



Can Functional Food and Organic Food be Supporting Concepts in Europe?

Susanne Bügel 1, Kamille Almer 1, Aneta Załęcka 2, Angelika Ploeger 3, Machteld Huber 4 and Johannes Kahl 3

1 Department of Nutrition, Sports and Exercise, Faculty of Science, University of Copenhagen, Frederiksberg C, Denmark
2 Division of Organic Food, Warsaw University of Life Sciences (SGGW), Warszawa, Poland
3 Department of Organic Food Quality and Food Culture, University of Kassel, Witzenhausen, Germany
4 Louis Bolk Institute, Driebergen, The Netherlands

Background :

Functional and organic food belong to fast growing segments of the European food market.

The question is whether organic food can also be a functional food?



Figure: The red Ø label reflects that it is the Danish authorities, who have monitored the farm or the company that last processed, packaged or labeled an organic product. The green logo is the EU version for organic farming

Objectives:

To analyze the similarities and differences of functional and organic food in order to determine if the concept of functional food supports or contradicts organic food production.

+
Health Claims?

Results:

Regulations:

	European Food Regulation	European Regulation for Organic Agriculture and Food Production	European Health Claim Regulation
Functional Food	✓		✓
Organic Food	✓	✓	

Problem:

The regulation for organic food restricts the number of food additives and limits substantial changes in the food.

This may cause problems in changing the food based on single constituents or attributes when applying the concept of functional food to organic food production.

The Conceptual Background:

Functional Food	Focus on product related attributes represented by single constituents or functions relating to human health specific targets.
Organic Food	Considers the food and production as a whole rather than just the sum of its constituents.

Problem:

For organic food it is difficult to prove positive effects on health.

The whole food instead of constituent parts has to be compared in order to get an authorized health claim (what should the placebo be?).

Consumer Behaviors:

Functional Food	The decision for buying functional food is related to rationality and consumers associate functional food with a more technological approach.
Organic Food	The decision for buying buy organic food is related to an emotional attitude and consumers associate the food with naturalness.

Problem:

Consumer decisions for buying organic food contradicts the functional food concept.

Conclusions:

Functional food and organic food are competing rather than supporting concepts in Europe

Keywords:

Organic; Functional; Food; Consumer; Quality; Concept