SAVONIA

Market Potential for Vietnamese Organic Food Products in Finland

Trang Thu Dinh

Bachelor’s International Business Thesis

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Valitse kohde.

SAVONIA UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES **THESIS**
Abstract

Field of Study Business and Administration			
Degree Programme Bachelor Degree Programme in International Business			
Author(s) Dinh Thu Trang			
Title of Thesis Market Potential for Vietnamese Organic Food Products in Finland			
Date		Pages/Appendices	65/10
Supervisor(s) Virpi Oksanen, Pentti Markkanen			
Client Organisation/Partners			

Abstract

Organic food product consumption has radically increased nowadays because of the benefits to both human health and environmental protection.

The main issue of the thesis was to discover the possibilities for Vietnamese organic food products on the Finnish market based on analyzing subjective and objective elements of both markets.

The research was carried out by quantitative research method using a survey. The survey attempts to cover all possible sections of organic food products to examine Finnish customers' attitude and preference about organic food consumption.

After analysis, the results convinced the positive attitude for Vietnamese organic food products to enter the Finnish market. However, for durable development in this market, the careful business plan and specialized research projects are required. This study emphasized Finnish organic food market situation from customer's point of view so that the companies can use the results as resources to create their own plans suitable for this market.

Keywords
Organic, food, Finnish market, possibility, customer, attitude, preference, Vietnamese

market.

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List of Abbreviation

ADDA	**Agriculture Development Denmark Asia**
CE marking	**Conformite' Europe'ene**
Evira	**Finnish Food Safety Agency**
FTA	**The Free Trade Agreement**
GSP	**The European General Scheme of Preferences**
IAS	**Institute of Agriculture Science**
IFOAM	**International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movement**
OTA	**Organic Trade Association**
PGS	**Participatory guarantee system**
PPS	**Purchasing Power Standard**
USA	**United States of America**
VOA	**Vietnamese organic agriculture**

1 INTRODUCTION

After the Second World War, the dramatical development of chemistry in farming and agriculture had lead people to new era of massive productivity of agricultural products. But, on the contrary, human's health and environmental balance started to get chemical exposure from foods, land, water, soil and so on. Specially, when Paul Muller invented DDT in 1939, insects controlling was preferred as the new farming trend around the world. Starting from European countries, especially, Britain in 1940s, there were farmer's and customer's groups who realized about drawbacks of using non-organic farming methods and non-organic products, tried to inform about these dangerous of non-organic products to human's health and environment. Organic farming methods were developed and spread around the world by middle of 21st century. While in 1970s and 1980s, organic products were hardly found in special food's stores. In 1990s, they started to appear in supermarkets, food stores, pharmacies and other places. (The organic institutes, 2014.)

Being part of Europe, Finland got the idea about organic farming from the very early stage, from 1910s with many experiments about organic farming methods in order to increase agricultural production and sustainable development. However, Finnish organic farming was really known by the success in inventing AIV system of professor Virtanen that brought him Nobel award for chemistry in 1945. (Heinonen, 2009.) This long development history of organic agriculture displays the stable demand of Finnish people on organic products and makes Finland becomes ideal export destination for organic producers.

Based on market report in organic consumption, organic food market is expected to reach to 104,7 billion $ in 2015 and the compound annual grow rate of 12.9 %, with the main products of fruit and vegetable. Europe is realized to be the largest market for organic products with 28 billion $ revenue in this section but Latin America, Australia and Asia areas are forecasted to get biggest compound annual grow rate with 16,5%. (Transparency Market Research, 2014.)

The Research Motivation

The motivation of this thesis is to analyse about the possibility of Vietnamese food products for entering to Finnish organic market. Finnish people have big demand about organic products and Vietnamese market offers big supply in agriculture products. (Yle, 2013), (VOV, 2013). The research result might rather explore new market for Vietnamese agriculture export or inform about difficulties and barriers in order to be solved in the future.

The main purpose of the research is to find out if it is possible to trade in organic products between Vietnam and Finland. Besides, the research attempts to retrieve deeper information on these objectives:

- The main target groups for organic products?
- From which countries of origin Finnish customer usually purchase organic products?
- How often they use organic products?
- Are they willing to try un-known products?
- Are customers satisfied with organic products provided in the markets?

The Research Method

The research will be done with the help of survey in order to understand more about purpose of whether or not products are welcomed in this new market. The technics of research will be in printed survey and through other communication tools such as Internet communication, like social network, email and so on. The Sample objective of the research is 150 answers so that, there will be 200 printed surveys and other tools. The research attempts to collect information from all possible customer groups in the market. The research form is released October and November 2014 by paper and other types and the questionnaire is attached into this thesis in Appendix. The Results after collected from audiences, is analysed by Webropol online service and Microsoft Excel; the conclusion and diagrams will be given at the end of the thesis.

The research results can be used as information for future organic exporters, especially in the Finnish market. In addition, the results can be used also as a part of other researches related to customer attitudes and opinions about the organic food situation in Finland.

The theoretical section of the thesis will concentrate on analyzing the organic food market situation in Finland and in Vietnam. After that, the thesis indicates the potential opportunities and challenges for Vietnamese organic food products in the Finnish market, based on realistic analysis about legislation, certificates, and customer purchasing power in Finland.
The structure of the thesis:

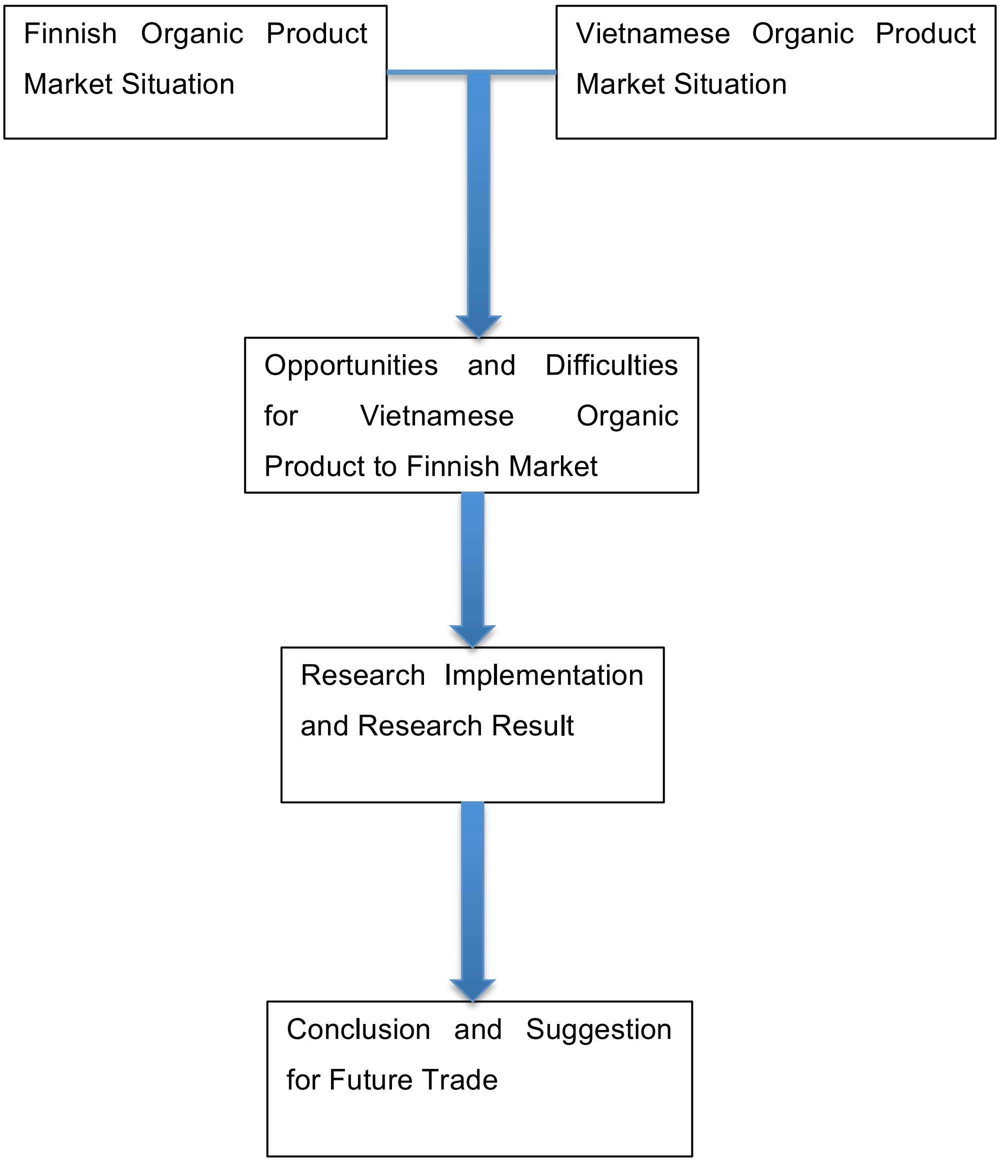


Figure 1. Structure of thesis

The theoretical sections try to cover information related to trading between Vietnam and Finland and, also concentrate on figuring out obstacles, which threaten Vietnamese products for entering Finnish market. The results can be used as information for future Vietnamese producers to overcome these obstacles.

2 ORGANIC FOOD MARKETS IN FINLAND AND VIETNAM

This part will explain the potential of Finnish organic food market by collecting information about effects of organic products to human's health, Finnish preference about organic food products and challenges of producing organic food products in Finland. Meanwhile, Vietnamese organic food market will also be analysis about history, development, and experiences in organic export to foreign markets.

2.1 The importance of using organic products for health

In order to have whole picture for this matter, the United State Environmental Protection Agency has given the definition about organic products, which includes the both organic planting and production process. Growing organically ways are understood by planting in the organic land, breathing the fresh and non-polluted air and feeding by organic fertilizer. Besides, the organical production aims to produce and preserve products in organical ways with organical additives or non-additives. (United State Environmental Protection Agency, 2014).

The additives, coloring, synthetic chemicals, radiation, genetic manipulation foods can be called in general as chemical or non-organic foods. To analyse about the effects of these chemical foods, doctors from Stanford University made several researches and released the result about the high damage to human health by chemical food. The non-organic food displayed the risk of containing about 80% pesticides and 33% antibiotics. (US. Environmental Protection Agency, 2014).

Pesticide is used as an efficient additive in agricultural production by large affecting area and cheap price. Pesticide was invented with the purpose of cleaning the field by killing and preventing un-wanted plants and controlling production by killing harmful insects, viruses and animal. (US. Environmental Protection Agency, 2014).

According to The World Health Organization (WHO), food can be affected by chemical addition by the chemical exposed in land, water and air in the planting area. Besides, the food additives, which are used by farmers in order to increase the productivity and appearance of agriculture products, are also known as chemical exposure foods. There are many different kinds of phosgene that can change the genetic of foods and also affect to human health and environment, such as pesticide, herbicide, fungicides, and preservatives and so on. The most used additive in planting is pesticide that is reported to influence to foetal malformations, cancer, nerve problems and long-term health problems (United State Protection Environment Agency, 2014).

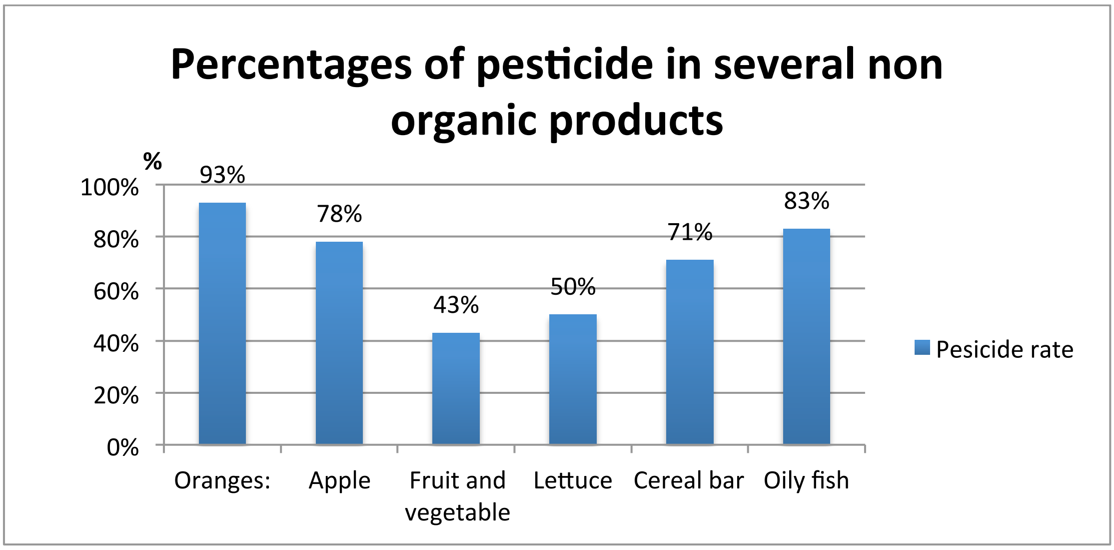


Figure 2. The percentages of pesticide in several foods (McCally, 2009)

The figure 2, shown percentages of extra pesticide used in fruits and vegetables researched by Mark McCally- a New York physician based on data of 2009.
Researchers from The National Health Institute and Havard School of Public Health in Boston also demonstrated the harmful of chemistry exposure foods can cause dangerous diseases such as diabetes 20% – 200% higher risk, 70% growing in Parkinson risk. (Barling, Jr and Brooks, 2010)

Besides pesticide usage, non-organic farms are also believed to use herbicide in order to reduce expense and efficient cleaning, However, herbicides were researched as suspect for changing in habitat of many animals, and also chemical effects to environment. Herbicide effects in environment can be listed as poisoning plants, soil, and animals. Herbicide can affect to environment balance by affecting to plant and poisoned plants, and some animals that eat these plants. From these sources, it can affect to human's food chain and affect to human's health in the future. (Freedman, 2014)

Based on new study mentioned by Reuters 2013, Roundup – one of the most popular herbicide brands, which is used in farm, park, and yard and so on in USA and around the world has related to serious health problems such as Parkinson, cancers and fertility in long term. In addition, it also makes change in crop, soil's and land's quality. (Reuters, 2013)

For these reasons, the necessary and importance of organic foods should be considered. The drawbacks not only affect to human's lives in the moment of using, but also to the environment and sustainable of living in the future.

2.2 Preference of Finnish people about organic products

From the WHO ranking in 2000, Finland stood in the top 100 best health care system in the world in many indexes. The effects to health by organic and non-organic foods in daily life was informed in public media, newspaper, researches from university in several years. The encouragement for using organic in personal and public kitchens was hold by both government and private associations around the country. (World Health report 2000). Moreover, being known as the northernmost agriculture in European countries, Finnish farmers realized the significant needs of organic products from domestic customers. For that reason, the number of organic farms has been proceeding by time in Finland.

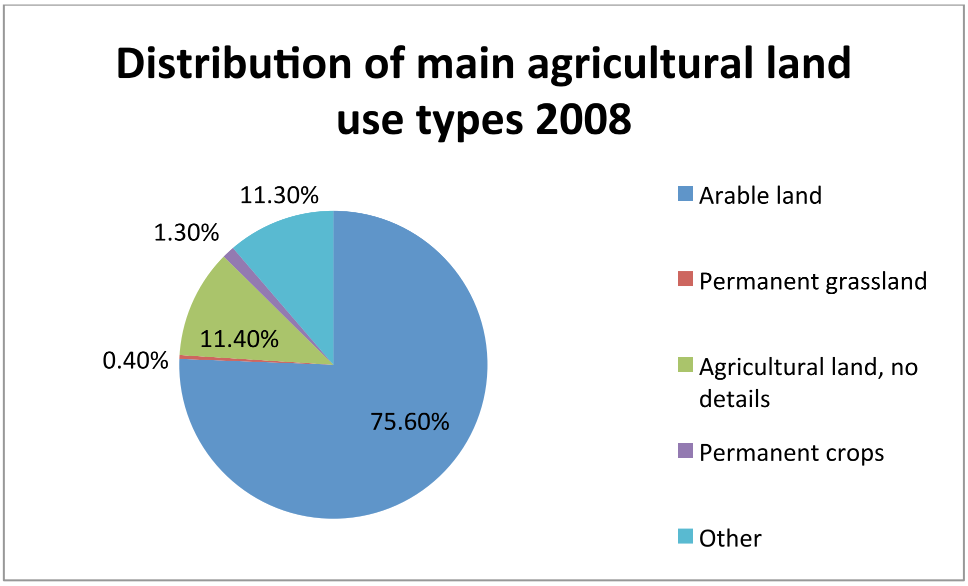


Figure 3. Distribution of main agricultural land use types in Finland (FIBL & IFOAM, 2010)

The figure shows percentage of land, which was used for organic agriculture in Finland in 2008. The total organic land occupied 11.40% of 150374 hectares Finnish agricultural land, stand at second position after arable land with 75.60%. The result was not too big however; it demonstrated the interest of Finnish people in organic farming. (FIBL & IFOAM, 2010)

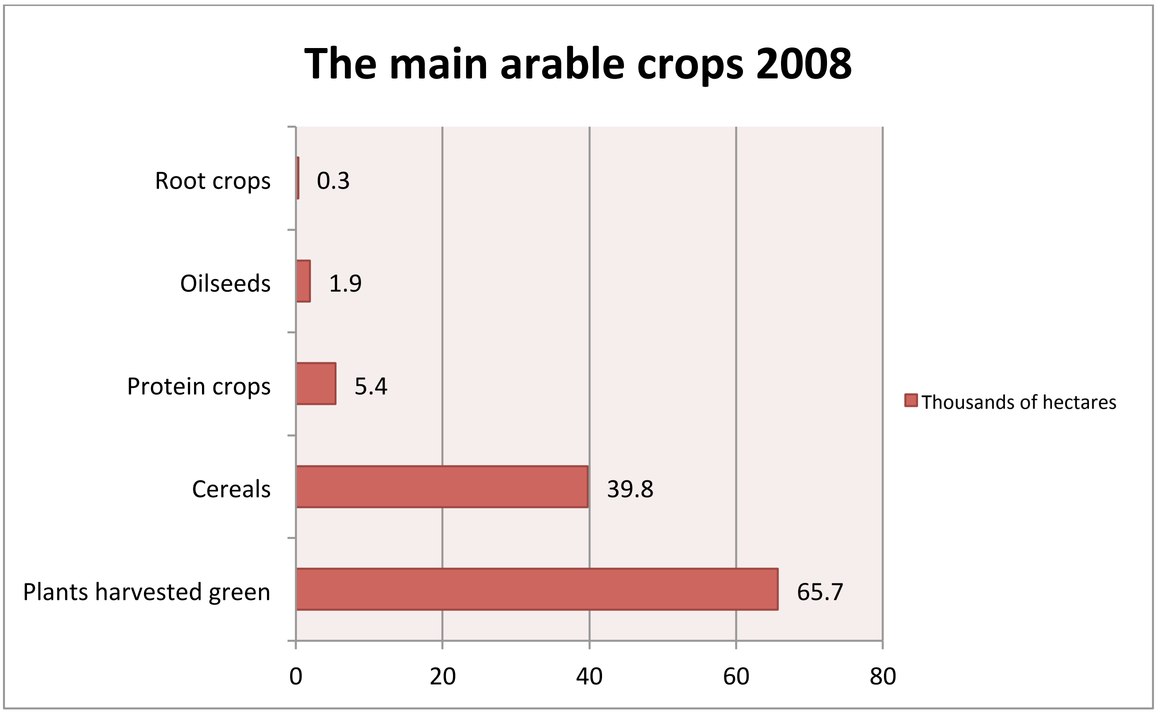


Figure 4. The main organic arable crops in Finland 2008 (FIBL & IFOAM, 2010)

Figure 4 shows the main plants of organic arable crop that grown in Finland in 2008. There were four 5 main products such as plants harvested green, cereals, protein crops, oilseeds, and rood crops. Plants harvested green were mostly grown with 65.7 thousand hectares, following organic products were cereals with 39.8 thousand hectares. Oilseeds and root crops occupied small area of organic land with only 1.9 thousand hectares and 0.3 thousand hectares.(FIBL & IFOAM, 2010)

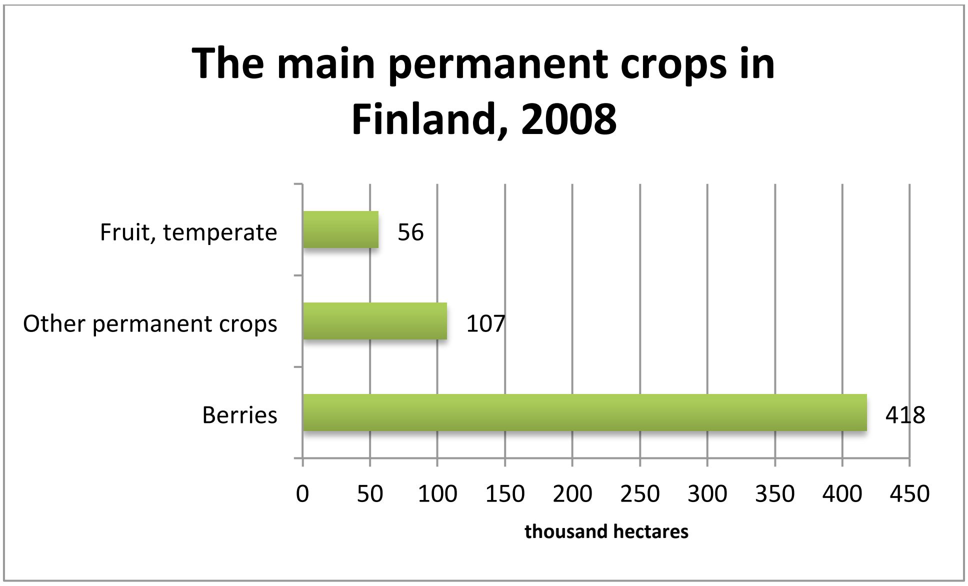


Figure 5. The main permanent crops in Finland 2008. (FIBL&IFOAM Survey 2010)

Figure 5 illustrates the permanent crops in Finland in 2008 by thousand hectares. Permanent crops, which were grown in Finnish organic land, were listed as berries with 418 thousand hectares, and fruit with 56 thousand hectares. The other permanent crops occupied 107 thousand hectares. (FIBL&IFOAM Survey 2010)

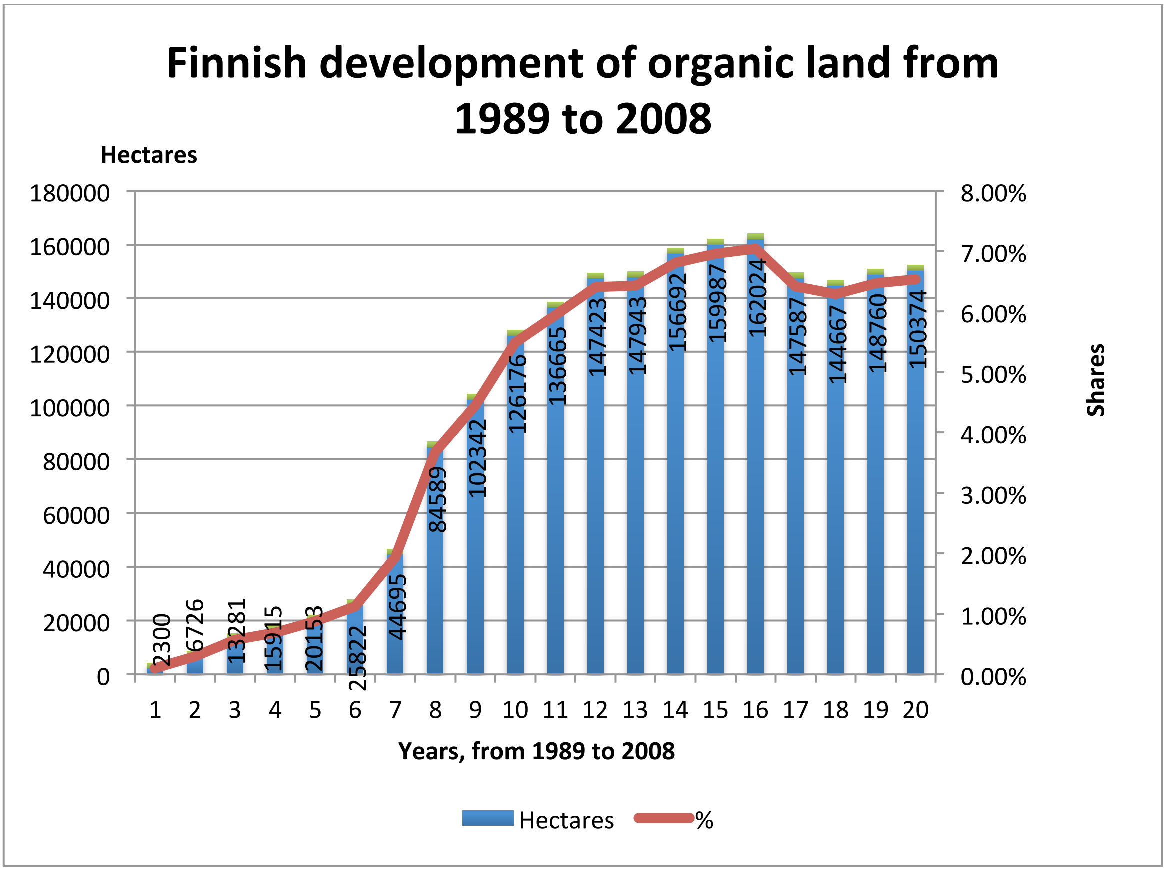


Figure 6. The development of organic land in Finland from 1989 to 2008 (KTTK/Evira/Eurostat)

From these graphs, the rapidly growing number of organic land was displayed clearly indicated the concentration and demand of Finnish people about organic products.
According to the annual report from Organic Organization Finland, Finnish young organic market was raising extremely fast in 2011-2012 and has still ability to grow in the recent time. In 2011, 41% of organic market was expanded and the same growth rate in 2012 with the estimation of 23% in first half. Moreover, in 2011 Finnish organic market had the participation of two biggest and most popular domestic Finnish retailers as S-group and Kesko-group in this section. S-group organic products appeared in cooking oil, egg, milk and seeds by Rainbow products, while Kesko-group introduced organic carrots, potatoes, milk, and tea, and so on under the label Pirkka. The Finnish organic organization, which is known as Pro-Luomu also, began to make efficient promotion campaigns for advertising, informing news about organic products and encourage people for organic food usage. The market participation of these two groups

and the presence of Pro-Luomu approved the organic using trend in Finnish market. (Pöytäniemi, 2012)

In the survey which made in 2005, 20% of Finns got attracted by organic food to often consume it, and 4% of them was high users of organic (means using from 6-100% of organic ingredient for eating), 16% of them using as 1-6% of their food, 20% of Finns sometimes using organic products in personal food preparation. (Heinonen, 2009). The perceive of Finnish people about organic products has been growing rapidly in the few years. If in 2005, the awareness of organic was for personal using only, in 2009, there was about 16% of food suppliers included restaurants and public suppliers used organic as ingredient for making food. The organic using campaign which was hold in 2010 in order to encourage chefs by using at least one organic ingredient in cooking attracted more than 500 participants mainly in public area in the same year. (Organic Industry Report, 2010). All of the activities from Finnish retailers and Finnish Associations for Organic such as Luomuliitto Ry, Organic Finland, volunteering programs and other government efforts have been bringing the good results to Finnish knowhow about using organic foods for the safety environment, animal treatment and personal healthcare. The organic consumption of Finns was recorded with 22% of daily using organic in 2010 comparing with 17% in 2008 and with around few % in 2005.(Dahlbaka, 2011, 3).

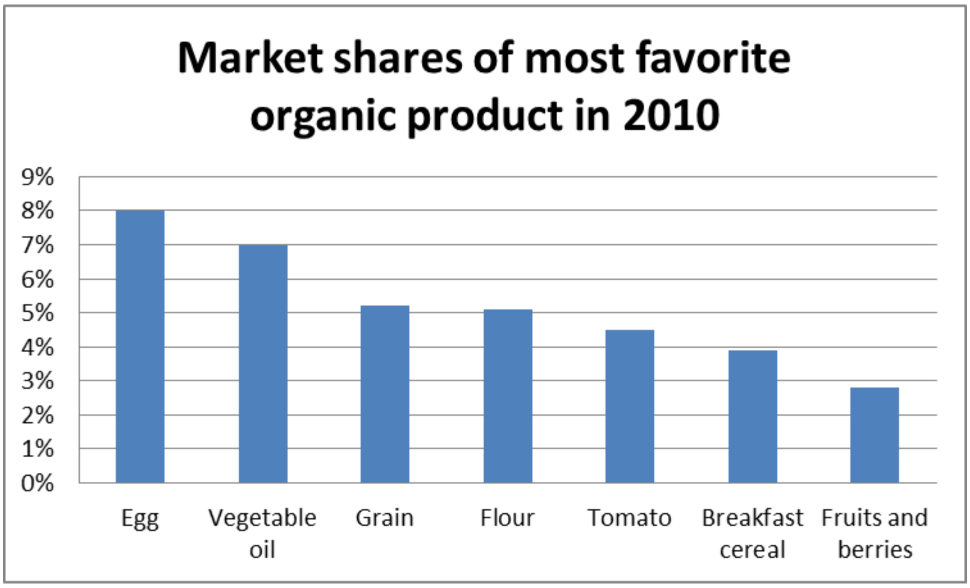


Figure 7. Market shares of most favorite organic products in 2010 (Dahlbaka, 2011, 3)

From figure 7, the highest purchasing decision made in organic products was for egg with 8% of market share in the total of food consumption. The favourite products of Finns were traditional food ingredients as flour, grain, fruits, vegetables and oil. Retailer's information about most organic food selection in 2013 in organic food section had calculated as organic milk with 20%, the second position belonged to fruit and vegetable with 19% and the third position was bakery products with 10%.(Kottila, 2013)

According to ProLuomu Company, organic product's turnover in Finland is believed for stable growth even in worldwide economic crisis. In 2012, organic product's sale in Finland reached 163 million €, and had increased 24% to 202 million € in 2013 and it is expected to reach 330 million € in 2015. Moreover, market share for organic food has been stably grown in the recent years from 1.3% in 2011 to 1.6% in 2013.(Kottila, 2013)

However, Kottila – director of ProLuomu Company Finland believed that organic food market in Finland still insufficient customer's demand by small range of products. (Kottila, 2014).

2.3 Challenge of Finnish organic farms

The awareness of Finns about organic products is incontrovertible; it can be convinced by the rapidly increase of organic supplier both in the number of farms and the size of farm. Comparing between the 2011 and 2012, the number of organic farms in 2012 was recorded as 11% higher rate than the previous year to 4300 farms and the average size expanded 1 to 2 hectares yearly. (Pöytäniemi, 2012). However, there are several of challenges appears in organic producing in Finland.

The weather is the first influence to Finnish farm yield. Finland is located in the north of Europe, with the contrary between winter and summer. Winter is usually the longest time in year in Finland with lowest point at -50 degree Census in some parts and almost whole the country is fulfill by heavy snow is biggest agricultural barrier. (Portraying Finland, Facts and Insights, 2005). The high technology and modern factories to control the temperature appears more and more in the country in order to satisfy domestic demand however, there are not all kind of agricultural products can be produced inside. (Fami farm Oy, 2010)

The second challenge organic products in Finland face to in the recent year can be realized as the strong organic using trend inside the country. The demand for organic products in Finland reached the high point in 2011 and 2012, which people expected to produce, cook and be served by organic ingredients, not only with raw products (nuts, wheat, flour, egg) but also with secondary products (bread, milk, meat) and final products (milk, bread, cheese). There were many animal farms in Finland had changed the meat producing process in order to supply organic meat and organic milk also. As the analysis above, organic products require organic production system together with organic raw materials. For that reason, Finnish organic meats need the organic animal foods, water, and so on. The production of organic grains and wheat in Finland satisfied for the domestic usage however from 2005; the rapidly increasing in organic animal farms required the extremely high supply of organic animal food had changed the situation. Some farms, production was only possible for suffering self-usage. (Pöytäniemi, 2012)

Besides, the influences of EU legislation applied for EU members are also reason for difficulties and decline of Finnish farms in the recent time. Finland has joined in EU membership in 1995, so that the significant changes in Finnish law in order to be suitable with EU legislation lead to the collapsed season of numerous of Finnish farms. Finland has many disadvantages in weather comparing with other European countries with the short planting season in year caused by the weather barrier as analyzed above. Moreover, the union required the fair behavior and tax free between every country lead to the termination of government price support for domestic agriculture products. Finnish agricultural products and organic products were difficult to compete with cheap and diversity products from other EU countries.

(Rannikko, 2014)

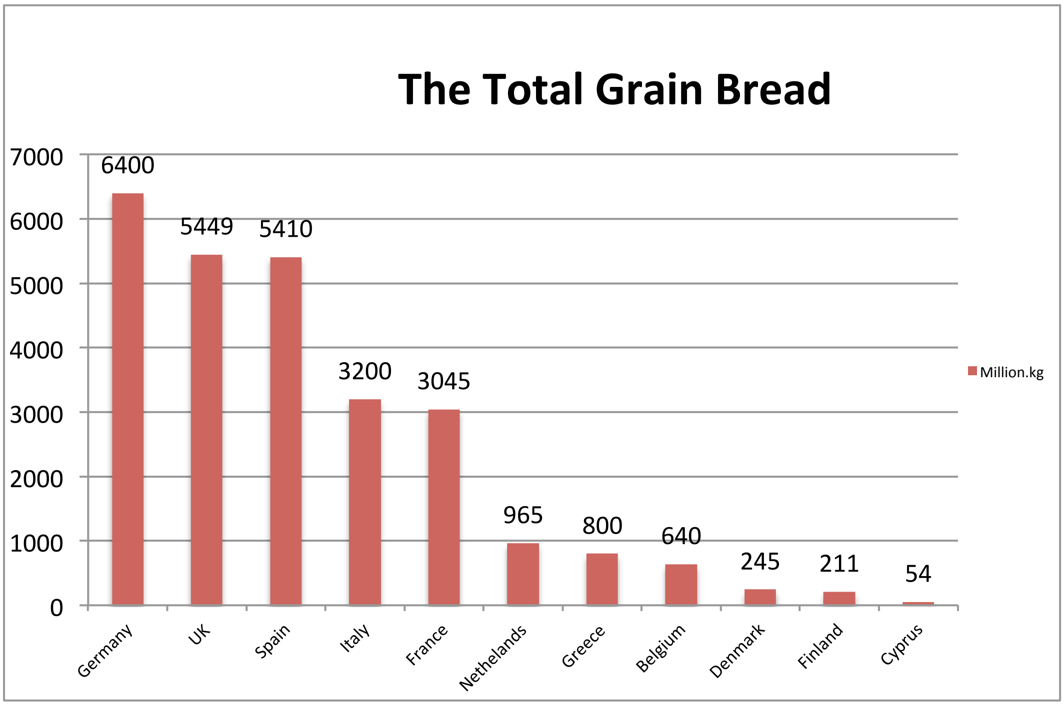


Figure 8. Comparison between the total grain bread between European countries, (European bread market report 2010).

Figure 9 shows the different between Finnish total grain bread productions with other European countries. Finnish occupied a 10th position for producing this product, which is quite important in Finnish meal. The figure can also give reason for Finnish importing trend. (Finnish Custom Statistic, 2014, 29)

According to the report of European Union about agriculture of all state members, Finland had the importing trend for food and agriculture raw material more than exporting trend. The report displayed total amount of importing in agricultural products inside of EU area of Finland occupied 7.9% of total importing budget in comparing with 4.3% of exporting in 2012. The total trade for agricultural products in Finland in 2012 was -2329.0 million € in comparing with other EU countries such as France 15977.8 million €, Spain 9018.1 million €, and Austria -878.4 million € in the same year. (European Commission, 2014). The main importing products of Finland were mainly raw material for final products, included plant, seeds, and feeding products.

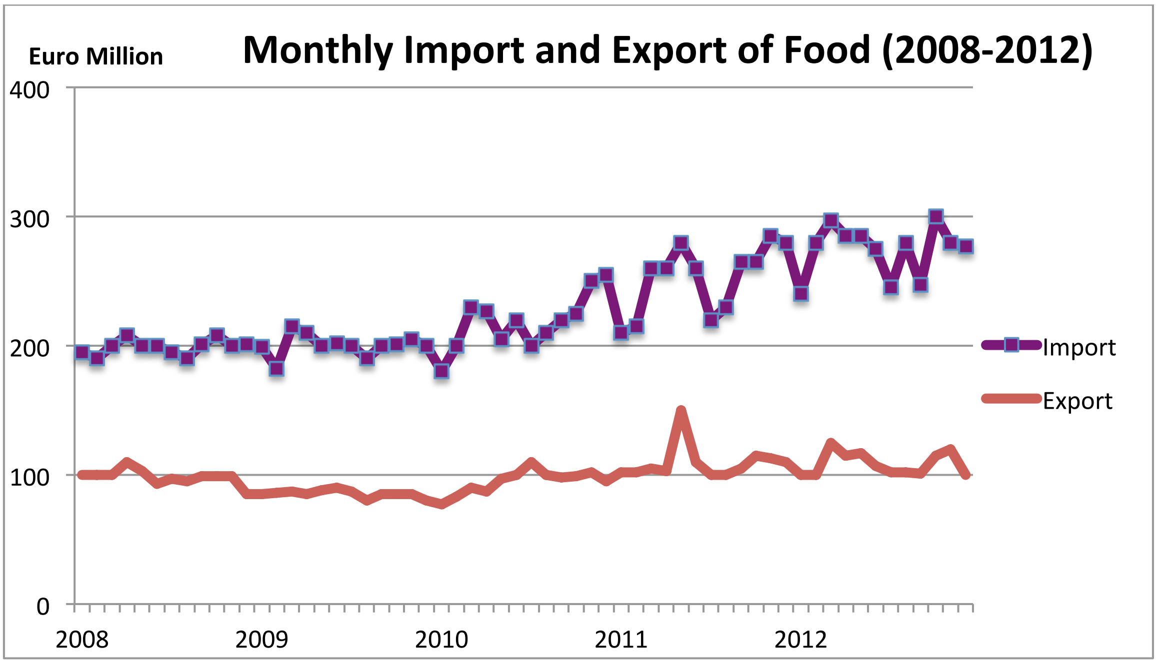


Figure 9. Monthly import and export of Food (2008-2012)
(Finnish Custom Statistic, 2014, p29)

Figure 9 shows the different between import and export in food section of Finland in 4 years period from 2009 to 2013 by million €. From the figure, total quantity of importing in food section reached 300 million € in 2013, convinced to be potential and dream market for every exporter in this area. Moreover, the importing trend increased rapidly in the short time, 4 years period, about nearly 100 million €. The result proved the high demand and growing trend of Finnish market about diversity and quantity in agriculture and food, and the dissatisfaction of domestic production in this area. Besides, the importing products, which were listed by Finnish custom and European Union statistic, were mainly in organic production process (seeds, plant, feeding products and other raw material. (Finnish Custom Statistic, 2014, 29)

In conclusion, at a glance, Finland appears with many challenges for agricultural development, however, the deeper research's result displays the opposite argument. In fact, Finland has a strong base in agriculture from its history besides, the concentrate of Finnish people about sustainable development for productivity, healthy, and environment. It brings to Finnish agriculture the trust about domestic products and also makes high barriers to other's producers to entrance to Finnish market.

Vietnam started to participate with organic agriculture trend quite late comparing with other areas of the world. In 1995, some domestic and foreign farming groups had introduced organic farming to Vietnamese agricultural union. Since then, organic farming have been developing and expanding both from customer's and farmer's awareness. In

2011, Vietnamese organic agriculture (VOA) union was established with purpose of joining all people who consider about producing organic in Vietnam to research, and develop Vietnamese organic production. (danviet.vn, 2014)

2.4 Vietnamese organic development

Vietnam locates in South East Asia where is affected by humid tropical climate with average temperature in year is 22-17 Celsius degree, annual precipitation is 1500-2000 mm, air humidity is about 80%. The natural condition brings to Vietnam advantages in developing agricultural production. Vietnam has two biggest agricultural areas which support agricultural products for whole country, as Red River Delta 15000 km^2 wide, and Mekong River Delta 40000 km^2 wide. Besides, Vietnam also includes 3260-km^2 coastlines, which is ideal for developing fishery. (dulichkhachsan.com, 2014).

Based on natural favorable, Vietnamese people has been producing agricultural goods, which can fulfill national needs and also export agricultural products to bring mainly turnover for the country. Vietnam has around 9,3 million ha agricultural production acreage, 1,037 million ha fishery in 2013. (AnhKien, 2013), (Doan, 2012). The main agricultural products of Vietnam by years are rice, coffee, cocoa bean, vegetable, tea, silk and so on. (Nguyen, 2013).

Vietnam was determined to have an only organic agricultural production until 1960 with plant’s fertilizer, which made from organic sources. However, after 1960, inorganic fertilizers were introduced to farmers to break organic system by promise of fastened growing time, high productivity, and prevent from harmful insects and animals. From 1960, following trend of developing countries to reach high productivity and fastened profitability, Vietnam also used some inorganic additional in planting, but main fertilizers were still organic fertilizers.(Dao, 2014). The country is mainly based on agricultural activities with about 70% of population working in agricultural sections, for that reason, Vietnamese people realized changes in land, products, water and air by usage of inorganic fertilizers after seasons. (Vietnamesegorvernment.vn, 2012).

From then on, the necessary for producing organic products has been taken care not only for human health but also for sustainable development natural resources. Organic farmers realized additional had made the degradation and erosion of land, so that, they started to come back to traditional planting methods with organic fertilizers. However, these acts were still single action by own care and with purpose of protects own land

and products. (Dao,2014). In 2005, the Denmark non-governmental organization ADDA made organic developing project in Vietnam with sample, which was made from North Vietnam's crop fields. The project was examined from November 2005 to October 2012 with purpose to build an organic system and introduce modern organic term to Vietnamese farmers and consumers. The project was identified as successful project, that help Vietnam to build an professional organic agriculture from changing farmer's attitudes by actual result (50-100% increasing turnover, organic consumption grown from 10tons in 2009 to 20tons per month in 2010), building product's assessment system, introducing product's to customer by marketing and popularize actions. In 2008, PGS had been established as an organic quality system of Vietnam. PGS is organic quality system which appears in many countries in the world include, USA, New Zealand, Brazil, Peru, Thailand, India and so on, PGS is based on the guarantee of producers in production chain. PGS in different countries can be different depends on criteria of farmers and consumers. In 2004, PGS Vietnam was certificated by IFOAM to be trusted system for organic products. (Vietnamorganic.vn, 2014)

According to Miss Pham Thi Thuy, vice president of VOA union, certificated organic production acreage reached 23400 ha in 2012, occupied 0,2% of agricultural acreage with biggest production of 7000 ha organic shrimp. The main organic production of Vietnam is shrimp, catfish, tea, pineapple, rice, vegetable and cashew nuts. (IAS, 2013). However, Vietnam is assessed to be a good producer and market for organic products by the available natural resources and labor resources. The main problems to bring Vietnam to be come an organic country can be because of the poor ability of evaluating system which is not accepted globally. Vietnam did not have own evaluating system for organic products (included machines and experts) so that products need to be measure by foreign experts and foreign system. For this reason, products after certificate loose price competitive advantage to compete to other producers. (AnhThu, 2014)

Although Vietnamese organic agriculture still stays in potential position for market and producer, Vietnam have started to export their organic products to other countries. In 2012, BIO Organic and USDA certificated Vien Phu- Vietnamese rice production with rice product to be 100% organic product which was fulfilled USA and European's organic quality system. (khoahocphothong.com.vn, 2012). In 2013, Vietnamese organic rice with USDA and European certificate started to be exported to difficult markets such as UK, Russia, France, Singapore, and Germany.(MaiPhuong, 2014)

In 2014, HoChiMinh city agricultural company (GAP) had successful in exporting 10 containers of organic rice to USA market and got good responses from USA agricultural partners and customers.(SonVi, 2014)

Besides rice, Vietnamese cocoa bean is also quite famous export agricultural product, which was estimated to be one of the best cocoa bean in the world. Exporting in cocoa bean in 2015 is expected to reach 60-70 million US$. (Anh, 2014). In 2007, Swiss organization-Helvetas operated an organic cocoa bean producing project in Cuu Long delta of Vietnam starting with 2000 farmers. Ritter Sport – a German chocolate producer was interested in Vietnamese organic cocoa bean and proposed to import certain amount of organic cocoa bean yearly. (Iro.hcmuaf.edu.vn, 2014)

Like other tropical countries, Vietnam also has diversity and massive amount of tropical fruits every season in year. Vietnam has been exported fruits to other countries in years. The dominant products can be seen as banana, lychee, pitaya, pomelo, pineapple and so on. The main markets of Vietnamese fruits are China, Russia, Japan, Taiwan and USA.(Agroviet, 2014). Fruit exporting action is estimated to bring back to Vietnam about 600 million US$ yearly. (HongNhung, 2012). Organic fruits were also concentrated by Vietnamese producers by highly increase in revenue by years.

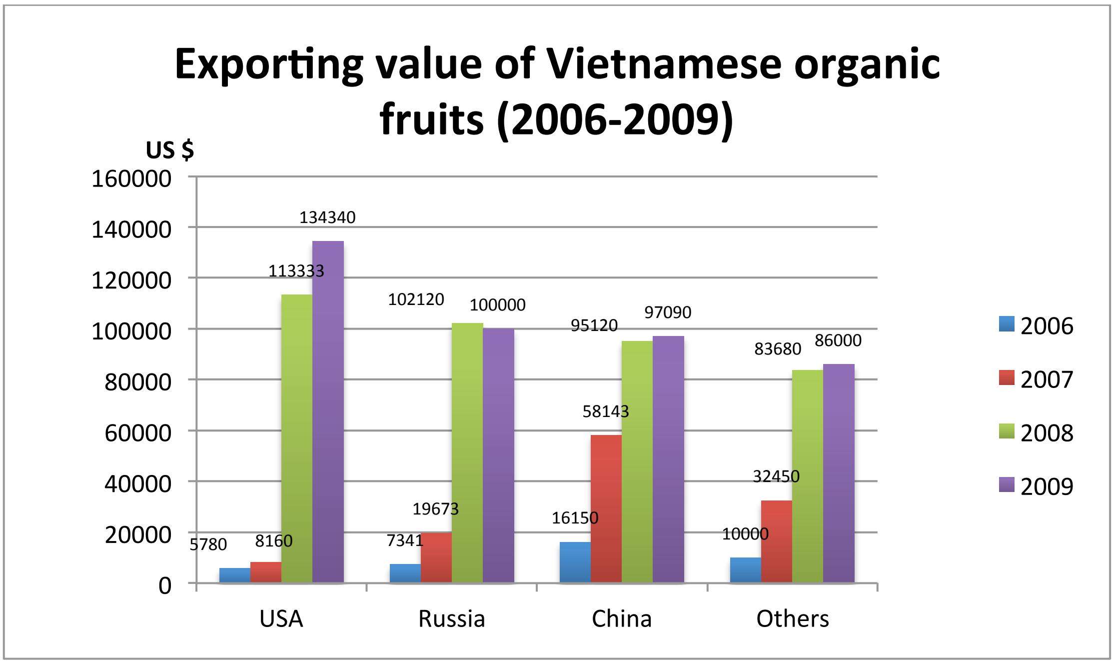


Figure 10. The exporting value of Vietnamese organic fruits from 2006 to 2009 (Vietnamese Ministry of Industry and Trade, 2014)

Figure 10 shows the radically grow in exporting of Vietnamese organic fruits to potential markets from 2006 to 2009 by US$. (Vietnamese Ministry of Industry and Trade, 2014).

United States of America was the biggest importer of Vietnamese organic fruits with main products was lychee, pomelo, pitaya, purple mangosteen, green orange, and durian. Following USA was Russia and China with also rapidly increasing in importing value. USA is expected to be loyal customer of Vietnamese organic fruits with estimated for more diversity products in future, especially, pineapple, and mango.(khotailieu.com, 2014)

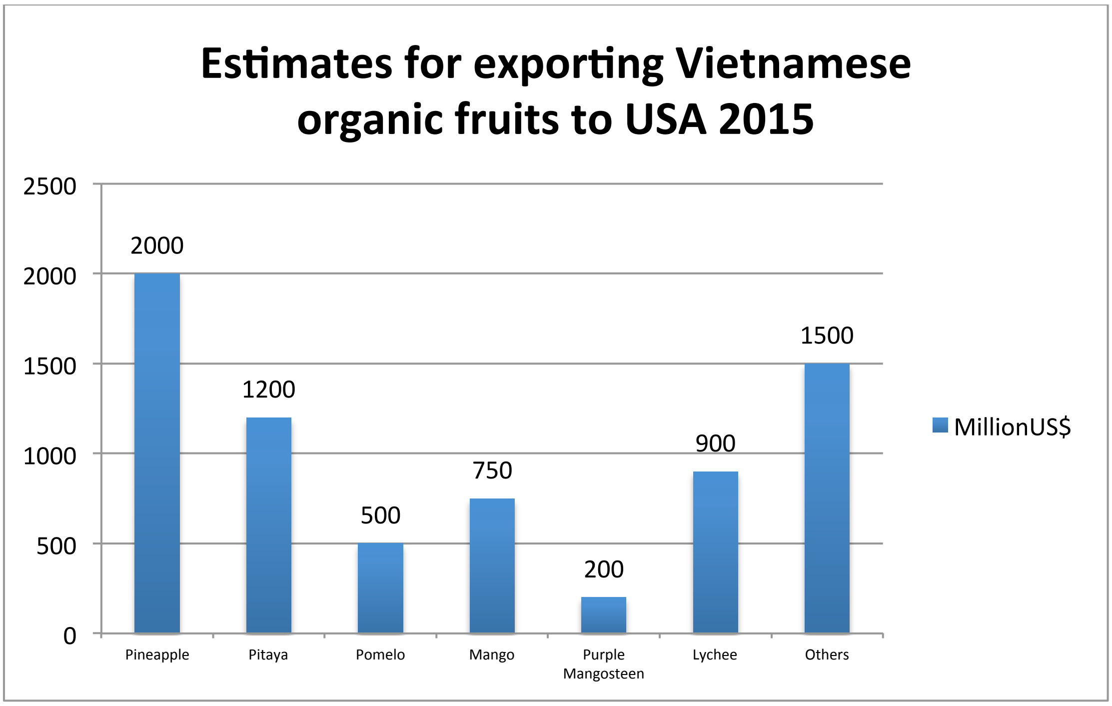


Figure 11. Estimates for exporting Vietnamese organic fruits to USA 2015 (Vietnamese Ministry of Industry and Trade, 2014)

To sum up, Vietnam has big opportunities to become an organic producer by natural endowments. Nevertheless, Vietnamese organic development still has the gap to international requirements. In recent years, Vietnam has been starting to improve in producing and exporting organic products to other side of the world and got good feedbacks. Besides opportunities, there are many visible challenges that postpone Vietnamese organic products to arrive in some difficult markets such as Finnish market.

2.5 Opportunities and challenges of Vietnamese food to Finland

According to researches of Vietnamese embassy in Sweden about possibility of importing Vietnamese agricultural products to Northern European area, this area imports about 70% of fresh vegetables and fruits from other countries. Finland is the least importer with only 15% of vegetables and fruits, which were imported to the country comparing with 40% of Sweden, 26% of Denmark and 19% of Norway. (ThaoVy, 2013). Finnish consumption in organic products is increasing rapidly in recent years. Domestic productivity is realized to be insufficient for Finnish demand in both volume and types. The research in 2013 gave result about 30% of organic products were imported to Finland and it has been growing steadily. The high price of Finnish domestic organic products and the shortage of Finnish products have brought to growth of foreign products in Finland. Based on Evira, number of shops and companies, which had presence of foreign organic products, were increased to more than 600 places in 2013 and around 70% of products in Ruohonjuuret – Finnish organic food chain were admitted as foreign organic products. The most foreign organic products that were sold in Finland were fruits, vegetables, and cheeses. (Yle, 2013). From these reasons, the first opportunity for Vietnamese products in Finland can be seen as high demand in both volume and diversity of Finnish organic market.

Besides, price for organic products in Finland is also become reliable discussion around the country. Organic products are known as high price items in markets and shops. According to release from Finnish Competition and Consumer Authority in 2002, price of organic products in Finland was set as 1.5 to 2% higher than others non-organic products. In addition, price had been increased 1.5% from previous year in general. Nevertheless, the growth was not equal for every product, from same report; price of cucumber was risen 25% in comparison with 2001. Moreover, distribution of organic products was mainly in urban, south and eastern areas, other areas were sparse. (Finnish Competition and Consumer Authority, 2002). Vietnamese organic products can be offered with lower price than Finnish organic products by the differences in currency, labor cost and other costs. It can be seen as chance for Vietnamese organic products to reach price sensitive customers.

The other opportunity for Vietnamese organic products in Finnish market is high purchasing power of Finnish market. Purchasing power is depended on country's economic, personal earnings, and credit availability. (Kotler 2014, 99).

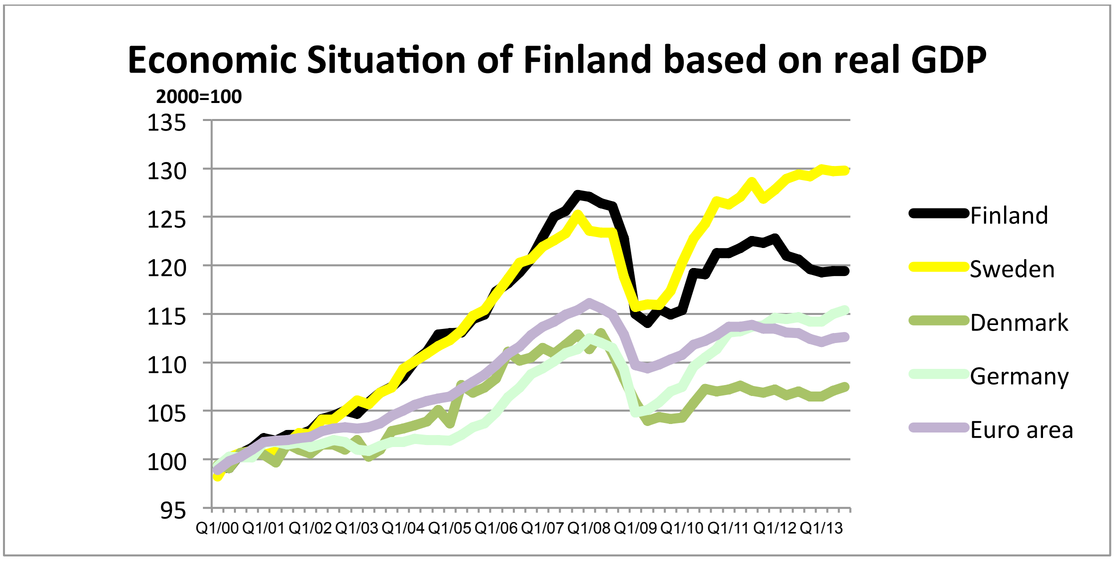


Figure 12. Economic of Finland based on real GDP (OECD, 2014)

Figure 12 is made, based on data from OECD to compare economic situation between Finland, Sweden, Denmark, Germany, and Euro area, with main data was real GDP from 2000 to 2013. (OECD,2014). From the graph, Finnish economic was displayed which had radically and firmly grown until 2007 to become the highest economy in these areas. From 2007 to 2013, with effect from economic crisis all around the world, Finnish economic decreased to lose first position to Sweden. However, from 2009, Finnish economic had been recovered and increased. The growth of Finnish economic was not fast as previous period but, comparing with other areas, Finnish economic still stayed in leading positions for strong and sustainable development. (OECD, 2014)

The strong economy of Finland brings to its citizen chances to get a firm and high personal earnings in many different areas. Salary system in Finland depends on types of education employees have and different types of job. (Statistics Finland, 2013)

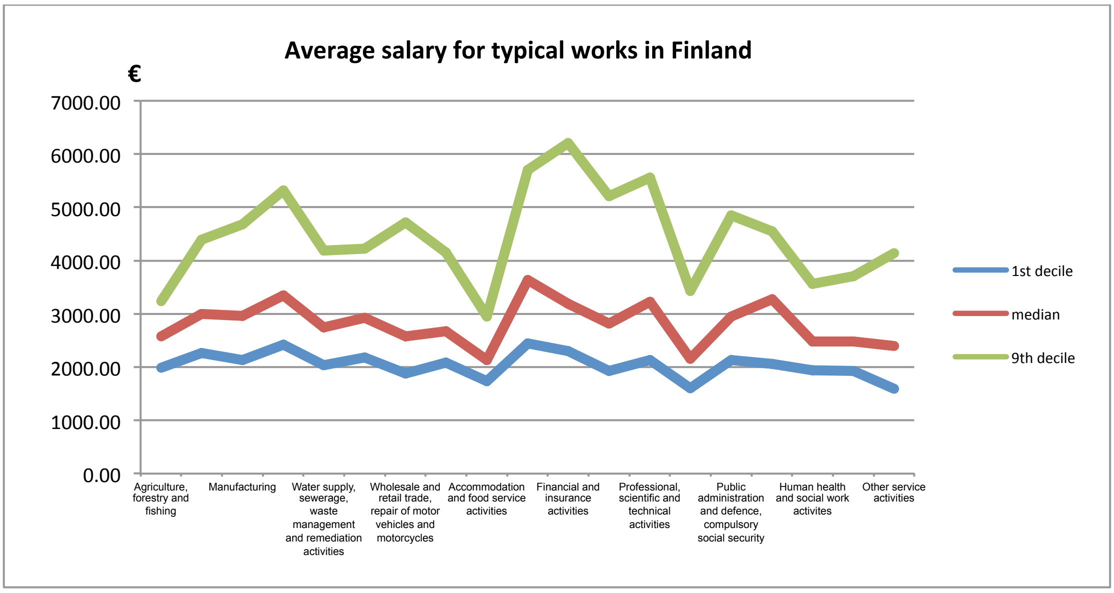


Figure 13. Average salary for typical works in Finland (Statistics Finland, 2011)

Figure 13 shows monthly average earnings from some typical works in Finland in 2011 such as agriculture, fishing, manufacturing, education, transportation, electric, gas, IT and so on. From the figure, lowest average in these job group is service activities with 1593 € monthly and highest salary is for information and communication with 2446 € monthly for first decile. (Statistics Finland, 2011)

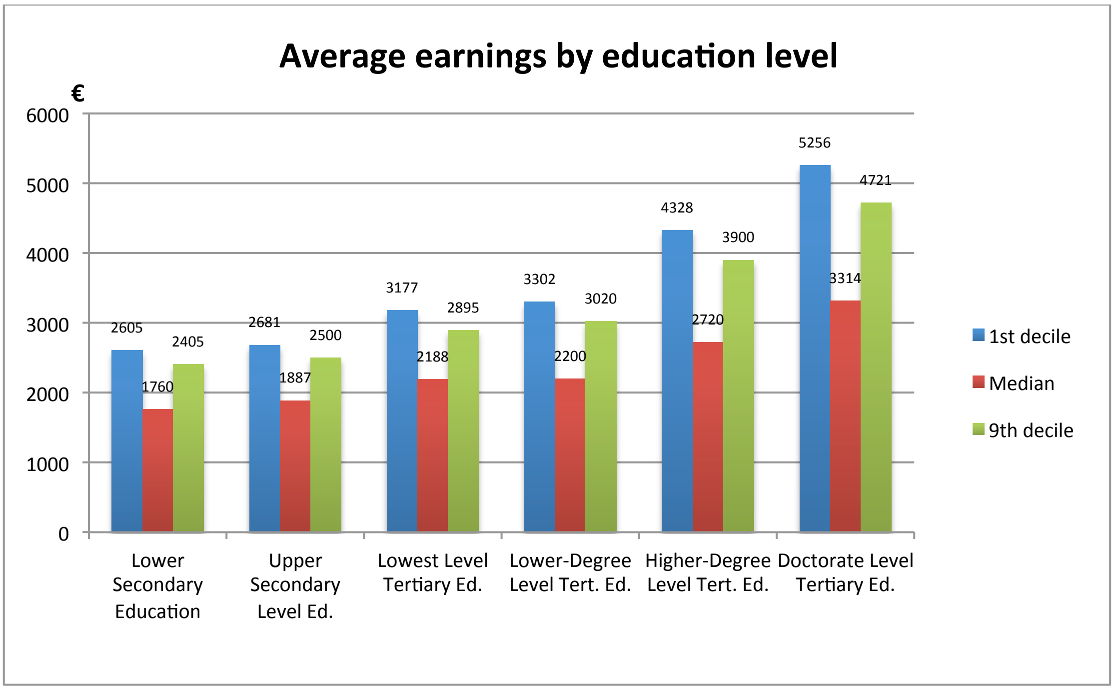


Figure 14. Average earnings by education level (Statistics Finland, 2013)

Figure 14 indicates average monthly salary of Finnish people in 2011 by different educational level. The lowest salary belongs to lower secondary education level with

1760 €. From these data, personal earnings in Finland can be seen in top level of salary earnings in European area and in the world. Finnish average salary has the huge gap with some other European countries in the State such as Bulgaria with 1.5 € per hour, Latvia 2.90 € per hour, and Romania 2€ per hour. This information convinces high purchasing power between Finland and other top salary country and others, based on the PPS, different gap between them can be rated to be 5:1. (Eurostat, 2014)

Many banks around the country offer credit availability in Finland, besides, there are many types of loan are offered for citizen such as car, house, boat, student loan and so on (nordea.fi, 2014). In addition, budget sources for market activities for example Finnvera are also available. (Finnvera.fi, 2014)

From these reasons, Finland has strong purchasing power based on secured economy, high personal earnings and enriched financing sources. This can be seen as good opportunity for every company to take part in this market.

Besides these advantages, there are also many exist challenges for Vietnamese organic products for entrancing Finnish market.

Vietnamese organic production is assessed to have high potential to develop by the enrichment of natural resources such as climate, land, and agricultural history. However, Vietnamese organic assessment system is still poor and unreliable for exporting to other markets special difficult market as Finland.((AnhThu, 2014).

Nowadays, Vietnamese organic products are certificated by PGS standard. PGS standard is organic product's standard, which is based on the guarantee about using organic ingredients of all producers in production chain. (Vietnamorganic.vn, 2014). PGS was established in Vietnam from 2008 and it was accepted by IFOAM in September 20013. PGS had gained success in certificating organic products in many markets such as USA, France, New Zealand, Latin America, Philippines, India and so on. (PhuongDong&XuanQuynh ,2013). Besides PGS, Vietnam also uses VietGap and GlobalGap standard for certificate organic products. VietGap is agricultural criterion that was initiated by Vietnamese Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development in order to verify Vietnamese agricultural products. (vietgap.gov.vn, 2006). GlobalGap is certificate, which came from EuroGap standard for agricultural products and it was first time inspected by EuroCert. (eurocert.com.vn, 2014). GlobalGap is used in Vietnam for certificated agricultural products in general and organic products in detail however, GlobalGap is usually standardized by other international organizations such as

EuroCert, and Bureau Veritas with expensive cost. While VietGap and PGS are admitted as work better for domestic market than exporting market. (ThuHuong, 2014) European union has made strong requirements for exporting products from others countries, which can be known as 'Green barriers' about products, packages, environment and so on. In order to exporting agricultural products to EU, Vietnamese producers have to adapt to many different criterion such as environmental standards (ISO 14000, HACCP, EMAS, SPS) besides, products standard by themselves. (Tran, Do, Ho&Pham, 2014). In case of agricultural products, EU is using GlobalGap also as general standard, however, there are different certificates used by different country. In Finland, organic products are inspected and certified by Finnish Food Safety Authority (Evira), Finnish Customs and other Health Officers. Organic products in Finland are certified under brand 'Luomu' (as natural) which can be granted by Evira. Moreover, there are many other private brands such as Ladybirds by Luomuliitto, and Demeter by Finnish biodynamic Association for own products. According to the Food Business Forum in 2007, there are ten main elements which has been affecting to Finnish food sector development such as corporate responsibility, safety of foodstuffs, health and nutrition issues, pricing, marketing and so on. The ranking for the most and the less important issues, that based on data from 2006 to 2008 displayed the direction of Finnish food sector by customer's care. Corporate responsibility stayed at 9th position in 2006, 5th position in 2007 and 1st position in 2008. The result indicated the attention of Finnish people about environmental responsibility, labor responsibility and so on. It was also reason for higher green barrier for every product in Finnish market. Meanwhile, safety of foodstuffs occupied 5th position in 2006, 6th in 2007 and 2nd position in 2008. After corporate responsibility, safety also became pushing element for purchasing decision. The other surprising element as marketing in Finnish people attention was only stayed in 8th, 9th, 9th position alternately. Pricing was a big effect in 2006 and 2007 as 2nd position however; it turned to 6th position in 2008. (CIES, 2007). The ranking result convinced most important concerns of Finnish market, not about price, not about marketing, relationship, but it were about environmental responsibility, labor responsibility, healthy, safety and nutrition issues. That is the reason there are many certificates, barriers, for importing products to come into Finnish market.

The second challenge for Vietnamese products to Finland is tax barrier. Vietnamese exporting products to Finland has to suffered from EU tax legislation which includes many different types of tax such as anti-dumping duty rates, importing tax, VAT, and so on. The tax will be calculated based on price of products. (Dutycalculator, 2014). Custom duty of importing products of Finland is counted as from 0%-17% for non-European countries. Moreover, VAT for mostly types of products are 24%, food products are 14%. (Vero.fi, 2012). From 2006, EU had released GSP – Generalized System of Preferences to support for developing countries. GSP system mainly works for providing developing countries opportunities to join in EU markets with lower reasonable tax rate. Vietnam also takes part in this system from 01/01/2014, that every exporting products of Vietnam can get incentive tax rate to EU area. Based on this system, there are many non-sensitive products from Vietnam can get 0% of importing tax when come to EU area, for food and agricultural products, the tax is lowered to be 3.5%. (Le, 2014). However, according to Mr Bouflet – Counselor of EU in Vietnam, GSP also brings challenges to Vietnamese exporting products, that, the system has limitation for exporting products. Exporting products cannot exceed 17,5% of total same types of products from every GSP countries. GSP will be investigated every 3 years and EU can end it unilaterally. Price of products brings difficulties for EU products can be reason for reconsideration of GSP. (Doanhnhansaigon, 2014). To summarized, nowadays, Vietnam is enjoying good exporting support from EU area, however, the support is only temporary issue in order to help Vietnamese economic. For the sustainable development and long-term trade relationship, Vietnam is trying to get FTA agreement with EU. FTA is agreement between two partners about both responsibilities and rights of both sides. FTA can open market for both Vietnam and EU in which, Vietnamese and EU products by themselves have to compete to other products to build stronger competitive advantages. (HaiMinh, 2014)

The third difficulty for Vietnamese organic product to Finland is about documentary. Import and export transactions are always required more documentary than normal transactions. To exporting to EU countries, importers need to provide many documents to fulfill EU requirements and Finnish requirements. Food and agricultural products exporting to Finland are also required import license, which is accepted by Finnish Agency for Rural Affairs and National Board of Customs. (Canadian Trade Commissioner Service, 2014). Moreover, for outside of EU area, to import products to Finland, there are many others documents needed.

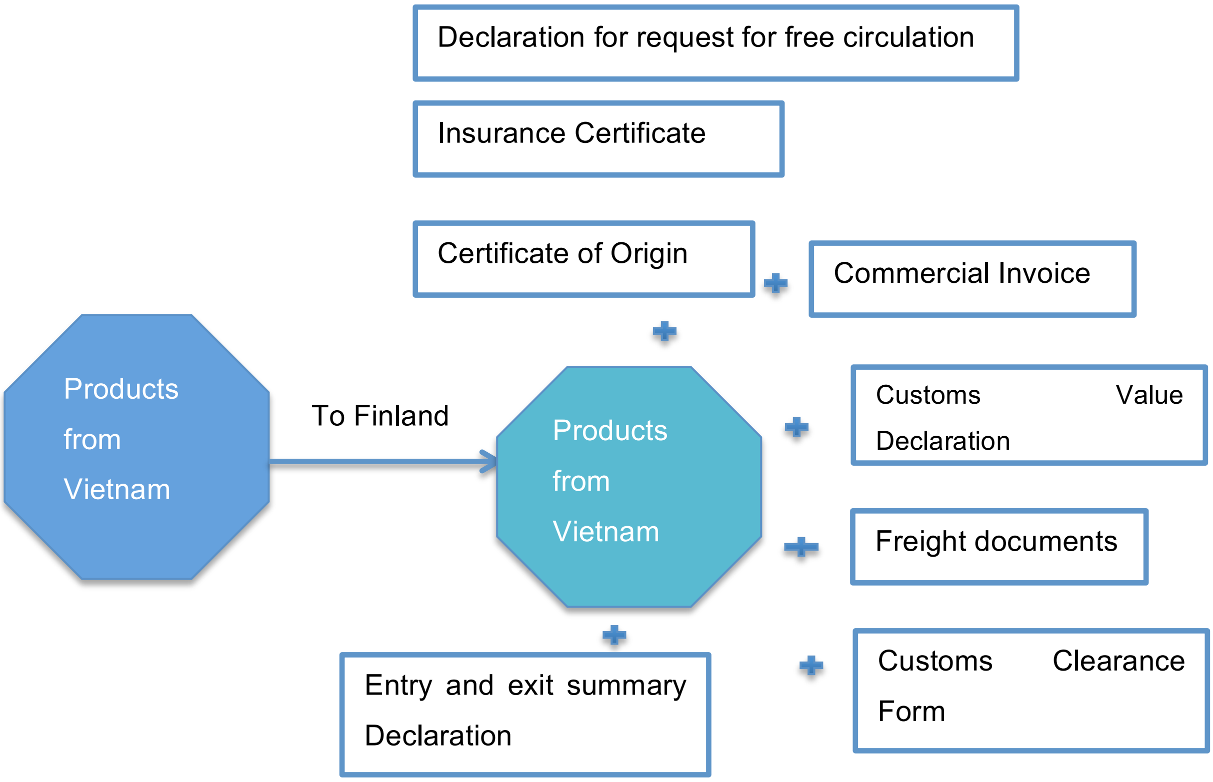


Figure 15. Documents for exporting to Finland (The Canadian Trade Commissioner Service, 2014)

Figure 15 indicates the main documents, which are required for non- European countries to export products to Finland. Vietnamese products also need to provide these documents for exporting transactions to Finland. (The Canadian Trade Commissioner Service, 2014). Agricultural products are usually sensitive products, that easy to go over ripe, specially for organic products, which are non-chemical used. For this reason, the long process of documents and customs inspection, together with long transporting route from Vietnam to Finland can cause risks such as, broken products, over date products and postponement. So that, competitive advantage from fresh, cheap, and good quality products cannot be used in Finnish market.

The fourth challenge for Vietnamese organic products to Finland is packaging and labeling. Vietnamese agricultural products have gained high ranking in exporting to other areas in the recent years. However, Vietnamese exporting products are usually raw materials, which are mainly sold to other producers as products in production lines. Problem comes from poor agricultural system with simple machineries and perceive of Vietnamese farmers who do not take enough consideration about labeling and packaging in order to increase quality and join in difficult markets such as Finland. (dddn.com.vn, 2013). Labeling and packaging are important criteria for every products in

Finland, not only importing products. Packaging needs to be used for purpose of preventing from damage during transportation, protect product's nutrition and classify product's types such as agricultural products, industrial products and so on. According to EU regulation EC 1935/2004, there are different types of package are necessary for foodstuffs to decrease waste and environmental risks in cycling. (Ministry for foreign Affairs of Finland, 2014, 11). Labeling of products is required to include information about product 's nutrition, weight, ingredients, manual of using, country of origin, and CE marking. (Ministry for foreign Affairs of Finland, 2014, 12).

To summary, although Vietnamese organic products have incontrovertible advantages to enter to Finnish market, nevertheless, many subjective and objective barriers still exist to cause difficulties for exporting those to Finland. Vietnamese exporters are required to understand EU foreign trade legislation and Finnish own legislation, besides improvement of Vietnamese products quality in nutrition, safety, company's responsibility, package, label, documents and so on in order to be accepted in a potential and difficult market as Finland.

3 RESEARCH ON THE POTENTIAL DEMAND FOR VIETNAMESE ORGANIC FOOD PRODUCTS

The theory part of thesis has already analyzed about theoretical aspects in order to explain the purpose of thesis and objective elements influenced to thesis subject. The research part of thesis will concentrate to research method, research result and analyze result practically. The research section will deal with attitude of Finnish customers about thesis's question. Result of research will be used for answering thesis's object in introduction part. Besides, it is also expected to give explanation about this phenomenon.

3.1 Research Implementation

The research is performed by survey form based on quantitative research method. As definition from Aliaga and Gunderson, quantitative research method is used to 'explaining phenomena by collecting numerical data that are analyzed using mathematically based methods' (Aliaga & Gunderson, 2000). The idea of quantitative method meets thesis's requirement, which requests high volume of audiences in order to discover Finnish consumer's attitude about this subject. Moreover, audiences are not required to have specialized knowledge about the case study. Sample is selected randomly around Finland. Survey tries to cover attitude from different customer's segments in Finland, so that result can be used to compare and analyze not only for answering to yes/no question, but also for understanding reason of this answer, based on information from customer's demand, preference, habits and so on for future usages.

Survey includes 16 questions, mainly in multiple choices and ranking form; besides, there are also blank spaces for additional opinion of audiences. Sample is mainly selected from Varkaus, Helsinki and Uusikaupunki in Finland. Survey is made by Webropol online service, which is available at address: http://www.webropol.fi/. Survey is targeted to get 150 answers by both digital form and paper form. Digital responses are gathered from online social network such as Facebook, and Twitter. Paper responses are collected from public places such as markets, schools, and streets. Survey is conducted from October 2014 to November 2014.

Answers of survey are analyzed by Webropol service and Microsoft Excel program in order to release charts, diagrams, tables and figures. From then on, the research is examined based on comparing data, charts, diagrams and figures to release realistic information about case study.

3.2 Result analysis on potential demand

The research's survey is carried out in nearly one month period, which collected 120 answers comparing with 150 answers potentially. There are many refusals appeared in survey process, with main reasons are time, language and vision. The analysis of answers will be described in the following paragraphs.

The three first question of survey are about background information of respondents such as age, occupation situation and home city, in this case, collector ignores children sections deliberately because of the dependent characteristic of this section. The first question collected 120 answers from respondents.

Ages	Numbers of respondent
From 25-35	45
From 19-24	28
From 35-45	25
From 45-55	9
Over 60	8
From 55-60	5
Below 18	0

Table 1. Age Division of respondents

Table 1 displays answers, which collected from first question 'How old are you?'. This question gets answers from many different age groups. The biggest group of respondents is shown from age group 25-35 with 45 answers, following by age group 19-24 and 35-45. The reason for different in groups of respondents can be explained by the habit of using Internet and English language of different age groups. The younger and working age groups of Finnish are easier to communicate by English language and Internet services; on the contrary, older age groups require Finnish communication and other approaches. (Leppänen, 2011, 41), (StatisticFinland, 2013). For this reason, the poor Finnish language skill of writer is interfered survey to attract older respondents.

The second question is still about general information of respondents as home city.

Home towns	Numbers of respondent
Uusikaupunki	32
Helsinki	27
Varkaus	26
Turku	12
Espoo	6
Vantaa	5
Lahti	4
Joroinen	4
Pieksamaki	2
Kokkola	1
Laitila	1

Table 2. Hometowns of respondents

Table 2 describes main cities of answerers, which were listed as Uusikaupunki, Helsinki, Varkaus, Turku, Espoo and Vantaa. Besides these cities, there are few answers that were collected from other cities also such as Kokkola, Lahti, Pieksamaki and Joroinen. This question gets also 120/120 answers from respondents. The biggest amount of respondents was from Uusikaupunki, after that were Helsinki and Varkaus. The younger age groups were collected from almost every of these cities with the help of Internet, however, the older age groups' answers were mainly from Varkaus, Uusikaupunki and Turku, collected by paper surveys because of possibility to present of writer in these cities.

The last question about background information is occupation of respondents.

Occupation	Numbers of respondent
Working	64
Student	33
Retired	11
Self-Employed	6
Non-working	6
Other	0

Table 3. Occupations of respondents

Table 3 shows the occupation of respondents. There are almost all of current occupations covered by this survey. The highest possession of respondents belongs working group with more than 50% then student with over 25% and following with retired, self employed and non-working people. However, the big gap between working group's respondents to other groups can be taken as reason for the different results in following questions related to deeper information about organic situation in Finland.

The fourth question is about using organic situation in last month of answerers.

Use of organic food products in the last month	Numbers of respondent
Yes	72
No	48

Table 4. Use of organic food products in the last month by respondents

Table 4 displays answers for question: 'In the last month, have you used organic food products?'. This question gets 120 answers with 60% of people used organic food in the last month, and 40% of these answerers did not use it. From the result, 60% of people who used organic in last month can be noticed to be regular customers for organic products with frequency of purchase is at least once a month. On the other hand, these respondents can be seen as yearly users who frequency of purchase came eventually in last month, however, the percentage of this phenomenon does not happen as high as the other. 40% of respondents gave answers as 'No' using organic foods in previous month. This percentage includes both non-organic users and irregular customers.

In this case, the highest percentage of people who replied as 'Yes' belonged to age group from 25-35 and 35-45, nevertheless, this result is also affected by big amount of respondents in these groups. The percentage of age group over 60, and 55-60 who answered 'Yes' is not as high as these groups, however, there was 0% of respondents answered 'No' in over 60 years old group and only 2.1% from 55-60 years old group, at the opposite with 42% of 'No' answers from 25-35 and 39.6% from 19-24. From these comparing information, the preference for regular using organic happens in the older age groups is higher than younger age groups in Finland.

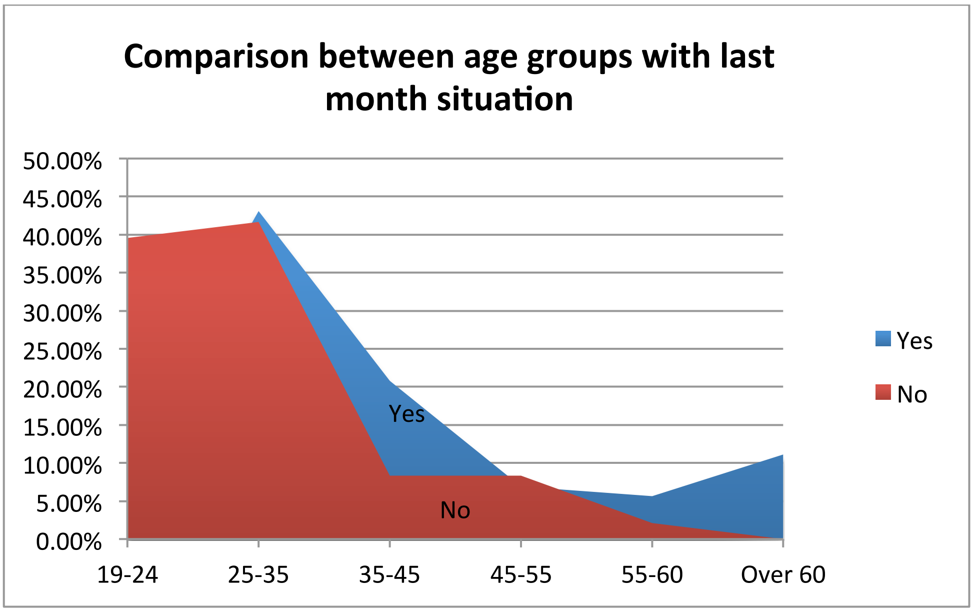


Figure 16. Comparison between age groups with last month situation

Figure 16 describes situation of using organic foods in last month comparing with age groups in Finland. The comparing data is performed as 'Yes' or 'No'. Data was taken from 120 answers of respondents and compared by percentage. This result is also similar when use same analytical method to compare between occupation and last month using organic situation.

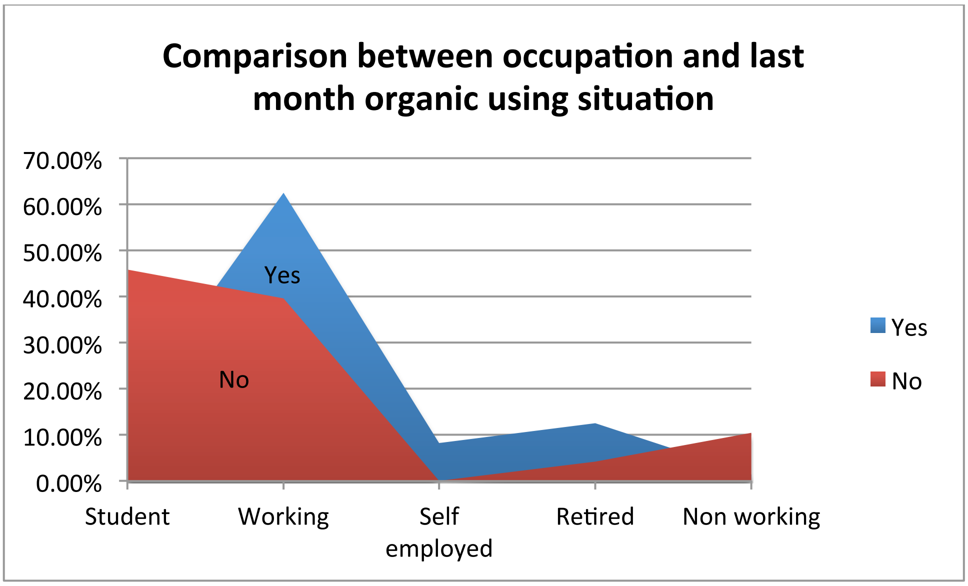


Figure 17. Comparison between occupation and last month organic using situation

Figure 17 indicates relationship between occupation and frequency of using organic food products. As information, which was given in theoretical part of this thesis, organic foods are concerned as expensive products in Finland; the result from survey strengthens this mention. In addition, the higher age groups are, and the better financial situation respondents are, the closer frequency in using organic food products are found.

The fifth question goes deeper to Finnish organic food products' situation, which is given in previous question about frequency of using organic foods of respondents.

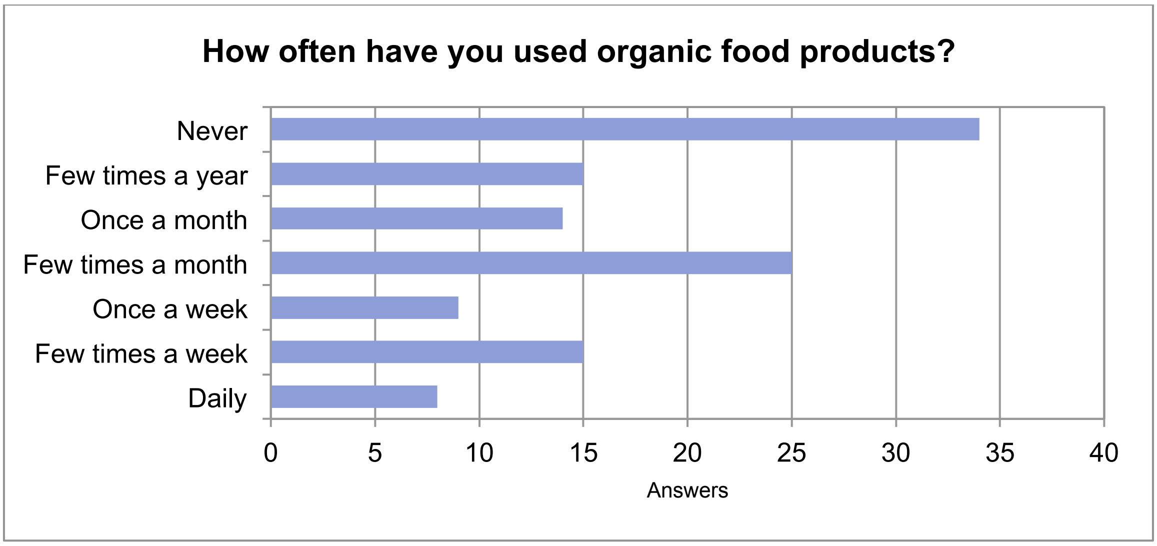


Figure 18. The frequency of using organic food products by respondents

Figure 18 illustrates answers from question 'How often have you used organic food products?'. There are 34 respondents who answered as 'no interested in using organic', occupied 28% of respondents. Meanwhile, the most frequent in using organic is monthly users with 39 people, occupied 46,8%, following by weekly users with 20%, yearly with 18% and lowest percentage of users belongs to daily using with only 9,6%. The reason for this result is possible to be explained by price, place and availability of foods, which will be indicated deeper in few following paragraphs.

Moreover, there are also differences in frequency of using organic food products based on age, occupation and place. Age and occupation can be connected together in most case by relationship between working age, studying age and retired age and so on.

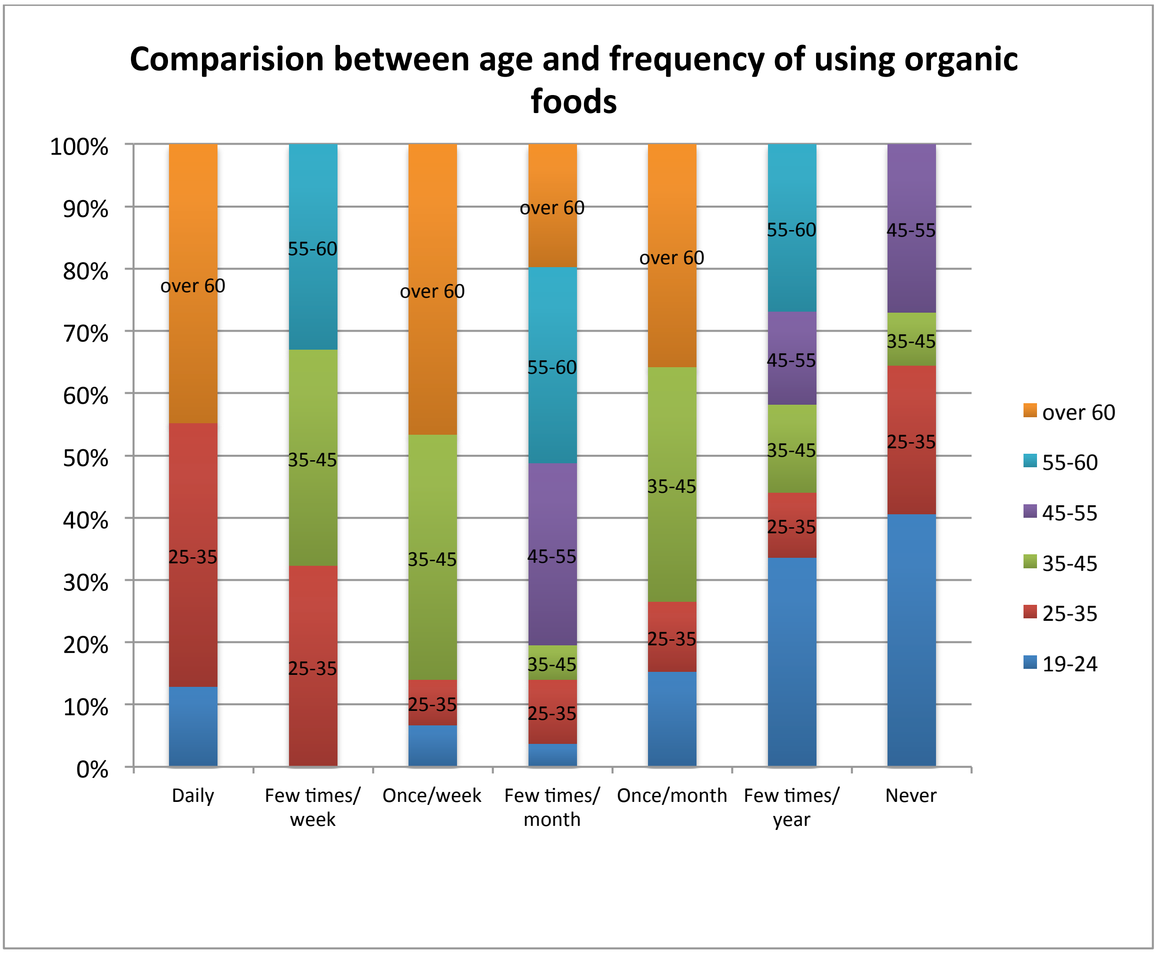


Figure 19. Comparison between age and frequency of using organic foods

Figure 19 describes comparison between age and frequency of using organic foods in Finland. From this figure, the highest percentage of non-organic users belongs to age group 19-24 with 40%. On the contrary, highest regular organic user is found in over 60 years old with over 40%. However, data is only possible to be seen relatively, because of difference in number of sample in age groups. The direction of frequency in using organic is shown more frequent in higher age groups and less frequent in lower age groups. It indicates the realistic attitude in Finnish society as older age groups concentrate about their health more than younger age groups and usage of organic food products is seen as one of health care methods. (Natural Standard, 2011). From that reason, older people, middle age and working age people are most potential customers for organic food products in Finland. On the other hand, younger age groups even though do not have continuous frequency as these other groups, they still show attention about using organic products by the significant percentage recorded in purchasing organic food products.

The difference between places has also been shown in answers in frequency of using organic. Helsinki areas (Helsinki, Vantaa, and Espoo) have the highest position in using organic food products by comparing between frequency of purchasing and number of non-organic users. There are 37% of people who answered as ‘Daily’ users of organic were from these areas while 14.71% of people with non-organic interest were from these areas. Others big cities as Lahti and Turku also have quite same situation with Helsinki areas with only over 2% of non-users comparing with 25% of ‘Daily’ and over 30% of ‘Monthly’ users. Smaller cities such as Uusikaupunki with over 17% of non-users, 40% ‘monthly’ users, 20% ‘yearly’ users and Varkaus with over 30% of respondents had given ‘rarely’ answer for using organic foods comparing with 25% ‘Daily’ users, 34% of ‘Monthly’ users. However, this result can only display the higher preference of organic food products in bigger cities than smaller cities by comparing between the consumption and non-using organic food products, it cannot represent for organic situation of any city because of big gap between respondent’s volumes in different cities.

The sixth question is about factors, which are influenced into buying organic food’s decision of Finnish people.

Picture 1. Regular factors affect to organic consumption’s decision

Picture 1 is made based on data that were gathered from survey question 6 about ‘how some elements influence to Finnish organic consumption’s decision’. Author has given some general terms such as package, origin, price, certificates, experience, and brand for respondents to evaluate the importance of those terms. The evaluation are started with very important, important, sometimes, and not important. Origin, experience, and certificates seem to be the most important factors for buying organic products of Finnish people, 48% of organic users cared about origin of products, meanwhile, 43% and 37% mentioned experience and certificates as their most important factors for consuming organic foods. Besides, price and brand are also voted as important elements for buying decision of organic food products when stay at important scale for 46% and 44%. Package is not principal consideration of Finnish people by 42% of respondents gave answers as ‘sometimes’, and for some special products. In addition, there are over 20% of respondents believed that price of organic products not affected to their purchasing decision. This answer is gathered mainly from working age and older age respondents while younger age respondents took price as important element for their buying decision. Furthermore, the frequency in purchasing organic food products also influences to this decision. There are only 9% of daily users believed that price is not important to their decision, this percentage gets higher when the regularity gets farther as weekly and monthly.

From this information, Finnish consumer’s decision is affected mostly by realistic factors such as origin, price, certificates, own experience and trustable brand rather than beautiful package or commercial activities. So that, organic sellers should take care of core value of products and have long term plans than building short-term profit plans. The additional box for this question also gets some extra information about Finnish organic purchasing’s decision such as expired date, product appearance, fresh, tasty, environment safety, allergy and so on. It can be concluded as healthy elements, product’s information, environment factors and product’s appearance (how products look like, tasty, fresh or messy). This additional and detailed information gives clearer ideas about Finnish purchasing decision. Finnish people not only consider about products themselves but also many related information of products (reputation of company, detailed information of products, healthy information, social responsibility, brand, origin and certificates)

The next question is about which kind of media or channel has succeeded to bring organic food products to Finnish people.

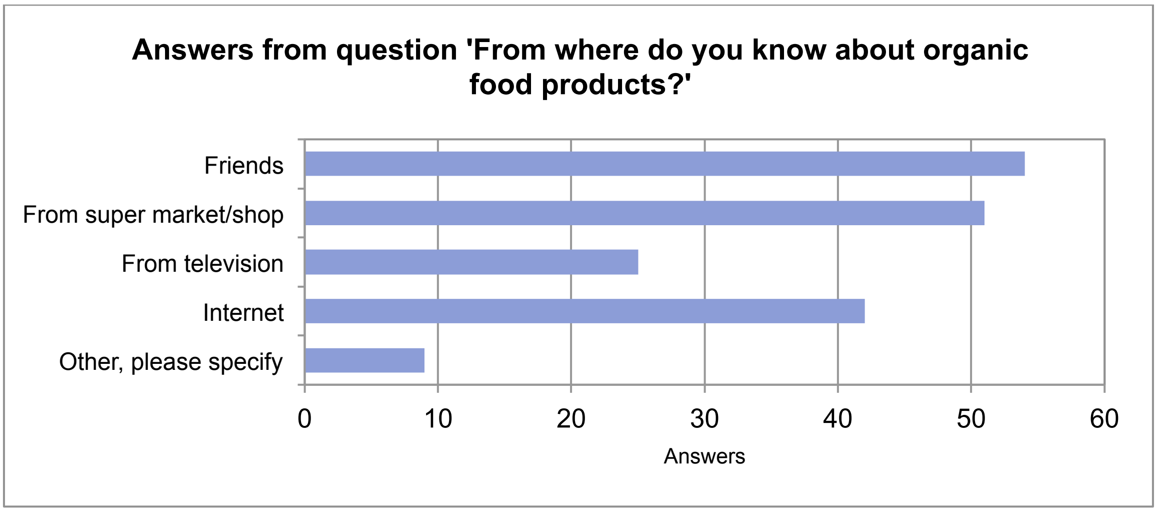


Figure 20. The advertising channels for organic food products voted by respondents

Figure 20 displays answers that were collected from question ‘From where do you know about organic products?’. The answers indicate most effective marketing channels for organic products as friends, markets, shops, and Internet. Besides, relatives, magazines, newspapers, and books are also possible channels for introducing organic products to customers. The most successful channels for almost all age of customers are realized as supermarkets and friends. However, there are different changes with other elements based on age difference such as younger people prefer more Internet channel than older people. Meanwhile, when age gets higher, most effective channels changed to be supermarkets, friends, television, and other special sources (books, magazines, newspaper and so on).

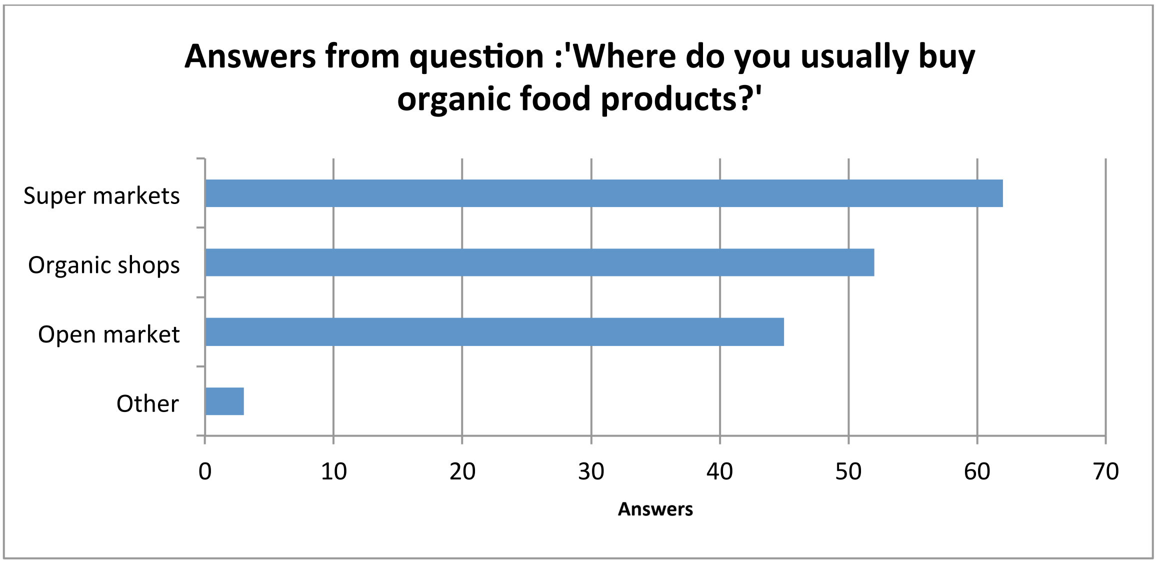
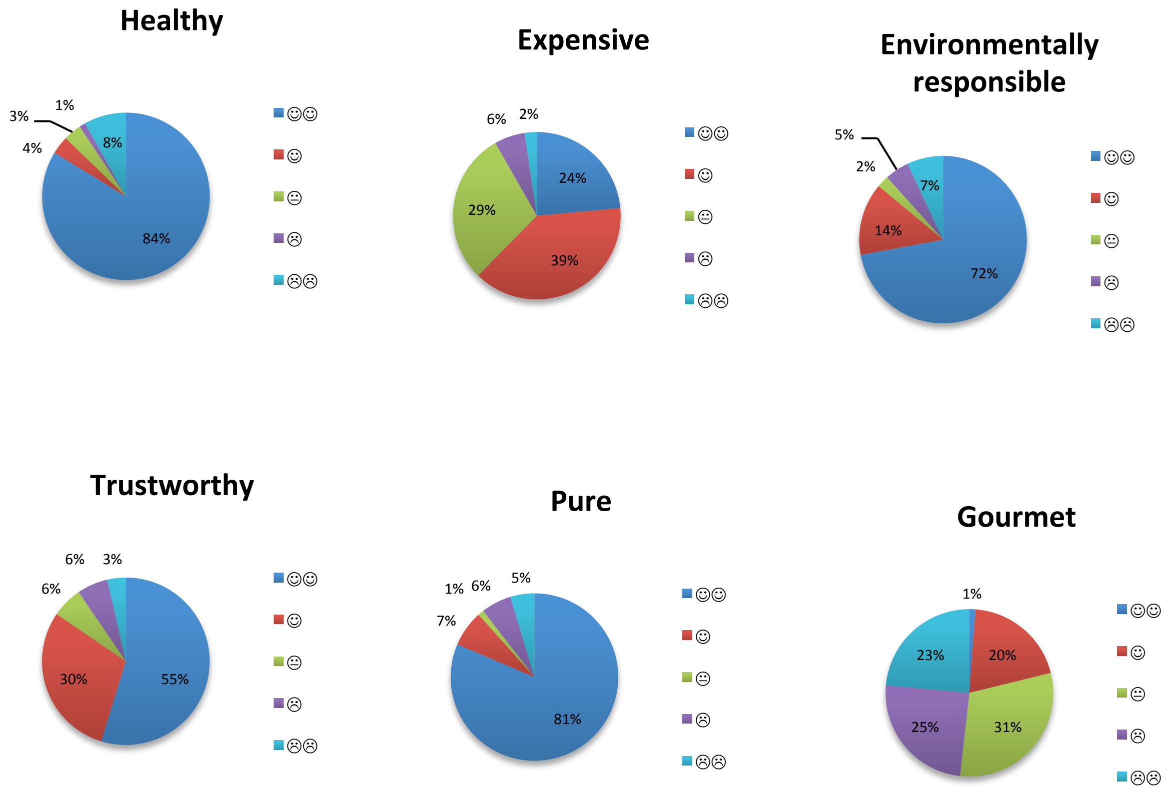


Figure 21. The preference distribution channels of organic food products in Finland

Figure 21 describes about favorite distribution channels of organic foods in Finland. The most favorite channel is voted as supermarkets by convenience and availability of this channel in almost every area and city. Furthermore, organic shops and open markets are also answered to be effective places for organic products. The difference between these terms is not big gap, almost all age of respondents and every places have given quite familiar answer for this question.

Other channels which were given by respondents are website and online shops, organic chains and straight from farms or producers.

The following question concentrates to discover Finnish attitude about organic food's situation in Finland.



Picture 2. Perception of Finnish customers about organic products in Finland

Picture 2 reveals Finnish customer's perception about organic food products in Finland nowadays. Most of respondents agree with terms 'healthy', 'trustworthy', 'pure' and 'environmentally responsible' when comment about organic food products. It can be because of characteristics of organic products as non-chemical foods so that, healthy and environmental protection and also pure are convinced. Moreover, 'expensive' is also concurred by answerers. The term 'gourmet' was confused by many respondents and got quite many voted for '☹' (sad) and '😐' (confused) answers. Result from this question again proves Finnish purchasing behavior, which is decided by actual and practical value more than related value. Besides, there are over 20% of answerers supposed that organic food's price nowadays are still reasonable and can be remained.

After that, it is question about which competitive elements will attract Finnish customers between two same products.

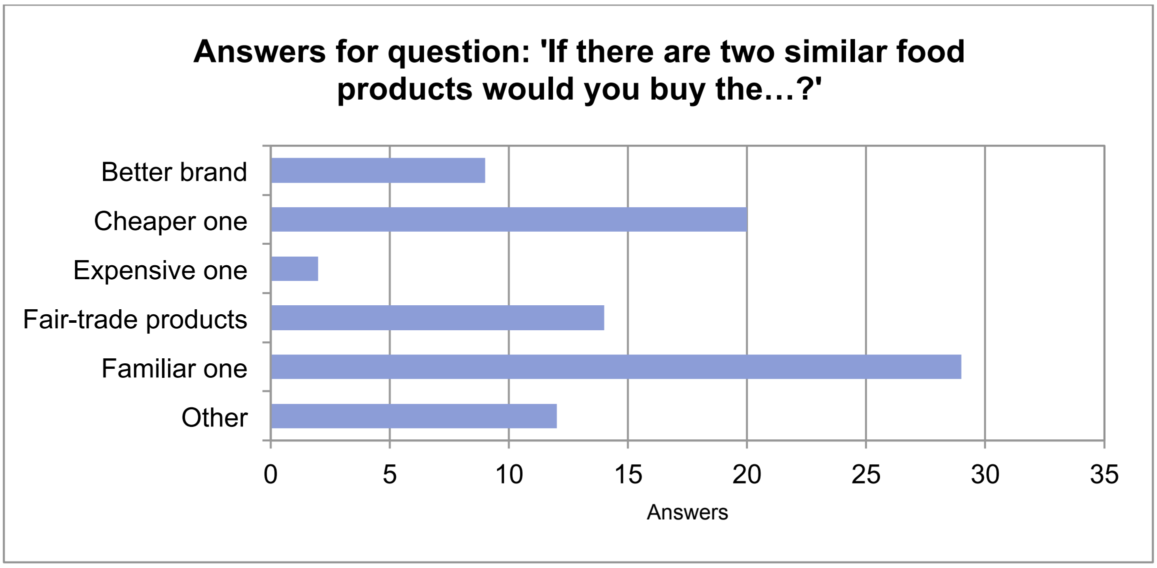
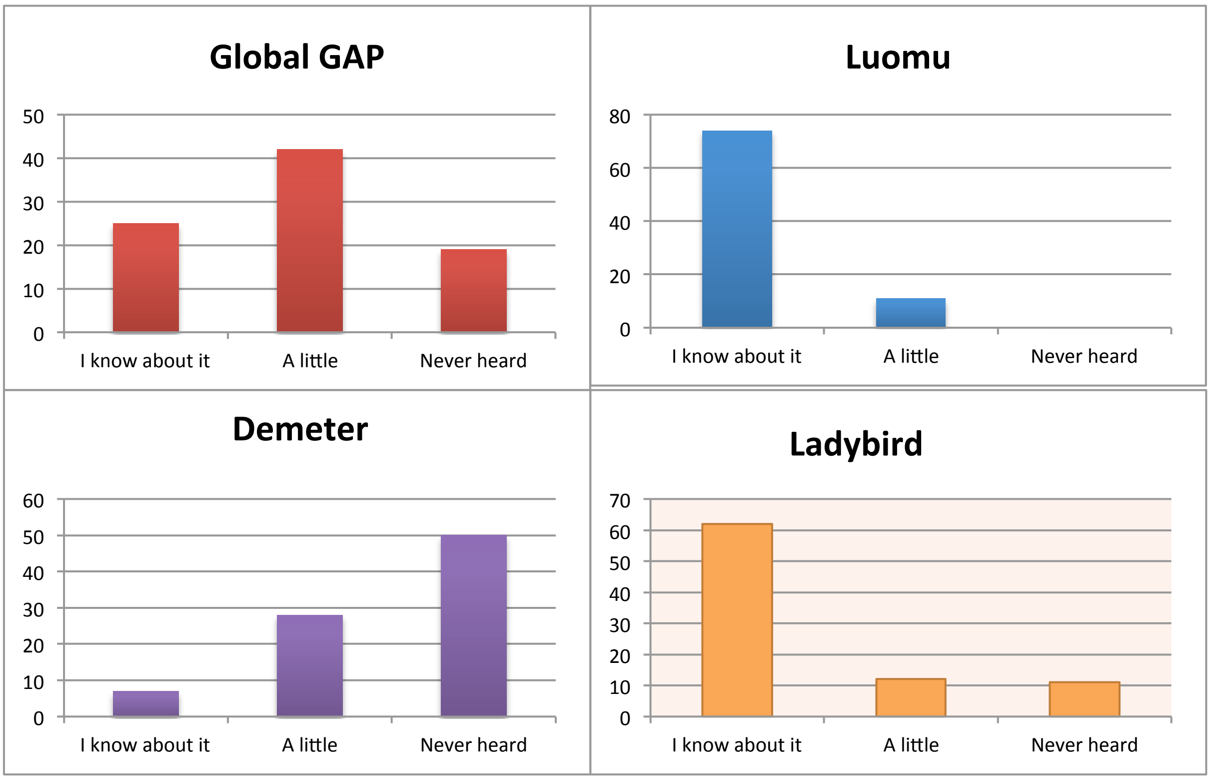


Figure 22. The closest factor for purchasing decision of organic food products

Figure 22 indicates answers which were collected from question 11, ‘If there are two similar products would you buy the…?’. This question is made in order to find out closest factors, which can explain for purchasing decision of specific products. The most important factor that was chosen was ‘familiar one’ with 34% of respondent’s agreement. It can be seen as experience factor, this result is also suitable with result collected from previous questions. Following factors, which was voted are ‘cheaper one’, and ‘fair trade’. These elements can be seen as price issue, and reputation or image issue. Besides, many respondents noticed that, they prefer local products and domestic products rather than others. From this information, competitive elements of products in Finnish attitude can be explained as experience, brand, image, reputation, price and domestic. Company needs to bring quality products besides good marketing activities and better to support Finnish domestic products.

The next question tries to understand Finnish customer’s knowledge about current certificates, which are using nowadays for organic food products



Picture 3. Answers from question 12

Picture 3 reveals answers from question 12 that was made to assesst level of knowledge of Finnish customers about common labels and certificates used for organic nowadays. Luomu, Ladybird, Demeter and Global Gap are used for rating with scale from ‘I know it’, ‘a little’ and ‘never heard’.

Luomu is Finnish certificate for organic product which is given by Evira for products which is authenticated by Finnish public inspectors. (ifoam-eu.org, 2014). Luomu was most familiar certificate based on respondents’s choice with over 70% of people ‘know about it’. Ladybird is also Finnish organic certificate which is given by Luomuliitto for Finnish and local organic products. (Heinonen, 2014). Ladybird seems to be familiar certificate for Finnish customer also when it got over 60 % of people who knew about it. Demeter is also Finnish certificate for biodynamic products but it works for exporting products more than domestic products. (Heinonen, 2014). Result from survey for Demeter certificate was not good as Luomu and Ladybird, when there was only less than 10% of respondents ‘know about it’, and over 25% had given answers as they have understand about it a little. Global Gap is the only international certificate in the list, which is used nowadays for Vietnamese organic products. (Tran, 2014). There were nearly 40% of respondents gave answers as ‘they have heard about Global Gap’. As the explaination above, Global Gap is current certificate that Vietnamese organic products use for exporting in the recent time. Althought, there are not 100% of Finnish customers understand about Global Gap, however, this result shows the significant number of customers have at least heard about this term. This can be seen as opportunity for Vietnamese organic food products that they do not need to introduce and convince Finnish market about this certificate.

After understanding about these certificates which have been using nowadays in Finland for organic food products in question 12, question 13 tries to discover about what elements can convince Finnish customers about quality of products.

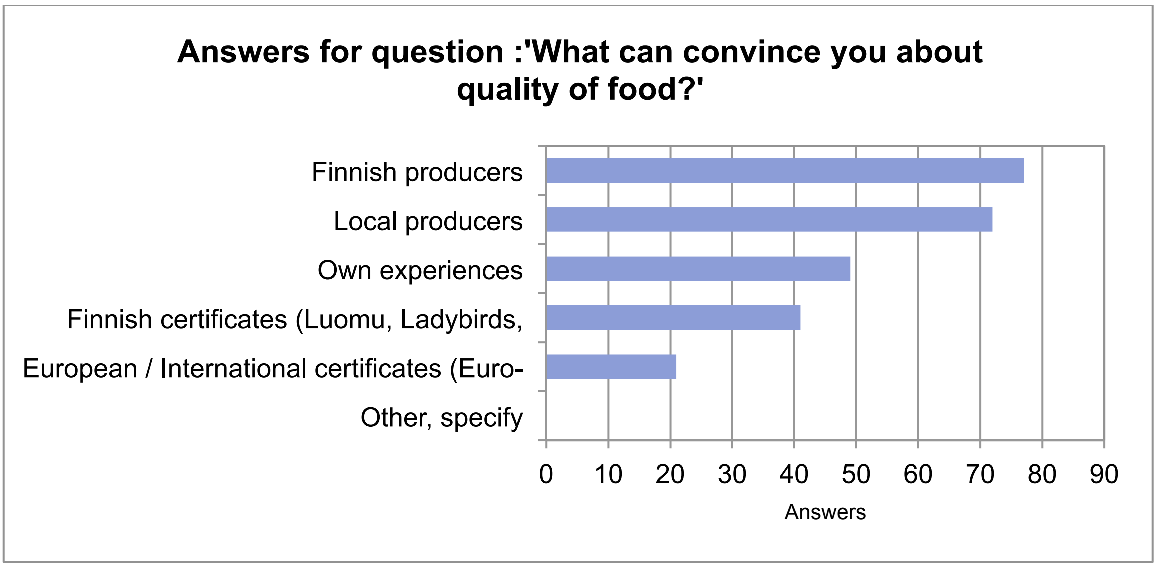


Figure 23. The convincible elements of organic food products in Finnish customer's attitude.

Figure 23 indicates about the most convincible elements of food products in Finnish customer's perception. The result which was collected does not bring surprise after result of previous questions. Result from question 6 votes 'origin' as 'the very important' factor of Finnish purchasing decision with 48%, and ' important' with 41%. Besides, in the additional box of question 11 about the choice in two similar options, there were almost all the answers are given as 'local products' and 'Finnish products'. Result from question 13 mentions again about these terms. The question's type is made in which respondents are possible to choose more than one choice for their answers. The answers was collected as, 'Finnish producers' and 'local producers' are most selected with around 90%, and following these terms is 'own experiences' with nearly 60% of choices from respondents. Other certificates are accepted with only nearly 30% of choices. From this result, the favorite of Finnish customers about domestic and local products creates huge barrier for international products to be sucessful in Finnish market.

The next question analyzes about Finnish customer's expected price for organic food products.

Figure 24. The ideal price of organic food products for Finnish customers.

Figure 24 describes the reasonable price for organic food products in Finnish customer's attitude. The bar chart shows that there is more than half of respondents expected organic food's price could be 5-10% more expensive than normal products, more than 40% respondents supposed it could be 10-20% more expensive than normal. There are not much people believed organic products could be same price with normal products. For the special requests of organic products, same price with normal products is impossible to be realistic. Besides, more than 20% higher than normal products seems to be too high.

Question 15 points out some ideas about marketing problems for organic products based on Finnish customer's ranking about price, product, and place.

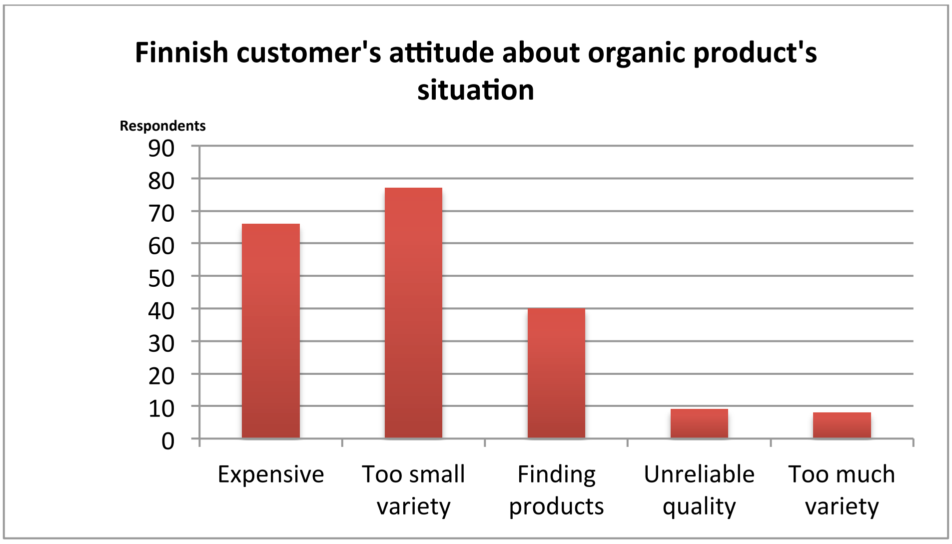


Figure 25. Finnish customer’s attitude about organic product’s situation

Figure 25 shows Finnish customer’s attitude about organic food’s situation in Finland nowadays. There are 5 terms about price; availability, quality and diversity of products that were provided for ranking from totally agree to totally disagree. There are over 70% of respondents gave answers as organic products in Finland is expensive items, over 80% of Finnish would like to have more organic products both in quantity and category. Besides, nearly 50% of respondents supposed that there should be more places for organic products. The percentage of people who satisfied with availability of organic products which gave ‘disagree’ rank for this term was mainly in big cities as Helsinki, Turku and so on. The reason for it might be the existence of organic shops, organic chains and many markets around these cities more than some smaller cities. In addition, almost all of answerers trust about quality of organic products, which are under organic labels in Finnish market.

The last question concentrates to analyze demand of Finnish customers about organic products.

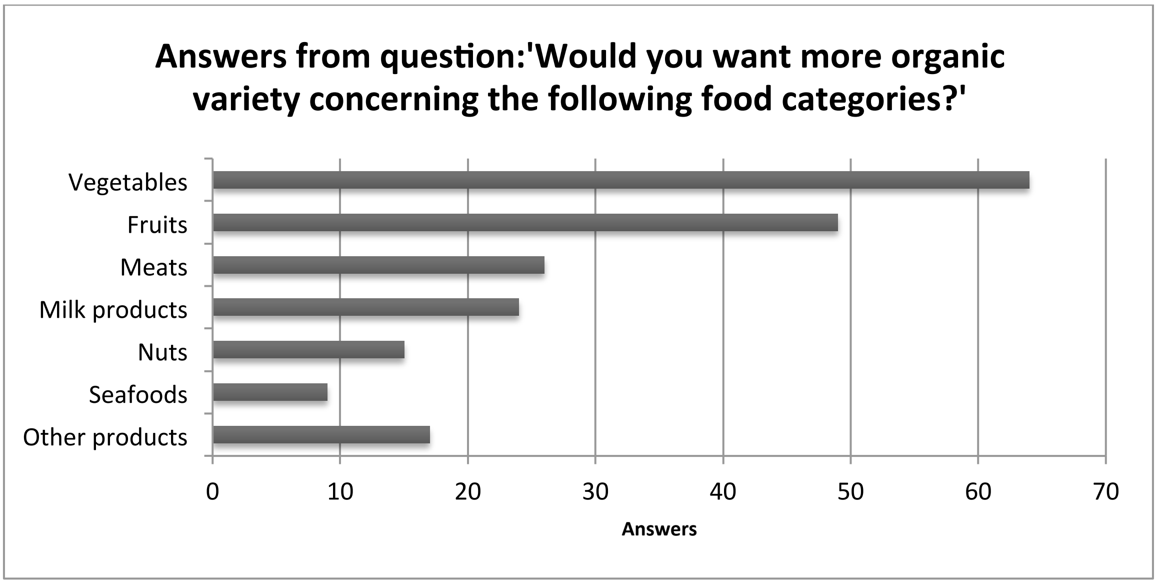


Figure 26. The expectation for more variety of organic food products' categories in Finland

Figure 26 describes needs of Finnish customers about types of organic foods that can be provided with bigger quantity. Vegetables and fruits are most favorite food products with more than 70% and nearly 60% were selected. Following by meats and milk products are also expected to get more categorized by respondents with around 30% answers. Nuts and seafood are not chosen much by respondents with only over 10% of selection. From theoretical part above, Finland needs to import 15% of vegetables and fruits from outside of the country to satisfy Finnish market's demand. (ThaoVy, 2013). The result from survey also shows the realistic problem of Finnish market as lack of supply in fruits and vegetables and they are expected to increase more categorized. Furthermore, the additional box for other ideas of respondents of this question, figured out breads, and bakery products also.

To conclude, research was carried out quite fluently with the big support from supervisor, social network, Internet and friends. The result of research was analyzed with strong assistance from Microsoft Excel and Webropol service. After research, there are some factors about Finnish organic situation and attitude of Finnish market about organic products are perceived. Finnish market is convinced to be very potential market for organic food products. The most targeted customer's segments are old, middle age and working age people. Finnish customers concern about origin of products and information about products together with social responsibility and reputation of company. Price in some case is not key issue for purchasing decision. Price of organic nowadays in Finland is evaluated as expensive items. The most satisfied price is 5-10% more than non-organic same products. Finnish companies and local companies are most favorite and trustable organic suppliers. The successful advertising channels are supermarket, Internet and friends; besides, the successful distribution channels are supermarkets and private shops. The desirable organic foods for more variety are fruits, vegetables and wheat products.

4 CONCLUSIONS AND COMMENTS

The thesis is one part of studies in Bachelor Degree of International Business of Savonia University of Applied Sciences. The thesis was made with the purpose of evaluating the possibility of Vietnamese organic food products in Finnish market. The thesis was separated into two parts: the theoretical part and the research part.

The theoretical part concentrated on analyzing organic food situation in both countries and objective areas, which influence to organic food markets in Vietnam and Finland. The theoretical part included three different proportions that are listed as the Finnish organic food situation, the Vietnamese organic food situation and Opportunities and Challenges for Vietnamese organic food products in the Finnish market.

The results from the theoretical part were summarized in the following points. Finland has criteria to be a good potential organic food market. Finland has the developed organic food production. However, demand for organic products is still not fulfilled. Vietnam has good conditions to become organic food producer and Vietnam has experience in exporting organic food to difficult markets in years. However, the Finnish market not only brings opportunities for Vietnamese organic producers, but also many challenges and barriers need to be overcome.

The Research part followed the theoretical part in order to get practical comments from the Finnish markets about its own attitudes and based on those it could be considered about the possibility for Vietnamese organic food products to the Finnish market.

The Research was carried out by a quantitative researching method based on a survey. The survey's answers were collected during 1 month in Finland. The survey included 16 questions, which concerned about organic food situation in Finland. The research results answered the entire question that was proposed in the thesis's objective about potential customers, customers' attitude about organic foods, frequency of using organic foods, the evaluation of organic food market in Finland, and so on.

After all the analysis, the main question of the thesis was answered: it is possible for Vietnamese organic food products to enter the Finnish market. However, to maintain and expand Vietnamese organic products' own competitive advantage in long term in this market it requires Vietnamese producers to have serious investment in both information and production.

From my point of view, as a thesis's writer, I can suggest some ideas about direction that organic producers is possible to take when entering Finnish market.

First of all, based on my experience, Vietnamese agricultural producers usually work as private producers who want to make production and transaction individually. Profit will be maximized in perfect situation. However, in order to work with a strict and professional market like Finnish market with many different rules about tax, inspection of origin, health, social responsibility and so on, the advises from lawyers, transporters, and customs are important to be considered before import- export transaction so that products satisfy the Finnish market's requirements. Producers should be aware of displaying documents related to products, environmental factors, delivery terms; company's factors, besides, labels, certificates that are valid in Finland (Luomu, Global Gap, EuroGap and so on). The inspection time usually takes longer than organic fruits' or vegetables' lifetime, so that, counselors about the EU legislation and Finnish law are important in this case. In addition, Vietnamese organic food producers should get a membership in some organic organizations such as OTA, IFOAM and so on, to make sure that the certificated process can be done faster and more fluently and also to create good image for companies.

Secondly, Vietnamese producers always take price as a competitive advantage to compete with other producers in the European area. However, organic food products are special type of products, for which, Finnish customers are actually satisfied to accept to have higher price 5-10% than normal products and for some market's segments, 10-20% higher price than normal products are also reasonable for organic food products. The cheap price does not take key position to gain competitive advantage in this situation; producers can concentrate on quality of products, availability of products and diversity of products.

According to radioVietnam, , Finland is recently having a project to support Vietnamese agricultural products to be exported straightly to the Finnish market through Finnish embassy in Vietnam, besides, help Vietnamese agricultural producers to find suitable Finnish partners. (radioVietnam.vn, 2014.) Official information about Finnish agricultural market, Finnish legislation and other factors are published in order to help Vietnamese producers to enter the Finnish market. It can be seen as good opportunity for Vietnamese organic producers also to research about this market and make some experiments to enter this market.

In my opinion, the most potential products which are suitable for Finnish market from Vietnam are vegetables, fruits, and wheat products (cereals, rice). Moreover, I suppose, the long-term process with a long-term plan, steady investment and well managed production, information system and specially Finnish certificates will attract Finnish customers more than other certificates.

Limitation of research

The research target was to find out about Finnish attitude towards organic food products so that the results can identify the availability of Vietnamese organic food to this market. Nevertheless, the sample remained quite small (150) compared to whole Finnish population (around 5 millions). The sample was collected in few cities and towns of Finland in order to get more diverse opinion of Finnish people. However, as Helsinki is a big and diverse city, Varkaus and Uusikaupunki are small and similar cities. For that reason, the result might have more or less local ideas so, the results do not represent Finnish customers in general. Because of these points, the research can be used for understanding more about Finnish market and giving direction for users relatively, but to make the full assessment of this market, the deeper research which requires bigger sample, more diverse area and longer time is necessary.

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APPENDIX ONE: Survey in English form

SAVONIA
AMMATTIKORKEAKOULU

Dear respondents,

This survey is a part of my studies of international business in Savonia UAS. My goal is to find out: ' How organic foods are using in Finland nowadays' in order to find the ability for exporting Vietnamese organic foods to Finland.
My name is Dinh Thu Trang; your assistance in my thesis would be greatly appreciated.

My email address is: Thu.T.Dinh@edu.savonia.fi.

If you have questions concerning this survey, please contact my supervising teacher: Virpi.Oksanen@savonia.fi

Survey questions:

1. How old are you?
   Below 18
   From 19-24
   From 25 to 35
   From 35 to 45
   From 45 to 55
   From 55 to 60
   Over 60

2. Which city do you live in?

3. What is your occupation?

   Student

Working

Self-employed

Retired

Non-working Other, please specify

4. In the last month, have you used organic food products?

a. Yes
b. No

5. How often have you used organic food products?

a. Daily
b. Few times a week
c. Once a week
d. Few times a month
e. Once a month
f. Few times a year
g. Never

6. What elements affect your decision to purchase organic food?

	Very important	Important	Sometimes	Not important
Package				
Origin				
Brand				
Experience				
Price				
Certificates				

Other important points for you, specify

7. From where do you know about organic food products?

From super market/shop

From television

Friends

Internet

Other, please specify

8. What is your perception on organic food products concerning the following aspects?

	1 ☹ ☹	2 ☹	3 😐	4 ☺	5 ☺ ☺
Healthy					
Expensive					
Trustworthy					
Environmentally responsible					
Gourmet					
Pure					

9. Where do you usually buy organic food products?

a. Organic shops
b. Super market
c. Open market
d. Other

10. If there are two similar food products would buy the…?

a. Cheaper one
b. Better brand
c. Familiar one
d. Expensive one
e. Fair-trade products
f. Other

11. Have you heard about these terms?

	I know about it ☺ ☺	A little ☺	Never heard ☹
Global GAP			
Luomu			
Ladybirds			
Demeter			

12. What can convince you about quality of food?

a. Local producers
b. Finnish producers

c. Finnish certificates (Luomu, Ladybirds, Demeter)
d. European/International certificates (Euro-leaf, Global Gap, EuroGap)
e. Own experiences

f. Other, specify

13. How much are you willing to pay for organic food products?

a. Same price as with other food products
b. 5-10% higher a price
c. 10-20% higher a price
d. more than 20% higher a price

14. On your opinion, which of these aspects are true concerning organic food products?

	Totally agree ☺ ☺	Agree ☺	Disagree ☹	Totally disagree ☹ ☹
Too Expensive				
Too small variety				
Finding the products				
Unreliable quality				
Too much variety				

15. Would you want more organic variety concerning the following food categories?

Fruits
Meats
Nuts
Milk products
Vegetable
Seafood
Other products,

Thank you very much for your attention.

APPENDIX TWO: Survey in Finnish form

Hyvä vastaanottaja,

Tämä mielipidekysely on osa minun opintojani Savonia Ammattikorkeakoulussa. Tutkimuksen tarkoitus selvittää miten orgaanista ruokaa (luomu-ruokaa) käytetään suomessa ja tarkoitus on myös selvittää mahdollisuutta vietnamilaiselle orgaaniselle ruualle suomessa.

Tämä mielipidekysely on osa opinnäytetyötäni ja olisin hyvin kiitollinen osaanotostasi kyselyyn.

Nimeni in Dinh Thu Trang, sähköposti-osoitteeni on Thu.T.Dinh@edu.savonia.fi

Jos olet kiinnostunut saamaan lisätietoa tutkimukseen liittyen, ole hyvä ja ota yhteyttä vastaavaan opettajaan, Virpi Oksanen Virpi.Oksanen@savonia.fi

Dear respondent,

This survey is a part of my studies of international business in Savonia UAS. My goal is to find out: ‘ How organic foods are using in Finland nowadays’ in order to find the ability for exporting Vietnamese organic foods to Finland.
My name is Dinh Thu Trang; your assistance in my thesis would be greatly appreciated.

My email address is: Thu.T.Dinh@edu.savonia.fi.

If you have questions concerning this survey, please contact my supervising teacher: Virpi.Oksanen@savonia.fi

Survey questions (Tutkimuksen kysymykset): (Valitse ikäryhmä)

1. How old are you? (Valitse ikäryhmä)
   Below 18 (Alle 18)
   From 19 to 24
   From 25 to 35
   From 35 to 45
   From 45 to 55
   From 55 to 60
   Over 60

2. Which city do you live in? (Mikä on kotikaupunkisi?)

3. What is your occupation? (Valitse seuraavista)
Student (Olen opiskelija)
Working (Olen työ-elämässä)
Self-employed (Olen yrittäjä)
Retired (Olen eläkkeellä)
Non-working (Olen työtön)
Other, please specify (Jokin muu, mikä?)

4. In the last month, have you used organic food products? (Viimeisen kuukauden aikana, oletko käyttänyt luomu-elintarvikkeita?)
   a. Yes (Kyllä)
   b. No (Ei)

5. How often have you use organic products? (Kuinka usein käytät/olet käyttänyt luomu-elintarvikkeita?)
   a. Daily (Päivittäin)
   b. Few times a week (Useammin kuin kerran viikossa)
   c. Once a week (Kerran viikossa)
   d. Few time a month (Useammin kuin kerran kuukaudessa)
   e. Once a month (Kerran kuukaudessa)
   f. Few time a year (Muutaman kerran vuodessa)
   g. Never (En koskaan)

6. What elements affect your decision to purchase organic food? (Mitkä seuraavista asioista vaikuttavat päätökseesi ostaa luomu-elintarvikkeita?)

	Very important (Hyvin tärkeä) (	Important (Tärkeä)	Sometimes (Joskus)	Not important (Ei tärkeä)
Package (Pakkaus)				
Origin (Alkuperä)				
Brand (Brändi/Tuotemerkki)				
Experience (Kokemus)				
Price (Hinta)				

Certificates (Sertifikaatit)				

Other important points for you, specify (Muut tärkeä asiat, erittele)

7. From where do you know about organic foods? (Mistä saat/olet saanut tietoa luomu-elintarvikkeista?)

   From super market/shop (Kauppa/Myymälä)

   From television (Televisio)

   Friends (Ystäväpiiri)

   Internet (Internetti)

   Other (Muu)

8. What is your perception on organic food products concerning the following aspects? (Mikä vaikuttaa ostopäätökseesi koskien luomu-ruokaa. Ole hyvä ja valitse sinulle sopivin vaihtoehto.)

	1 ☹ ☹	2 ☹	3 😐	4 ☺	5 ☺ ☺
Healthy (Terveellisyys)					
Expensive (Hinta)					
Trustable (Luotettavuus)					
Environment responsibility (Ympäristö-vastuullisuus)					
Gourmet					
Pure (Puhtaus)					

9. Where from you usually buy organic foods? (Mistä useimmiten ostat luomu-ruokaa?)
   a. Organic shops (Luomu-tuotteisiin erikoistunut kauppa)
   b. Super market (Kauppa/marketti)

c. Open market (Tori)

d. Other ☐ (Muu, mikä?)

10. If there are two similar food products would buy the…?
(Jos on saatavilla sama tuote, mutta hinta on eri, minkä valitset?)

a. Cheaper one (Edullisempi)
b. Better brand (Parempi brändi/tuotemerkki)
c. Familiar one (Entuudestaan tuttu)
d. Expensive one (Kalliimpi)
e. Fair-trade products (Reilun-kaupan tuote)

f. Other ☐ (Muu, mikä?)

11. Have you heard about these terms (Oletko seuraavat termit sinulle tuttuja?)

	I know about it (On tuttuja) ☺ ☺	A little (Vähän)☺	Never heard (Ei ole tuttuja) ☹
Global GAP (Global GAP-Sertifiointi)			
Luomu			
Ladybirds (Leppäkerttu-merkki)			
Demeter (Demeter-Biodynaaminen yhdistys)			

12. What can convince you about quality of foods? (Mikä saa sinut vakuuttuneeksi ruuan laadusta?)
a. Local producers (Paikallinen tuottaja)
b. Finnish producers (Kotimaisuus)
c. Finnish certificates (Luomu, Ladybirds, Demeter) (Laatu-sertifiointi, esim. Global GAP, Leppäkerttu-merkki, Demeter-merkki jne.)
d. European/International certificates (Euro-leaf, Global Gap, EuroGap)
e. Own experiences (Oma positiivinen kokemus)
f. Other, specify (Jokin muu, mikä?)

13. How much you are willing to pay for organic foods? (Kuinka paljon olet valmis maksamaan luomu-elintarvikkeista?)
a. Same price with other foods (Saman hinnan kuin muista tuotteista)
b. 5-10% higher price (5-10% korkeamman hinnan)
c. 10-20% higher price (10-20% korkeamman hinnan)
d. more than 20% higher price (Yli 20% korkeamman hinnan)

14. On your opinion, which of these aspects are true concerning organic food products?

(Mitkä seuraavista luomu-ruokaa koskevista väitteistä ovat mielestäsi totta/ei totta?)

	Totally agree ☺ ☺ (Samaa mieltä)	Agree ☺ (Jokseenkin samaa mieltä)	Disagree ☹ (Jokseenkin erimieltä)	Totally disagree ☹ ☹ (Täysin erimieltä)
Too Expensive (Liian kallis)				
Too less of choices (Liian vähän valinnanvaraa)				
Can not find place (Huono saatavuus)				
Don't believe in quality (En luota laatuun)				
Too much of choices (Liian paljon vaihtoehtoja)				

15. Would you want more organic variety concerning the following food categories?

(Minkä kategorian luomu-elintarvikkeita toivoisit olevan enemmän saatavilla? Valitse seuraavista.)

Fruits (Hedelmiä)

Meats (Liha-tuotteita)

Nuts (Pähkinöitä)

Milk products (Maito-tuotteita)

Vegetable (Kasviksia)

Seafood (Kalaa ja äyriäisiä)

Thank you very much for your attention!

Kiitos paljon osallistumisestasi kyselyyn!

SAVONIA