

# Conference: How can developing countries gain from the growing market for organic food

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Øster Voldgade 10, 1350 Copenhagen K.  
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## Background

In Denmark, the market for organic products is growing rapidly. Demand is growing not only for products produced in the Western hemisphere, but also products originating in the South. In itself, this represents an opportunity for producers and exporters of agricultural products in developing countries.

Small scale farmers in developing countries, applying non-organic production methods, risk dependency of external inputs like artificial fertilizers and pesticides, as well as depreciation of the soil. As opposed hereto, organic farming with its use of a variety of crops and animals, offers synergies and diversity, which leads to an improvement of the soils, increased yields and more stable production systems.

Consequently, there is an incentive for small scale farmers to applying organic cultivation practices, not only from the perspective of export, but also when considering food security.

The purpose of the conference was to reach concrete proposals as to what Denmark might do to assisting developing countries benefit from the increased export opportunities within the organic food sector in the Western markets.

## Program

In order to identify opportunities and barriers for the development of export of organic products from developing countries, the conference program was split into three themes:

- Theme 1:**            **What is needed in the developing countries in order to develop the organic export?**
- Theme 2:**            **What is done by Denmark already, and what else could be done?**
- Theme 3:**            **From a Danish perspective, which products are in demand and what are the requirements for reaching the market?**

Two speakers, from Germany and Switzerland respectively, made presentations on Theme 1:

Presentation 1:     - **Opportunities and constraints for developing country exporters**  
                          - **Fair trade - is it fair?**  
                          - **Climate change and organic agriculture**  
*v/ Alexander Kasterine, Senior Market Development Adviser (Trade and Environment), International Trade Centre (UNCTAD/WTO)*

Presentation 2:     - **Developing country needs and experiences with organic farming**  
                          - **Organic farming and food security**  
*v/ Louise Luttkholt, Strategic Relations Manager, IFOAM*

All other presentations were made in Danish.

Theme 2:

Presentation 3:     **Hvilke muligheder er der for at støtte ulandene i at drage nytte af de øgede markedsmuligheder?**  
*v/Hanne Carus og Janne Schnider, DANIDA*

Presentation 4:     **Hvordan støttes økologi i ulandene? Hvilke erfaringer har Folkekirkens Nødhjælp?**  
*v/Mette Lund Sørensen, Folkekirkens Nødhjælp*

Theme 3:

Presentation 5:     **Hvor ser detailhandlen muligheder for ulandene for at få gavn af det voksende marked? Hvad bør DK gøre?**  
*v/ Christina Udby Hansen, Økologisk Landsforening*

Presentation 6:     **Hvor ser importørerne/grossisterne muligheder for ulandene?**  
*v./ Sven Jensen, Solhjulet og medlem af Økologisk Landsforenings Ulandsudvalg*

The 6 presentations were followed by a 2 hours workshop, in which the conference participants were grouped into 6 groups. The purpose of the group work was to formulate concrete proposals as to how Denmark can assist developing countries benefit from the growing markets for organic products, secondly how to proceed implementing those proposals.

## **Participation**

60 people participated in the conference. The majority of the participants were Danish. The lion's share of the participants was or had been involved in working with or in developing countries.

## **Communication:**

The conference was announced at the homepage and newsletters of DDRN and Organic Denmark, as well as via different networks. A press release was also issued, before as well as after the conference was held.

Powerpoint presentations as well as recommendations from the conference are available at the homepage of Organic Denmark, [www.okologi.dk](http://www.okologi.dk). The Organic Denmark Board on Developing Countries will follow up on the recommendations made at the conference.

A longer conference report is available in Danish at:  
[http://www.ddrn.dk/filer/forum/File/OASD\\_Danish\\_report.pdf](http://www.ddrn.dk/filer/forum/File/OASD_Danish_report.pdf)