it is safer to eat organic food especially with recommendations on food diets based on raw materials (more cereals and vegetables) which are the products most contaminated with pesticides.

Edited by [Clarisse Emeline Oceane Loaec \(https://absalon.ku.dk/courses/21676/users/157254\)](https://absalon.ku.dk/courses/21676/users/157254) on 3 Jun at 15:13

 [Diana Ismael \(https://absalon.ku.dk/courses/21676/users/157316\)](https://absalon.ku.dk/courses/21676/users/157316) 

<https://absalon.ku.dk/courses/21676/users/157316>

3 Jun 2017

Let's ask ourselves why people choose organic?

For sure, reasons such as health, environment, animal welfare, taste, are among the most important reasons.

I would like to start discussing the taste issue, some recent research claim that there is no difference in taste between organic or non-organic. However, from a personal experience I can clearly tell that I tasted the difference several times especially in some types of fruits.

Second point is environment and with no doubt organic agricultural methods are much better than conventional.

Regarding the third point and the most controversial point which is health, some researcher claimed that there no to very small difference between both types pf food, but others still insist on that organic is much healthier.

One research I read shows that organic food has more of the antioxidant compounds linked to better health than regular food, and lower levels of toxic metals and pesticides, according to the most comprehensive scientific analysis to date.

Nevertheless, if it wouldn't be foe our personal health, at least organic should be consumed for our earth and environment health.

 [Leonardo Grasso \(https://absalon.ku.dk/courses/21676/users/157248\)](https://absalon.ku.dk/courses/21676/users/157248) 

<https://absalon.ku.dk/courses/21676/users/157248>

3 Jun 2017

Hello everybody!

Since you have all come up with interesting considerations about organic agriculture and foodstuffs, I would like to share with you other considerations about nutritional content and health effects of different foods.

Seasonality, provenance, farming methods, processing, consumption habits all play their role in determining nutritional content, health effects and overall sustainability of foods we eat. Although "organic" often entails seasonal, local, low processed and sustainable food, it is not always the case; a lot of organic agriculture today is carried out at industrial scale, with no concern about ecological interactions, landscape diversity, cultural heritage, native crops and local agricultural practices.

Some studies point out that seasonal, local, and low processed foods have a higher nutritional content and smaller ecological footprint than out of season, imported and highly processed foods.

Would you prefer local vegetables from conventional farming or imported vegetables from organic farming? This is the issue I often face when wandering in supermarkets.

Seasonal native vegetables from smallholder local organic farms would be the best option; but how to include these aspects in a regulatory framework?

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3 Jun 2017

Organic certification is not the only one which may be a sign of quality (as for the environment and for the health). In Europe, there is also the recognition of a certification and labelling system which aims to promote and protect some products (origines, typical know-how, traditional recipe ect...) and to ensure a certain quality to the consumer depending on the specifications - which include farming method if I am not mistaken - (for example "Label rouge" in France, IGP, AOP...). I think this is one of the solutions to local, cultural, seasonal issues... but with its drawbacks because there is (I speak for the french case) a multitude of labels with its own specificities which are, sometime, difficult to understand in their subtleties, especially for people who are not sufficiently aware. Moreover, some labels may also be self-declarations.

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4 Jun 2017

I would agree with a lot that has been said here already. The impact of organic food on health, on a personal level, is to know that the food has been cultivated naturally as it should be, with no unnecessary chemicals. It's the fear of the unknown (ie. the impacts of the fertilisers, pesticides, genetic modification etc.) that drives me to organic produce. However, what Leonardo said rings true. Organic production has proven to have many benefits, but once I considered food miles and the fact that some organic products are flown from halfway around the world, I thought the purpose was defeated. In this case, seasonal foods would have less

impacts on the climate and environment I believe, at least in terms of air pollution and depletion of soils (linked to the transfer of nutrients and water from the original soil into the foreign lands).

Ultimately, I will have to say organic foods impact human health in a positive way by avoiding unnecessary and unnatural implements, protecting people who react to the fumes of sprayed implements, and preserving the natural order of species (e.g. natural predators eliminating pests).

On the other hand though, one must also consider what organic entails when it has to be carried several miles away to the target population.

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4 Jun 2017

It's been interesting reading everyone's post, and like a lot of contributions already implies I would agree that organic foods have a positive impact on health and the following points would further buttress my opinion.

Although there aren't tonnes of evidence that prove that organic foods (processed or unprocessed) are healthier or safer than conventional foods, however, the organic farming methods go a long way to validate this point. The replacement of all non-organic farming methods with the use of natural farming methods like composting, crop rotation, stimulating biodiversity, companion farming to mention but a few appears to pose no risk of potential harm to human health. Despite the fact that conventionally grown products have been shown to contain safe doses of pesticides, chemical fertilisers, antibiotics, growth hormones, preservatives etc., the accumulative effects of these safe doses remain uncertain.

Due to the absence of artificial preservatives, organically produced fruits and vegetables have a shorter shelf-life than conventional ones and are expected to be consumed as soon as possible. As such, their high nutritional contents are sure to provide consumers with a considerable amount of essential nutrients which are important to human health.

The indirect benefits of organic cultivation and consumption on the other hand has been shown to impact on human health positively with the absence of chemicals and pesticides enhancing the reduction of water and soil pollution of wide expanse of land.

In really appreciating the benefits associated with eating organic, I believe that one must have a holistic perspective to its health implications; from the farmers growing the crops, the waterways from which we drink, the air we breathe, and the food we eat.

Edited by [Tolulope Magret Olukuewu \(https://absalon.ku.dk/courses/21676/users/157276\)](https://absalon.ku.dk/courses/21676/users/157276) on 4 Jun at 17:10

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[Monika Ostrowska](#)



<https://absalon.ku.dk/courses/21676/users/157608>

4 Jun 2017

Organic food is safer, free from pesticides, often better tasting than non-organic food, but if we can not afford organic food, then it is better for the health to eating any vegetables than not eating them at all for fear of chemistry. When it comes to meat, animals live in better conditions and eat natural food for them, and it is also benefit of our health. Prophylactic use of antibiotics is not necessary. Animals are not breeding in crowded cages, and do not get sick so often. So our food contains less chemistry. If everyone chose ecological meat and eggs, their prices would be comparable to those of mass-produced food.

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○ <https://absalon.ku.dk/courses/21676/users/79790>

[William de Montboin](#)



<https://absalon.ku.dk/courses/21676/users/79790>

4 Jun 2017

Hey all!

After reading the current responses, I don't think I have much to add without repeating others, although I will say that I agree with the general consensus that eating organic food certainly can't hurt you, and it MAY be healthier when compared to conventional food.

I do have a couple comments that I hope others find interesting.

[Out of 18 health claims concerning polyphenols in the EU, there is only one that is authorized](#)

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.2903/j.efsa.2011.2033/abstract> by EFSA <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.2903/j.efsa.2011.2033/abstract>: olive oil with a certain polyphenol content protects LDL particles from oxidative damage. Otherwise, no other polyphenol has sufficient proof for a health effect in the eyes of European legislation. However, this lack of confirmed health effects may be more telling of the extreme difficulty of proving such claims, rather than their non-existence.

I think it's also interesting to think about food fraud and the organic market considering that the source of much of the organic food that is consumed in Europe is much farther away than one would think. The European Food Fraud Network (FFN) [reported 234 cases of food fraud](https://ec.europa.eu/food/sites/food/files/safety/docs/food-fraud_network_activity_report_2016.pdf) https://ec.europa.eu/food/sites/food/files/safety/docs/food-fraud_network_activity_report_2016.pdf, and while they unfortunately don't differentiate between organic and conventional cases, many of them involve falsified or inaccurate documentation, or mislabeling. In my opinion, organic food is particularly at risk when it comes to food fraud because of the premium that consumers will pay for it, and its reliance on process based certification to distinguish it from conventional food. For instance, in 2013 (before FFN existed), there was [a case of non-organic produce being imported into Malta and then exported to Italy as organic](http://www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/national/64943/malta-at-the-centre-of-organic-food-fraud-#WTRllhOGPMI) <http://www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/national/64943/malta-at-the-centre-of-organic-food-fraud-#WTRllhOGPMI>. Of course, if we're not truly eating organic foods, then we certainly aren't benefiting from any of their potential health benefits. With that mind, I think that the question that Leonardo and Tracy brought up about how to prioritize local vs imported foods is worth discussing. Does anyone else have any thoughts to share about that?

The last thing I wanted to say might be a bit out there, but I hope someone else might have something to share about it. As we can see in the article by Reginald and Wachter, there is concrete proof about the higher sustainability of organic farming compared to conventional. If we take into account that the WHO definition of health is not just the absence of disease, but also physical, mental, and social wellbeing, I think organic farming's environmental benefits have a definite positive impact on our health--What sort of mental state will we be in if we no longer have any wilderness to explore or biodiversity to marvel?

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13 Jun 2017

Auch! I actually haven't heard about those cases of food-fraud, but it is really interesting, and important to have in mind. Personally, I shop local before organic, and if I can - local and organic. On the other hand, I don't think we should use these examples to scare people from buying organic, because these cases are probably not the general trend in the organic market - and organic imported products are still to prefer over conventional imported products, I think.

I agree you are a little out there, but its a good reflection! I also think Hang (furture down) are making a good point out of the "mental state" part of the definition. From her comment: *However, since I change my shopping behavior in which some parts of food basket are organic, it makes me feel good and happier when consuming them.* This part of the mental state is also a topic for discussion, because many people think that if the product is organic, then its healthy. Which also can be a sort of black and white understanding (organic chocolate = must be healthy). But on the other hand, i do think that when people start reflecting on their consumption towards more organic product, they have made a decition to actively change their habits towards a healthier, at least more sustainable diet (and maybe way of living) - and i also do think this makes people more happy. Any other thoughts on that?

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[Mariana Maante](#)



<https://absalon.ku.dk/courses/21676/users/157252>

8 Jun 2017

After reading the current responses, I will agree with the general consensus that eating organic food can't hurt us, and it can be healthier compared with the conventional food. I totally agree with Monica. Usually, organic food is much more expensive than non-organic food. If I have to choose between organically or conventionally grown apples, then because of the price I will choose the second one. And at the same time, I can't be 100% sure that the organic food what is sold in the store is truly 100% organic. I can be sure when I have grown it on myself.

◀ [Write a reply...](#)

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[Sonsolis Moreno Gil De Antunano](#)



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9 Jun 2017

After reading the articles provided and the discussion so far I have come to the following conclusion.

In one hand, it is true that consuming of organic food can't hurt us and may prove beneficial since they contain less to none pesticide residue and they tend to have a higher nutritional value than conventional food. Furthermore, it is not only beneficial for us but it also has a positive impact on the environment, topic which should currently greatly concern us. It would allow sustainable farming that could feed future generations.

However, since there is not enough evidence to back up the consumption of organic food many are weary to change their lifestyle due to fear of the unknown. I find it understandable that due to lack of proof of the real advantages organic food may present people are concerned on the effects it will have on their health.

Therefore, until further research is done that could render empiric data I find it hard for most people to switch to organic.

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[Hang Vu Thi Huu](#)

<https://absalon.ku.dk/courses/21676/users/157309>

10 Jun 2017

Hello everyone,

It is really interesting when reading all of your discussion. I would like to contribute my opinion with regard to this topic.

First of all, as we all agree that the only few research proved the result that the nutrient in some of organic product is higher than conventional, for example antioxidant, vitamin C, carotenoid in vegetables or of n-3 linolenic acid and CLA in milk products. However, there are also a number of research indicating that there is no difference between conventional and organic food products in term of nutritional value. It means that nutrient contain difference between conventional and organic food is not really significant. Therefore, if we accept the assumption that people taking up more nutritional food are more likely healthier than those taking less, it is not persuasive to say that eating more organic food will lead to better health.

Secondly, the observational research on human regarding organic consumption with health effect are not many. Children fed by biodynamic & organic food exhibit less allergies and lower body weight (but the result is not statistically significant) according to PARSIFAL study in 2005. Another research also found that children consuming organic dairy product pose the lower risk for eczema (research KOALA Birth Cohort Study in the Netherlands in 2006). So it seems that there is scientific proof supporting for positive health effect of organic.

In my opinion, I think the health compose not only physical but also mental health. I could not say (or I am not sure) eating organic food make me become robust or healthier. However, since I change my shopping behavior in which some parts of food basket are organic, it makes me feel good and happier when consuming them. Many food bloggers also recommend using the organic ingredients. So, I think eating organic food is becoming a lifestyle and offer the mental health benefit than physical health benefit.

Thank you

Edited by [Hang Vu Thi Thu \(https://absalon.ku.dk/courses/21676/users/157309\)](https://absalon.ku.dk/courses/21676/users/157309) on 10 Jun at 23:26

 [Clarisse Emeline Orsini Loas \(https://absalon.ku.dk/courses/21676/users/157254\)](https://absalon.ku.dk/courses/21676/users/157254)

<https://absalon.ku.dk/courses/21676/users/157254>

20 Jun 2017

Hello,

I am wondering, after reading health perception of organic food consumer if there is, maybe added to a biological effect of less pesticides residues or other things for example ... a psychological effect of the positive perception of organic food by the consumer. Indeed, some studies shows than positive promotion may induce better perception when tasting the product - which is used in advertising (I didn't find the source, but it is I think in relation with halo effect or positive reinforcement (I am not sure for the last one)). I found an other example with national brand, taste perception and neuroscience, this (*little*) study shows than with national brand images the same product is perceived with a better taste than the ones with unknown brand images (<http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0061569>). This seems to illustrate halo effect. Rapprochement may be done with the positivism surrounding organic products and the taste perception which not seems very clear according to major studies -even if, actually, some demonstrate better taste-. The difficulty to conclude may also be due to studies where comparisons are skewed because of pedological, geographical, farmer's practices, ripeness, varieties... factors and variabilities. (<https://www.organic-center.org/reportfiles/TasteReport.pdf>).

Finally, making **the choice** to change eating habit may be linked to the psychological effect (and is potential health benefit) of perceived behavioral control (I am sorry this is in french http://www.delplanque-formation.com/Files/psychologie_de_la_sante.pdf and p78 <https://tel.archives-ouvertes.fr/tel-01496256/document>) (http://www.delplanque-formation.com/Files/psychologie_de_la_sante.pdf).

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<https://absalon.ku.dk/courses/21676/users/50979>
 Susanne Gjedsted Bügel

<https://absalon.ku.dk/courses/21676/users/50979>

18 Jun 2017

So many very good observations and comments. You are really showing your knowledge and the broadness of backgrounds as we intended with this course.

i would like to provoke you a little bit. I stumbled over two figures - NOT from Scientific papers - but anyway showing some mistakes that some people do when interpreting data from observational studies. What is wrong with these figures and why do we have to be careful when interpreting observational studies?

[pitfalls in observational studies.docx](https://absalon.ku.dk/files/1356496/download?download_frd=1&verifier=DEVWIOf8hriI0R2v5kfwgl9tccZZITLSO2BYBWj) (https://absalon.ku.dk/files/1356496/download?download_frd=1&verifier=DEVWIOf8hriI0R2v5kfwgl9tccZZITLSO2BYBWj)

<https://absalon.ku.dk/courses/21676/users/75492>
 Hanum Putri Hapsari

<https://absalon.ku.dk/courses/21676/users/75492>

20 Jun 2017

I'm thinking about the figures. We have to be careful when interpreting observational studies on account of the fact that it based on the observer skills. Observer on observation study is an instrument for measuring the data. We should focus on within-observer reliability or observer consistency and between-observer reliability (all observers get the same data during research). Several ways to know how reliable our data. We can be using correlation (Perason correlation or comparing each data on each variable (Kappa coefficients). If the result from each observer is poor, then the data is not comparable between observers. We also need to use the right statistical method to conclude our data.

Moreover, it is also related to the **reliability**. When we doing observation study, our measurement is repeatable and consistent which is free from random errors. when behavioural characteristics are measured unreliable then real effects, for example, differences between groups or correlations between measures, may remain undetected. Secondly, **validity** among the data is also important to which a measurement actually measures. A valid measure is answering the questions being asked. It's related to accuracy, specificity, and scientific validity. The last is **feasibility**. We should use the possible, practicable, and worthwhile measurement procedure to our research.

To sum up, interpretation observation data is crucial to our research due to statistical test to test our data, reliability, validity, and feasibility.

Edited by [Hanum Putri Hapsari](https://absalon.ku.dk/courses/21676/users/75492) (<https://absalon.ku.dk/courses/21676/users/75492>) on 20 Jun at 12:09

<https://absalon.ku.dk/courses/21676/users/157254>
 Clarisse Simelone Greene Lopez

<https://absalon.ku.dk/courses/21676/users/157254>

20 Jun 2017

Hello,

This "study" reminds me of many others which show very high rate correlation coefficient but without having significance, this is sometimes due to the fact that they share the same causality. The famous example used in France to illustrate this is stork demography and birth rate in villages with storks which are highly correlated but only because they are linked to the same cause: kind of "rural environment" (higher birth rate in rural areas and stork preference for villages).

It's important to well understand variables' parameters and be careful of over-interpretation, it's joined what said Hanum, and we can't rely only on statistics without standing back and stay critical (positive and negative).

About autism, there are currently two theories:

- genetic (which can emphasize risks)
- environmental causes (toxins, mercury ...)

I heard that this correlation was not true but hypothetically if doubt still existed. Hypotheses have to be made. For example according to genetic expression which seems different between organic and conventional products ("Recent studies have shown that the switch from mineral to organic fertilizers results in significant differences in gene and protein expression patterns [...] Marcin Baranski & al. 2014) this makes me think (probably wrongly) of GMO (even if it's epigenetic) with lack of stand back about effect (positive or negative) on the consumer (many other hypotheses may be done beyond this genetic "hypothesis")...

And then, further study must be conducted to complete this first one, by, for example, studying and comparing the rate of organic consumption in the autism population and parents (before diagnosis, because this population and close relatives could have organic consumption patterns because of the disease) and the well-being population.

 <https://absalon.ku.dk/courses/21676/users/40094>

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21 Jun 2017

Thanks for sharing this Susanne. It is important to raise awareness on this matter!

I think that first of all we have to look at the context of the studies. E.g. who is buying the organic products, and who is diagnosed with autism? As Clarisse mentioned, is it the organic consumers that are diagnosed with Autism? Probably not. And do we even know if the prevalence of Autism is studied in the US?

Furthermore, I think these graphs are a result of two different development processes. The organic food sales in the US are probably increasing because of the increased awareness of possible positive effects of organic food production and the greater supply of organic food products all over. The prevalence of autism among children on the other hand, is probably related to better diagnostic tools etc.

I think we see the same in the third graph. The availability of foods, both fast foods and organic foods are increasing - and I think this graph shows a tendency of different segments moving towards either more fast foods, or more organic foods.

To sum up, from my understanding observational studies can be used to say something about the prevalence or incidens of e.g. of organic consumption, but it doesn't say anything about the causality of this tendency, and can definitely not be directly combined with other observations of other tendencies, without any future documented association.

 [Tracy Kamerling Philips](https://absalon.ku.dk/users/157343) 

<https://absalon.ku.dk/courses/21676/users/157343>

1 Jul 2017

This is a good example, Prof Bügel. It shows that one should be careful when drawing conclusions from observational studies. I mean, the autism study and the rise in organic food study were independent. An increase in organic food consumption cannot be concluded to be the cause of the rise of autism. In the same period the number of people using cars, for example, may have increased in a similar manner but one study has nothing to do with the other.

Since the studies have no association, causality of one on the other cannot be concluded. I agree with Marianne on the possible explanation for the 3rd graph.

 [Write a reply...](#)

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3 Jul 2017

Hi,

Besides the psychological aspect on the consumption of biological products which was stated during this discussion I wish to make an observation: In my entourage and myself, I notice that the people who consume this type of products are people warned and very careful about their health and their lifestyles. They do a lot of sports, they have a varied diet, they take the time to cook, they are interested in the environment. It is for this reason that I think that the debate on the impact of health between organic and conventional agriculture is deeper than just consumption. I think it is all about education and lifestyle when we talk about health. For example, even if you consume a large amount of red meat that is of biological origin, you will increase the risk of cancer as well as if you consume in excess of the non-organic red meat, everything is about balance.

Pierre.

<https://absalon.ku.dk/courses/21676/users/157254>

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4 Jul 2017

Yes ! A totally agree, organic can be also a philosophy and a life style choice.

Some studies tried to cluster and categorize organic consumers, fo example in France [NutriNet santé](https://www.etude-nutrinet-sante.fr/) (<https://www.etude-nutrinet-sante.fr/>) published in 2013 [Profiles of Organic Food Consumers](http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0076998) (<http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0076998>), part of which is as follows : "In both genders [for regular consumers], consumption of organic foods was associated with a **higher education level**, **lower BMI** and **higher level of physical activity** along with less frequent restrictive dieting. As expected, cluster 3 participants, i.e. those who stated that organic foods were too expensive, had a lower income and education level. They also more often reported a restrictive diet. Income per household unit in the other four clusters was high and fairly similar among clusters. In addition, participants who were uninterested in organic products (cluster 1) displayed weaker adherence to nutritional guidelines compared to RCOP [Regular Consumer of Organic Product] ([Table 3](http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article/figure/image?size=large&id=10.1371/journal.pone.0076998.t003) (<http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article/figure/image?size=large&id=10.1371/journal.pone.0076998.t003>)): 7.7 ± 1.7 versus 8.4 ± 1.8 in men, respectively and 7.9 ± 1.8 versus 8.7 ± 1.7 in women, respectively. Adherence to nutritional guidelines was similar in clusters 1, 2 and 3."

<https://absalon.ku.dk/courses/21676/users/12396>

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That would be really a step forward: Organic not just as a delivery of raw materials (which then maybe turned into functional foods :-)) but the organic as a life-style based on values to share among food system actors.

Some studies show, that choosing organic food is not just a matter of income but of awarness and education. And the question still remains: how close the attitude-behaviour gap (we know what to do but we do not do).

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