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### **Advertising for Sustainability – Promoting Sustainably Produced Food to Finnish Consumers**

Food is one of the key consumption contexts in terms of environmental and social impacts in the World and food choices are a visible part of people's consumption styles. (Belz & Peattie 2009) Thus, sustainable food consumption and sustainably produced food products should be promoted to consumers actively (Jackson 2005). Statistics indicate that the consumption of and the demand for organic and other sustainably produced food products has increased steadily in Finland but is the increasing demand for sustainably produced food visible in the amount of advertisements?

Sustainability of food products is a credence attribute of the product. Thus, consumers have to trust the information given by others, such as food producers or marketers. In order to successfully market sustainably produced food products to these consumers, the promotion should be readily available and its message easy to understand. Although the amount of information does not necessarily correlate with the consumers' willingness to purchase food or other goods, informing consumers about different alternatives, does provide the prerequisites for consumer choice.

Mass media channels are considered the fastest and most efficient means of informing people about the existence of an innovation thus creating awareness about it. (Rogers 2003) Mass media is a powerful media that reaches a large market with persuasive or informative messages. Although it has its limitations, advertising has been widely used as a part of sustainability marketing strategies in many product and service categories. (Belz & Peattie 2009).

The objective of this research is to analyse, by using qualitative content analysis, both the amount as well as the content of food advertisements from the years 2006-2007 and 2010-2012 from three Finnish magazines. In addition, the aim is to outline what are the product attributes food producers and marketers use to promote sustainably produced food to consumers. Print advertisements are chosen, since they may convey more detailed information than television or radio advertisements. Moreover, print advertising can be more pleasing to the consumers than television and radio advertisements, since the consumer can decide oneself how much and how long one wants to pay attention to the advertisement and its message.

The diffusion of innovations –theory (Rogers 2003) is used as theoretical framework. In addition, this paper draws upon the concept of sustainable consumption (Jackson 2005). Moreover, the concept of sustainable marketing (Emery 2012) and its implications for marketing communications aiming to inform consumers and to motivate sustainable food consumption are discussed.

The results indicate that, despite the ample amount of food advertisements, there are rather few advertisements of sustainably produced food products in 2006-2007. However, the gradual increase in the popularity of sustainably produced food is visible in the quantity as well as the content of advertisements from the years 2010-2012. The findings of this research yield new information about how sustainably and ethically produced food products have been marketed to a larger group of Finnish consumers, although further research is still required to more thoroughly elaborate this issue.

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