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**ORGANIC PRODUCTION AS PART OF A SUSTAINABLE LOCAL FOOD SUPPLY CHAIN**

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**Introduction**

In Latvia, the demand for organically grown and produced food constantly increases, and the organic farming industry and market continues developing. In the period from 2015 to 2019, the organically certified agricultural land areas in Latvia increased by 52.19 thou. ha or 2.9%, reaching 289.8 thou. ha or 14.5% of the total agricultural area.

**The research aims** to assess the availability of organic food in the local food supply chain.

**Materials and Methods**

The research used assessments by various research paper authors for the theoretical framework and discussion on sustainable local food supply chains. Trends in the market of organic agricultural products in Latvia in the period 2015-2019 were analysed using the database of the Agricultural Data Centre (ADC) (statistical data on organic farming) and the information available from the Food and Veterinary Service. Research methods employed: monographic, analysis and synthesis, statistical analysis and logical construction.

**Results**

Table 1

**Output, sales and self-consumption of organic products in Latvia in 2015 and 2019, thou. tons**

Primary products	2015			2019			Average change rate, % - tm(b)
	Output	Sales	Self-consumption	Output	Sales	Self-consumption	
Grain	60.20	31.62	28.58	111.99	74.72	37.27	136.31
Industrial crops	0.36	0.17	0.19	1.48	1.35	0.14	692.70
Vegetables, incl.:	1.84	0.67	1.18	3.11	0.97	2.14	45.69
Cabbage	0.27	0.07	0.20	0.23	0.06	0.17	-18.34
Pumpkins	0.38	0.10	0.28	0.84	0.27	0.57	183.12
Carrots	0.32	0.10	0.22	0.33	0.10	0.23	-1.25
Beats	0.19	0.09	0.10	0.27	0.07	0.21	-23.71
Cucumber	0.09	0.06	0.04	0.29	0.06	0.22	10.69
Potato	18.41	4.69	13.72	22.81	10.48	12.33	123.37
Fruits and berries, incl.:	1.53	0.91	0.62	2.64	1.34	1.30	47.04
Apples	0.90	0.48	0.42	1.80	0.79	1.01	63.83
Beef	3.73	2.85	0.87	2.16	1.88	0.29	-34.22
Mutton and goat meat	0.33	0.28	0.05	0.29	0.19	0.10	-33.16
Pork	0.12	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.01	0.05	-78.28
Meat of other animals	0.013	0.004	0.010	0.017	0.005	0.01	20.61
Cow milk	66.77	56.4	10.23	83.39	72.25	11.14	27.78
Goat milk	0.24	0.15	0.10	0.35	0.22	0.12	53.54
Honey	0.29	0.25	0.04	0.36	0.22	0.14	-11.55
Chicken eggs (thou. pieces)	0.81						
		0.53	0.28	2.48	1.47	1.01	178.07

Table 2

**Number of organic processors by product category in Latvia in the period 2015-2019**

Product category	Number of processors					Average change rate, %
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	
Meat and meat products	16	22	27	34	24	14.19
Fruits, berries, vegetables and potato	60	67	69	76	86	9.49
Vegetable oils and animal fats	2	2	3	4	5	27.08
Milk and dairy products	24	24	22	24	30	6.44
Grain processing products and starch	11	12	13	13	13	4.36
Bread and pastry goods and cakes	13	17	19	18	20	12.10
Other food products	89	97	112	128	151	14.18
Feed	2	3	4	14	6	69.05
Beverages	10	12	12	5	16	45.42
<b>Total</b>	<b>227</b>	<b>256</b>	<b>281</b>	<b>316</b>	<b>351</b>	<b>11.52</b>

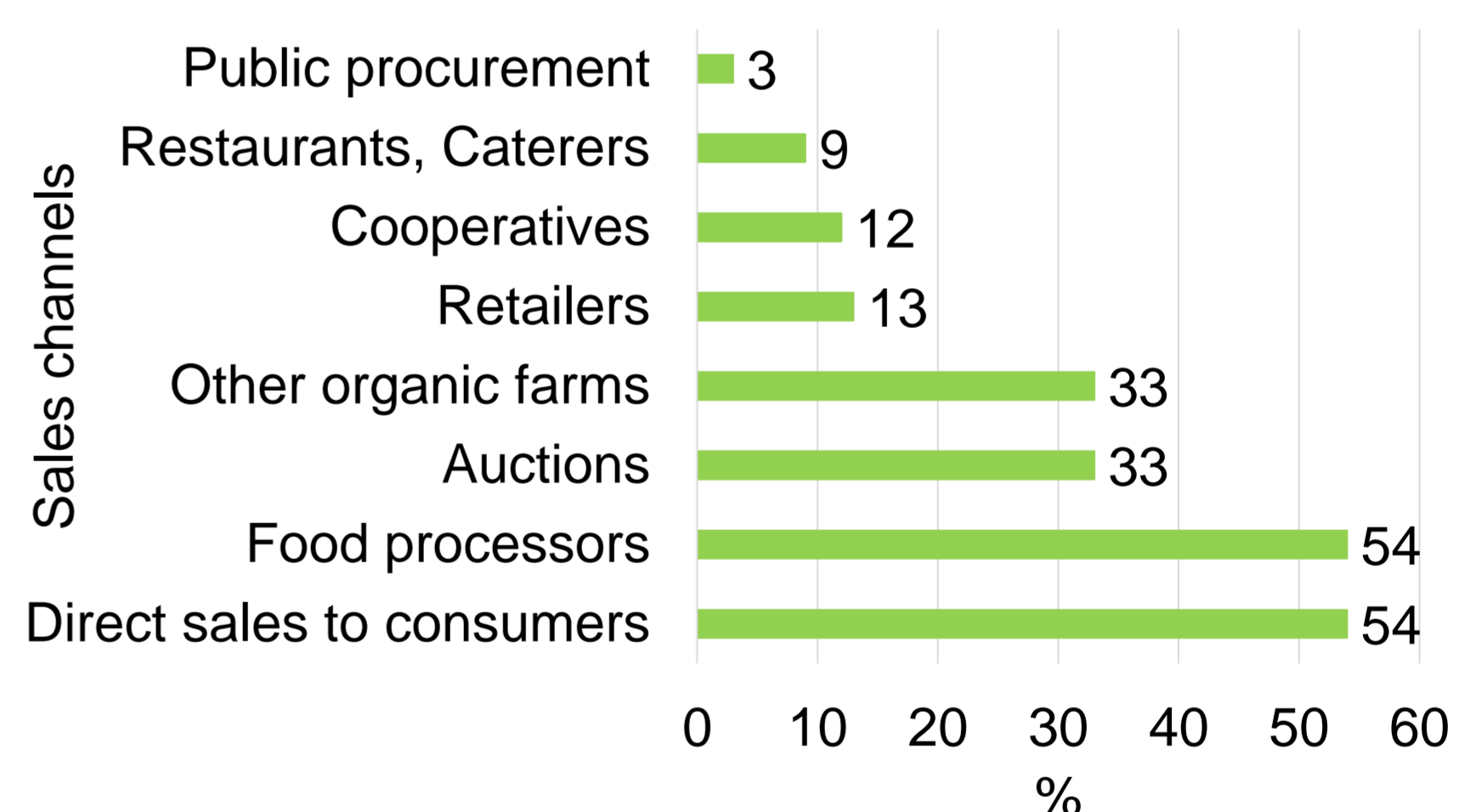


Fig.1. Most popular sales channels for organic products in Latvia

**Conclusions**

1. The output of organic products is affected by the growing consumer interest in healthy and high-quality food. Consumers prefer short food supply chains to buy organic produce from local producers.
2. Every year, the range of available organic products is affected by various micro and macro environmental factors: spread of various diseases (ASF, Avian influenza), weather conditions (droughts and rains), availability of production resources (seed, breeding livestock etc.), various policy decisions on the availability of support, market prices etc.
3. Over a five-year period, the output of beef, pork, poultry and wild animal meat decreased, while the production of chicken eggs and cow milk increased. In addition, farmers have started producing more fresh fruits and vegetables, as well as medicinal plants, oilseed rape and turnip rape.
4. In 2019 compared with 2015, main market-oriented products were cereals, beef, mutton and goat meat, raw milk, honey and chicken eggs. The sales of the products as a percentage of total production exceeded 50%, while the other products: industrial crops, potato, fruits and berries, vegetables, poultry wild animal meat and pork were mostly used for self-consumption.
5. An analysis of organic foods by degree of processing revealed that there were available mostly unprocessed foods (fresh fruit and vegetables) or minimally/basically processed foods (milk, dairy products, pastries); therefore, the products have low levels of saturated sugars, salt and trans fats