Compost and consumption: organic farming, food, and fashion in American culture

Abstract
This research analyzes the history and cultural significance of organic agriculture as a social movement. It illuminates how organic production and consumption are polyvalent and socially embedded. Organic farming has been classified as a hobby and as a constituent of agribusiness; organic food has been dubbed as a hollow preference and as an exploited industry. At its core, though, organics is a social movement. From agricultural pioneers in the 1940s to contemporary consumer activists, the organic movement has preserved connections to environmentalism, agrarianism, health food dogma, and other ideological alignments. Organic farming has been a method of agriculture, social philosophy, way of life, and subversive effort. Organic consumption has been a practical decision, lifestyle choice, communicative performance, status marker, and political act. The dissertation embraces this multiplicity and expounds on the nuances of what the organic zeitgeist has meant in American culture. The study entails collection and analysis of historical and contemporary data, including archival, legislative, and regulatory documents. It applies discourse analysis, semiotics, iconographic study, and cultural analysis to texts and additional sorts of media. Observations of organic sites of consumption also enhance the historical and theoretical evaluations. This project includes scrutiny of rhetorical strategies used by organic farmers, business leaders, chefs, consumers, writers, and organizations that engage with the “organic lifestyle.” Despite the fluid intertextuality of these expressions, there are common themes. Unraveling the multivocality and interconnectedness of prevailing discourses provides insight into the movement’s epicenter.

Department
American Studies

Subject
American studies
Consumer studies
Food studies
Environmental history

URI
http://hdl.handle.net/2152/41419

Collections
UT Electronic Theses and Dissertations
Organic food and farming benefit from favourable consumer perceptions, some of which cannot be scientifically substantiated. Organic farming in the EU is a system of agriculture and food production that combines favourable environmental and animal welfare standards and is supported by EU law (Regulations (EC) No 834/2007 (1) and 889/2008/EC (2)). The organic production system strives for minimal disruption of the natural equilibrium while ensuring the production of high-quality food. To ensure that organic farmers and processors produce or process foods in accordance with organic legislation, designated control bodies and authorities certify and inspect each organic practitioner (cf. list of EU control bodies and authorities). Organic farming is defined as production of crop, animal, and other products without the use of synthetic chemical fertilizers and pesticides, transgenic species, or antibiotics and growth-enhancing steroids, or other chemicals. From: Encyclopedia of Soils in the Environment, 2005. Related terms Such studies have led to more research on the composting of human wastes, a practice long accepted in Asia but not a part of most European or Western Hemisphere fertility strategies in recent years. These systems evolved to include integrated management, a focus that continues today. First of all, organic food and farming research should become viewed as excellent, effective, and targeted to the big challenges of the forthcoming decades. Organic farming is the use of agricultural production systems reliant on green manure, compost, biological pest control, and crop rotation to produce crops, livestock and poultry. Organic centered agricultural production system fosters the cycling of resources to conserve biodiversity and promote ecological balance. Thus, the objectives of organic farming is agricultural production of fibers, grains, vegetables, flowers, fruits, foods, and animal products such as milk, eggs and meat in the best natural way. Unlike other agricultural practices, organic farming performs better with regards to water and soil conservation, maintaining ecological balance, and utilization of renewable resources. On the contrary, it also has its drawbacks. Here are the pros and cons of organic farming.