

Nürnberg, Germany 14. - 17.2.2023

# BIOFACH2023

into organic



## BIOFACH: Hanni Rützer column

### “Meet Food” – the “natural” organic trend

A lot of things promoted in the media as “trends” prove in most cases to be nothing but hype, proposed as a “solution” for something that really isn’t a problem at all. Generally, these are specific foods, drinks or dishes: Sometimes it will be green cabbage (better known under its hipster name “kale”), and at others it’s all about matcha tea or shakshuka, which are being proclaimed as the latest top food trends.

However, I understand food trends to be something very different: Namely, longer-term developments in our eating culture that reflect the desires, preferences and needs of consumers, that provide answers to problems relating to our nutrition and food production, and that each offer specific proposed solutions or meaningful alternatives. Food trends as I understand them, therefore, direct attention away from the merely new (which can quickly become old again) to the meaningful. In doing so they help consumers to decide what to eat on a day-to-day basis, and support producers with the strategic alignment of their companies.

This is also the case for what has become known in Germany as the “meet food” trend, reflecting the desire of many consumers to not just “consume” food but to “experience” it consciously with all their senses and learn more, in as vivid a way as possible, about the production and quality of the food and the people behind it. “Meet food” therefore constitutes a dedicated response to the industrialisation and associated anonymisation of food production. And this makes it a food trend that accommodates above all the needs of organic farmers and producers who have a “natural” interest in showing their customers how they produce their foodstuffs – sustainably, with sparing use of resources, regeneratively and with animal welfare in mind. Such producers are open to information-sharing and dialogue, whether during farm-gate sales or weekly markets and increasingly, via direct online sales, as they want to inform customers about their products in a transparent way.

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The digital tools that are now increasingly more important in the context of communicating with customers offer organic farmers and producers better and better opportunities for authentic communication and wide-ranging information-sharing. The aim is to bring consumers closer to the product, whether by using videos to make their operations more transparent or through personal chats and making direct sales an easier process for customers.