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RESEARCH
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STUMBLING BLOCKS IN THE MOVE TOWARDS ORGANIC FOOD PRODUCTION IN SOUTH AFRICA WITH SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO TEMPERATE FRUIT PRODUCTION

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Which one will you buy?

VS

20-70% Price Premium!!

Industry Problem?

Growing Demand for Organic Apples and Pears

Supply available from:

Argentina

New Zealand

Italy

France

Poland

China

NO SUPPLY!! - SA

What is Organic Food/Fruit?

Organic farming is the concept of producing food in a sustainable manner with a balance between agroecological approaches and productivity (Niggli, 2015).

Allen and Alabala (2017) simplistically just defines “Organic” as the way in which agricultural products are grown without the use of pesticides and chemical fertilizers.

The demand for organic food is currently getting considerable traction due to consumer perception that organic foods are safe to consume and environmentally friendly (Darnhofer et al., 2010; Hoefkens et al., 2009).

Organic Demand - Worldwide

WHY?

Food Safety and Health (Aschemann et al., (2007); Kranjac et al. (2017)

Environmental protection and sustainability (Aschemann et al., 2007).

2020 - **€120,6 Billion**

Global Sales (Willer et al. 2022)

South African Demand

Not as large as USA and Europe, but definitely there in Retail

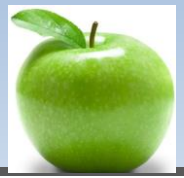
WOOLWORTHS

SPAR

Checkers

Pick n Pay

No or very little supply in South Africa



Global Production of Organic Food

2020
All Food types - Global
74,9 mill ha
3,4 mill growers
4,1% growth from 2019

(Willer et al., 2022)

2020
Temperate fruits - Global
256 000 ha

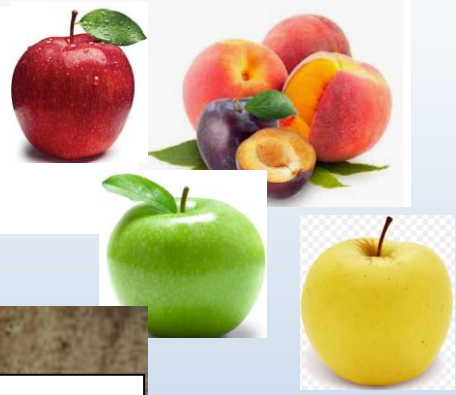
Apples -107 776 ha – 42,01%
Pears -21 888 -8,55%
Apricots –33 280ha - 13%
Plums – 20 480ha - 7,8%
(Willer et al., 2022)

2017
Temperate Fruits – SA
14ha

ACTUALLY NONE!

China – 51400ha Spain 5936 ha
France 16 535 ha USA 18 130 ha
Italy 19 304 ha
Check Republic 3449 ha
Turkey – 20 268 ha
Poland – 10 008 ha

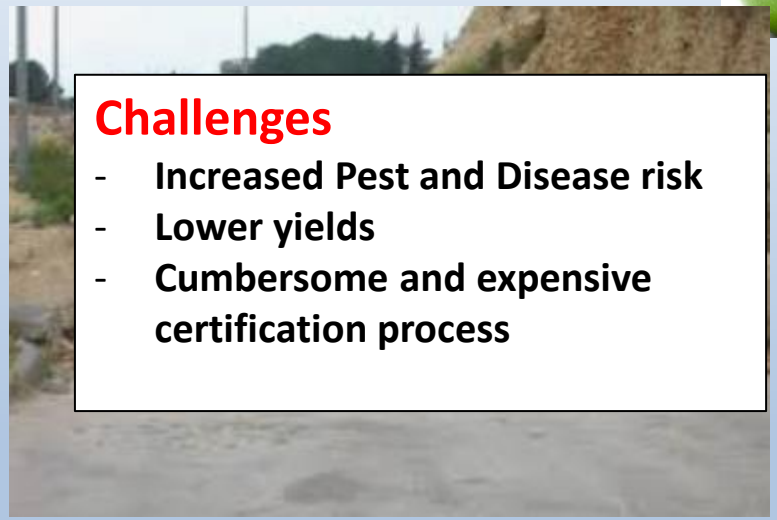
Benefits and Challenges of Organic Production



Benefits

- Increased Bio-Diversity
- Increased Soil Fertility
- Increased Water holding capacity
- Higher organic matter content
- Enhance carbon storage
- No use of synthetic pesticides
- Increased demand
- Higher returns

Gomiero et al., (2011); Niggli, (2015)



Challenges

- Increased Pest and Disease risk
- Lower yields
- Cumbersome and expensive certification process

Purpose of Research

Determine the main stumbling blocks in the production of organic food in South Africa

Measure: Willingness of growers to produce organically

Most important Stumbling Blocks

Most important Motivational Factors

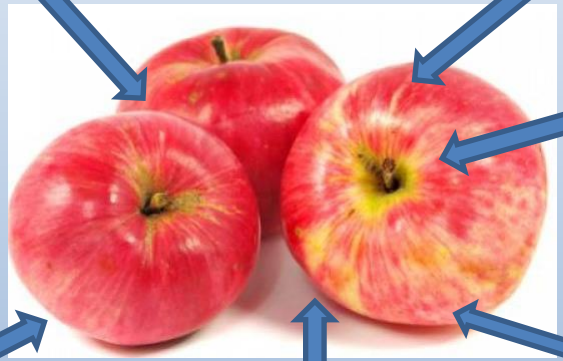
?How can Industry get growers to produce fruit Organically?

Research Method

Target Population
2479 Farms
1851 Growers

Questionnaire

Survey



Apple and Pear growers

Convenience Sampling

39 Completed Surveys

Non-Probability Sampling

Results and Discussion

Current Status

Answers from growers in questionnaire

0%

Of growers are formally Certified Organic (Currently)

67%

Of growers are of the opinion that they apply some organic techniques

28%

Of the growers are of the opinion that they can apply more environmentally safe farming practices

Results and Discussion

Perception about fruit growing

Growers

Agree

that consumers are becoming more concerned about food safety

Growers

Agree

that consumers are becoming more concerned about HOW food is produced

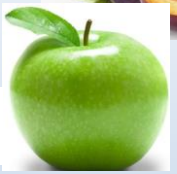
Growers

Agree

that consumers perceive Organic fruit to be more safe for human consumption

Results and Discussion






6 Most important Stumbling Blocks to covert to Organic

1. Lack of knowledge about organic production and having to learn something new
2. Lack Government support
3. The three year conversion period can cause financial distress
4. The cumbersome and difficult certification process
5. Price premiums cannot be guaranteed
6. Pest and disease risk

Expected to be number 1

Results and Discussion




4 Most important motivational factors in order to covert to Organic production

1. The internal conviction to farm more sustainably and environmentally friendly

2. Financial reward from increased demand – *expected to be nr1*

3. There must be someone to share the risk

4. The need for SUCCESS stories

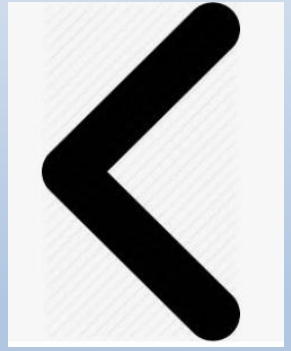
Results and Discussion

Willingness to convert is low

Willingness to convert whole farm to organic

Or

Willingness to convert part of farm to organic



Willingness to convert some practices to organic

or

Willingness to convert other sustainable initiatives

Contribution to Research and Practice

Suggested Action plan

- Educate + Inform
- Get Government on board
- Assist growers to get the conversion going
- Constantly assist growers to combat pest and disease
- Create Environmental awareness
- Make sure markets are in place + Price Premium
- Start Pilot project
- Create Community
- Create Success Stories

Summary

In order to start producing Organic Temperate fruit – start with the right **FOUNDATION**

Inform and Educate / Pilot projects

Create an intense awareness about conservation of the planet

Create Success Stories

Starting with $$$$ will not work!

Special thanks:

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Thank You

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