

Marketing organically sourced large-scale kitchens – a Danish model

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/Dorthe Kloppenborg, Organic Denmark.

The Organic Cuisine label – state controlled.



State-controlled by the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Fisheries. Danish Veterinary and Food Administration.



New rules for large-scale kitchens. 1st January 2009: Large-scale kitchens were exempted from the EU regulations. New rules designed for large-scale kitchens considering conditions in these kitchens: Changing menus, Non bureaucratic and manageable, Simple control, Credible and ensuring the high trust in organic products, controlled by the authorities.

State-controlled label, public-private cooperate in promoting the label

Danish Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Fisheries published the label. Organic Denmark (Økologisk Landsforening) applied for funds to promote the label, in cooperation with the authorities (the Danish Veterinary and Food Administration). Organic Denmark received 200.000 Euro (June 09-Feb 11) from the Danish Innovation Act to promote the new label.

What does the label say ?

The label shows the share of organically sourced foodstuffs bought in the kitchen over a period (minimum 1 month, maximum 3 months). It's a beacon for the organic engagement in the kitchen. It is not a label for organic content in certain dishes. Kitchen must inform of specific organic raw materials.

Organic share/percentage

Bronze 30-60% organic, Silver 60-90% organic, Gold 90-100% organic

The share is measured either by cost (kroners) or by weight (kilos). The label is the same regardless way of measuring. "Gold kitchens" can call themselves "organic". Must have a policy for the 10% non-organic raw products.

How does it work in practice

The kitchen must send a summary showing that their organic share of the raw materials used over the previous three months has been within the relevant percentage level. Subsequently kitchen internal control every 3 months. Secure use of right label and not mislead consumers. The kitchen will be registered as user of the relevant label – authorities subsequently carry out minimum annual inspections in order to ensure the documentation is right.

What counts in the percentage

Raw materials from farming and fish farming. Weight/value of raw materials of own harvest. As organic counts only organically certified products. (Wine from organically grown grapes counts as organic).

What does not count in the percentage

Non food, Salt, Water, eg. bottled water, Food from hunting and fishing (wild caught).

Other opportunities in the rules

The kitchen can claim their use of certain organic raw products – e.g. "This kitchen uses only organic potatoes and carrots". This presupposes that the kitchen exclusively use the organic products mentioned in the claim. No non-organic products in stock.

Claim that certain dishes are organic – e.g. "organic spinach lasagne". The kitchen must exclusively use organic ingredients in the lasagne and the specific ingredients must not be present in the kitchen as non-organic.

Promoting the organic engagement

Valid documentation for the organic engagement – supports the kitchens need for demonstrating what they do.

Google Map of Denmark - kitchens with the organic cuisine labels at www.oekologisk-spisemaerke.dk

Signs with the label at the eatery, website, menu, at marketing material etc.

Increasing consumption

The rules ensure consumers relevant and easily understood information about the involvement of large-scale kitchens with organic products. At the same time they support the work of large-scale kitchens in using more organic raw products.

Experiences and challenges

Wholesalers must prepare their system to supply kitchens with data for easy inventory (organic share).

Restaurants complain about beverages - too high volume compared to food.

Fish is difficult to categorize- wild caught or from fish farming ?

Inspection fee (90 Euro/year)

Prospectively 2010

Cooperation with municipalities, professional organizations, guidance and advice in how to measure in practice.

Expecting around 1000 kitchens registered with one of the labels within the end of 2010.

www.oekologisk-spisemaerke.dk – also information in English.

Long tradition of public food control system. Great importance for the high confidence that consumers have in the organic control system and the products sold as organic. Being launched lately the new labels are only in an early stage of introduction.

Expected soon to be well known and widely used in Denmark.

Go Organic when you go out

Consumers demand organic products – not just at home. The Organic Cuisine label guides organic consumers to restaurants, cafés, canteens, schools, nurseries, hospitals, colleges etc. awarded with bronze, silver or gold.

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