

The Development of National Variation and Food Policies

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Commentary

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ABOUT THE STUDY

The rising popularity of organic foods also raises important questions of interest to governments of different countries. According to some research, people prefer to buy organic food because they believe it helps the local economy. Demographic and agricultural histories, as well as governmental procedures, are fundamental to understanding recent food system localization practices. Growing awareness of the importance of local food and agriculture has piqued the interest of farmers and consumers seeking to challenge global food systems. Much of the focus in new local food policy initiatives has been on combining specialty products from local farms with organic and environmentally friendly products. The shift to local food may encompass many different forms of agriculture, encompassing a wide range of consumer motivations and resulting in a wide range of political changes, much like the nineteenth-century laissez-faire economics prompted various responses with resistance to contemporary globalisation.

Food policies in Europe

Food is crucially linked to a sense of belonging to a national community and is part of national identity in many European countries. The debate over genetically modified food in Europe has brought interest groups, social

movements, and NGOs to spread the importance of health, nutrition, and ecological consideration to legislative bodies. The European Commission created a set of policies in 2007 that regard procedures to be taken when it comes to organic agriculture and importing. Some European Union countries encourage biotechnological industry growth, while others have adopted precautionary principles to avoid industrialized food production. The Consumer Union has successfully campaigned for introduction of regulations requiring labeling of products to ensure customers have control over the purity and quality of the food they purchase. Concerns about genetically modified foods have increased demand for organic food, which is viewed as a way to eat only trusted foods in order to maintain a sense of order. Since 1970, the EU has taken over agricultural policy in EU member states; farmers and retailers have become accustomed about food issues in political and environmental terms.

Local variation in Europe

In countries such as the United Kingdom, government policies emphasize informed consumer choice through ingredient labeling. Due to the government's slow response to food scares, the United Kingdom is the European country with the most vocal and radical opposition to new agricultural innovation. According to studies, there is a strong preference for ecologically cultivated food in countries such as Belgium, Norway, and the United Kingdom. Despite this, the government of the United Kingdom has attempted to mobilize the organic food market. Organic food exemplifies the impact of moral issues combined with localized trust in farmers. Food has become entwined with issues of political legitimacy, becoming the subject of ongoing debates and conflicts between citizens and the government. Interactions between producers, retailers, and consumers are spawning new modes of consumption that give the consumer power. Marketing and retailing agents in European societies provide ecological information to their customers, prompting people to question large corporations and government statements about food. This is significant evidence that food consumption is important for people's sense of belonging to a political community, among other things.

Organic labels

In the organic food market, consumer trust is critical because buyers cannot truly verify whether a product is organic even after consumption. Many European countries have a long history of organic certification. Organic certification labels on product packages and price tags inform consumers that a product is certified organic. Only products that can be labeled and sold as organic food in the European Union comply and are certified according to the principles of organic production, certification, and labeling of regulation (EC) No 834/2007. Since July 2010, all prepackaged organic products produced and sold in the EU must bear the new mandatory EU logo.