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**Certification of Organic Food generated and marketed in  
Japan**

**Chances and Barriers**



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## 10. Summary

In contrast to the fact that there are national standards for labelling organic agriculture in Japan, and that there is a law that improves the certification, there are many unclear questions about the market for organic food in Japan. Different ways of direct marketing are used, like Teikei, specialized distributors or consumer cooperatives. In case of direct marketing only non-certified domestic agriculture products are sold. But in case of the regular marketing channels, there is sold mostly imported certified organic food. The main question is, if the Organic Japanese Agricultural Standard (Yūki-JAS) will be achieved for domestic agricultural production.

The consumer consciousness about the environment and health is growing. Accordingly the interest in organic food is growing, too. The Japanese consumers prefer domestic produced food. The potential of demand for organic and domestic food shows that the growth of the market will continue in the next years.

In the beginning of the 1990s the government published guidelines for special agricultural methods. One of six categories in these guidelines concerns real organic agriculture. It means that no chemical pesticides and no chemical fertilizers are in use. The other categories just concern agriculture that works with reduced use of chemical pesticides or chemical fertilizers. In 1999 the government revised the “JAS-Law” to introduce third party certification. At the same time new standards for organic agriculture were introduced. It was not the aim to promote organic agriculture, but simply to introduce a classification scheme.

In this case study certified and non-certified farms were analysed. In Japan there were made interviews with farmers and tea-producers. In addition there was made a quantitative analysis of the producers' farmland, the sales and turnover of organic green tea.

The results show that the non-certified farmers are typical-sized for the average of all farms in Japan. They use compost, dung and rice-bran for fertilizing. To do something against pests they use self-made plant-extracts. The methods of uncertified organic agriculture are comparable to certified organic agriculture.

The four tea-producers are not representative for all Japanese organic tea-producers. In the analysed period from 1997 to 2006 the farmland of the analysed tea-producers is growing. The comparison of the certified to the non-certified producers shows that the certified producers are much bigger.

The average farm land of organic farms is a key factor for the achievement of Yûki-JAS. The small-scaled agriculture in Japan is a barrier for this achievement. The direct marketing can be seen as a barrier, too. But the significance of direct marketing is declining.

There is a positive trend to an achievement of the Organic Japanese Agricultural Standard (Yûki-JAS). But it is a really slow process.