

DOWNSTREAM: Provision of 'green' products

Description

Availability of organic, eco-labelled and fair-trade product alternatives refers to retailers working to ensure customers are offered green product alternatives in as many product groups as possible.

Potential for positive environmental impact

Retailers can improve their environmental profile by increasing the share of organic, eco-labelled and Fairtrade products in the stores. If a green product e.g. a product produced with fewer resources or without harmful substances replaces a traditional product, there is a positive, environmental impact.

Prevalence and future potential

Indeed, the general trend among operators in the Nordic and European food retailing sector is an increase in the offer of organic, eco-labelled and Fairtrade products (Schmidt et al 2009). The extent of these efforts however varies between covering at least one organic product in a shop to up to 20% of all product lines being organic (Waitrose and Tesco). Nowadays even discount stores offer a permanent assortment of organic and Fairtrade products, e.g. Danish Netto. This is a sign that these products are becoming more mainstream. 28.6% of the sale of organic products is in discount stores in Denmark (Ministeriet for Fødevarer, Landbrug og Fiskeri 2010).

In Finland Kesko Food will have the widest assortment and sales of Fairtrade products in Finland. In 2009 150 fair trade products were provided (Kesko 2010). Norgesgruppen (Ultra and Meny) in Norway wants to have the cheapest organic products (Norgesgruppen 2010). In Norway many retailers (e.g. ICA, COOP, Norgesgruppen and REMA 1000) sell Norwegian breed organic salmon.

COOP Denmark has the target to double sales of eco-label products by 2011 and ensure the best range of Organic products on the Danish market. See case study. The larger the volume and product range of the green products, the larger the sales (Schmidt et al, 2009).

In order to follow the sale of sustainable products good registration of products is important. In COOP Denmark organic products have their own product numbers in the internal register, which means that it is easy to follow the sales, order new products, etc. Eco-labelled products do not have their own numbers in the register and the shop manager cannot follow the specific sales of these products (Kirsten Schmidt, interview with Shop Manager Micki Høyer Hansen, SuperBrugsen).

References

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<http://www.norgesgruppen.no/norgesgruppen/norgesgruppen/forbrukerinformasjon/okologi/>

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