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# POSSIBILITIES FOR AND ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES OF SWITCHING TO LOCAL ECOLOGICAL RECYCLING AGRICULTURE

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*Baltic Ecological Recycling Agriculture and Society (BERAS) Nr. 3*

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*Centrum för uthålligt lantbruk*



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*Possibilities for and Economic Consequences of Switching to Local Ecological  
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## SOME JUVA HOUSEHOLDS' FOOD EXPENDITURES

A consumer research study of food purchases in 10 households in Juva, Finland, in 2004 suggests that few households are environmentally conscious as was the case in the Järna study. The primary aim of this consumer survey was to see what a typical Finnish food basket might contain (consumption profile). A secondary goal was to find out how many of the items in that basket were locally and ecologically produced foodstuffs. As the data presented here is based on purchase habits of ten households, it lacks statistical validity.

The methodology used for data collection was the same as in Thomsson's study. Families collected their food purchase receipts for two two-week periods. Nine families (15 adults, 12 children aged 3-18 years and one child < 3 years old) participated to the first two-week period during the spring of 2004, and nine families participated in autumn (15 adults, 10 children aged 3-18 years old and two children < 3 years old). After each period each household was interviewed about its food choices, food consumption and food purchasing habits in order to get a picture of how representative the purchases were.

In Finland the purchases were recorded in terms of kg food and Euro per household per two-week period and then extrapolated to produce annual figures per household and per person per year. The amount of energy (MJ) supplied by the purchased food was also extrapolated on an annual basis.

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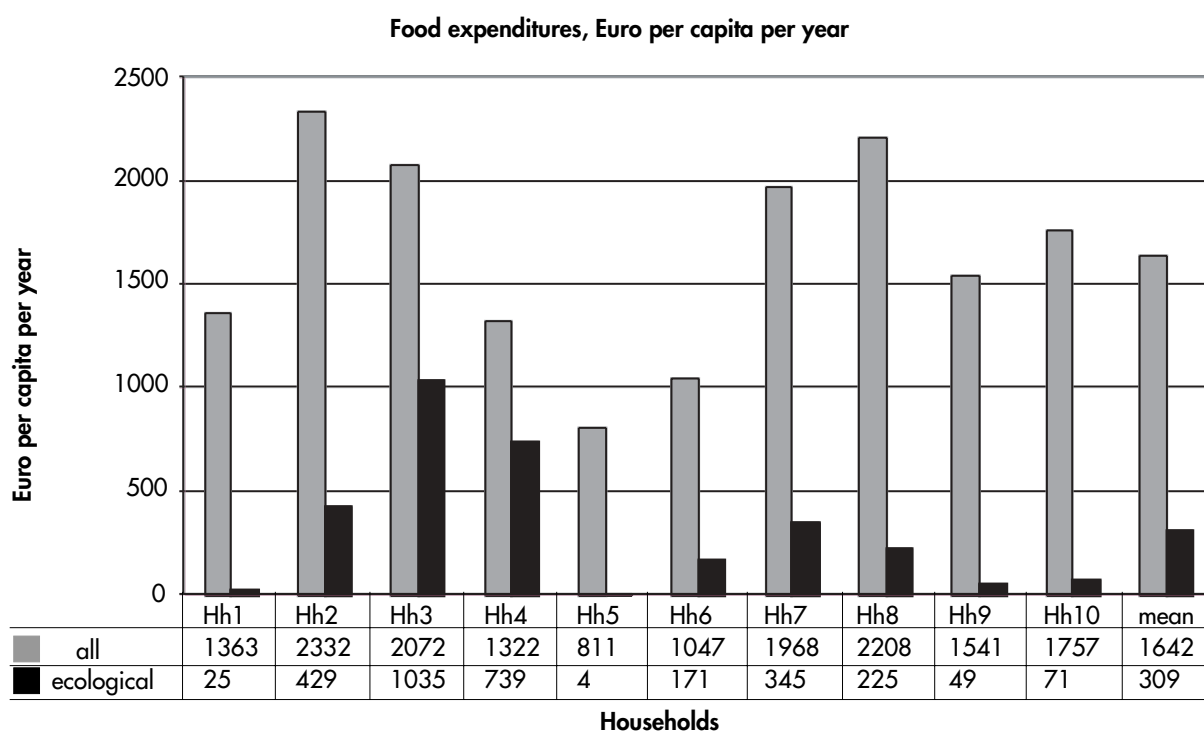


Figure 1. Expenditures on food per capita per year.

In 2001/2002, the average Finnish household's expenditure on food was 1580 Euro/person/year (Statistical Yearbook, 2004). In Juva the average expenditure on food was only slightly more at 1642 Euro/person/year but the variation between households was considerable, ranging from 811 Euro to 2332 Euro/person/year. In six households the expenditures were higher or almost the same as the Finnish average.

Expenditures on ecological food also differed between the households. In four households' expenditures came to less than 100 Euro/person/year, while one household spent more than 1000 Euro/person/year on ecological food. Despite the fact that the incomes of two households were quite low one bought a lot of ecological food and the other bought almost none.

The annualized energy content of the purchased food also varied considerably from household to household. The mean energy content was 3286 MJ/capita/year. Average energy intake extrapolated from the Findiet (Männistö, 2003) study was 2847 MJ/capita/year. The results of the Findiet2002 study were based on actual food intake. The results calculated here from purchase diaries are higher but reasonable compared to those of the Finndiet 2002-study. The energy intake of three households were much higher than those of the others. In future an effort must be made to account for such differences. Some of the differences might be explained by bulk purchases that do not reflect consumption over two-week period.

In Juva the expenditures on ecological food per households range from 0.5% to 56.0% of total food expenditures (mean=17.8%). The expenditures on ecological food of two households were 50% or more

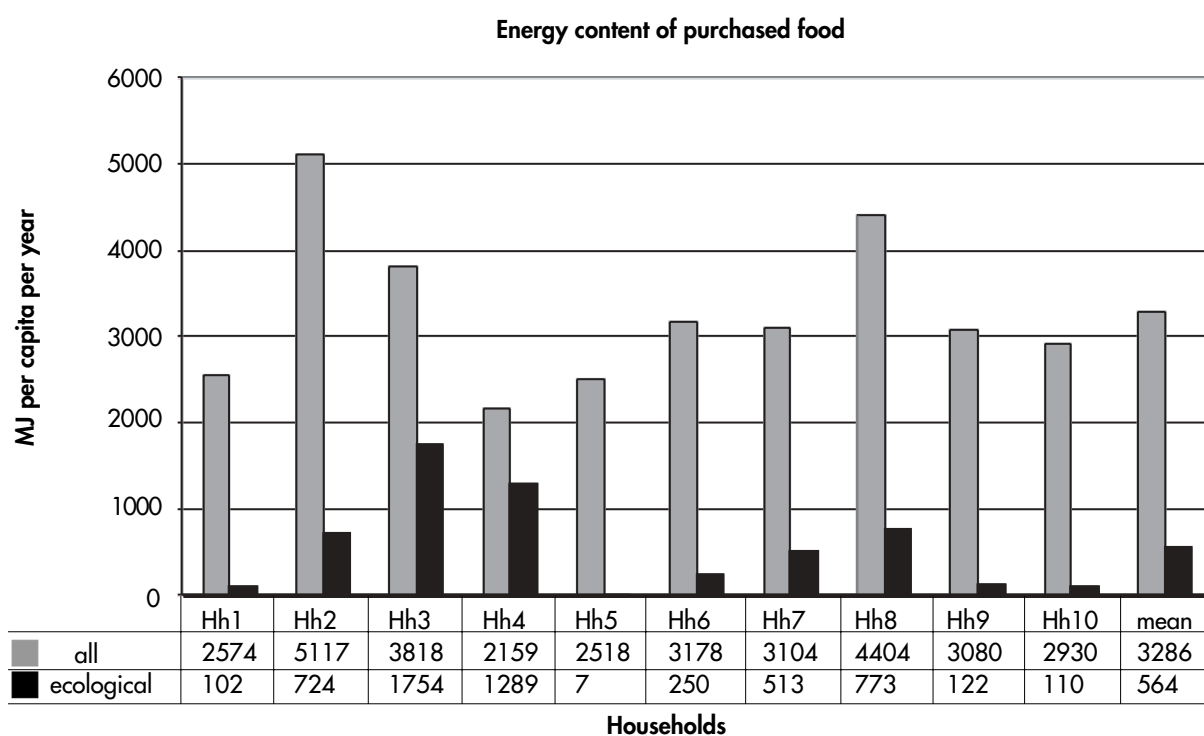


Figure 2. Energy content of purchased food MJ per capita per year.

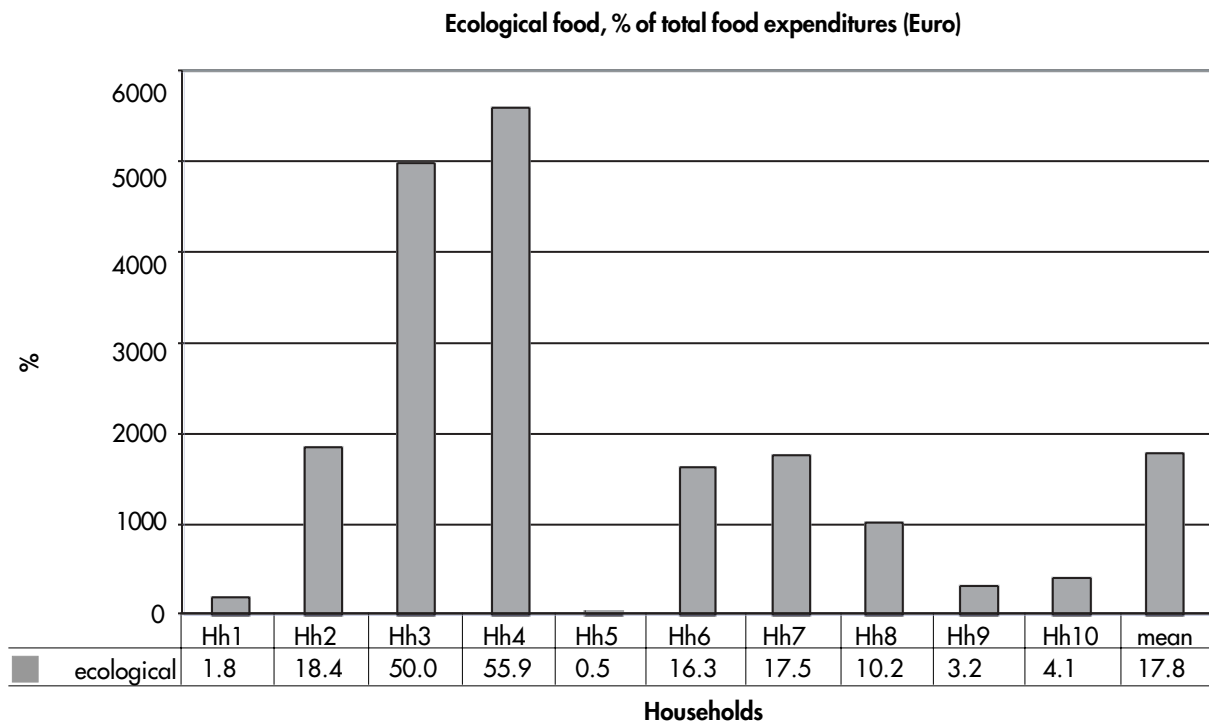


Figure 3. Ecological food, % of total food expenditures.

of total food expenditures. Six households spent more on the ecological food than average Finnish family. In 2003 the average expenditure on ecological food in Finland was 9.1% (limited to bread, grain products, milk, cheese, vegetables, fruit and berries).

Analysis of these data is one going. The next step is to compare the different food groups purchased by the households in order to determine what ecological and eco-local foodstuffs these households bought. It should also be possible to calculate from the data how much more expensive the ecological food was compared to the ordinary food.

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