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Discussion on lecture 10

[Bernhard Johannes Kahl](#)

25 Jun at 9:49


4

Dear all,

you may discuss what are the most important elements and dimensions characterizing the organic food system? Specially if taking OFS as living laboratory for developing sustainable food systems in general?

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I think the most important elements of the organic food systems are:

- A system could engage the participations of all stakeholders (from producers, distributors, retailers, and consumers) in maintaining the sustainability in all activities from farms (production) to tables (consumption).
- All stakeholders share the same responsibility toward soil, water, biodiversity, energy use, waste reduction, livelihoods, product quality, and human health and work for improving the current situation.
- All stakeholders have to ensure the transparency of the chain so that everyone could access the data for learning purpose or policy improvement.



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Super! Caught the most important issue: **how** the different elements are connected.

But what makes the organic food system unique, in comparison to other approaches such as agro-ecology: that these values are set as principles and those principles are codified (set to standards, regulations) in production.



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I think that sustainable diet makes the organic food system unique. This diet has low environmental impact. It is respectful and protective of biodiversity and ecosystems, culturally acceptable, accessible, economically fair and affordable. Also, it is nutritionally adequate, safe and healthy. Same time natural and human resources are optimized.

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I think what makes the organic agriculture model unique is the set of rules and standards bounded to it, which tries to overcome a market characterized by asymmetric information between producers and consumer through the certification system (ideally - if we put aside all the past fraud cases). The transformation of the IFOAM principles (are they all represented ? some studies show that fairness is still not reflected in the organic EU regulations) into practical farming methods provides a framework to compare this agricultural model with the conventional one, since sustainability can be measured via the different production procedures adopted.

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