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**INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL ON FOOD SYSTEM DYNAMICS**

**Int. J. Food System Dynamics 13 (4), 2022, 384-394**

DOI: https://dx.doi.org/10.18461/ijfsd.v13i4.D1

# Untangling the confluence of two alternative food movements: local and organic

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*Received May 2022, accepted June 2022, available online August 2022*

## ABSTRACT

Two alternative food movements (AFMs)—local and organic—frequently appear together as "local organic food" in real settings as well as in academic studies. Why have the two AFMs been dealt with together despite their obviously different objectives? Through a review of the existing studies that have referred to the interactions of the two realms, I attempted to elucidate the overlap and identified nine factors linking the two AFMs: diversity in local food, bifurcation of organic food, sales channels to be expanded, substitutability, complementarity, competition in markets, trust on different levels, integration of society with nature, and community tradition.

***Keywords**: Alternative food movement; consumers' perceptions; local food; organic food; producers' perceptions*

# 1 Introduction

Under the collective term "alternative food movement" (AFM), a variety of food-related social movements have emerged, encompassing organic food, vegetarianism, Fair Trade, slow food, local food, food justice, and food sovereignty. These movements commonly attempt to replace the dominant food system with one that is fair, health-promoting, and ecologically sound (Galt, 2017). The respective movements have different objectives and focuses that are, to some extent, recognized by ethical consumers, and each movement has its supporters, i.e., consumers. However, the two most broadly known movements are frequently referred to as one set: local and organic foods. This phenomenon might be natural because many studies have noted that consumers with a positive perception of organic products also have a relatively positive preference for products that are locally produced (e.g., Denver and Jensen, 2014; Hasselbach and Roosen, 2015a; Hempel and Hamm, 2016). Organic food consumers might be local food lovers and vice versa. The rapid development of local food systems and the overlapping implications of local and organic foods are referred to as "local is the new organic" (Chen et al., 2020, p. 535).

The existing literature has shown that these two AFMs are not clearly different from each other. As Pugliese et al. (2013, p. 4) reported in the context of Lebanon, in the past, consumers could easily confuse organic and local/traditional foods; it took time for the two segments to evolve gradually, targeting different consumer categories or types. A survey of the United States (US) food shoppers revealed that they did not clearly differentiate local from organic; rather, consumers simply paid attention to different purchasing options, such as specialty shops, farmers' markets, and participation in community-supported agriculture (CSA) (Nie and Zepeda, 2011). Similar confusion on the side of consumers has been reported in other surveys (e.g., Haas et al., 2013; Rogers and Fraszczak, 2014). Risku-Norja and Muukka (2013, p. 8) also pointed out that in the policy documents in Finland, local and organic foods are "usually not differentiated from each other" although they "appear as important items in food sustainability." When the research topic is slightly separate from the food movement or system, local and organic foods tend to appear as a set: collective purchase (Little et al., 2010), participatory action research (Guzman et al., 2013; Helmfrid et al., 2008), social movement (Starr, 2010), packaging of foods (Paunonen et al., 2018), and the food truck industry (Holmes et al., 2018). Consequently, local and organic foods are sometimes summarized as the antonym of "conventional foods" (Little et al., 2010) or as "sustainable food" (Annunziata et al., 2019).

Local food and organic movements, despite their different characteristics, appear to be linked to each other. Why are they considered to be linked? Why and how do the two movements interact with each other? These questions remind us of the complexity of the AFM. The success of the AFM might not depend on the success of each individual movement but on the effective linkages of some movements. The objective of this paper is to untangle the linkages of the two movements and to identify the factors that link these movements by reviewing the literature, especially past research outputs on the interactions of local and organic food movements, systems, or attributes. Prior to identifying the factors, in the next section, I review the research approaches that have been implemented to conflate the two realms.

# 2 Research approaches

Most studies on local and organic food movements have focused on the contexts of the global North, especially North America and western Europe. The interactions between the two realms have been explored more often from the perspective of consumers than from that of producers or farmers.

## 2.1 Consumers' perceptions

On the consumer side, most notably, local and organic foods have been compared in terms of willingness to pay (WTP) and the awareness of environmental conservation. In other words, scholars are concerned with the movement that consumers support more favorably and the types of foods that are more marketable. The results have shown that one of the two movements does not always surpass the other.

In many studies, local food is preferred over organic food. In one study on cereal brands in Germany, local brands (domestic brands) were evaluated more positively overall, although only some consumers were concerned about whether the product was organic (Bauer, Heinrich and Schafer, 2013). In another survey in Germany, a sustainable diet (environmentally friendly and healthy) was perceived as local and regional (81.6%) or as organic (59.5%) (Polleau and Biermann, 2021). Firefighters in the United Kingdom (UK) and the US, as middle-class consumers, overwhelmingly preferred local to organic foods (Scholten, 2006). In another US-based study, respondents generally assigned greater importance to foods that were US grown, followed by those that were GM (genetic modification)-free, locally grown, and organically produced when deciding what to eat (Bellows et al., 2010). According to de-Magistris and Gracia (2016), Spanish consumers were willing to pay a price premium of 25% for locally produced almonds and 5% for organically produced almonds. More recently, during the Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, people in Bavaria,

Germany, showed a willingness to purchase more locally produced food items but did not attach importance to organically produced food (Hempel and Roosen, 2022).

By contrast, in a blind-taste evaluation of apples in the US, participants preferred organic non-local apples the most, followed by organic local, non-organic local, and non-local non-organic apples (Costanigro et al., 2014). Some consumers would buy an imported organic product rather than a local conventional one (Sirieix, Grolleau and Schaer, 2008). Adolescents in the US placed more importance on organic (23.2%) and non-GMO (genetically modified organism; (34.1%) than on locally grown (20.9%) food (Robinson-O'Brien et al., 2009). More interesting, Yue and Tong (2009) found that although consumers' WTP for organic foods was approximately the same as their WTP for local foods, they would pay more for organic, local fresh produce. The fact that local or organic food depends on the selected product and context necessarily leads to the second and third research approaches.

Regarded as the second research approach, some studies have aimed to classify consumers into several categories in terms of their attitudes toward local and organic foods to determine the characteristics of different consumer categories. For example, de-Magistris and Gracia (2016) simply identified three types of consumers, that is, (a) conventional consumers, (b) short-distance consumers, and (c) sustainable consumers (local and organic), without differentiating between local and organic in the consumption. Nie and Zepeda (2011) identified four types of US food shoppers, namely, (a) rational consumers, (b) adventurous consumers, (c) careless consumers, and (d) conservative uninvolved consumers, labeling those who visited farmers' markets and bought organic food most frequently as (b) "adventurous consumers." In a survey of Danish consumers and a choice experiment involving beef salami, five consumer segments with respect to preferences for organic and local product attributes were identified: (a) organically and locally committed, favoring direct sales, (b) price-insensitive and locally minded, (c) vaguely locally minded, (d) uninterested and price-sensitive, and (e) organically and locally inclined, favoring small producers (Denver et al., 2019). Pelletier et al. (2013) attempted to analyze the preferences of young adults in the US for organic, local, sustainable, and non-processed foods relative to five components: (a) organically grown, (b) made with organic ingredients, (c) not processed, (d) locally grown, and (e) grown using sustainable agricultural practices, although their study placed more emphasis on the integration of these components as "alternative food production practices."

Exploration of the characteristics of consumers who prefer local or organic food or both is another popular research topic. However, it seems difficult to characterize local food and organic food consumers separately. The existing studies that can be classified into this category have tended to focus only on either local or organic consumers or regard ethical consumers as one group. In the Eurobarometer data analysis conducted by de Boer and Aiking (2021), older participants were more likely to buy local food than younger participants, although the younger participants demonstrated more concern about environmental issues than the older ones. This result suggested that inconvenience in shopping for local food affected young people's purchase behavior more significantly than environmental motives (de Boer and Aiking, 2021, p. 8). In addition, there appears to be a difference between rural and urban consumers. In the qualitative study of consumers' perceptions in Finland, participants from a rural area were more interested in supporting the local economy through the purchase of local food than participants from an urban area (Roininen, Arvola and Lahteenmaki, 2006). Bazzani et al. (2017) interestingly revealed that personality traits can be sources of heterogeneity in consumers' preferences for locally produced but not for organic products; more caring personalities tended to choose local products, whereas these products were less preferred by more extraverted personalities. In a study of attitudes towards (a) organic, (b) local, (c) US-grown, and (d) GM-free foods conducted by Bellows and his colleagues in the US (2010), women generally assigned greater importance to food attributes than men. Furthermore, those four attributes, (a) to (d), were commonly associated with increasing age and frequent or regular attendance at a place of worship (Bellows, Alcaraz and Hallman, 2010). The results from another survey of adolescents, which were somewhat unexpected, indicated that Asian Americans and Latino Americans were more likely to purchase organic food than Caucasian Americans (Robinson-O'Brien et al., 2009). Overall, in the second research approach, the difference between the two AFMs did not particularly attract attention from scholars.

The third approach also takes the form of a comparison, but with the aim of clarifying the similarities and differences between the two movements. Whereas the cores of the movements, namely, organic farming and local supply, are by no means synonymous (Lobley, Butler and Reed, 2009, p. 733), similarities have been identified. Many authors, including de-Magistris and Gracia (2016) and Ivanova et al. (2020), have suggested that both movements commonly have positive environmental impacts due to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions required for their production and transportation. According to Yue and Tong (2009), while the store categories for organic and local foods are obviously different from those for conventional products, organic and local foods are bought through similar channels. In a study of consumer preferences conducted in Germany, for both consumer groups, natural contents and animal welfare were the most important motives (Hasselbach and Roosen, 2015b). Both groups "use consumption as a means through which they could take some responsibility for society … when purchasing food" (Ditlevsen et al., 2020, p. 10).

Some studies have shed more light on the differences in consumers' perceptions. In accordance with the preceding studies, the word association study of Roininen, Arvola, and Lahteenmaki (2006) revealed that "local" was linked with supporting the local economy, short transport distances, freshness, and trustworthiness of origin, while "organic" was

linked with purity, health, food safety, and high prices. Different consumers would find one or more of these different characteristics more appealing. Jensen et al. (2019) interpreted the difference between the two movements as follows: "the demand for organic foods seems to be more driven by perceived attributes of organic *products*, such as expected better taste …, [whereas] the sale of local foods … is rather [affected] by promoting the overall concept of *localness*" (p. 262, emphasis my own). This statement allows us to regard the local food movement as larger and more comprehensive than the organic movement. However, at the same time, that large concept, i.e., local, can be more ambiguous, without conveying any aspect of environmentally friendly production. Ditlevsen et al. (2020) reported that organic food consumers tended to emphasize environmental issues, while local-food consumers did not (p. 8).

As the fourth approach, there are studies that have focused on organic-cum-local food from the beginning. Torjusen, Lieblein, and Vitterso (2008) studied box schemes in Norway and Denmark as a means of local distribution of organic food, revealing that those schemes provided an arena for learning and actual changes in consumers' food practices. The combination of localness and organic foods seemed to communicate the sustainable attribute more strongly than either attribute alone. A study conducted by Alkon (2013) focused on farmers' markets selling organic food, namely, local organic food. The convergence of the two movements allowed both producers and customers to "construct the naturalness of the food" (Alkon, 2013, p. 670). On the assumption that organic food is favorable for health and the environment, Garcia et al. (2020) examined accessibility to organic food in local food environments (local stores) in Barcelona, Spain. Their results showed that it is physically difficult for some consumers to access local organic food. Similarly, Li et al. (2018) examined what type of people preferred local-cum-organic food in New Orleans, US; while preference for local organic food was correlated with population density and education, there was no significant correlation in terms of income and ethnicity. Schrank and Running (2016) regarded farmers' markets and CSA not only as the combination of the two AFMs but also as "alternative local organic markets" in contrast with "conventional global organic markets." A focus on the overlapping area might allow us to make a clearer distinction between the two types of organic consumers.

### 2.2 Producers' perceptions

The following outlines studies that have been conducted from the perspective of producers or farmers. The two AFMs overlap when organic farmers access local markets. For example, the studies on CSA have automatically included both AFMs (e.g., Cristiano, 2021). However, little light has been shed on the overlap on the side of producers. In one study in Quebec, Canada, a higher share of organic-certified farmers participating in short food supply chains (SFSCs) was shown, compared to other channels (Mundler and Laughrea, 2016), whereas organic farmers in the US were shown in another study to be less likely to use these chains (Chen et al., 2020). Participation in SFSCs did not influence a farmer's decision to adopt organic production methods (Chen et al., 2020). This inconsistency leads us to query the factors that do or do not influence the convergence of the two AFMs regarding organic farmers.

The first research approach on the side of producers is to explore the meaning of local markets for organic farmers. Through a case study of organic farmers in Sweden, Roos et al. (2021) found farmers' direct sales to be a means of community building. Such organic farmers saw not only the connections with local consumers but also the connections with neighboring organic farmers "as important for building the local community" (Roos et al., 2021, pp 6–7).

The second approach is to focus on organic farmers who sell locally and attempt to determine their characteristics. In a study conducted by Brown (2002), farmers selling only directly to consumers had higher educational attainment, viewing their farming experiences as a lifestyle or hobby as opposed to a vocation. Farmer and Betz (2016) further revealed that farmers selling only directly to consumers had greater concerns about how their farming practices affected the environment, including the health risks associated with chemical usage. Chen et al. (2020) compared the incentives for adopting organic farming and direct marketing and found that they overlapped considerably. Pinna (2017) identified several styles of behavior among organic producers and labeled one of them as "re-localizers." This type of organic producer had "a strong relation with the promotion of the territory through its history, traditions, and natural landscapes" (Pinna, 2017, p. 348). Milestad et al. (2010) also pointed out, in the context of Austria, that the actors in the local organic network saw a strong connection between their spatial and social closeness; producers "could make a living without negotiating their values" (p. 237). In other words, "the quality of the social relationships within the [local] network and with consumers" (Milestad et al., 2010, p.237) could allow the producers to continue organic farming. Producers who support both AFMs seem to discover the value of locality through the practice of organic farming.

From these existing studies with different objectives, I attempt to draw factors that could contribute to the confluence of local and organic foods.

# 3 Factors linking the two movements

## 3.1 Diversity in local food

The first factor derives from a technical issue. The linkage of the two AFMs is, at least partly, caused by the ambiguous definition of local foods. The range of "local food" depends on each producer or consumer, sometimes meaning food cultivated by farmers who live in the same village, town, or region and sometimes meaning domestic food (e.g., Feldmann and Hamm, 2015; Risku-Norja and Muukka, 2013). Such variations in definition can necessarily diversify the nature of local food. Although consumers can directly communicate with producers at local farmers' markets, domestic food purchased from local supermarkets does not bring such communication opportunities.

How long or short is the proper distance for local marketing? For example, an Italian network of organic producers and consumers called Campi Aperti "sell[s] 'strictly organic' products that are 'as local as possible' – generally within a distance of 70 km – [trying] to challenge mainstream production processes" (Alberio and Moralli, 2021, p. 450). Although local food is generally believed to be environmentally friendly (e.g., Janssen, 2018; Zander, Padel, and Zanoli, 2015), Coley, Howard, and Winter (2009, p. 154) "found that if a customer drives a round-trip distance of more than 7.4 km in order to purchase organic vegetables, [his/her] carbon emissions are likely to be greater than the emissions from cold storage, packing, transport to a regional hub, and final transport to [a] customer's doorstep used by large-scale vegetable box suppliers." It is not easy to define local food in terms of geographical distance. In addition, if "local" is defined in terms of psychological distance between producers and consumers, it may not necessarily mean geographical proximity. "[O]rganized proximity," such as direct online selling, provides consumers with "proximity in terms of confidence and shared values" (Aubry and Kebir, 2013, p. 87).

As Bazzani, et al. (2017) suggested, the lack of a shared definition for the local food claim seems to lead to heterogeneity in consumers' preferences for local and organic foods. In such diversified local food marketing, opportunities emerge in which organic food is sold as local food and vice versa.

## 3.2 Bifurcation of organic food

Compared to local food, organic food is clearly defined, and the definition is comparatively well understood by consumers. However, organic food is not monolithic either. The bifurcation of organic foods has been pointed out frequently. The "organic industry" characterized by corporate control, large-scale operations, and global markets should be differentiated from the "organic movement" that celebrates artisanal production and local markets (Goldberg, 2011). de Lima et al. (2021) expressed their concern that if "the corporatization and standardization of organic agriculture" enable progress to advance at the current pace, organic agriculture will no longer contribute to the local environment. Rogers and Fraszczak (2014) also referred to a "local" organic network versus a "global" organic industry and admitted that the linkage with local markets can be a way of showing the "real" organic attribute. Given that organic food is becoming increasingly globalized as well as industrialized, both farmers and consumers who want to maintain the original organic movement have chosen to be local as well.

## 3.3 Sales channels

As long as organic producers want to increase opportunities for selling their products, it is possible to interpret local food as a strategy for increasing and diversifying the sales channels for organic products. In agreement with the preceding studies, Curl et al. (2013) found that organic produce consumption was significantly associated with neighborhood availability. The local food environment that allowed consumers to access organic food played an important role in the decision to consume organic foods (Curl et al., 2013). Although the local food environment in this sense might include the sales of imported organic foods in local supermarkets, it, at least partly, suggests the conflation of organic and local foods. In addition, organic farmers not only want to increase sales opportunities but are also sensitive to sales chain choice. Because "producers and buyers often expect organic products to go beyond the regulated technical specifications, being the cornerstone of an alternative food system including environmental, economic, and social differences as well" (Rogers and Fraszczak, 2014, p. 325), organic farmers are more selective about how to sell their products than conventional farmers. This makes organic farmers closer to the local food movement.

Diversified sales channels also bring new additional opportunities to consumers. Seyfang (2008) aimed to evaluate a newly introduced sales channel, that is, direct marketing, in comparison to sales in supermarkets that dominated the organic retail sector at the time. Although "organic" food in the narrow sense can be purchased in supermarkets, other benefits, such as "supporting a cooperative, keeping money in the local economy, having face-to-face contact with growers, [and] increasing one's connection with the source of one's food," are not so easily transferred into the mainstream supply chain (Seyfang, 2008, p. 198). In brief, combined with the local attribute, organic products can allow consumers to enjoy additional meaningful experiences that purchases in supermarkets never could.

### 3.4 Substitutability

Some consumers regard organic and local foods as interchangeable. Costanigro et al. (2014, p. 103) argued that "it is possible that a stigma against the conventional food supply chain induces a Willing to Pay premium for any label providing an alternative to conventional produce. … [and] this 'alternative' connotation may be one of the shared characteristics accountable for the substitutability of local and organic products." Jensen et al. (2019, p. 262) also pointed out that there are consumers that "may be prone to substitute between local and organic varieties." In other words, to some ethical consumers, being against conventional is more important than being either local or organic although many such consumers prefer being both organic and local (Hempel and Hamm, 2016, p. 316). The substitutability of the two attributes, without doubt, causes an overlap of the two movements.

We should also note that the substitutability of the two attributes might not be simple. Denver and Jensen (2014) and Hempel and Hamm (2016), in different contexts, concluded that consumers who preferred organic products also had a relatively strong preference for local foods. However, Denver and Jensen (2014) also found that those with a high perception of local products did not have stronger preferences for organic products. This suggests that substitutability might not always work in both directions.

### 3.5 Complementarity

The two AFMs can complement and reinforce each other. According to the study of Zander, Stolz, and Hmm (2013), organic food consumers place higher values on "additional ethical attributes"; in five European countries, organic consumers also preferred greater animal welfare, local production, and fair producer prices as such additional ethical attributes. More arguably, the nature of local food can, to some extent, complement what the nature of organic food lacks. Tasca et al. (2017) shed light on a more scientific complementarity of the two AFMs: although the environmentally positive impact of organic farming has not necessarily been proven, the direct delivery of raw products with returnable packaging is obviously environmentally friendly, regardless of farming methods. This means that the contribution of organic agriculture to environmental conservation is more firmly combined with the local food movement. From the angle of consumers, Hempel and Hamm (2016) also argued that local food production complemented organic food production in a group of organic-minded consumers. Furthermore, a WTP estimation by Hasselbach and Roosen (2015a) confirmed that the two production methods can support each other in achieving price premiums.

Sumner and Wever (2015) explained the complementarity from a different perspective. They argued that "local" itself deals with distance and marketing methods without any "end in itself." "Local is not automatically more sustainable or more just" (ibid., p. 75). Such "empty claims can only be substantiated when local food is backed by an agenda based on a set of values that promote sustainability or social justice" (ibid., p. 75). As one such value, organic agriculture can provide an "end" to local food. This complementarity seems to work in both directions.

### 3.6 Competition

The above-mentioned complementarity in many cases leads to the sixth factor, competition. Two types of competition have been identified among producers. First, as Hedberg II and Zimmerer (2020) reported, some producers participating in the local food movement converted to organic farming in response to requests from consumers or perceived consumer demand. One of the most common consumer questions at the studied farmers' market was about the use of chemicals to manage pests, weeds, and other crop diseases, and the other most common one was "are you organic?" (Hedberg II and Zimmerer, 2020, p. 40). Therefore, old-time farmers in the local food movement were obliged to become organic farmers to avoid "los[ing] business to newer organic producers" (Hedberg II and Zimmerer, 2020, p. 41). However, how to combine the two attributes is not so simple. As Printezis and Grebitus (2018) revealed, the inconvenience of the point of sale significantly reduces consumers' WTP for local food even if the food is also organic. How and where local organic food products are sold seems important for making the products more competitive.

Second, organic farmers need to compete with industrial organic producers (Rogers and Fraszczak, 2014). The adoption of localness will enhance the competitiveness of small-scale organic farmers. "In doing so, not only do they obtain [more] advantage in serving consumers with various needs for sustainability than if they only adopt organic farming or direct marketing alone, but also they can have higher price premiums by combining these two attributes" (Chen et al., 2020, p. 534).

### 3.7 Trust

A word that has most frequently appeared in the literature is trust. Trust plays an important role in products, producers, and retailers (Ladwein and Romero, 2021). The organic attribute might be used to build trust regarding local food and vice versa. In Lebanon, food scandals negatively affected consumers' trust in traditional local food (called Baaldadi); the local food was then integrated with organic production to overcome the mistrust regarding its quality and safety (Pugliese et al., 2013).

Trust is, in some cases, related to whether the food, especially organic food, is certified or non-certified. For instance, the results of a survey conducted with food shoppers in Spain indicated that consumers highly valued labeling schemes, including the organic logo, regulated by EU (European Union) law (Gracia and de-Magistris, 2016). However, expensive certification is not an option that all farmers can afford. For uncertified organic farmers, participation in the local food movement, namely, selling directly to consumers, is beneficial. In farmers' markets and roadside stands in West Virginia, US, "the consumer can see the product and speak with the farmer about its organic farming" (Farmer and Betz, 2016, p. 40). Farmers' conversations with consumers "provide reassurance to consumers that these farmers trust the wellbeing of themselves and their families with their spraying practices" (Hedberg II and Zimmerer, 2020, p. 40). According to Chen et al. (2020), "farmers implementing organic production without USDA organic certification are more likely to adopt direct marketing. They argued that consumers preferring organic foods may not rely on USDA certification but rather *trust* local farmers' organic claims" (p. 534, emphasis my own).

Trust is also observed on the part of farmers who are not 100% organic. "[T]hey trust customers to continue to support them even if their environmental practices do not conform to standard packages like certified organic"; in reality, "very few farmers have changed their spraying practices during their tenure selling in [the] farmers' market" (Hedberg II and Zimmerer, 2020, p. 41). In terms of trust, direct communication between producers and consumers might surpass official certification in some settings. Both local and organic segments seem to need each other to build and maintain trust.

### 3.8 Integration of society with nature

Society meets nature by the confluence of the two movements. Focusing on farmers' markets, Alkon (2013) described "local organic food" as "co-produced by society and nature" (p. 673). The food and the farms on which it is grown are then depicted both as natural and as the product of human labor (Alkon, 2013, p. 673). Neither "local" nor "organic" on its own can link society and nature. To enable farmers and customers to "construct the naturalness of the food" through the market (ibid., p. 670), both farmers and customers are expected to belong to the same locality, and "the naturalness of the food" will be realized by the adoption of organic farming. It is only when "local" and "organic" are combined in food production and consumption that society and nature can be connected.

### 3.9 Community tradition

In connection with local marketing, organic farming or produce might create a community identity because "marketing does not depend only on the farm or on the single product strategy but it is linked to the whole territory" (Pinna, 2017, p. 348). In the study of McDaniel et al. (2021) in New Mexico, US, small-scale organic food producers and workers "play a key role in the local food environment." The producers and workers reported considerable pride in their role as community advocates and leaders, describing a commitment to and responsibility for addressing health disparities among marginalized and low-income communities (ibid., p. 1385). Furthermore, "a number of participants expressed a preference for the term 'traditional' to describe their farming practices rather than 'organic' although [they all] had received USDA organic certification"; "[s]ome who expressed objection to the 'organic' label reported a discomfort with this new descriptor for practices that have been persistent on these farms for centuries" (ibid., p. 1388). Their long-standing communal agricultural practices are "traditional" rather than "organic." In some societies, the convergence of local and organic foods may exist as "communal tradition," as McDaniel et al. (2021) witnessed.

The history of the local food movement in the US might explain the "communal tradition" in the country in another way. According to Ikerd (2011), the local food movement has its roots in the natural food movement of the 1960s; in response to Rachel Carson's 1962 book, *Silent Spring*, the "hippies" started to "produce their own natural foods, buying natural foods at local farmers markets, and establishing the first cooperatively owned and operated natural food stores" (p. 50). "To these early natural food advocates, 'organic' was more a way of life as a way to grow good, healthy food" (ibid., p. 50). Local and organic food as a way of life could continue more sustainably than farming and marketing methods adopted for business.

## 4 Conclusion

In this paper, I have attempted to decompose the confluence of the local food and organic movements in real settings and identified nine factors that could elucidate the phenomenon. These two realms tend to be conflated due to their diverse characteristics. The confluence is practically effective as a strategy for expanding sales channels. In contrast to the conventional food system, the two AFMs substitute each other as alternatives. They complement each other to increase competitiveness in food marketing and to build trust on a variety of occasions. The confluence can be interpreted as a way of linking society with nature and actually exists as a community tradition in some societies. The influence of the factor(s) depends on the product and the geographical contexts. Although there is no trend in the confluence, a type of means–end relationship is observed in most settings: the organic component provides an end,

and the local is a means for pursuing alternative food movements. The confluence of the two AFMs might have been a necessary process for each of them to survive.

While this paper focused on the interactions of two AFMs, there are many other settings where different AFMs are combined intentionally and unintentionally. For instance, in the global South, Fair Trade-certified producer groups, usually consisting of small-scale farmers and farm workers, are additionally required to obtain organic certification for access to more export markets (e.g., Makita and Tsuruta, 2017). This literature review suggests that decomposing the confluence of different AFMs should be significant not only for gaining a better understanding of the respective AFMs but also for building more effective strategies for the entire AFM to achieve success.

## Acknowledgements

I acknowledge the funding supplied by KAKENHI, Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (No. 20H03085) which made this research possible.

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