

Possibilities and restrictions for organic food in public procurement



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Introduction

By the end of 2006 the share of organic food served at the University Hospital in Trondheim was 30 %. The objective of this study is to gain empirical insight into the patients' and nurses' perception of the food served at the hospital, their views concerning food production methods, as well as differences between the groups regarding the two aforementioned issues.

Materials and methods

The data was collected in a questionnaire survey. In December 2005 the questionnaire was handed out to 200 patients and 370 staff members. Most of the questions were closed questions, where statements had to be rated on a Lickert type scale.

The respondents:

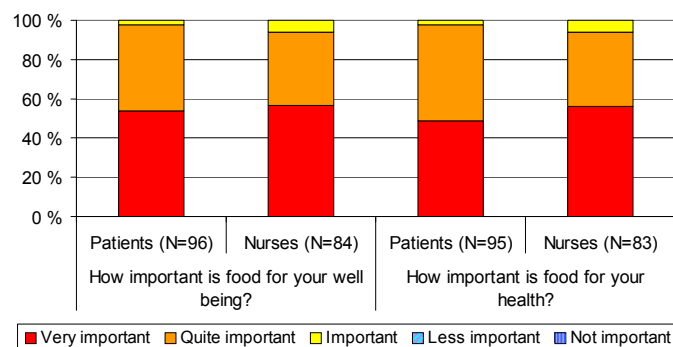
	Patients	Nurses	Kitchen staff
Number of respondents	98	222	35
Response rate (%)	49	60	58
Women (%)	57	84	80
Men (%)	43	16	20
Age	51	37	34

Results and discussion

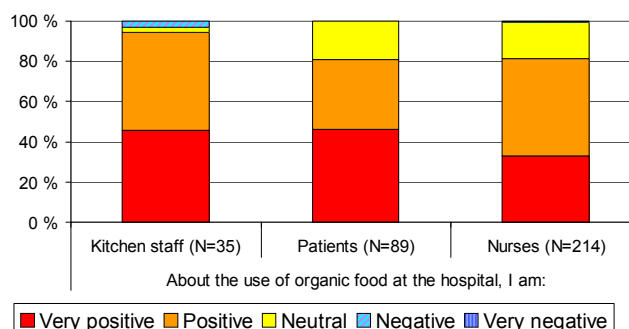
On average, all respondents were satisfied with the food served at the hospital. There were no significant differences between the patients' and the nurses' response to questions on the hospital food and methods for food production. They rated the following statements as most important:

1. food contains the right nutrients
2. food is mostly without preservatives
3. food is produced without pesticides
4. the use of artificial fertilisers in production is avoided

Importance of food for well being and health:

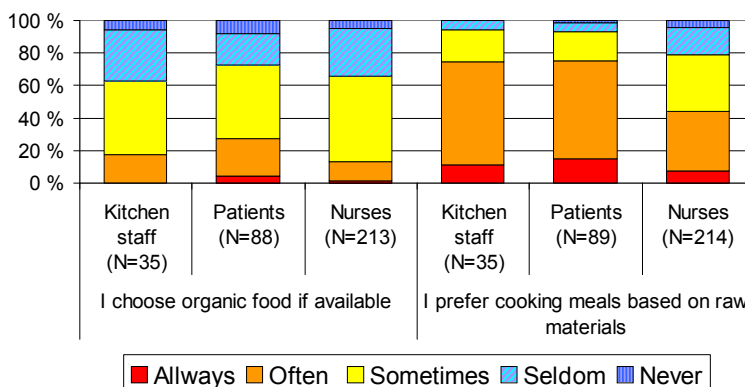


Opinion on using organic food at the hospital:



While more than 80 % of the respondents in this study were positive to the use of organic food, only 56 % of all patients and 33 % of all nurses agreed that organic food is worth the extra price. This demonstrates the inconsistency between the desire for organic food and the actual willingness to pay a premium price. Both price premium and insufficient supply are important barriers to the use of organic products in public procurement.

Food routines at home:



Conclusions

- Organic food is highly welcomed by patients and personnel at the hospital
- The kitchen staff are positive to the use of organic ingredients
- All respondent groups at the hospital were more interested in getting organic food compared to the population on average
- The combination of quality and price is highly relevant to consumers
- Serving organic food and informing about it has made patients and personnel more content about the hospital food

