

Choosing Local Organic Food: Consumer Motivations and Ethical Spaces

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Abstract : In recent years, the organic sector has increased significantly. However, with the ‘conventionalization’ of these products, it has been questioned whether these products have been losing their original vision. Accordingly, this research based on 31 phenomenological interviews with committed organic consumers in urban and rural areas of Portugal, aims to analyse how ethical motivations and ecological awareness are related to organic food consumption. The content thematic analysis highlights aspects related to society and environmental concerns. On an individual level, the importance of internal coherence, peace of mind and balance that these consumers find in the consumption of local organic products was stressed. For these consumers, local organic products consumption made for significant changes in their lives, aiding in the establishment of a green identity, and involves a certain philosophy of life. This vision of an organic lifestyle is grounded in a political and ecological perspective, beyond the usual organic definition, as a ‘post-organic era’. The paper contributes to better understand how an ideological environmental discourse allows highlighting the relationship between consumers’ environmental concerns and the politics of food, resulting in a possible transition to new sustainable consumption practices.

Keywords : organic consumption, localism, content thematic analysis, pro-environmental discourse, political consumption, Portugal

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