



Challenges in communicating about organic seeds & organic breeding

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What motivates consumers to purchase organic

- Health concern
 - (Perception of) quality and taste
 - Environmental and ecological motives
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Drivers of willingness to pay for organic food

- Locality
- Shopping environment

Shenoy, K. R., Ranjith, V. K., Nayak, S., & Anirvinna, C. (2024). Conceptualizing organic food consumption: A consumer motive perspective. *Cogent Social Sciences*, 10(1). <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2024.2338864>

Katt, F., & Meixner, O. (2020). A systematic review of drivers influencing consumer willingness to pay for organic food. *Trends in Food Science and Technology*, 100(April), 374–388. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tifs.2020.04.029>

Motives for buying heirloom vegetable varieties

- taste and
 - potential health-promoting properties
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Motives for buying local food

egoistic-hedonic (taste, nutritional value, health)
higher than

altruistic motives (environment, ecology, societal benefits)

Communication Challenges

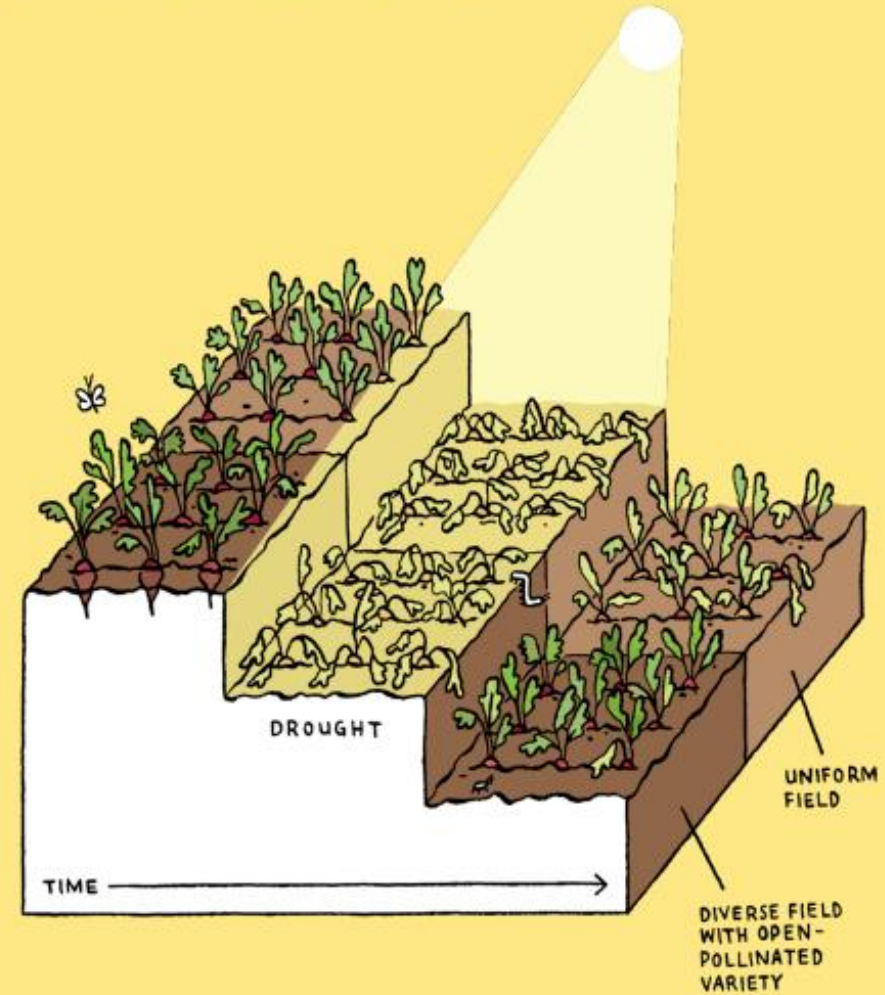
Consumer-citizens do not make a direct connection between CULTIVATED DIVERSITY and the food they eat

The differentiation of varieties should rather be mediated on the basis of taste, appearance and consistency.



Organic farms in Germany cultivate “bioverita” certified beetroots, offering fair prices, high yields, and exceptional taste with robust resilience.

Climate Resilience



Diversity endures where uniformity fails.

Thanks to their genetic diversity, open-pollinated varieties have increased resilience.

Communication Challenges

Consumers are rarely aware of the difference between species and variety and, because of this, communicating about genetic diversity is very challenging

Consumer-citizens have highest chance of eating a new species or variety that they had not known before when going to a farmers' market, eating at a restaurant or buying a vegetable box.



Communication Challenges

Complexity and multidimensionality of the topic (species diversity, genetic diversity, cultivar type, newly developed cultivars vs landraces, different breeding approaches for Organic Varieties/Organic Heterogeneous Material/organic pure lines, Organic Plant Breeding vs Breeding for Organic concepts, breeding vs seed production);

When communicating about cultivated diversity, basic information (e.g., “What is a variety/cultivar?”) should be included

Help farmers change seeds and make a difference!

Let's grow the organic seed community together

We all want tasty and healthy food that are also good for the planet. This can be achieved if farmers use seeds that are adapted to local conditions and resilient to climate changes and extreme weather conditions. Placing farmers at the centre of organic and local seed systems boosts local economies, ensures sustainable farming practices and secures food for generations to come.

Join us! Let's make a difference with simple actions

Together, we can build a more resilient, diverse, and sustainable food system. Seek out local farmers at your market who practice seed sovereignty and taste the difference in every bite.

Diverse wheat populations enhance resilience.



Cultivated Diversity:
Embrace the power of variety

Diversity of crops

Sustainable gardens and fields should be diversified. Growing different crops together makes farming better. This species-level diversity enhances the ecosystem and promotes sustainability.

Diversity of varieties

Growing many varieties for each crop boosts productivity and local adaptation. There are several types of varieties particularly adapted to organic farming. Examples include diversified populations and open pollinated varieties, which enhance diversity even within a single field.

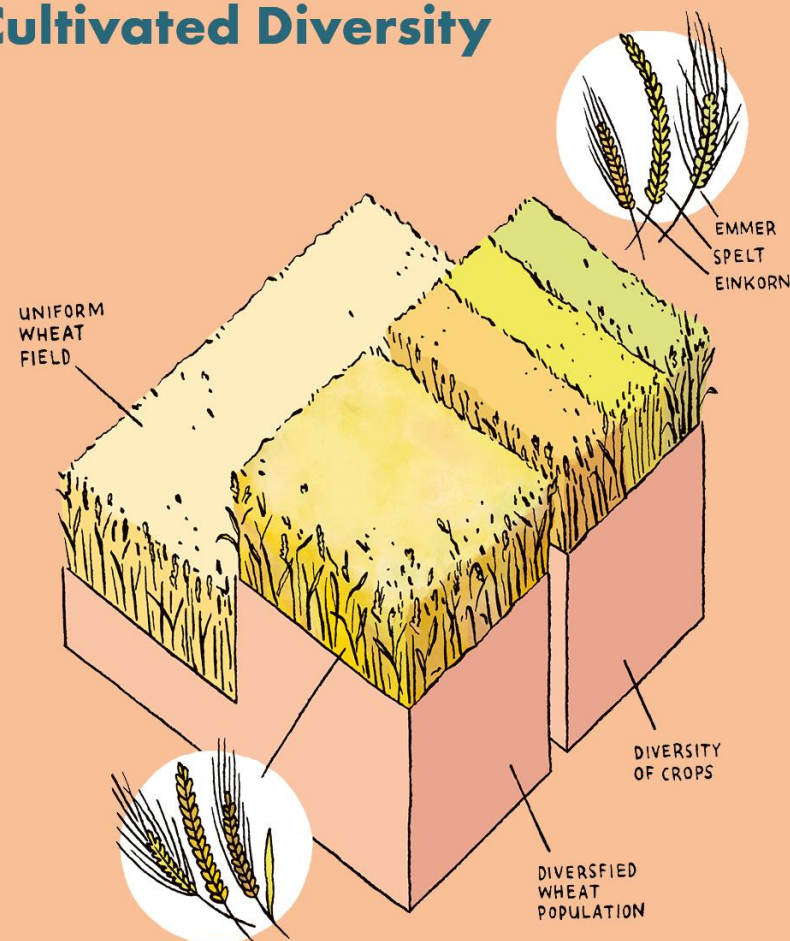
Diversified populations

Picture a wheat field in which plants differ in height, seed colour, ear size, and disease resistance. These traits, along with additional non-visible genetic diversity, create a robust community, enhancing resilience.

Open pollinated varieties

These varieties produce seeds that can be reused year after year, retaining the original traits. This allows anyone to save and regrow seeds without buying new ones each season.

Cultivated Diversity



Farmers need access to organic seeds of as many crops and varieties as possible to make the best out of their crops.

The availability of organic seeds of many crops and varieties promotes sustainable farming practices and ensures products with unmistakable flavour, such as the FURAT wheat grown in Tuscany.

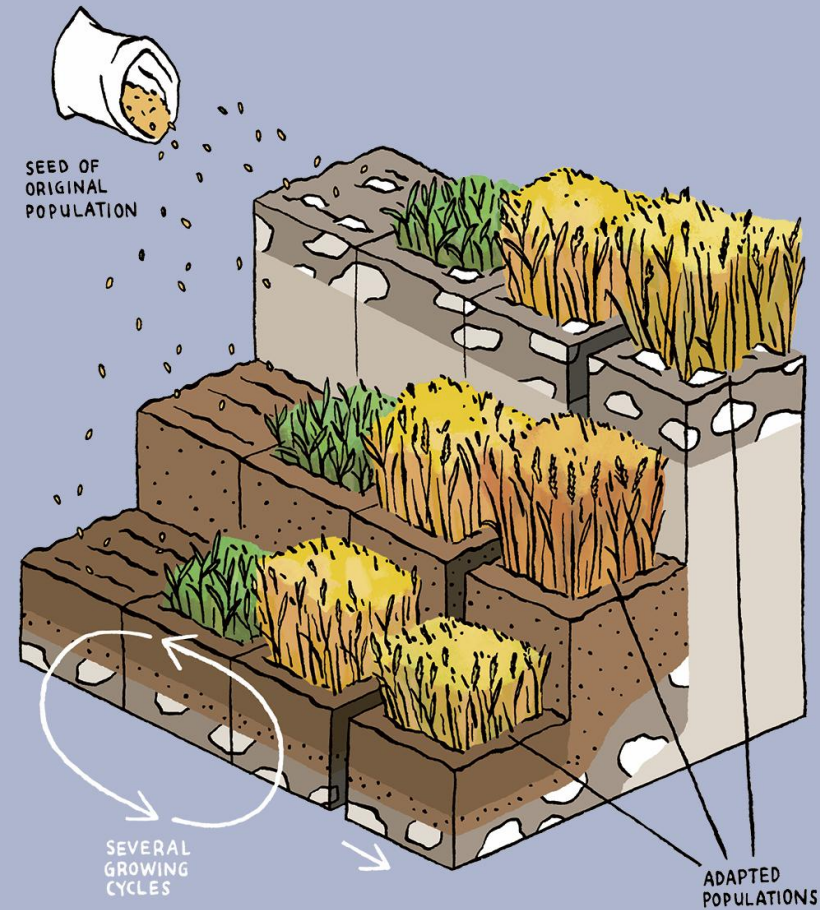
Communication Challenges

The topic of seed/breeding difficult to separate from related topics

Explain clearly how organic breeding is an enabler for organic farming in general, allowing it to reach its full potential, and to better achieve its sustainability goals in practice.

Promote the concept "*to each land its seed, to each seed its land*".

Local Adaptation



>>climate change adaptation
>> local production

**For every local soil, the right seed;
for every seed, the right local soil.**

Diversified populations, when grown for several years
in the same environment, will adapt locally.

Communication Challenges

Consumer expectation vs actual sector situation

Use positively framed messages>>
This approach should be well
balance in order to avoid to loose
credibility

Promote the concept of organic right
from the start





Communication and Marketing for organic seeds & organic breeding

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