Possible Indicators for Social Sustainability and Fairness in Organic Agriculture

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Content

- Possible Indicators for
  - Social sustainability
  - Fairness
- Indicators used by enterprises
  - Trade
  - Processing
Material and Methods

First (preliminary) results of a diploma thesis
Aim: overview over possible indicators

- Literature survey
  - on social sustainability/fairness
  - of indicator systems regional/national/international
  - of indicator systems in organic organisations/ associations /enterprises

- Selection of sets of applicable indicators

- Interviews with selected enterprises in processing and retailing on their perceptions and activities
Social Sustainability – Possible dimensions for indicators

- Relations within the enterprise
  - Work
  - Equity

- External relations
  - Regional quality of life
  - Responsibility towards consumer
  - Social resources in regional communities
  - Social sustainability of economy
Social Sustainability – Examples for possible indicators

**Relations within the enterprise** → **work** → **Training and further education**

**Indicator:** time budget for employees for training on organic agriculture

**Ex:** *Spar* offers several months of an internal training for sales trainees in cooperation with experts on organic farming

**External relations** → **Regional Quality of life** → **Diversity of socio-economic structures**

**Indicator:** support the diversity of socio-economic structures in the region

**Ex:** *M-PREIS:* support of a regional producer based brand (Bio vom Berg), owned by a cooperative of small scale producers (farmers, butchers dairies)
Fairness –
Possible dimensions for indicators

- Fair to people
  - Consumers (traceability)
  - producers, processors, retailers
  - energy
  - environment protection
  - Sustainable agriculture

- Fair to the environment
  - animal husbandry
  - feeding
  - resource use
  - support measures

- Fair to animals

- Fair to future generations

Consumers (traceability)
producers, processors, retailers
energy
environment protection
Sustainable agriculture
animal husbandry
feeding
resource use
support measures
Fairness – Examples for possible indicators

**Fair to people**

*producers, processors, retailers* → *Fair price*

**Indicator:** fair payments to farmers for their products

**Ex.: Spar:** is paying farmers supplying their organic brand „NaturPur“ a fair price that covers production costs and allows profit

**Fair to animals**

*feeding* → *fodder*

**Indicator:** source of animal feed

**Ex: Bio-Bauern Sulzberg:** animals are fed mainly on farm based pasture and own hay
Relations along the supply chain

Suppliers
(raw materials, equipments, ingredients, packaging...)

Producers

Processors

Food retailers

Consumers
### Applicable indicators for food retailing

#### Examples for Social Sustainability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Social sustainability</th>
<th>Example: M-PREIS</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>From retailer to</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
| Producers/processors | **Criteria:** Reliable and trustworthy relations  
**Question:** What kind of arrangements do you have between you and your suppliers of organic products? | Close partnership with the cooperative Bioalpin (Bio vom Berg) since 2002  
Joint development of new products  
M-PREIS guarantees purchase of quality products  
Personal arrangements on a regular basis on the amount of supply |
| Consumer | **Criteria:** Responsibility for product quality  
**Question:** How do you ensure quality and food safety of organic products? | Internal quality controls by random sampling  
Controls of supplied products on delivery  
If quality problems occur they are immediately discussed directly with the organic supplier and the cooperative |
<table>
<thead>
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<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Fairness</th>
<th>Example: Butchery (Juffinger)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>From processor to</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Consumers/ retail partners</td>
<td><strong>Criteria:</strong></td>
<td>Traceability of production process</td>
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<td><strong>Question:</strong></td>
<td>Can you guarantee customers a complete transparency of your production chain?</td>
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<td>retail partners are encouraged to visit the company and have an insight on the processing practices</td>
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<td>Planned: traceability of the supply chain via homepage for consumers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Producers/ animals</td>
<td><strong>Criteria:</strong></td>
<td>Fair treated animals</td>
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<tr>
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<td><strong>Question:</strong></td>
<td>What contains a fair treatment of animals for you and how can you know your suppliers treat them well?</td>
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<td>Basic condition: organic standards</td>
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<td>Personal contact to all suppliers, knowledge on their conditions of animal husbandry (free ranging etc.)</td>
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<td>Farmers transport the animals with adequate vehicles</td>
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Preliminary conclusions

- Concepts of social sustainability and fairness are not yet well defined for organic products.
- Concept of fairness seems more tangible than concept of social sustainability.
- So far rather “soft factors“ are implemented which are difficult to communicate to consumers.

Further research needed.
Thank You for your attention!

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