

DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGES OF FERTILITY AND LIFE EXPECTANCY IMPACT ON FOOD CONSUMPTION TENDENCIES

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Abstract

Organic food means food produced according to international standards, using technology that completely fit the regulations for the protection of nature i.e. without using or limited use of artificial fertilizers. These organic crops grow on healthy - uncontaminated land or land previously cleaned of all toxins. Because of the positive impact of this kind of production on individuals and society in general, market of organic products seen continuous growth. Confirmation for the positive contribution of organic production is continuous increase of life expectancy of the population. This is logical because organically produced food improves the health of the population, while the organic method of production means a cleaner environment, which consequently leads to of their life increase.

For the purpose of this paper, the data has been taken from the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Economy of Macedonia, Organic Europe, European section of the Organic World website, Research Institute for Organic Agriculture (FiBL) and the Agricultural Market Information Company (AMI). In this paper are put out some theoretical aspect about the consumers' preference for organic production. Also, organic production dynamics (land under organic production, organic producers and organic market), birth rate and life expectancy are shown in tables and figures. Based on this data, we performed trends analysis.

The data show that the area under organic production in Macedonia has increased over 130 times in last ten years, from 192 hectares in 2004 to 26.431 hectares in 2012. In the European Union, the area was duplicated, from 6.353.105 hectares in 2004 to 11.151.991 hectares in 2012. The life expectancy in the European Union, as well in Macedonia is increasing. In the European Union, the average life was 73 years in 1980 and reached 80 in 2012. In Macedonia, it was 67 years in 1980 and 75 years in 2012. The birth rate in the European Union was 13.9 or almost 14 live birth per 1.000 inhabitants in 1980 and 10.4 in 2012. In Macedonia the birth rate was 21.6 in 1980 and 10.9 in 2012, which means double reduction. Predictions for the future are showing increase of the area under organic production and the life expectancy, on one hand, but also decreasing in the birth rate, on the other hand.

The preference of organic production means cleaner environment, healthier life and better place for living, which among other things, contributes to longer life expectancy. The trend of increased life expectancy follows the trend of increased organic production (land under organic production, organic producers, and organic market). This means that the consumers are more and more preferring organic food. A growing majority of consumers in Macedonia know what organic agriculture is and know the value of organic food, but in this area, there is much more that can be done, like: raising the consumers' awareness through appropriate campaigns, promotions and other informational tools, more organized export of organic products, and promotion of Macedonian organic food in international trade fairs and similar events.

Key words: *Organic production, Life expectancy, Birth rate, Correlative analysis, Macedonia, European Union.*