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# *Eating Well* with Organic Food: Everyday (Non-Monetary) Strategies for a Change in Food Paradigms: Findings from Andalusia, Spain

**David Gallar Hernández [1,*], Helena Saracho-Domínguez [1], Marta G. Rivera-Ferré [1,2] and Isabel Vara-Sánchez [1]**

[1] Sociology and Peasant Studies Institute (ISEC), Agroecology, Food Sovereignty and Commons Research Group, Department of Social Sciences and Humanities, Cordoba University, 14071 Córdoba, Spain; z32sadoh@uco.es (H.S.-D.); martaguadalupe.rivera@uvic.cat (M.G.R.-F.); isabel.vara@uco.es (I.V.-S.)

[2] Agroecology and Food Systems Chair, Research Group Inclusive Societies, Policies and Communities, University of Vic-Central University of Catalonia, 08500 Vic, Spain

* Correspondence: david.gallar@uco.es; Tel.: +34-957-212644

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**Abstract:** In the context of nutritional disaffection with a dominant food and agricultural system and the social questioning of everyday nutritional habits, we studied what *Eating Well* means to people and what role organic food plays in their lives. We conducted 11 discussion groups that were carried out in Andalusia, Spain; participants had different socio-demographic characteristics—they lived in either rural or urban areas, had different purchasing channels, and practiced varying degrees of organic food consumption. The investigation revealed (1) the motives and limitations for the consumption of organic foods, as perceived by the consumers of organic foods, and (2) the everyday strategies practiced to overcome these limitations. In both cases, this research transcends the classical analyses focused on the price of a product, when proposing a framework for alternative strategies that are based on the ordinary knowledge and practices of the consumers, by looking at consumption through an integrated lens that is rooted in the notion of what consumers consider to be *Eating Well*. This study shows that *Eating Well*—according to the criteria of the consumers and the implemented strategies—breaks from the dichotomous or exclusive focus on economic or ideological motives, and revalues feminine and rural knowledge and practices, for a comprehensive management of nutrition.

**Keywords:** organic food; everyday strategies; agroecological transition; alternative food movement; food sovereignty

## 1. Introduction

Nutrition is a topic of special relevance, particularly in industrialized societies, where social interest in nutrition has been increasing. It is a topic of interest in a wide range of study areas, such as in the context of the individual, the family, or the collective; in economic, social, health, political, cultural or environmental contexts; agriculture, nutrition, or gastronomy; from a sociological, anthropological, medical, economic, or agronomic perspective; from production to consumption; from preoccupation with aesthetics and with health; about the different viewpoints on the agri-food system and the obstacles and problems of agri-food system; locally or globally; nutrition is considered a worrying matter, sometimes for its excess and other times for its insufficiency, etc. Nutrition is an all-encompassing social reality and, as such, it is the object of numerous interpretations by different actors and interests in the face of general uncertainties, contradictions, and the paradoxes of the modern diet: for example, varying medical perspectives on which is the best diet, what kind of fat to

consume (olive oil, margarine, butter, etc.), how carcinogenic red meat is, how to manage a vegetarian diet, what environmental and social impact each diet has, etc. [1–5]. In this sense, the consumption of organic food is one of the strategies that try to respond to the complexity of the question "What should we eat in this context of uncertainty, contradicting discourses, paradoxes and pressures?" The existing research on the consumption of organic products has traditionally only investigated three perspectives: (i) motivations for consuming organic products and the limitations to starting or increasing the consumption of organic food [6–11]; (ii) the conventionalization process of organic food consumption, through which the mainstream market has absorbed this type of consumption (and also production) in response to specific motivations of health-concerned consumers who, despite their readiness to pay a higher price for organic items (viewed as healthy products), still consider price an essential criterion for decision-making [12,13]; (iii) communication between producers and consumers, confidence-building processes, and their impact on the dominant agri-food system, without paying special attention to budgetary limitations [14,15].

In this context, this study builds on previous partial approaches to provide a more comprehensive analysis of the strategies implemented by different consumer profiles to overcome the perceived limitations to consuming organic food. We also studied how the conventionalization processes in the organic sector are challenged through consumers' participation in different types of alternative food networks. They are challenged not only from a financial or ideological point of view, but also as a part of a more complex transition process that deals with the construction of new eating habits, which transcend the dominant scenario of the hegemonic agri-food system, with which consumers have expressed dissatisfaction [16]. To address this we used a social practices approach, which allows one to understand the social organization, continuities, and possible ruptures in people's everyday practices, such as cooking or buying food. As Hinrichs [17] states: "Understanding how the elements and patterns in everyday practices have become normal and routine sheds light on what is possible and what actually happens should novelty in the form of "sustainability innovation" be promoted or introduced." Our point of departure is that, in people's everyday food management (particularly planning, buying, and preparing), "people" mostly refers to women [18,19].

Understanding the criteria applied by organic product consumers regarding this food paradigm becomes, therefore, a key element for interpreting their consumption strategies: in other words, how they include organic products in their diet, overcoming the different limitations perceived.

We understand eating to be part of an expert system that includes (i) what the criteria and patterns for *Eating Well* are, (ii) the act of thinking about what is correct and appropriate to eat, (iii) going to buy those foods, and (iv) making them available to eaters in a reasonable and timely manner. This is all done while keeping in mind certain criteria for quality and deciding between a diverse selection of foods with sometimes opposite qualities (a decision further complicated by conflicting dominant narratives about what one should eat as well as by conflicts with the decision maker's own definition of *Eating Well*). These are decisions taken according to the amount of time and specific knowledge available to the decision makers. These elements, among others, form the foundation of what we consider in this text to be the "comprehensive management of eating." Strategies and knowledge, especially linked to female and rural environments, provide new elements that are to be reevaluated in the construction of new paradigms, but are nonetheless rendered invisible [20,21].

Andalusia, in southern Spain, is a region with a very strong organic sector; it is the Spanish region with the highest organic production area (50% of the total area devoted to organic agriculture in Spain). Moreover, Spain itself has the largest share of land (1.71 million hectares) dedicated to organic agriculture in Europe [22]. However, the majority of the organic food produced in Andalusia is exported [22]. Thus, consumption rates of organic products in Andalusia are rather low and they are particularly linked to non-conventional channels. On the one hand, supermarkets and department stores are increasing their stock of organic products, rather slowly, as the people in this region have relatively low purchasing power. On the other hand, the existence of an established social model

of alternative food networks is providing organic products to the still scarce general population of organic product consumers [23].

In this context, analyzing Andalusia as a social space for consumption seems appropriate, as it can provide important insights for working out social and political strategies to promote the consumption of organic products among different consumer profiles, avoiding the conventionalization of the sector. In Andalusia, certain trends promoting the creation of localized and sustainable agri-food systems through the framework of agroecology and food sovereignty can be appreciated. They respond to the impacts of conventionalization process, such as the concentration of land and distribution chains, the loss of agroecological methods and associated knowledge, the longer distance traveled by conventionalized organic foods, etc. [24].

Considering the above, this investigation aims to reveal (1) what the motivations and limitations for the consumption of organic foods are and (2) the everyday strategies that consumers develop in order to overcome the perceived limitations. In both cases, it proposes a framework of alternatives taken from practical knowledge and practices and looks at consumption with a focus on what consumers consider *Eating Well* to be.

## 2. Materials and Methods

In order to address the objectives of this research, a qualitative study was carried out with discussion groups (DG) in September and October of 2015. There were 11 discussion groups in six of the eight capitals of the western and eastern Andalusian provinces and three rural areas with established production and consumption initiatives for organic foods.

DGs, though artificial work spaces, had as their objective the creation of a microcosm capable of updating the systems of collective representations associated with the issues studied with a qualitative sample of subjects; in other words, they were a sample of subjects with a set of target characteristics that allowed us to explore the structure of the social sphere, going beyond mere statistical representativeness [25,26]. Their fundamental objective was the study of the social representations (systems of norms and values, images associated with institutions, collectives or objects, topics, stereotypical narratives, etc.) that emerged from the discourse between participants in the DG. To this end, the selection of the DG attendees was established based on two criteria in balance with one another: (a) homogeneity among participants to be able to reproduce a typical and shared social discourse; and (b) heterogeneity to avoid redundant and monolithic discourses in the group [25].

The people who attended the discussion groups were selected through a survey, previously conducted in each territory, that surveyed the socio-demographic characteristics of 150 people: age, sex, education, profession, family structure; purchasing channels used; habits and styles of purchasing, cooking, and consumption; and quantity of consumption of organic products. In each territory, people who met the target criteria (see Figure 1) were surveyed and the results were used to confirm the definitive profile of the participants. The DGs had between five and eight participants, with the exception of DG2, which had three [27]. In some discussion groups there were participants who already knew one another, especially in rural groups, given the limited population of possible relevant participants in those areas. The true objective of the research on the consumption of organic foods was not revealed, neither in the entrance survey nor in the invitation of those selected to participate in the DGs, in order to not condition or direct the interventions of the attendees. The survey and invitation were presented as research by the University of Cordoba for the Regional Government of Andalusia on "nutrition in Andalusia" to look at "nutrition, habits, tastes and preferences."

The DGs were designed around two basic pillars: (1) degree of consumption of organic products, (2) consumption style, which included both purchasing channels (more or less conventional or alternative) of organic food and consumption style (a preference for establishments that offer gastronomic experiences, purchasing habits, cooking, diets). Additionally, the following variables were incorporated: (1) habitat (rural or urban), (2) sex, (3) age and (4) having children; as well as a certain diversity according to participants' economic power and family responsibilities. With the

goal of revealing practical nutritional knowledge and practices that are substantively feminine, the groups were purposively composed, mostly, of women and women with children (to account for the everyday management practices used not only by women but also those used specifically by mothers). The specific characteristics of each DG are shown in Figure 1. The three rural DGs were formed in towns with established initiatives of alternative channels of organic foods with the same target profile for participants from the three groups.

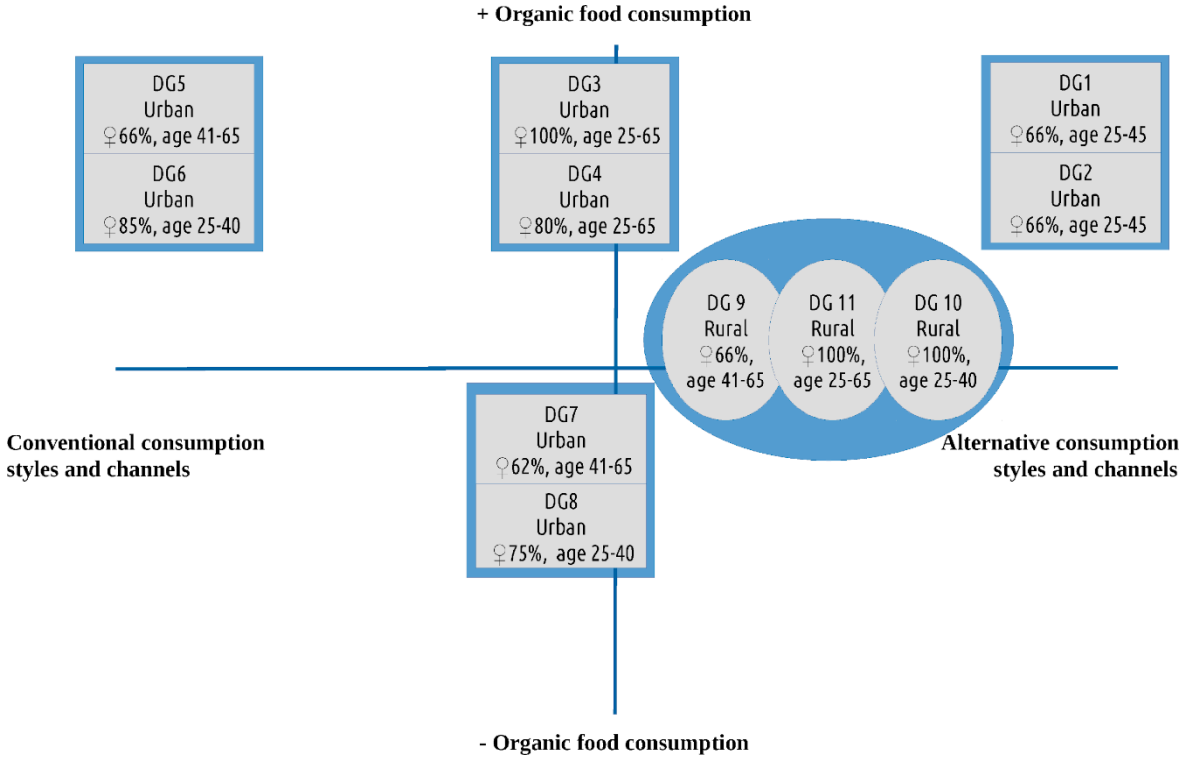


**Figure 1.** Discussion group design and composition.

Throughout the text, we define alternative channels as spaces where a kind of involvement or commitment exists between producers and consumers. Table 1 shows the different channels used by DGs participants, though the participants were chosen for each DG for their preference for a particular type of purchasing channel.

The discussion groups started with the initial question "What is *Eating Well*?" in order to see where the group's discourse would go. This led to topics like nutrition, agriculture, the agri-food sector, and organic agriculture. Groups also discussed the difficulties they found and which everyday strategies they put into practice to be able to meet their own standard of *Eating Well*.

The moderator in each DG introduced the investigation again, provided information on the DG dynamic (the role as moderator, permission to record, the estimated duration time, etc.) and presented the prompt to the group: "the topic is diet, 'eating well' or 'good eating'. Who wants to start?" Evidently, the role of the moderator of the DGs was initially restricted to the presentation of the prompt and reintegration (through verbal and, especially, nonverbal language) into the group discussions, to avoid symbolic, emotional, and authoritarian dependency with respect to the moderator [25,26]. Only in some cases, at the end of a given DG, were some direct questions asked to clarify a point. After each DG, a tasting of organic foods was offered where the real objective of the investigation was made explicit and the use of this research method was explained. This informal space was also included in the notes of each DG as relevant information for data triangulation. The sessions of the DGs were audio recorded and later transcribed while maintaining the identification of each intervention separate. The transcripts were then imported into the qualitative analysis program Atlas.ti. The analysis, from a

"system of discourses" perspective, was carried out through an "analytic" approach (of decomposition and fragmentation of discourse into significant elements) and an "integrative" approach (of overall and comprehensive reading within the set of discourses) [28]. Finally, as seen in the results presented here, the overall integration in analytical terms based on the structure of consensuses of the DGs was put together, and the analysis of limitations and strategies proposed in the DGs were further examined.

**Table 1.** Access channels to organic food of DG members.

| Access Channel | Direct Relationship with Producers | Consumer Implication and Commitment | Open Choice/On Demand | DG |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Self-consumption | X | X | X | DG1, DG2, DG3, DG4, DG5, DG7, DG9, DG10, DG11 |
| Direct sale | X | - | X | DG4, DG5, DG6, DG7, DG10, DG11 |
| High-involvement consumer groups; agroecological coops | X | X | - | DG1, DG2, DG3, DG4 |
| Low-involvement consumer groups: organic consumer associations | Indirect | Optional | X | DG1, DG2, DG3, DG4, DG5, DG6, DG7, DG8, DG9, DG10 |
| Organic farmers' market | X | - | X | DG5, DG9 |
| Internet | - | - | X | DG3, DG5, DG6, DG8, DG10 |
| Corner shops selling organic products | Indirect | - | X | DG1, DG2, DG3 |
| Herbalist shops/Specialized shops | - | - | X | DG1, DG5, DG6, DG7, DG8, DG9, DG11 |
| Supermarkets or Hypermarkets | - | - | X | DG3, DG6, DG7, DG8, DG9, DG11 |

## 3. Results

Below are the basic consensuses of the DGs about (1) the concept and characteristics of *Eating Well*, (2) the role and definition of organic foods in a diet for *Eating Well*, (3) the limitations that have come up to a greater or lesser extent in all the DGs and what strategies the participants in each of the DGs put into practice.

### *3.1. The Basis for Eating Well and a New Food Paradigm*

The construction of the groups' internal dynamic and the resulting initial consensus was very similar in all groups, as arguments presented in all of them focused on considering the idea of *Eating Well* as generically linked to healthy food.

Below, the main points of consensus that emerged from all the DGs regarding the initial question of what *Eating Well* means are briefly addressed: (1) food against illness and for health, (2) varied food and "spoon" food (which refers to stews whose staple ingredient is legumes, potatoes or bread)—an often understated part of the "Mediterranean diet," (3) the avoidance of chemicals in food production as well as synthetic additives in processed foods, (4) quality food, which is defined by its origin, flavor, and the absence of chemicals, (5) a communal quality and pleasure and (6) resistance to "Eating Poorly."

#### 3.1.1. Healthy Food against Illness and as a Health Promoter

Health is the initial point of departure for the majority of groups when defining *Eating Well*, although the ones using alternative channels—composed of younger people—assign it a less important role. In many cases, illness becomes a trigger for changing lifestyle habits: be it the introduction or exclusion of a certain diet or food, the use of organic products, or a change in consumption choices in general. Similarly, becoming a mother is another trigger for considering the use of healthy food.

#### 3.1.2. Variety and Balance: Homemade Dishes, Comfort Food, and Varied Diets

In the construction phase of the DGs (when the participants first begin to reach consensus through dialogue), *Eating Well* is linked to healthy food: healthy food means following a varied and balanced diet preferably linked to homemade dishes, traditional cooking or even comfort food, and following the idea of "*eating a little bit of everything*." This traditional diet is associated with home-cooked dishes based on vegetables, legumes, and cereals; reduced consumption of meats; and the avoidance of ready-made, processed or industrialized foods, such as pre-packaged pastries and soft drinks: in other words, a Mediterranean diet, even though this is not used as a normative framework of reference. In the majority of groups, the diet of choice was mainly "flexitarian," clearly connected to the low-meat diet that was traditional before the introduction of industrialized meats into the modern diet.

#### 3.1.3. Food Safety

Another issue that the discussion groups highlighted is chemical additives in food and its relationship with health: health was understood as a concern about pesticides and synthetic fertilizers used in agriculture, or synthetic additives applied to industrialized and processed foods. This was one of the essential factors that emerged as group discussions went on: the negative role of agri-food distribution, marketing, and advertising, as well as everything related to the hegemonic model of agro-industrial food, with the construction and normalization of low-quality, unhealthy product consumption.

#### 3.1.4. Quality Food

*Eating Well* requires a series of food products that must meet certain characteristics, i.e., they must be "*good food*," and these products are assigned the highest quality. The important elements that appear more or less in all groups are: (1) origin, in a broad sense; (2) taste; and (3) being chemical-free.

Origin: Consumers attach great importance to the origin, more or less known, of the food they buy and consume. They demand that their food be local and seasonal, that is, that it have some sort of proximity. This creates a close connection that relates to the "*natural*" and "*authentic*" "essence of food "*from the land*."

Taste: The sum of the abovementioned features (local, seasonal, natural, authentic, from the land), for all DGs, meant food tastes better, and is perceived to be of higher quality.

Agrochemical-free: However, in all the DGs, taste and origin preferences were seen as necessary but not enough if food is not chemical-free. Evidence of industrial and chemical agriculture at the local level was especially noticeable among the rural groups, where there was more direct exposure to the current state of agriculture and the quantity of chemicals used by their families and neighboring farmers.

#### 3.1.5. Eating as Social Interaction: Commensality and Pleasure

The notion of *Eating Well* extends to the social interaction of eating: commensality, or the practice of eating together as a social space for sharing and indulging in food, the act of cooking for oneself and for others. It is something that came up tangentially in all the groups, except in the case of groups that directly suggested more community-based strategies—and the act of sharing the management of food. It is also worth mentioning that *Eating Well* and food quality were in no way connected to images of high-end, "gourmet" foods or recipes, but rather the opposite, to products related to everyday life.

#### 3.1.6. Eating Well vs. the Dominant Agri-Food Model: Beyond Food Safety

Finally, among all the DGs, participants agreed that an opposing model dominated and set up by the agri-food system in a broad sense, through the industrial agricultural production model, the food industry, advertising, and the construction of eating habits and purchasing behavior stands in direct opposition to the model of *Eating Well*. In all groups, following initial consensus, discussion arose

about how the agri-food system is a space where none of the abovementioned criteria for *Eating Well* (balanced, chemical-free diets with quality food) are met, going beyond the concept of food safety and responding to food disaffection. The agri-food system was recognized as a space for processed and industrial food with additives, chemicals, and hidden fat and sugar. It was seen as producing food that cannot be trusted (as in the cases of food scandals like mad-cow-diseased meat or the use of chemicals in food and the lack of trust in the raw ingredients, for example the inclusion of horse meat not mentioned on the label in beef hamburgers). Finally, participants spoke of a lack of flavor in many fresh products and also questioned the advertising of functional food and medical claims being made in said advertisements.

### *3.2. Organic Food in the Concept of Eating Well*

In this context, characterized by the main elements defined by the DG participants, organic products entered into the *Eating Well* equation. Our results show that the main motivations for the consumption of organic products, both by current frequent consumers and by non-consumers, are health, quality, food safety, and "authenticity," with less importance given to environmental concerns or the support of local economies.

#### 3.2.1. Definition of Organic Products

In the different DGs, a wide and implicit definition was used, clearly assuming that the main criterion for food to be considered "organic" was its production without the use of agrochemicals: herbicides, pesticides, "*poison*," "*concoctions*," and so on. In the case of animals used for food, the consensus was that they should be raised in "*good conditions*," in a "*natural*" manner, without using hormones or antibiotics.

Regarding the guarantee and identification mechanisms for organic products, the general consensus was that these are not necessarily linked to an official validation of certification bodies, endorsed by European regulations. Confidence and control levels are transferred to collective and individual social elements that provide mutual trust, to accept that the products acquired in these networks are indeed organic and chemical-free. These mechanisms were mainly defended and used in groups using alternative channels. On the other hand, the official organic certification, while considered by some a minimum prerequisite when no other criteria are available, creates some distrust in several groups, especially among those who use more alternative channels (DG1 and DG2, especially). In any case, organic labels are clearly recognized and demanded by big food retail stores, mainly for processed and/or packaged products.

Beyond the definition of organic chemical-free products, all groups repeatedly considered the issue of food sustainability. The dimensions considered were the distance that products must travel, the labor conditions in production and distribution, the use of processed products and plastic for packaging, and, especially, the issue of who benefits from these kinds of food products. In other words, DGs criticized the conventionalization of organic foods and the reproduction of unsustainable practices in the agri-food system.

#### 3.2.2. Access Channels to Organic Food

Table 1 shows the different channels used in each of the discussion groups to respond to the *Eating Well* model and incorporate organic products.

Each of the channels has been characterized according to: (1) the type of existing relationship between producers and consumers; (2) the degree of consumers' involvement in that model (the feature that determines the alternative character of each channel); and (3) the choice of food options of each channel at the time of purchasing. In this text "alternative channels" are defined as spaces where a kind of involvement or commitment exists between producers and consumers.

It is worth noting some general ideas from Table 1: (1) the diversification and complementarity of access channels in all the DGs; (2) the ready access to a product through self-supply; (3) the absence of conventional channels (supermarkets and hypermarkets) with organic products is made

up for by alternative channels like associations and consumer groups that facilitate conventional consumers' access to organic foods; (4) the scarcity of organic markets and neighborhood stores with organic products in Andalusia; (5) direct sales as an important space for different social profiles; and (6) herbalists' stores as a convenient space for different profiles.

In each case, different channels and their variables have different functions and meet the needs, motivations, and demands of different consumer profiles. Also, the majority of groups did not consider them to be exclusive, given that in each of the groups, at least four different marketing channels were mentioned.

### *3.3. Limiting Factors and Response Strategies for Organic Food Consumption*

Our results show that price is identified as the main disadvantage of consuming organic products, followed by other difficulties such as the inconvenience caused by a lack of availability and variety of products, the time spent buying them, and the questions of whether a product is actually seasonal or not and which one would be more sustainable. In our case, as noted above, distrust regarding organic product labels was not an important—though it was recurring—factor, as it is solved beforehand via other types of trust-building networks to grant access to organic food.

Below, the limitations that arise to a greater or lesser degree in all the DGs and the strategies of participants of each of the DGs are presented. There are six perceived limitations, presented by order of importance in the DGs and by the number of strategies generated to overcome them: (1) Price; (2) Availability and diversity; (3) Time; (4) Knowledge and capabilities; (5) Social pressure; and (6) Public Policies. In the following Tables, at the end of each limitation, the DGs where each strategy of adaptation and resistance came up are noted.

#### 3.3.1. Price

Among all groups, price was perceived as the first limiting factor, given that organic products are identified as being more expensive than conventional products. Nevertheless, as seen below, there are differences as to whether or not it is a determining factor. Table 2 shows the different strategies suggested in the different discussion groups to overcome the price barrier.

**Table 2.** Strategies to overcome the perceived "Price" barrier to consuming organic food.

| Strategies-Price | DG |
|---|---|
| Dietary change towards a "home-based" food model, with more vegetables, legumes and cereals, less meat, and fewer processed and superfluous foods | DG1, DG2, DG4, DG6, DG7, DG8, DG9, DG10, DG11 |
| Reduction in food consumption to fight consumerism: no sweets or superfluous products | DG1, DG2, DG4, DG11 |
| Choice of cheaper basic products versus new or trendy products | DG2, DG6, DG7, DG8, DG9, DG10, DG11 |
| Home-cooking processed foods: pastries, bread, spreads and vegetable drinks | DG6, DG11 |
| Reduction of the amount of food consumed; organic food is more "nourishing" and filling | DG4, DG9, DG11 |
| Priority change regarding price, consumption, leisure, and food | DG1, DG2, DG3, DG4, DG6, DG7, DG8, DG9, DG10, DG11 |
| Valorization of health-related aspects (direct and indirect benefits, monetary and non-monetary costs) | DG3, DG4, DG6, DG8, DG9, DG10, DG11 |
| Search and use of complementary channels | DG1, DG2, DG3, DG4, DG5, DG6, DG7, DG8, DG9, DG10, DG11 |
| Combination of organic/conventional products | DG1, DG2, DG3, DG4, DG5, DG6, DG7, DG8, DG9, DG10, DG11 |

In all discussion groups, it was acknowledged that for those already buying organic, price is only one of several deterrents, and not the key one, to consuming more organic products. Therefore, price was given less importance, and several strategies were implemented for changing eating habits and managing money spent on food, so that the cost of a shopping basket of organic food does not exceed the cost of an equivalent quantity of non-organic food.

As an essential strategy, a dietary change towards a model of "home-made food," with more vegetables, legumes, and cereals, less meat, and fewer processed foods, not only represents healthy eating habits, but also makes for a cheaper and more affordable diet made up of organic products. This is a radical challenge to the dominant agri-food system, which, as discussed in over half of the DGs, encourages the use of superfluous and ready-made products that are less healthy and increase household food expenditure.

"Input substitution" in food, that is, the act of replacing conventional products, mainly processed, ready-made, and other superfluous food (e.g., snacks, sweets, soft drinks), with organic equivalents without modifying the rest of one's habits or food patterns, is considered to be completely unaffordable, due to the price of organic products and the fact that, in comparison, conventional products are too cheap. In turn, a preference for more basic and cheap foods among the organic options is common practice, as opposed to the consumption of foodstuffs like tofu- or seitan-based foods, or other unusual, expensive, or somehow "trendy" products, like quinoa, chia, red lentils, or basmati rice, among others.

Cooking healthier and cheaper processed foods at home, such as cakes and breads, vegetable spreads, vegetable drinks, and so on is a strategy that, according to the DGs, reduces costs, as these types of processed organic foods are very expensive; makes the most of seasonal production surpluses; and, in some cases, becomes a form of resistance against the dominant agri-food system and unhealthy eating, through the comprehensive management and revalorization of home-made food. Furthermore, some participants stated that some organic products are more filling than their conventional counterparts, and therefore, smaller amounts of them are necessary, in spite of them being more expensive than conventional ones (bread, rice, sugar, vegetables, and greens).

Moreover, price was no longer viewed as an absolute point of reference and was considered to be one more factor in determining spending priorities for the individual, the family, or the collective group. The direct and indirect health benefits, as well as the monetary and non-monetary costs, were also acknowledged.

The channels used to access organic products was also mentioned, although indirectly. Participants using direct sales channels or consumption groups, agro-ecological cooperatives, or organic consumption associations indicated that price was not a barrier to their consumption of organic products.

Similarly, the combination of organic and non-organic products in the shopping basket was a constant feature in the majority of groups—as a way to reduce spending, but also due to a lack of availability or diversity of products.

#### 3.3.2. Availability and Diversity

The availability of organic products was another limiting factor signaled by the different groups: in their own words, "*sometimes it is just too difficult to buy organic*." All groups stated that organic shops are scarce; nearby corner shops do not supply organic fruit or vegetables; specialized shops are rare; and dominant channels provide a very limited supply of organic products, or none at all. Plus, restaurants do not offer organic products on their menus, and there are very few organic farmers' markets. In particular, a higher range of organic fruit and meats on offer would be desirable. Table 3 succinctly presents the strategies that consumers of organic products practice to confront these limitations.

**Table 3.** Strategies to overcome the perceived "Availability and Diversity" barrier to consuming organic food.

| Strategies—Availability and Diversity | DG |
|---|---|
| Search and use of complementary channels (including self-consumption) | DG1, DG2, DG4, DG5, DG6, DG8, DG9, DG10, DG11 |
| Communication with producers for higher diversity | DG4, DG10, DG11 |
| Change in diet model and logic of consumption: conversion/transition process | DG1, DG2, DG3, DG4, DG5, DG6, DG7, DG8, DG9, DG10, DG11 |
| Acceptance of a certain limitation in diversity, as a consequence of consuming seasonal products | DG1, DG2, DG4, DG10, DG11 |
| Creative cooking | DG1, DG2, DG4, DG9, DG10, DG11 |
| Preserving (canning, freezing, etc.) | DG1, DG6, DG8, DG9, DG10, DG11 |

To overcome limited availability, the main strategy was to combine different purchasing channels. In this way, when analyzing shopping practices in the different groups, the combination of purchasing channels and the strategies for dietary change contributed to a great extent to overcoming availability and/or diversity limitations.

Different consumer profiles had different motivations for perceiving the lack of diversity as a limiting factor as well as differing solutions. In some cases there was demand for a higher diversity of processed items, and a permanent offer of fresh produce throughout the year—which has become commonplace via the conventional food model—partly demanding organic production to fill these needs. Others complained that they usually receive large amounts of organic products, sometimes excessive in the case of certain ones (namely Swiss chard, fava beans, or eggplants), making their food boring and monotonous. This was shared, with a certain degree of humor and understanding, by persons participating in access channels closely linked to local, seasonal production. Thus, they would propose improving the diversity of seasonal varieties and crops to overcome this issue. Dialogue with producers and improvement of crop planning with higher diversity were considered as potential solutions. That said, this "complaint" was actually used to recognize the slight downside of preferring and choosing quality seasonal products.

Therefore, the "saturation" of certain produce was integrated in changing dietary habits and food management strategies: on the one hand, creativity in the kitchen is put to work, either by recovering traditional recipes or by inventing, experimenting, and discovering cooking techniques from other cuisines, to turn an excess of a product into an opportunity to eat differently; in other words, ways of cooking become more diverse to deal with the lack of diversity of produce. Improving the level of food management—such as preserving seasonal products to eat them out of season—was also considered via preserving or freezing techniques, either of the raw product or a cooked dish.

#### 3.3.3. Time

The lack of time to manage this self-assumed model of *Eating Well* with organic products was another limiting factor mentioned by discussion groups. Paired with the demands of a comprehensive management model of *Eating Well*, criteria like health, quality, critical consumption, the search for more or less local products, etc., became limiting factors, as they were linked to insufficient time to address this management model. Today's pace of life was generally considered an obstacle to *Eating Well*, even more so if organic food was part of the equation. Table 4 succinctly presents the strategies that consumers of organic products practice to confront these limitations.

**Table 4.** Strategies to overcome the perceived "Time" barrier to consuming organic food.

| Strategies—Time | DG |
|---|---|
| Cooking in "spare time": Sundays, nights, etc., keeping meals ready (in fridge or freezer) or preparing sauces/sautés in advance to combine with other ingredients later | DG1, DG2, DG3, DG4, DG6 |
| Family organization and distribution of chores (including mothers and mothers-in-law) for food management | DG4, DG6, DG10 |
| Meal sharing—Community life | DG1, DG2, DG4 |
| Lifestyles: prioritizing "good living"—"degrowth" | DG1, DG2, DG4, DG6 |
| Organization in collective channels | DG1, DG2, DG3, DG4 |
| Search and use of complementary channels | DG1, DG2, DG4, DG5, DG9 |

Again, many tasks of the comprehensive management of food in this model of *Eating Well* are assumed with new criteria, for which no infrastructure exists (physical or social). Therefore, this type of consumption requires the rebuilding, invention, and adaptation of new individual and collective strategies to simplify the invisible tasks related to food management: thinking, procuring, preparing, cooking, eating, and enjoying food. These strategies include cooking in one's "spare time" to have meals ready in advance; organizing family rhythms and chores (within the couple, and also engaging parents and in-laws) for food management; or sharing chores and management collectively, within the framework of changing consumption styles and nutritional models for *Eating Well*, including organic products.

In light of the mentioned time constraints, as detailed in Table 4, new proposals arose to help with food management, from individual solutions that lead to "juggling acts" between culture and nutrition to comply with *Eating Well* in hostile contexts of everyday management [14], to more structural and collective solutions.

The shared "family" management of chores and responsibilities was one proposal, as well as the implementation of changes through collective self-organization, although the latter is possible only in specific cases. From a global ideological perspective, some groups questioned the system as a whole and considered it an obstacle, proposing a lifestyle change, together with new habits for *Eating Well* and, consequently, for *Living Well*. Others perceived inequalities that should be addressed from collective social positions as well as by public policy-making.

From a feminist perspective, in DG2, where mainly alternative consumption channels were used, work and the pace of life were acknowledged as factors that mothers must fight when working outside the home but still wanting their children to *Eat Well* with homemade, balanced food using vegetables and quality products. This caused feelings of guilt and unease when their perceived responsibilities in terms of the nurturing, care, socialization, nutrition, and education of their children were not accomplished.

In turn, time and dedication constraints varied according to different channels of access to organic food. In principle, it seems that a higher substitution of conventional products for organic ones, using existing channels in the hegemonic model, would require a smaller effort. Then, when considering more stringent social, economic, and justice criteria, difficulties arise: new channels must be built from a collective, voluntary, and militant perspective, with different socioeconomic criteria and management approaches that have little to do with the dominant model dynamics. To build these social and physical spaces in a more or less collective or individual manner, the resulting alternative channels would consume more time and effort, although a higher level of satisfaction would be achieved by users. On the other hand, once certain organizational dynamics have been embraced, these channels can

meet other needs like participation, decision-making, or diversity, ultimately solving availability issues and being less expensive.

#### 3.3.4. Knowledge and Skills

In this context, knowledge and skills for managing our daily diet—individually or in a family/group—are key elements to overcome the abovementioned limiting factors of price and availability/diversity, and to fulfill the established criteria for *Eating Well* using organic food. Table 5 presents the different strategies related to the acquisition and socialization of new knowledge and skills as well as the DGs in which they are practiced.

**Table 5.** Strategies to overcome the perceived "Knowledge and Skills" barrier to consuming organic food.

| Strategies—Knowledge and Skills | DG |
|---|---|
| References and memories of traditional cooking knowledge and flavors | DG1, DG3, DG4, DG5, DG7, DG8, DG9, DG10, DG11 |
| Experimentation | DG2, DG4, DG8, DG9, DG11 |
| Mass media, books, workshops, nutritionists | DG5, DG7, DG8, DG11 |
| Search and use of complementary channels | DG2, DG6 |
| Participation in networks, channels and collective spaces: knowledge exchange, teaming up with others, alternative channels, organic markets | DG1, DG2, DG4, DG6, DG7, DG10, DG11 |
| Inclusion of children in food management: at home and at school | DG1, DG3, DG6, DG7, DG9, DG10, DG11 |

Through the different profiles of participants in the discussion groups, two poles of socialization and information patterns stand out: on the one hand, there were people who take part in social movements and decide to widen their critical field of vision towards food and nurturing, sharing networks for socialization and critical/conscious consumption, given that a large share of alternative channels actually arise from these networks and are supported by them; on the other hand, there were people who start from personal and health-related motivations and seek more formal and individualistic training and information, via books, workshops, or coaching by dietitians. Between these two poles, any complementary space for socialization and information was used to share practices, discourse, and emotional experiences. There were also people who supported the idea of including these issues in schools.

In other cases, knowledge and skills are especially put to work when direct access to seasonal fruits and vegetables is available through direct selling, box schemes, consumer groups, and shops. In these cases, the "natural" shapes of vegetables are "rediscovered" (spinach, radishes), unknown local varieties are discovered (purple carrots, different tomatoes, thistles, purple broccoli), and "new" vegetables are used (either previously fallen into disuse, like parsnip or fennel, or new arrivals like arugula) in conventional channels. Also, techniques for cooking these "novelties" are put in place, as well as new recipes to cook seasonal products creatively, especially at peak harvesting season. In short, there is a whole new world of raw materials and recipes that will help transform seasonal products into dishes that rival the gastronomic standards of homogeneous imported/greenhouse food-based diets.

The comprehensive dietary management associated with organic food has to do with consumers "discovering" lesser-known access channels: either conventional hypermarkets and supermarkets, or "alternative channels" like local specialized shops and co-ops, consumer groups, box schemes, and direct selling by producers.

In any case, the idea of *Eating Well* including organic food requires a breadth of knowledge and skills including identification of the products, cooking and preserving methods, marketing channels, and socialization spaces.

One key aspect of food management at peak harvesting times is the preparation of home-canning or freezing products, and everything related to these tasks (washing, chopping, roasting, or stewing, as well as gathering the canning materials, finding space in the freezer, and using up the preserves out of season). These tasks are, once more, related to female knowledge and practice, as well as to rural environments, and their non-monetary value has rendered them invisible [18–21].

#### 3.3.5. Social Pressure

As detected in the different discussion group narratives and shown in Table 6, this transition is partly felt as a process of individual conflict, on the one hand, and as a conflict with our immediate social environment and with hegemonic consumption spaces, values, logic, and practices, on the other. Firstly, this conversion and transition model is determined at the individual level by the conflict between the standard consumption model dominated by the hegemonic agri-food system and challenges to it, including: the efforts made to resist the dominant forms of socialization and to find alternative arguments, discourse, and practices to respond with a new framework. Secondly, this process is intensified by external pressures coming from the market structure more broadly: from dominant food access channels and their cultural and consumption mechanisms, as well as from the immediate social environments reproducing the dominant model.

**Table 6.** Strategies to overcome the perceived "Social Pressure" barrier to consuming organic food.

| Strategies—Social Pressure | DG |
|---|---|
| "Tactical" coexistence of models, between *Eating Well* and conventional model: "no obsessions," "giving in" from time to time. Negotiation of limits. | DG1, DG2, DG4, DG6, DG7, DG8, DG9, DG10, DG11 |
| Exposure and dissemination through daily activities: recipe sharing, wielding influence in educational spaces, satisfactory substitutes for "all" | DG1, DG2, DG8, DG10, DG11 |
| Participation in collective networks, channels, and others as spaces for comfort, learning and empowerment. Spaces for "normalization." | DG1, DG2, DG3, DG4, DG10, DG11 |
| Social isolation and avoidance of conflictive spaces | DG2, DG6, DG7, DG12 |

Organic food consumers claimed they feel social pressure from their immediate environment, and this affects them while having to manage their social relationships and, especially, when raising their children in an environment with a certain degree of conflict and questioning. These consumers suffer from self-doubt when contradicting the hegemonic model, but empower themselves with tools to resist pressure and search for alternatives. These pressures often increase when a specific diet comes into play, be it vegetarian or not, leading to more conflict and exclusion.

In this scenario, discussion groups concluded that they need a "tactical" negotiation and "not to become obsessed" with these challenges, sometimes cutting down on demands and expectations to avoid feelings of guilt and weakness when facing "temptation." This helps with coexistence, avoiding conflict and possible exclusion. There were others, though, who primarily avoided conflict by finding spaces of comfort, leading to a certain degree of social isolation.

Social pressure acknowledged by mothers while raising their children was one of the most direct testimonies to the difficulties faced when questioning the hegemonic model. As mothers, they worried about their children's health and exposure to harmful additives, "toxic products" and "poisons" in industrially-processed snacks that children have access to via "conventional" habits, either at home or at school. In turn, this generated a space for support and an exchange of tips.

Managing children's relationship with the "real world" was a particularly sensitive issue for mothers: the "conventional world," the general familiar/social environment around children, does not share the pattern of *Eating Well* that is followed at home. This is especially the case in schools, a place for socialization of children where their dietary habits and lifestyle are constantly challenged by different sets of values. In view of this situation, different strategies are developed to allow for a "tactical" coexistence with dominant food socialization spaces: permanent education strategies with negotiation of limits, in an effort to adopt a constructive and educational position to aid coexistence without giving up on certain principles. Consequently, this socialization of children and their involvement in the process were understood as one more step in the transition towards *Eating Well* within the family—both presently and in the future—based on principles of equity in the acceptance and division of tasks for comprehensive food management.

Alternative, collective, and socially-engaged marketing channels—alternative agri-food networks—emerged as spaces of support, reassurance, and understanding, also becoming spaces of resistance. These spaces become spaces of participation and of political advocacy, to create community and both individual and collective empowerment when building these transition processes towards *Eating Well*, including organic food. Given the lack of specific promotion of organic products from the institutions and the agri-food system itself, and also given the specific features of some access channels, the consumption of organic products becomes a socialization process that clashes—in more or less confrontational ways—with the hegemonic eating habits and socialization spaces of the dominant agri-food system. Therefore, public socialization spaces and the "normalization" of this consumption backed by public institutions was one of the demands arising from the discussion groups.

#### 3.3.6. Public Policies

The role of public institutions was one more factor limiting organic food consumption, as emphasized in discussion groups. Participation in social movements and organizations for organic consumption, along with the creation of experiences of self-management were the key strategies, regardless of individual complaints.

All groups shared the belief that governmental agencies should encourage this type of production, fostering the creation of points of sale and organic markets, and should include organic products in their public procurement criteria and in their canteen facilities for public hospitals, schools, residences, etc.

Moreover, the current situation in school cafeterias does not help with the desired socialization process, given the low quality of food and the lack of awareness regarding health, quality, sustainability, and nutrition.

There was also criticism that public institutions are still providing support for an hegemonic agri-food system that produces and promotes unhealthy, polluting, and unfair food products and food models, via means of production, labeling, and food security regulations, as well as by facilitating the establishment of hypermarkets and chain stores.

In these cases, as seen in Table 7, strategies to influence public policies are directed at participation in organizations, associations, and social movements that aim to have some level of social and political impact on government agencies, by advocating for organic agriculture, agroecology, or food sovereignty. Additionally, the discourse and practice of "disconnection" and autonomy also emerged: going beyond public policies, and not including administrations in their actions, efforts are made to build autonomous experiences and networks, like self-managed school cafeteria services and agroecological cooperatives.

**Table 7.** Strategies to overcome the perceived "Public Policies."

| Strategies—Public Policies | DG |
|---|---|
| Participation in organic consumer organizations and social movements | DG1, DG2, DG3, DG4, DG11 |
| Creation of self-managed experiences—Autonomy | DG1, DG2, DG4 |

## 4. Discussion

We understand that the act of eating is part of an expert system that includes the criteria and patterns of *Eating Well*, the act of thinking about what is correct and appropriate to eat, going to buy those foods, and deciding how to make them available to consumers in adequate ways and periods of time, according to certain criteria for quality. This is done through diverse mechanisms with sometimes opposing characteristics pertaining to the availability of time and specific knowledge, and other elements that form the foundation of what we consider in this text to be "comprehensive eating management." Strategies and knowledge are especially linked to feminine and rural spaces, so new ideas are required when constructing new paradigms, and still, women and rural residents continue to be invisible in general terms [18–21]. Therefore, to better understand how sustainable agri-food systems can be promoted in the Andalusian context, it is necessary to pay more attention to these knowledge and socialization processes (as shown below), which are capable of overcoming the main limitations to *Eating Well* through the use of non-monetary strategies and organic foods.

With regards to the role of organic products in *Eating Well*, the results obtained add to other research that demonstrates that the main motivations for the consumption of organic products, both by current frequent consumers and by non-consumers, are health, quality, food safety, and "authenticity," with less importance given to environmental concerns or the support of local economies [6–11] in Spain [29,30] and in Andalusia specifically [31,32]. In our research, in alignment with the profile of organic food consumers, the dominant agri-food system is seen as a detrimental, unhealthy model; it is distrusted, as are the buying habits it encourages and benefits from. Thus, not only is this hegemonic model questioned and a cause of concern regarding food safety, but it also generates great dissatisfaction [16,33,34].

Placing strategies for organic food consumption and limiting factors within a broader context—linked to a change in consumption habits—provides new insights to appreciate patterns of change and a transition towards new food models that are perceived as fairer, more sustainable, and more responsible. This approach, associated with daily practices, offers an influential and cross-disciplinary look that goes beyond the initially forecasted sociological profiles, revealing a much higher level of similarity and convergence of strategies, attitudes, and practices than expected during the research design phase.

Some of the strategies that arose in this research add to the ones partly recognized in other literature: for example, Zitcer [35], regarding those who take part in food co-operatives, or Moruzzi and Siriex [36], in their analysis of non-engaged consumers and of persons involved in consumer networks.

This standpoint allows us to unblock certain discussions regarding price as a critical limiting factor in the expansion of organic food consumption in regions with a lower purchasing power. Price is certainly a limiting factor, but different strategies exist to encourage the consumption of organic products and overcome financial factors at the same time, including a change in consumption habits and collective socialization dynamics, supported by diversity and the complementary nature of access channels.

Thus, price should not continue to be the only criterion when examining organic food consumption "Input substitution" in our diet—changing only conventional products for organic ones, without any other change in values, habits, skills, or access channels—leads to an impasse that will only lead to the reinforcement of a falsely dichotomous analysis. This limited view concludes that only those with a higher purchasing power can access organic products and, in the absence of other collective, social, or ideological motivations, consumption will inevitably be through conventionalized products and channels. Moreover, this approach leads to an ideological bias: those with enough "sensitivity" or "awareness" (and training, thus including a certain class assumption) are considered to be morally superior for making an effort and paying higher prices, therefore excluding those who cannot or do not want to pay more for their food [35,37–39]. This leaves out a range of strategies, opportunities, and collective spaces to access other types of organic products, at other prices, through other channels in our diets for different, healthier, and more sustainable eating habits.

We understand that these strategies should be subject to further specific analysis, to verify the effective costs of each diet type, as well as the financial impact of changing our eating habits. Such an analysis will help reinforce this type of non-monetary strategy, extending the pool of potential organic consumers to sectors of our population that have so far been excluded by their financial limitations.

We also found that different strategies can simultaneously address different perceived limitations. For instance, the strategies of increasing the amount of home-made food and discovering new cooking techniques help to overcome issues of price, skills, and knowledge, and the lack of availability and diversity of products. However, the implementation of these strategies is limited by a lack of time. The strategy of combining different marketing channels can be used to address price and lack of variety, but again is up against a lack of time.

The lack of time was in fact the most difficult perceived limitation to address, more than price, since it implies a deeper change of lifestyle. In this sense, the DGs demanded more support to build and use collective spaces that can enable access to organic food for *Eating Well*, because collective effort can be more efficient and less time-consuming. The promotion of collective channels, which change the logic of consumption and the food model, would also help to address knowledge and skill gaps, as well as price and social pressure limitations. From a feminist perspective, this constraint can only be addressed by changing the time allocation within the household to revisit the division of tasks and democratize care activities. Consequently, the concept of care in feminist economics [40], which appeared explicitly in DG2, is central to addressing the distribution of responsibilities by gender, and the role of labor and the economy to comply with *Eating Well*.

Linked to this feminist perspective is the knowledge and skill limitation, and the important role of social and collective spaces to address such limitations. From this perspective, our relationship with food is re-interpreted, and comprehensive food management is integrated in a practical and explicit manner: thinking what to cook according to seasons, budget, available products, family taste, times and rhythms of commensality; deciding when to shop and/or pick up the box; cooking vegetables and other products; socializing around food; preserving food, cooking in advance to compensate for the days with time constraints; adapting and sharing recipes, etc. All these are invisible tasks that have always existed, commonly in the hands of women, who have devoted time and care to them. Nevertheless, with modernization, these tasks were partly taken over by industry, which has given back processed products and ready-made meals in response to women entering the paid labor force, though they still had to take care of the family's diet. In more recent times, however, a generalized cultural deagrarianization process is taking place, in which urban people (and sometimes people from rural areas as well) are becoming less and less aware of productive processes: where food comes from and what it takes for it to reach our tables, paired with a lack of gastronomic culture and food cooking skills, particularly the comprehensive management of the social action of feeding oneself and others. Traditionally, this socialization had taken place in the family, mainly by women, mothers and grandmothers who, as part of the sexual division of labor, were in charge of food management and taste education, in a broad sense [40,41]. New patterns and lifestyles, as well as the expansion of the dominant agri-food model and its related eating habits, have eroded this type of socialization around food. Creating new socialization spaces is an important strategy to address some of the limitations of *Eating Well*. In short, acquiring the necessary knowledge and skills related to the different areas of food management for *Eating Well* with organic products is part of a socialization process that unfolds through various strategies specific to each case, and becomes necessary to overcome the perceived limitations. A process of socialization and knowledge/skill acquisition takes place, including prestigious references, spaces for socialization, and reproduction of practices and discourse, allowing people to get on adequately in this new social context. In other words, there is a conversion process, where the basic principles of the hegemonic agri-food model are questioned, regarding consumption habits and quality/health criteria, in a transition towards a new food paradigm, which includes organic produce as part of a wider conception of *Eating Well*. In turn, the visibility and revaluation of these non-monetary strategies will require paying much more attention to these tasks and responsibilities,

acknowledging how they take place, in which contexts, to which extent, by whom, and what is the dissemination capacity to and from different social profiles.

In this sense, public and collective spaces for the normalization and visibility of organic product consumption emerge as essential spaces demanded to governmental agencies, through the promotion or unblocking of impediments to farmers' markets, as well as through the inclusion of organic criteria in public procurement of food for school canteens, hospitals, residences, etc. In particular, schools are perceived as fundamental spaces for normalization of and education about new food models that include organic products.

Similarly, this approach highlights the importance of collective processes implemented by different alternative food networks, which provide support for changes in eating habits and for a transition towards healthier, fairer, and more responsible food models, not only by decommodifying access to organic food but also by promoting more locally sourced processes that do not give in to the market and its conventionalizing dynamics [42].

Importantly, some of the strategies address different perceived limitations at once. For instance, reinforcing and giving visibility to the role of women and the rural sector, two spheres that have commonly received little consideration in analyses of this kind, are therefore viewed as fundamental [18–21]. During this research, the importance of women's knowledge and roles in the comprehensive management of food has emerged clearly and conclusively; these roles, which commonly sustain a large share of the strategies considered, are again made invisible as they are not monetized or valued, becoming a substitute for the monetary field of the market. Equally, the rural sector—viewed from a female perspective, and as a space closer to agricultural production and to less modernized consumption habits influenced by the dominant agri-food system—provides a set of essential tools for a transition towards food models of *Eating Well*. In this case, rurality works as a recollection of food management skills that help sustain these non-monetary strategies: both through gastronomic memories and through self-production or close proximity to producers.

In a region like Andalusia, with a rather strong social fabric of alternative food networks—which, however, are not improving in terms of importance or number of consumers—and where the conventionalized market is not yet strategically positioned regarding organic consumption, the findings of this research can help us to make the most of these dynamics and strategies, in order to enhance organic consumer networks and anticipate the market's conventionalizing pressures. This analysis of consumer strategies should not, however, lose sight of the dynamics of promoting and strengthening collective organic producers' networks, and of supporting collective processes that sustain these collective normalization and socialization dynamics within the framework of an agroecological transition [43].

*Limitations and Future Empirical Research*

This study analyzes the strategies and practices of consumers who, to a greater or lesser extent, eat organic food. This contributes relevant information to help us propose intervention programs that will facilitate the expansion of the consumption of organic food. It also provides information about what facilitates and inhibits the consumption of organic products (according to consumer profiles) and what can be done to reinforce access channels and more or less sustainable agri-food systems.

Still, this investigation could be deepened by complementing it with a similar one among consumers who are not already eating organic food. This would provide a way to compare the limitations that these consumers face so that we might propose possible lines of intervention to encourage new social groups into organic food consumption. The complementing of social profiles would provide relevant elements from the theoretical perspective as well as strategic elements for the promotion of sustainable agri-food systems. Furthermore, our research has a clear bias towards women's knowledge, as seen in our methodological design; guided by the literature [16–21], we have acknowledged that food chains are gendered and women play a dominant role in them. However,

new research is needed to better understand what strategies would have emerged had there been more men participating in the research.

Throughout the results, social innovations that provide a response to the precarious economic situations of different social groups have been discussed. These innovations allow more people to access healthy and sustainable foods. Nevertheless, a more detailed analysis is needed of the influence and interactions that the other types of capital (social, cultural, and symbolic) have in relation to economic capital in terms of the arrangement of nonmonetary strategies, although these strategies seem to be partially accessible to populations with social, cultural, and symbolic capital inequalities.

An important element to consider is the expansion of conventionalized channels of organic food, which poses an analytical challenge to discovering to what measure these channels do or do not end up modifying the limitations perceived by consumers of organic products, whether this modifies the strategies of adaptation to the market, and if it affects the nonmonetary ways of facing up to such limits.

Finally, public policy in Spain deserves special attention. Political opportunities are being generated in the realm of local municipal governments for the construction of sustainable agri-food systems in service of the right to an adequate diet. It would be beneficial to analyze the relationships between these new political opportunities and the different strategies consumers use to strengthen sustainable local agri-food systems.

## 5. Conclusions

This research confirms that overpricing is a limiting factor for the consumption of organic food, but it also reveals that (1) different profiles of consumers utilize specific strategies to overcome this limitation and reduce the overall cost of their food, including organic food and; (2) the importance of price as a limiting factor depends on the profile of the consumers, and is not the only, or always the most important, factor in determining the consumption of organic food.

Paying attention to other limitations beyond price allows for a better understanding of the dynamics and tendencies that facilitate or inhibit access to organic food for different social profiles. Thus, from a social innovation perspective, this comprehensive view can facilitate the implementation of intervention programs on different scales and by different strategic actors to increase the consumption of these foods in local agri-food systems. The recognition of these limitations and the strategies that consumers put in practice can be a useful tool to encourage adaptations by producers, distributors, and governments to increase the consumption of sustainable and organic food products.

In academic and social terms, it is important to recognize and value strategies that encourage social innovation in response to the needs of consumers. These strategies arise from new sustainable paradigms of consumption and management of daily life.

The results demonstrate the importance of rural knowledge and practices, and of food knowledge and tasks that until now have mostly belonged to women. There is a need for training and the expansion of knowledge and abilities that until now have been generally devalued. This knowledge allows for access to organic food and can contribute to the strengthening of local sustainable agri-food systems without requiring more financial capital. Finally, a comprehensive analysis of diets and the consumption of organic products is proposed to further understand the opportunities that exist for expanding access to organic, sustainable food to a greater portion of the population. This offers opportunities to those with fewer economic resources and also strengthens responsible and sustainable unconventional spaces for consumption.

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