

# THE IMPORTANCE OF CUSTOMER TRUST FOR THE GROWTH OF ORGANIC PRODUCT CONSUMPTION

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## **Abstract**

***Consumer trust is the main prerequisite for building a market for organic products. The reason is of course because the value offered by organic products is its composition that is free of chemicals, while not all consumers have access to check directly to get the claim. Consumers' trust in organic food will certainly determine their decision to buy organic food. Consumers trust producers who sell organic products through certification. This requires organic food producers to ensure consumers by maintaining product quality so that they produce products that can get organic certificates. This article presents the results of research on how to increase the expectations of consumers to buy organic products.***

***Keywords: customer trust, organic products, purchasing decision, organic product consumption***

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The need for a healthy life and improvement in the quality of life have encouraged people in various countries to apply the "back to nature" movement in their daily lives. The movement is based on the idea that everything that comes from nature without disturbing the balance is good and useful, and consuming organic food is considered the first choice to fulfill it. Organic products are products that are produced without artificial chemicals that can harm the body (BSN, 2013). This product has been known in Indonesia starting in 2010 (Mayrowani, 2012), with a variety of product offerings from food to non-food. Organic products enter Indonesia in the hope that they will be well received, considering that these products are healthier for consumption than conventional products. The impact of organic products if consumed continuously can be felt not in the short term but in the long term

that is 10 to 30 years later. Of course the good impact that will be felt, because it contains nutrients that are better than conventional products.

The organic food business is growing in Indonesia. This development was marked by an increase in the number of organic farmers, supermarkets and restaurants selling organic products, and exports of organic products (Noorjannah, 2012). The sustainability of organic agriculture cannot be separated from the economic dimension, other than the environmental and social dimensions. Organic farming is not only limited to eliminating the use of synthetic fertilizers, but also the sustainable use of natural resources, the production of healthy food and saving energy. Economic aspects can be sustainable if the agricultural production is able to meet the needs and provide sufficient income for farmers.

Awareness of the dangers posed by the use of synthetic chemicals in agriculture makes organic farming attract attention at both producer and consumer levels. Most consumers will choose food that is safe for health and environmentally friendly, thus encouraging the increasing demand for organic products. Healthy lifestyles that are familiar with the environment have become a new trend, leaving old patterns of life that use non-natural chemicals, such as fertilizers, synthetic chemical pesticides and growth hormones in agricultural production. This healthy lifestyle has been institutionalized internationally which requires a guarantee that agricultural products must be safe for consumption (food safety attributes), high nutrient content (nutritional attributes) and environmentally friendly (eco-labeling attributes). This healthy and highly nutritious food can be produced by organic farming methods (Yanti, 2005).

Because most consumers do not have the technical expertise and other resources to control the basic requirements of differentiating organic foods, especially the absence of chemical components in food production, trust is an important factor in marketing this product (Noblet and Teisl 2015). Organic is a credence of quality and therefore trust in the product's integrity is essential for consumers to buy it (Daugbjerg et al. 2014). To make consumers buy their products, producers must convince consumers that organic products have good benefits, and make them believe that their products are actually processed organically. When consumers buy the product from the manufacturer, they are easier to believe because it is still possible to see the production process, whereas when buying from a retailer, consumers must be convinced by the certification and control and the organic label owned by the product, as well as other means of communication to inform to consumers and guarantee that a product is indeed organic.

Organic food producers need to employ effective marketing strategies to increase consumption of organic products. One commonly used method is to change consumers' views of organic products in their perception (D'Alessandro et al., 2012). This can be done by conveying important information and benefits of organic products, so as to increase consumer awareness of organic products (Chi et al., 2008). This emphasizes the importance of a good view of consumers on organic products to increase consumer confidence in organic products. Some things that producers can do are carry out promotional activities and counseling to give consumers an understanding of the benefits of organic food. Another thing is the improvement in the quality of organic products produced so that they can meet the requirements to get organic certificates. The existence of organic certificates and labels will make consumers stronger trust to buy and consume these organic products.

## 2. THEORY OF TRUST

Trust is the willingness of consumers to depend on products or services based on expectations of objects, attributes, and benefits (Mowen and Minor 2002: 312). Trust is formed because of the expectations of one party that words, promises, or statements from other parties can be relied upon (Schurr and Oanne, 1985). A person's

trust in another party indicates the extent to which a person believes that the other party will act according to their expectations. Consumer trust is important for marketers because trust is the most effective way to build and maintain relationships between marketers and consumers in the long run. This explains that the initial creation of relationships with consumers is based on trust (Degaldo, 2004).

Trust is important for consumers because trust will help reduce the sacrifice of time and risk to consumers of the product (Kapferer, 2008). Trust in a product will help consumers in accelerating the product selection process so that it will reduce the time needed to make a purchasing decision. Trust in products can also reduce uncertain purchases. Because by looking at a product, consumers automatically get a picture of the attributes contained in the product.

According to Chen and Chang (2013) consumer trust in green product research is a willingness to depend on a product, service, or brand based on the trust or expectation that results from credibility, virtue, and capability regarding the environmental performance of the product. Consumers have the hope that the product they buy does not damage the environment. According to Chen and Chang (2013) indicators of consumer confidence in green product research can be measured through the following indicators:

1. Reliable, namely consumer confidence that the environmentally friendly image of the product is reliable and able to meet the promised value.
2. Dependable, namely consumer confidence that in general the function of environmentally friendly products can be relied upon.
3. Trustworthy, namely consumer confidence that the overall claim of the producer or marketer that the product is environmentally friendly can be trusted.
4. Expectations, i.e. the suitability of product performance with consumer expectations.
5. Environmental Protection, namely consumer confidence that environmentally friendly products that are purchased have a commitment in environmental preservation.

### **3. PURCHASE DECISION THEORY**

Purchasing Decision According to Suharno (2010: 96) is the stage where consumers have made their choice of a product and made a purchase of the product. Decision making by consumers to purchase a product begins with an awareness of the needs and desires. The existence of the needs and desires of consumers for a product will cause consumers to perform several stages of behavior, which will ultimately end in the decision to buy a product or not buy it.

Kotler and Armstrong (2008: 179) state that the purchase decision process consists of 5 stages, namely:

#### **3.1. Stages of Recognition of Needs**

At this stage, consumers are aware of a problem or need. These needs can be triggered by internal stimuli originating from within consumers, such as hunger and thirst, as well as external stimuli originating from the surrounding environment such as stimuli originating from advertisements, so companies must be able to determine what types of needs or problems experienced by consumers, their causes, and how these problems can lead consumers to the products they sell.

#### **3.2. Information search stage**

Consumer needs for a product encourage him to find as much information about the product he needs. Consumers can get information from several sources such as:

1. Personal Sources include family, friends and acquaintances or neighbors.
2. Commercial sources include advertisements, salespeople, distributors, packaging, store displays.
3. Public Sources include mass media, consumer ranking organizations or consumer institutions.
4. Experimental Sources, namely through the handling, assessment and use of the product.

#### **3.3. Alternative Evaluation Stages**

After gathering information on a brand, consumers will conduct an alternative evaluation of several brands that

produce the same product and how consumers choose among these alternative products. At this stage, consumers determine brand rank and form purchase intentions.

#### **3.4. Stages of Purchasing Decisions**

At this stage, consumers buy the most preferred brand, but two factors can be between the purchase intention and the buying decision. The first factor is the attitude of others and the second factor is the situational factor that is not expected.

#### **3.5. Post-Purchase Behavior**

After using the product, consumers will feel satisfied or not satisfied with the product. At this stage, consumers take further action after purchase, based on their satisfaction or dissatisfaction.

Indicators of purchasing decisions according to Kotler and Keller (2012: 161) are as follows:

1. Product choice, namely the decision of consumers to buy a product or use the money for other purposes.
2. Brand choice, the consumer's decision about the brand to be purchased among several alternative brands on the market.
3. Dealer choice, namely the decision of consumers where they will buy a product.
4. Purchase amount, the consumer's decision about the number of products to be purchased.
5. Purchase timings, namely consumer decisions about the time span of purchasing a product.
6. Payment method, the consumer's decision about the payment method to be used.

### **4. DEVELOPING CONSUMPTION OF ORGANIC PRODUCTS BY INCREASING CONSUMER TRUST**

Several studies related to organic food have been done by Padel and Foster (2005) and Makatouni (2002) who examined what are the main motives that encourage consumers to buy organic food. Both studies mentioned that the desire to live healthy for themselves and their families is the main reason for consumers to buy organic food. Makatouni (2002) states that families who

consume organic food have at least one child who has asthma or is allergic to inorganic food so that it encourages the family to choose organic food as daily consumption.

Another study was conducted by Alamsyah (2016) entitled "Consumer Trust in Organic Products". The research revealed the importance of consumer confidence in the organic product industry. Consumer trust can be obtained by providing information and understanding to consumers about the quality and benefits of organic products. These results are based on the fact that consumers who already know information on the benefits to be gained from the use of a product will create a trust and interest in the product.

Consumer confidence is the basic determinant of long-term consumer behavior. Research conducted by Putra and Syriac (2015) entitled "The Role of Green Trust in Mediating Green Perceived Value Against Green Purchase Behavior in Organic Products" shows that green trust has a positive and significant effect on green purchase behavior on organic products. That is because the more information obtained by consumers about the benefits of a product will lead to trust in the product, and that trust will be able to influence consumer buying behavior on the product. The greater the consumer's trust in a product, the greater the chance that the consumer will make a buying behavior on the product.

Chen's research (2010) entitled "The Drivers of Green Brand Equity: Green Brand Image, Green Satisfaction, and Green Trust" shows the important role of trust in driving brand equity in green products. Producers must be able to touch the side of consumers' concern for the environment and convince them that the products they offer are good for the environment. In addition, to further convince consumers, companies that offer green products need to formulate environmentally friendly strategies in marketing their products.

## 5.CONCLUSION

Based on the previous description, it can be concluded that trust is very important in the development of organic products. Efforts by producers to increase consumer confidence in their products will greatly affect consumers' decision to buy the product. One important thing in attracting consumer confidence, in addition to health problems is to touch the side of their concern for

the environment. This environmentally friendly issue is booming and will continue to grow along with the increasingly widespread environmental damage that occurs. If the producer can give the impression that the product is healthy and makes consumers believe that the product is environmentally friendly, it will attract consumers to buy and consume the product.

## 6.LIMITATIONS

This article only contains theoretical concepts and a collection of research results from several previous studies. Future studies can develop data analysis methods and the development of research variables. Distributing questionnaires or interviews with respondents can be done to get more accurate data.

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