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FRAMEWORK FOR GENERAL COMMUNICATION CONCEPT FOR ORGANIC AGRICULTURE IN SERBIA

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Coordination Office in Serbia
&
National Association for Development
of Organic Production “Serbia Organica”

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Abbreviations

CF - conventional farming

GMO - genetically modified organisms

MoA - Ministry of Agriculture

NASO - National association for organic development

NGO - non-governmental organisation

OA - organic agriculture

OS - organic sector

PPP - plant protection products

R&D - research and development

Sci - Scientific Institutions

UN FAO - United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization

Foreword

The publication “Framework for General Communication Concept for Organic Agriculture in Serbia” is intended to be used by the stakeholders in organic sector in Serbia. It has been developed within the framework of the UN FAO Project GCP/SRB/001/HUN: “Assistance to the Development of Capacity and Support Services for Organic Agriculture in Serbia”, implemented by FAO and financed by Hungarian Ministry of Agriculture. The project is implemented in coordination with the Ministries of Agriculture and the Ministry of Education of Serbia.

The project aims to improve capacity of farmers and other value chain stakeholders in organic market oriented value chains through participatory training in farmer field schools and farmer business schools. That is further supported by strengthening of Center for Organic Production in Selenca which has been empowered to provide training and facilitation of market linkages and business development. Project visibility and awareness about organic agriculture was enhanced by numerous activities and publicity work of national Association for Organic Agriculture Serbia Organica.

Broader base of competences for organic agriculture has been supported by upgrading secondary education curricula for organic agriculture and inclusive practical training of teachers and high school students. Overall institutional environment for inclusive organic value chain development will be strengthened by participatory formulation of National programme for capacity development and provision of support services for region-specific organic production development.

The materials produced within the framework of the project have been tested and validated during the workshop and training sessions.

“Framework for General Communication Concept for Organic Agriculture in Serbia” was prepared by the National Association for Development of Organic Production “Serbia Organica”.

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Preface

Communication is sharing our feelings, ideas and opinions with others. It is a two-way process. In spoken communication, we have speakers and listeners who send and receive verbal messages from each other. In written communication, we have writers and readers, whereas in visualization and observation, the symbols and signs are included.

This Communication concept is intended for the organisation in organic sector and is developed within the framework of the UN FAO Project GCP/SRB/001/HUN: “Assistance to the Development of Capacity and Support Services For Organic Agriculture in Serbia “ implemented by FAO and financed by Hungarian Ministry of Agriculture with the goal of setting parameters in planning communication and marketing strategy for operator in organic sector, as well as to give an overview of the communication process in relation to the organic agriculture and importance of its promotion.

National Association for Development of Organic Production (NASO) has prepared this document as guidelines for the natural and legal persons dealing with organic production as a tool of developing strategy for better communication with targeted audience and achieving development goals.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Communication is primary peoples' interaction that is established through exchange of information or messages directly or indirectly via media in certain time and place, social - psychological environment with certain temporary effects and relatively permanent social consequences. In case of misleading messages in public and incorrect information shared among recipients in the communication, good communicator should first present pro arguments and then counter arguments. This way argument laid down in front the recipients are more efficient and adopted. Communicator in this case must be from the expert field and well acquainted with the facts and persuasive narrator.

Although organic products have found their way to supermarket chains, not much has been done to promote them and their availability. It seems that consumers are left to discover organic products on their own, and to recognise their advantages over the conventional ones.

Communication is the indivisible part of the marketing strategy and is designed to create the desired image and develop perceptions among consumers. Communication motivates, informs, suggests, warns, orders, changes behaviour, and establishes better relationships, to make interaction meaningful and make oneself understood. Communication is effective when a communicator is effective enough to communicate competently, simply, clearly, sincerely and dynamically.

It starts from assessing the market demand and customer needs and goes back to production activities. Effective communication activities ensure that the audience gets the right messages about organic products.

Document is divided in several sections dealing with phases of the communication, starting from the general part - introduction, meaning of communication and promotion, channels of communication, with elaborated phases and importance of each phase in the process. Each message in the communication is adjusted to target audience and therefore should be unique for every stakeholder identified. This draft is dealing with organic agriculture and promotion and communication of this specific type of production therefore should serve as a guideline document for organisation in this field.

Developer/user of the Communication strategy would receive guidelines for using the most adequate and appropriate communication tools in addressing target audience the receiver.

However, this document cannot cover all the steps in the communication process, its purpose is to provide the user with information on how to create, develop and initiate communication strategy toward achievement of their objectives, to choose and implement communication tools and to set the strategy goals.

For the purpose of writing this document and answering above mentioned questions NASO has relied on the analysis and information conducted in the market research done within this sector in the previous couple of years.

The objective of this document is to assist the user in better understanding on how the communication can be used in addressing target audience and how to start building a strategy. On the other hand it could be used as a tool if user is going to engage the professional agency for the communication strategy.

Objectives identified in this document are:

- to explore and identify parameters of communication,
- to explore and identified target audience in organic sector,
- to state the meaning and importance of developing good communication strategy,
- to identify communication tools for each of the identified group,
- to assist in shaping communication strategy of the user,
- to assist in identification of messages intended for the receivers,
- to differentiate among different target receiver groups,
- to demonstrate an understanding of the strategic importance of communications in a competitive environment,
- to give recommendation in using communication tools,
- to increase purchase and products availability on the market.

The recipient of the message needs to get a clear, concise, complete and understandable message. Communication is a two-way process where both, communicator and receiver develop relationship where the communication is a constant process which needs to be maintained, modified and updated in accordance with the set objectives.

The communication model involves the following steps:

- Source of information that helps in creating message,
- Sender/communicator who develops message visually and verbally,
- Channel of communication used for sending the message,
- Receiver/target audience for whom message was intended for.

All this involves the external influence of a sixth element called noise or any other barrier, which acts as a dysfunctional factor in the process of communication.

Any communication strategy developed requires the finalisation with the evaluation of the achieved results and successfulness of the message transfer. According to the set objectives Developer needs to think of type of evaluation, number and type of indicators to assess. Evaluation results serve to all the future strategy and show the direction toward the objectives as well as behaviour of the recipient which is variable parameter.

Organic sector needs to focus on messages differing from the conventional farming. Conveyed messages need to be received by the recipient loud and clear and focusing on their needs and desires. Messages in organic sector would focus on environmental impacts, GMO free production, higher nutritional values, restrictive use of PPP, etc. Therefore, every Communicator needs to perform the thorough research of available data and then to think of developing communication strategy. If assessed, additional analysis is advisable to be performed with target group via questionnaires, on line surveys, etc. As much time invested in the research and developing strategy, the better the communication would be.

Communication concept draft will try to direct Communicator in the importance of the organic promotion. Nevertheless, all messages conveyed by communication channels are targeted and cannot be unified and adopted equally by all stakeholders in the sector. It means that every Communicator needs to design its own communication strategy and use tools that will serve for achieving goals set in the communication concepts.

Information every Communicator can use in communication can be from personal resources, data bases in place, contacts and communication with other stakeholders, information delivered by other stakeholders and other resources, etc. In any case one needs to design an effective marketing communication strategy with one or more marketing communication components.

A well-chosen marketing communication strategy utilizes one or more components to disseminate the company's outgoing message. A market-appropriate strategy increases the company's chances to accurately transmit the product's benefits, and to have that message positively received by the customer. In order to achieve this goal Communicator need to analyze target groups' needs, preferences, habits, attitudes toward food and environment, understanding of the process, etc.

In the case of organic products, current positioning is mainly based on some attributes of the products, either positive (healthy, better taste) or negative (produced without chemicals, GMO free, with no added artificial flavouring, preservatives, etc.). Furthermore, current positioning is usually pursued with a general symbolic reference to the need/goal of maintaining health, which appears one of the most relevant values in our long-living, aging of Western society.

Nevertheless, the organic market should learn the lesson, and consider that a new marketing concept is needed to (re)position the whole sector in the mind of the prospects. As shown in some researches, communication in organic sector combines both the safety & quality issues in one word, and is less semantically connected with the idea of disease.

COMMUNICATION AND PROMOTION ELEMENTS

Communication

Communication is a process that allows us to exchange information by several methods. Communication requires that all parties understand a common language that is exchanged. There are auditory means, such as speaking or singing, and nonverbal, physical means, such as body language, sign language, paralanguage, touch, eye contact, or the use of writing. Communication involves more factors than simple transfer of message, it requires well drawn message, the way of its transfer, the channel for its communication and appropriate actions in the process.

Effective communication strategy will rely on combination of several of the tools of communication - Internet, publications and other printed materials, public service broadcasts and videos, media relations, spokespersons, events. Which of the tools would be selected depends on the objectives of the communication objectives, profile of the target audience, appropriate of the selected tools, communication budget and various advantages and disadvantages.

In case of use of different communication tools Communicator needs to keep up with the correct and accurate message in all tools used, otherwise it may confuse or distract the target audience.

Every organisation has to become a communicator and promoter once in a while. For majority of organisations the question remains what, how and to whom to say.

Communication programme consists of several phases. The communicator has to:

- 1.) Identify target audience,
- 2.) Define goals of communication,
- 3.) Create message,
- 4.) Choose communication channels,
- 5.) Define budget for communication,
- 6.) Define communication mix,
- 7.) Evaluate results of communication,
- 8.) Manage and coordinate overall communication process.

1. Identification of the target audience is the first step in the communication process. Target audience can represent potential, current and future buyers of organic products; current, potential and future services' users; decision makers; R&D institutions; current, potential and future farmers/producers; current, future and potential processors; distributors and traders; NGO's and farmers' organisations; donors' community.

In this phase it is advisable to identify the leader among the target audience who will influence decisions of other people.

Before starting promotion, available marketing researches should be consulted. If there are no recent studies available on the sector research, communicator (the one who is doing promotion and communication to target audience) should conduct a short survey with tick boxes questionnaires to check the awareness of target groups toward organic products and awareness on organic agriculture. Communicator has to determine how acquainted recipients (target audience, identified stakeholders) are with organic products.

If the survey shows that majority of audience is not aware, and is not familiar with organic products and organic production, communicator has to build up awareness/consciousness first relating simple messages to the term of organic and keep repeating them constantly.

If surveys have information on organic production but very modest ones, then the communication has to be directed in broadening of that information. If audience already knows a lot, but has negative attitude towards organic, then communicator needs to discover why is this so and solve identified problems. Also, target audience can know benefits of the organic products but still not buying them, in this case communicator needs to promote values, quality and benefits of the organic products. In all cases communicator must base his relationship on trust.

2. During the promotion of organic products - rational messages should be sent to audience. They need to be convinced of certain benefits organic products bring. Messages should demonstrate quality, values, and advantages of organic production. The goal of the communication is to send to audience the clear message on values and benefits organic products and organic production delivers.

A good communicator needs to address the target group very specifically and convey the message in a clear, concise manner, the structure of the message needs to be understandable and of logical structure and decide on source of channel so that most of the group could be reached through the selected source. For example in promotion of organic baby food the communicator addressed mothers via clear messages conveying messages on ingredients of organic origin, produced without the use of chemical treatments and promotion of products in hypermarkets and pharmacies where consumers were given additional information on written material on ingredients, way of production and places where they can purchase the products.

3. Communicator can develop appropriate form of the message depending on the channel of communication. For printed media communicator needs to decide on text, headline, colour and illustration. If the messages are transferred by radio, communicator needs to choose words, and pleasant voice of speaker. Moreover, on TV media, speaker needs to comply with additional details in transmitting message - with gestures, face mimics, clothes, posture and appearance. During the promotion of organic products communicator should pay attention to package, odour, ingredients, shape and taste of organic products.

Organic products are present on the market of Serbia for certain period of time, and promotion of these products and organic farming has been communicated to broad audience for some time, nevertheless there is still obscurity in regard to the term organic. Messages conveyed in promotion of organic farming and organic products need to be clear, understandable, proofs-grounded and easily memorisable.

Moreover, messages in communication should be designed in the way so all identified recipients get them loud and clear despite eventual interferences in the environment. Respectful and competent communicator will reach target audience sooner and on the way use fewer resources. Good communicator should pass message in open and friendly atmosphere without any arrogance and intolerance especially without being offensive toward same conventional products.

4. There are a number of ways to use channels, such as combining different media, which also promote effective behaviour change.

Many of the media/channels (poster, flyer, video, folk theatre) when combined with interpersonal communication can become more effective behaviour change interventions. After the materials or media communication have been shown, a facilitator can lead an interactive ses-

sion with the audience to reinforce the messages. Thus, these components of a communication strategy should be linked with ongoing programme activities.

Channels of communication can be:

- personal and
- mass communication.

Personal communication is communication between two or more persons with a specific personal communication with others. The message emanates from a specific person. It can be done face to face, or by a person to audience, over telephone, or through post or couriers or through emails or through mobile messages.

Especially important personal communication is by using social channels where friends, family members, neighbours represent valuable, cheap and fast channels of spreading information to their social circle. An independent expert communicating to prospective buyers about the merits of the product is classified as an expert communication. A neighbour saying good things about a brand is social channel of communication.

It takes various steps to stimulate personal communications about their products and brands.

- They identify influential individuals and devote extra effort on them.
- Create opinion leaders by supplying possible opinion leaders with the product on attractive terms.
- Use influential or believable people in testimonial advertising.
- Develop word of mouth publicity by requesting satisfied clients to promote their product among their friends.
- Establish online discussion groups and communities.

Mass channels of communication involve:

- media - can be printed - magazines, souvenirs, direct mail, newspapers; broadcast media - radio, TV, audio, web pages; display media/out-door - billboards, posters, signs; electronic media - audio and video recordings.
- atmosphere - is shaped environment that serves to create certain image and attracts recipients. The office interiors and exteriors have a meaning to the potential buyers. For example in office colourful photos of organic production, tools used in organic farming and cultivation, organic products attracts visitors of the organisation and provides basic information on organic farming and raise their interests on it.
- events are occurrences designed to communicate particular messages to target audiences or audiences. Company arranges news conferences, opening ceremonies, and sponsorships come under event communications channels.

5. Budget for communication depends on organisation, their strategy and objectives. Communicator needs to think of the way of planning of the budget, would it be easier to first visualize communication channels and resources needed for the promotion of the OP or would the budget be planned according to the steps developed in the strategy - budget line is planned along with the strategy.

Communicator needs to carefully plan all the costs in accordance with the communication strategy, goal, messages he wants to convey and channels and tools to use.

Illustrative example of the promotion campaign budget is presented in annex.

6. Communication mix will rely on mix of several channels of communication. Communicator needs to draw attention of the recipients, then their interest, desire for organic products and finally action - their purchase.

7. After promotion it is important to get the feedback and results of the communication. Evaluation: target audience is questioned if they remember the message, which in particular, what they felt when they saw the message, what do they now feel about organic products. Valuable tool of evaluation of results of the promotion is survey on the spot of promotion of organic products, feedback on consumers' satisfaction with products, price, packing, etc.

8. Communicator needs to coordinate and manage communication process all the time. Communication process is on-going process and should be adjusted periodically and follow trends and behaviour of audience. Building and managing relationships with consumers and customers has a direct bearing on marketing communications.

Barriers to Effective Communication

The process of communication can be affected by the numerous barriers, such as:

- Linguistic incompetence,
- Lack of clarity,
- Lack of motivation,
- Socio-economic background,
- Improper body language,
- Distrust.

Excessive verbalism, verbosity, confusion, daydreaming, limited perception and physical discomfort too act as barriers in communication. It can happen that some of the channels selected in communication cannot reach target audience. If for example selected channel needs to be transferred by radio or TV, communicator needs to have in mind that some areas lack electric power, like remote areas in the south, the same goes for the sparsely populated areas, where appropriate tool would be direct communication on days when village market is.

Promotion

Promotion is every communication used to inform, persuade and refresh memory of people in regard to organisation or individual products, services, images, ideas or influences on society. Fundamentally, there are three basic objectives of promotion: presentation of information to consumers as well as to others, increase of demand, differentiation of a product.

Functions of promotion:

1. Creation and maintaining image of organisation and its products and services,
2. Presenting characteristics of products and services,
3. Making new products and services distinguished,
4. Keeping good image of products and services,
5. Announcing where products and services can be found,
6. Persuading recipient to use products and services of your organisation instead of the competition,
7. Persuading recipient to choose your product or service,
8. Justifying prices,
9. Answering to target recipients' questions,
10. Making products and services available and at hand.

Promotions are also held in physical environments at special events such as festivals, trade shows, and in the field such as in grocery or department stores. Interactions in the field (i.e. hypermarkets, etc.), allow customers to purchase the brand or product immediately, which showed in promotions NASO carried out as the clients expected procedure. The interactions among the brand and the customer are performed by promoters that represent the products and brands in physical environments. They can be hired by marketing companies or chosen within the Communicator environment. The good way of communication proved to be on-farm visits, for example farms could organise each month Day of open farms when consumers would interact with farmers, set information on production and products. Person-to-person interaction, as opposed to media-to-person involvement, establishes connections that add another dimension to promotion. Building a community through promoting goods and services can lead to brand loyalty.

Selection of communication channels and tools

It is critical to select the channels which best match the participants so it should be taken into consideration that message reach the target group (not all the targeted group will follow the same pattern), also it is important to understand that different channels have different role in communication, and at the end the selected channels should be accessible and available to target audience (no use of communicating message via radio in period when target audience is not able to hear it).

There are three major modes of communication.

1. Speaking – Listening

In this mode of communication the possible interaction is face to face and person to person. This mode of communication is generally used in seminars, classrooms, debates and etc. This communication channel is more lively and effective.

2. Writing – Reading

In this mode of communication, the Communicator is not physically present in front of the receiver. Language is always the vehicle for communication and often changeable into other forms. Though instant feedback is not possible immediately, this is perhaps the most used mode of communication.

3. Visualising – Observing

In this mode of communication, communication goes in the form of symbols and signs. Recipient decodes these signals and feels the impact of the ideas conveyed. Communication carried out is many to many and person to many.

Channels and tools of communication need to be selected according to the set objectives and goals of communication and adjusted to the purpose.

Purpose of communication					
Communication channels and tools	Advertising	Sales promotion	Public relations	Personal selling	Direct marketing
	Printed articles Radio TV commercial	Competitions, prize contest	Printed material	Sales promotions	Catalogues
	Symbols and logos	Samples	Seminars	Supporting programmes	Telemarketing
	Posters	Demonstrations	Annual reports	Samples	Electronic purchase
	Billboards	Degustation	Donor contribution	Fairs and trade shows	Faxing
	Displays	Coupons	Sponsorship		E-mailing
	Audio-visual material	Discounts	Publications		SMS
	Video material	Special discounts	Community relations		
	Films	Discounts when purchasing new product	Lobbying		
	Phone books	Notice board on the spot of the sale	Media promotion		
		Fairs and trade shows	Magazines, bulletins of the organisation		
			Events		

The message can be customized. The message can be up to date. In case of telemarketing, message can be altered depending on the response. In the case of other alternatives subsequent communication can be altered depending on the response. Direct communication is one of the tools where recipient is using sight, hearing, taste, smell and touch, all five senses. Studies show that more information is remembered if more senses are included in communication. Therefore all communication should include various tools and methods, and in order to stay remembered to be continuously repeated in time. Most of people, almost 95%, forget what they heard after one week. Repeating is the mother of knowledge and promotion.

National organic logo has to be a part of identification and a tool of communication with target groups. In addition to that processors/traders have also developed a number of logos which differentiate their organic products and brand. National logo is already branded and promoted in the sector and it would be advisable to use it in communication strategy as such.

COMMUNICATION WITHIN THE ORGANIC SECTOR

The most important word in this document is communication. NASO is practising three its types – interpersonal, group and mass communication which ensures that the right messages are conveyed to the right audience through the right channels. Communicator needs to ask himself who are his users or buyers, what are their characteristics, what motivates them, etc.

Communicator can address more or less identified recipients depending on their type of business and expected goals. Moreover, some of the identified groups can receive the same message. Before defining goals of communication for each identified target audience, communicator needs to carefully consider what messages recipients should receive.

The goals of communication in organic sector are:

- Improving the quality of the information services in organic agriculture where the producers engaged in organic agriculture will benefit through improved competitiveness, diversification of their enterprises and meeting market requirements;
- Proper distribution of information to the relevant stakeholders about potentials for organic agricultural activities;
- Realised promotional activities for improvement of the organic production and marketing;
- Increased awareness on organic farming and market of organic products as well as their commercial value;
- Increased sale of organic products;
- Compliant actions with the Government support and policy measures towards broad based education and information dissemination for organic farming.

Target audience is divided by their role in organic sector and type of business they conduct or by their interests. When addressing audience communicator designs content of the message, form, channels of communication and allocates budget for it.

Identified target audience in organic sector are as in the following:

- Organic farmers, natural and legal persons and their associations,
- Processors,
- NGOs, Centres for organic production,
- Donor community,
- Governmental institutions and their relevant departments,
- Chamber of Commerce – Group for organic production,
- Scientific Institutions, Universities,
- Accredited and authorised Certification bodies,
- Consumers/buyers,
- Traders-distributors, exporters, retailers and wholesalers,
- Decision makers.

Therefore identified audience can be grouped in several sections differing to the messages they would need to receive:

1. Organic farmers, natural and legal persons, Processors, Certification bodies;
2. NGOs, Centres for organic production, Farmers' associations;
3. Donor community;
4. Governmental institutions and their relevant departments, Chamber of Commerce – Group for organic production, Decision makers;
5. Scientific Institutions, Universities;
6. Consumers/buyers, Traders-distributors, exporters, retailers and wholesalers.

Each group has different demands and role in the organic sector hence different message has to be conveyed.

When designing messages for communication, communicator should always keep in mind above mentioned - to use key words, easy memorisable and verified or proof based facts.

The most communicated messages organic sector try to convey are advantages and benefits coming directly from organic products and organic agriculture:

- Controlled and certified production and use of chemical inputs,
- Reduced use of chemical inputs,
- Positive impact on environment (biodiversity, natural resources...),
- Animal welfare,
- Use of renewable energy,
- Non GMO products,
- Greater commercial value through added value of the product.

Target group and audience

Different audience require require different use of tools, adequate for the target and carefully planned strategy. Of course this document cannot set for each group strategy; it can only provide hints and guides for communicator after which he will be able to develop appropriate strategy for himself.

Below are given the some of the specificities for each group according to the experience NASO had in this sector in the past years.

1. ORGANIC FARMERS, NATURAL AND LEGAL PERSONS, PROCESSORS, CERTIFICATION BODIES

Over decades conventional farming led to pollution in soil, air, water and consequently to diminishing and scarcity of resources. As an equivalent to CF appeared OA whose main goal is nature preservation and conservation of entire ecosystem. The role of OA in environment preservation is an advantage communicator needs to use when addressing target audience. Limited resources and more risky production comes the better price of OP.

For this group messages conveyed are based on higher commercial price due to the specificity of product, use of renewable energy, animal welfare and positive impact on environment. Important issue for the most of the farmers is the use of rather limited inputs in production where they rely on on-farm manure and treatments directed mostly on prevention than curing of the plants and animals, since the concept lies in preventing diseases and limiting use of off-farm

resources. Nevertheless it is essential for them to be aware that there are agro-chemical inputs available on the market and efficient against pests and diseases.

Distributors and traders are being informed about the benefits of organic products like restricted use of pesticides, controlled production, non GMO use, which they can use in addressing their market, product's quality if important and demand on the market.

In this regard, NASO maintain regularly web site with all the relevant information and includes this service in the offer for their members. On the other hand constant and updated promotion is done through printed and mass media, as well as in personal communication via phone, e-mail, on-spot promotional and various organised seminars. Over years the combination of the above mentioned tools proved to be very efficient and to the point, of course it must be updated from time to time and adjusted to the behaviour and habits of the target audience.

Objectives:

1. Increase knowledge of farmers, visibility on the market, develop distribution channels,
2. Enhance level of available information about inputs and legislation in organic production,
3. Increase awareness to the public about worthy of organic food.

Messages conveyed to this group should have at least some of the following:

- Controlled production and controlled use of chemical inputs,
- Reduced use of chemical inputs,
- Positive impact on environment (biodiversity, natural resources...),
- Animal welfare,
- Use of renewable energy,
- Non GMO products,
- Greater commercial value through added value of the product.

Via this media farmers are contacted and given information on production cycles and financial aspects of it.

	Purpose of communication			
	Advertising	Sales promotion	Public relations	Direct marketing
Communication channels and tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Articles in the newspapers and magazines on organic farming Interviews in media about OF Promotion of organic logo Posters and billboards near more frequented places 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degustation of organic products in hypermarkets Notice boards on the places of sale and in the local communities on OF Fairs, trade shows where audience can get at first-hand information on OF 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Printed materials - guidelines, manuals for farmers, guides for certification process, etc. Seminars for farmers and inspectors of the control bodies Donor contributions - involvement of farmers in projects Lobbying for interests of organic audience Organised events like press conferences on OF 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> E-mailing and texting information to farmers, processors and certification bodies Putting articles on information and services on the web site of communicator

2. NGOS, CENTRES FOR ORGANIC PRODUCTION, FARMERS' ASSOCIATIONS

Civil sector was mostly included in drafting of the majority of the policy documents from local to the state level where the impact was on the development of partnership and cooperation between Government representatives and NGO so both parties could equally share responsibilities regarding sustainable development.

However problem exists in implementation of documents - in achieving expected goals through realisation of the National action plans. Moreover strong political will and financial resources should accompany these activities along with monitoring and revision of the measurements carried out.

For this group the messages are aimed at building close cooperation among each other and networking in order to change i.e. improve the policy environment in OS. As more as they are informed about it, the faster and greater the impact of this group will be. NASO is combining several tools, and from the past experience can state that the personal communication, face to face during various targeted events reaches more people and boosts the accomplishment of the objectives on the way.

Development of cooperation and partnership between civil sector and government representatives guarantees good environment for development of organic production in compliance with documents on sustainable development and in achievement of improved quality livelihood conditions, beneath all - a better health condition of the population and environment, which directly impacts economic prosperity of the society.

Objectives:

To build and maintain good relationship and provide better support for organic sector through:

1. Social support - developing alliances and social support systems that legitimize and encourage development-related actions as a social norm,
2. Empowerment,
3. Equipping individuals and groups with the knowledge, values and skills that encourage effective action for development.

Messages conveyed to this group should have at least some of the following:

- Controlled production and use of chemical inputs,
- Reduced use of chemical inputs,
- Positive impact on environment (biodiversity, natural resources...),
- Animal welfare,
- Use of renewable energy,
- Non GMO products,
- Greater commercial value through added value of the product,
- New employment opportunities.

	Purpose of communication			
	Advertising	Sales promotion	Public relations	Direct marketing
Communication channel and tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articles in magazines • Radio inter-views • TV inter-views 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inviting target audience to competitions, prize contest • Positioning organic products on shelves in the eyes level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Magazines, bulletins of the organisation • Annual statistic reports on OF • Promotion and inviting target audience to fairs and trade shows • Organising and inviting target audience to press conferences and opening ceremony of new organic restaurants • Printed material - leaflets, brochures... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular communication with decision makers on needs, problems and constraints producers have especially in purchase of organic inputs. • Holding round tables of Organic production group when appropriate and in accordance with the needs of the organic sector • E-mailing to contact persons on latest developments and information update • Develop regular meetings with lead representatives

3. GOVERNMENTAL INSTITUTIONS, PUBLIC SECTOR AND DECISION MAKERS;

Without the governmental support development of organic sector would be a vulnerable category. Decision maker's support and measurements are not complied with the needs of the sector, mostly due to the turmoil in political scene and changes in the Government. This way every change in decision makers asks for the constant meetings and updates of the new employed people with organic sector which consume a lot of time and slows down the process of sector's development.

Objectives:

To build and maintain good relationship with relevant competent Institutions through:

1. advocacy - generating political commitment for supportive policies and increase of public Interest and demand for development issues;
2. Social support - developing alliances and social support systems that legitimize and encourage development-related actions as a social norm,
3. Assisting development of OA in rural areas and empowerment of small scale farmers.

Messages conveyed to this group should have at least some of the following:

- Positive impact on environment (biodiversity, natural resources...),
- Use of renewable energy,
- Greater commercial value through added value of the product,
- Perspective production for small scale farmers and remote areas,
- New employment opportunities.

	Purpose of communication			
	Advertising	Sales promotion	Public relations	Direct marketing
Communication channel and tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articles in magazines • Radio interviews • TV interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inviting target audience to competitions, prize contest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Magazines, bulletins of the organisation • Annual statistic reports on OF • Promotion and inviting target audience to fairs and trade shows • Organising and inviting target audience to press conferences and opening ceremony of new organic restaurants • Printed material - leaflets, brochures... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings with representatives of the Ministry of Agriculture • Regular communication with decision makers on needs, problems and constraints producers have especially in purchase of organic inputs. • Holding round tables of Organic production group when appropriate and in accordance with the needs of the organic sector • E-mailing to contact persons on latest developments and information update • Develop regular meetings with lead representatives

4. DONOR COMMUNITY

Communication with donor community depends upon proper development of business relationship and up to date informing donors on the activities in the sector. Good relationships help in adjusting programs and donor activities in accordance with the estimated needs in the sector.

Donors' community has a very important role and impact not only on the national but even more on international level. Indirectly through their promotion they would promote cooperation they had and share experience to other donors. It is essential to keep and maintain good relationships with this group, no matter if no real cooperation through projects has been established so far or not.

Objectives:

To raise awareness on international level on OS through:

1. implementation of projects related to organic production,
2. provision of assistance in promotion and organisation of the international fair participation,
3. assistance in technical expertise,
4. direct economic prosperity of targeted recipients.

Messages conveyed to this group should have at least some of the following:

- Controlled production and use of chemical inputs,
- Positive impact on environment (biodiversity, natural resources...),
- Animal welfare,
- Use of renewable energy,
- Non GMO products,
- Gender equity and empowerment of the vulnerable social groups in assistance provision in finding new employment opportunities,
- Greater potential for the remote areas and underdeveloped communities.

	Purpose of communication			
	Advertising	Sales promotion	Public relations	Direct marketing
Communication channel and tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Articles in magazines Radio interviews TV interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inviting target audience to competitions, prize contest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Magazines, bulletins of the organisation Annual statistic reports on OF Promotion and inviting target audience to fairs and trade shows Organising and inviting target audience to press conferences and opening ceremony of new organic restaurants Printed material - leaflets, brochures... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular communication with Donor community (Embassies'' representatives, International organisations, etc) on needs, challenges and constraints in organic inputs. Holding round tables of Organic production group when appropriate and in accordance with the needs of the organic sector and in a presence of donors' representatives E-mailing to contact persons on latest developments and information update Develop regular meetings with lead representatives in donors' community

5. SCIENTIFIC INSTITUTIONS, UNIVERSITIES;

This group is important for development of the organic technologies. They need to be aware about the constraints in organic agriculture and even try to raise this sector to more competitive level indirectly by ensuring adequate PPP and seed/planting material.

Objectives:

- To establish healthy environment for organic producers in regard to the purchase and availability of organic inputs through development of close cooperation and networking with all relevant players in the field.

NASO keeps building network with this group through the project implementation and their involvement in the legislative work whenever possible. As more people are aware and work on achievement of the set goals, it would be less time and effort consuming. It is advisable to establish close cooperation and use as many of the tools mentioned as possible.

Messages conveyed to this group should have at least some of the following:

- Positive impact on environment (biodiversity, natural resources...),
- Use of renewable energy,
- GMO free,
- Restricted and controlled production,
- Needs in developing organic inputs and organic seeds and planting material selection.

	Purpose of communication			
	Advertising	Sales promotion	Public relations	Direct marketing
Communication channel and tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Articles in magazines •Radio interviews •TV interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Inviting target audience to competitions, prize contest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Magazines, bulletins of the organisation •Annual statistic reports on OF •Organising and inviting target audience to press conferences and opening ceremony of new organic restaurants •Printed material - leaflets, brochures... 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Meetings with representatives Scientific and Research Institutions. •Regular communication with on needs, challenges and constraints producers have especially in purchase of organic inputs. •Holding round tables of Organic production group when appropriate and in accordance with the needs of the organic sector invite group's representatives. •E-mailing to contact persons on latest developments and information update •Develop regular update communication.

6. TRADERS-DISTRIBUTORS, EXPORTERS, RETAILERS AND WHOLESALERS

Organic food in the countries with smaller production and limitations in production and processing should rather focus on niche market for finalised products and the rest of raw material is intended for wholesalers and exporters. In order to facilitate the work of this group it is needed constant updating on legislation and policy environment on trade rules and food standards.

Wellness is a concept that combines fitness and enjoyment; therefore why not combining this with massages, solariums, saunas, etc. Organic positioning could consider new users like business travellers, striving for the quality of life, new situations like open-air sport competitions, new point of sale - automatic vending machines in airports or wellness centres. A concept that eventually combines a gourmet/slow food diet, with an ecological and healthy lifestyle. Attention would be given to the HORECA¹ chains. They will be invited to the events, forums and specific promotions will be organized for representatives of HORECA representatives giving them a chance to introduce the organic products in their menus.

Objectives:

- To increase awareness on organic production,
- To develop messages directed toward these groups explaining differences in relation to conventional production and develop sense of emotional values for customers.

Messages conveyed to this group should have at least some of the following:

- Market values of organic products.
- Challenges in trading of these goods,
- Legal framework in dealing with organic products,
- Certification process,
- Advantages of organic products,
- Controlled production and use of chemical inputs.

Communication channel and	Purpose of communication				
	Advertising	Sales promotion	Public relations	Personal selling	Direct marketing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Printed articles on organic farming• Promotion of organic logo• Interviews on radio and TV	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Competitions, prize contest• Free samples of organic products• Degustation in hypermarkets of organic products• Fairs and trade shows of organic products	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Printed material• Magazines, bulletins of the organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fairs and trade shows	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Electronic sale on the web site of the communicator• E-mailing• Communication over web site

¹HORECA is the sector of the food industry that consists of establishments which prepare and serve food and beverages.

7. CONSUMERS

Consumers are the most important and sensitive parameter of domestic organic market. Organic food is for the most of consumers and traders in Serbia relatively new product. On field survey and interviews with different stakeholders in this sector conducted recently, indicates that the average Serbian consumer links the term “organic” to health. The conducted survey shows that consumers often associate organic products with natural and not chemically treated products, and often relates them with crops grown in a small garden in a traditional way. Besides attracting new consumers, the attention should be given to maintenance of consumers’ loyalty.

In specific sector as organic is, target audience should be aware of the benefits of the domestically and commonly grown foodstuffs rather than focusing on exotic and goods domestic recipient is not familiar with and would require additional information like how to peel it, cook it, etc.

Objectives:

- To increase awareness of consumers and of members in supply chain about the value of organic products and benefits for customers,
- To develop messages directed toward these groups explaining differences in relation to conventional production and develop sense of emotional values for customers.

Messages conveyed to this group should have at least some of the following:

- Reduced use of chemical inputs,
- Nutritional value of organic products,
- Controlled production and use of chemical inputs,
- Social responsible production especially in the third world countries,
- Positive impact on environment (biodiversity, natural resources...),
- Animal welfare,
- Use of renewable energy,
- Forbidden use of non GMO products.

Purpose of communication					
Communication channel and tools	Advertising	Sales promotion	Public relations	Personal selling	Direct marketing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Printed articles on organic farming • Promotion of organic logo • Promotion of organic farming on posters and billboards • Interviews on radio and TV 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competitions, prize contest • Free samples of organic products • Degustation in hypermarkets of organic products • Discounts when purchasing organic prod. • Notice board on the spot of the sale • Fairs and trade shows of organic products 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Printed material and culinary books • Seminars • Magazines, bulletins of the organisation • Cooking courses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sales promotions on green markets and in hypermarkets • Fairs and trade shows 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electronic sale on the web site of the communicator • E-mailing • Communication over web site • Social electronic media

New buyer of organic product can get the most information from the producer itself, via promotional material, internet, promoters, merchants and mass media and this section is controlled by buyers and producers. It is important to define communication channel for buyers, what motivates them to buy new product and define appropriate channels and tools for communication. Promotion of the organic product as the product distinctly labelled is very important for buyers and their behaviour during shopping.

When talking about marketing communication, it can be said that the main goal is to inform, but also, to persuade and what is most important to gain a consumer, a buyer of a product. In this process are used following approaches:

1. Image building,
2. Product differentiation,
3. Attribute-based,
4. Benefit-based,
5. Value-based campaign.

For organic and typical products is most suitable value-based campaign. This way to the consumers is given all relevant information about importance of these products to their health. Communicator addresses targeted audience.



Value can be added to organic products by insisting on their naturalness and environmental protection. For further development of the local organic market, strong and intensive campaigns with clear communication strategy, directed towards defined target consumer groups, are definitely needed.

Some of the promotional campaign reflects couple of the target words and build the entire campaign on it, but it is upon to the communicator and

objectives to decide which would be the strategy and who would be the main target within the group. Majority of the strategy developers make an overall research of the sector and then build appropriate strategy.

For example Imlek's milk campaign is recognizable on its Bello name, and the strategy focused on brand development rather than the communicating advantages of organic production. They first launched promotion of organic products and announced the new organic dairy products as first one made in Serbia. Now their product is a brand, recognizable and easy memorisable for every consumer.

There are many ways of promotion related to organic products like:

1. Design of products as communication trade value:

Having in mind that design of organic products is still not on the level to be attractive for the customers and in line with other members in supply chain it is one of the most demanding challenges for producers and traders. Development of attractive design and packages should increase attention of customers and increase decision making process towards the benefits of organic products. In comparison to products in the other countries, besides some particular cases, design of organic products is on the low level and need to be developed to achieve the main role - to attract customers, to inform them and to increase identification on the market.



With a proper design could be delivered recipes for organic salads and other meals.

2. Differentiation of organic products on the point of sale: Organic products in the market places are not separated from conventional products a nod therefore consumers lack adequate perceptions and have difficulties to distinguish organic from other products. Visually good and attractive marking of the points of sale in supermarkets and on trade spots with a clear and visible indication of organic products attracts consumers and assists in making decisions on purchase more easily. Such model requires high-quality communication with distributors and retailers to raise the attractiveness of the product and increased sales.

3. Trade leaflet development: In most of the cases such material is missing. Each market oriented producer needs to develop own trade leaflet. Its purpose is to inform traders' chain members (traders, distributors, exporters, retailers and wholesalers) to have a clear picture what producers want.



NASO is performing promotion of OA from the aspect of educating them on organic products, and communicating the advantages of such. On the other hand is providing information on market opportunities and acts as an intermediary in business partnership. Depending on the set objectives one must develop its own strategy and select and combine it with the most adequate tools.

Once more it needs to be clarified that this document serves as the guide reference document and should not be solely used in developing own strategy, it should be combined with the market research, target group, their accessibility and presence in the environment, etc.

One of the tools used in front of the DM shop in Belgrade (photo taken 24/6/2014) where the message on the photo promises a discount of 20% in case of purchase in amount above 800 dinars. It is one of the ways to attract buyers.

EVALUATION OF RESULTS OF COMMUNICATION

Evaluation is the structured interpretation and giving of meaning to predict of actual impacts of proposals or results. The main purpose of a program or activity evaluation can be to "determine the quality of a program or activity by formulating a judgment". Evaluation needs to be in accordance with objectives which are set up by producer, organization or within project.

Before evaluation itself, it is important to determine what kind of indicators will be used for measuring of activities success. There are many indicators which could be separated on **Quantitative** and **Qualitative** depending of what kind of information provide through evaluation process. During evaluation, there are three questions to help in definition of indicators: What are you going to observe, how are you going to do it, what interpretations are you going to give to what has been observed, or measured.

A good indicator should have the following characteristics:

1. Be specific: in terms of magnitude and time. It should also specifically refer to a single concept or activity rather than to a number of them;
2. Be factual: each indicator should reflect the fact rather than the impression or the interpretation;
3. Be directly measurable: indicators should have a direct causal link with what they are supposed to measure. Be sure to eliminate all possible interference from external factors; and
4. Be based on verifiable data: indicators should be accounted for based on already available data or on data that can be collected easily by the project. For instance there is no use in setting indicators for which you cannot identify appropriate sources of verification.

Quantitative types of indicators:

- Number of meetings,
- Number of participants,
- Number of articles in mass media,
- Number of buyers in certain period,
- Number or percentage of customers who buy our products,
- Number or percentage of buyers who buy competition's products,
- Market share increase,
- Number of promo material delivered,
- Increase of sale.
- Number of messages published in media,
- Demand increase,
- Frequency of buying,
- Most frequent size or quantity bought by one customer.

Qualitative types of indicators:

- Results of the meetings,
- Changed attitude of meetings participants,
- Quality of articles,
- Awareness about product or production sector,
- Attitude toward our specific products,

- Attitude toward competitor's products,
- Knowledge about products and production,
- Belonging customers to specific target groups,
- Type of media used in communication,
- Understanding of message conveyed,
- Target audience satisfaction,
- Readiness of audience to recommend product or deliver message further.

The task here is in determining sources from which information could be obtained regarding the set indicators. If means of reliable verification cannot be found indicators should be reconsidered. Since every indicator needs to be easily measured it is necessary to think of how it can be done. Means of verification have the purpose of ensuring that one can measure objectively the checkpoints established, either in the planning or implementation phase. Establishing means of verification involves defining measure indicators.

Communicator should get the feedback and the results of the communication after the communication activities. It is important to find out what target audience remembers and understand after the communication, if they remember the message sent, what in particular, what did they feel when they saw message, what do they now feel about organic products.

Evaluation table:

Results to be measured	Indicators	Means of verification for each indicator	External factors/risks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quantitative evaluation (of the impact in relation to the objectives) • Qualitative evaluation (of the impact in relation to the Objectives) • Relevant inputs 			

COMMUNICATION OF PROMOTIONAL CAMPAIGN - ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLE

NASO developed strategy of promotional campaign on the sale spots in bigger hypermarkets in Belgrade. The strategy consisted of 8 individual promotions which were held every weekend throughout 4 weeks. The promotion is designed in accordance with:

- a) Definition of the target groups - consumers,
- b) Set objectives:
 - raising awareness of consumers on organic products and
 - presenting differences that is advantages of OP in comparison with conventional.
- c) Messages conveyed during the promotion are planned in accordance to the above mentioned:
 - Reduced use of chemical inputs,
 - Nutritional value of organic products,
 - Controlled production and use of chemical inputs,
 - Positive impact on environment (biodiversity, natural resources...),
 - Animal welfare,
 - Use of renewable energy,
 - Forbidden use of non GMO products.

The strategy had a slogan that reflected the communication concept: "Buy organic - be a friend to you and to your environment".

- d) Besides promotion on the points of sale, communication strategy planned public relations, direct marketing, and used channels and tools in promotion were price discounts, media releases, web site, and distribution of printed material.
- e) Budget definition²
- f) Evaluation of results of the promotion is designed in accordance to set objectives via indicators, and verification tools were planned before the implementation.

Evaluation table:

Results to be measured	Indicators	Means of verification for each indicator	External factors/risks
Quantitative evaluation (of the impact in relation to the objectives)	-Number of sales promotion -8 -Number of visitors- 5.648 -Number of buyers in certain period 1.780 -Number of messages published in media- 14	-Number of visitors who communicated to promoters. -Counting consumers. -Monitoring clipping and counting number of published media releases and texts and articles.	-High price of products; -Insufficient time of customers to communicated to promoters; -Low interest in OP; -Inadequately chosen time of promotion; - OP are not visible positioned and are not properly labelled and distinguished from other products.

² Detailed budget is given in Annex.

	-Number of promo - material delivered- 7.480	-Number of persons - who received printed material.	
Qualitative evaluation (of the impact in relation to the Objectives)	-Awareness about product or production sector- 225 -Knowledge about products and production- 238	Interviews with consumers. -Interviews with consumers	

Recommendation and conclusion:

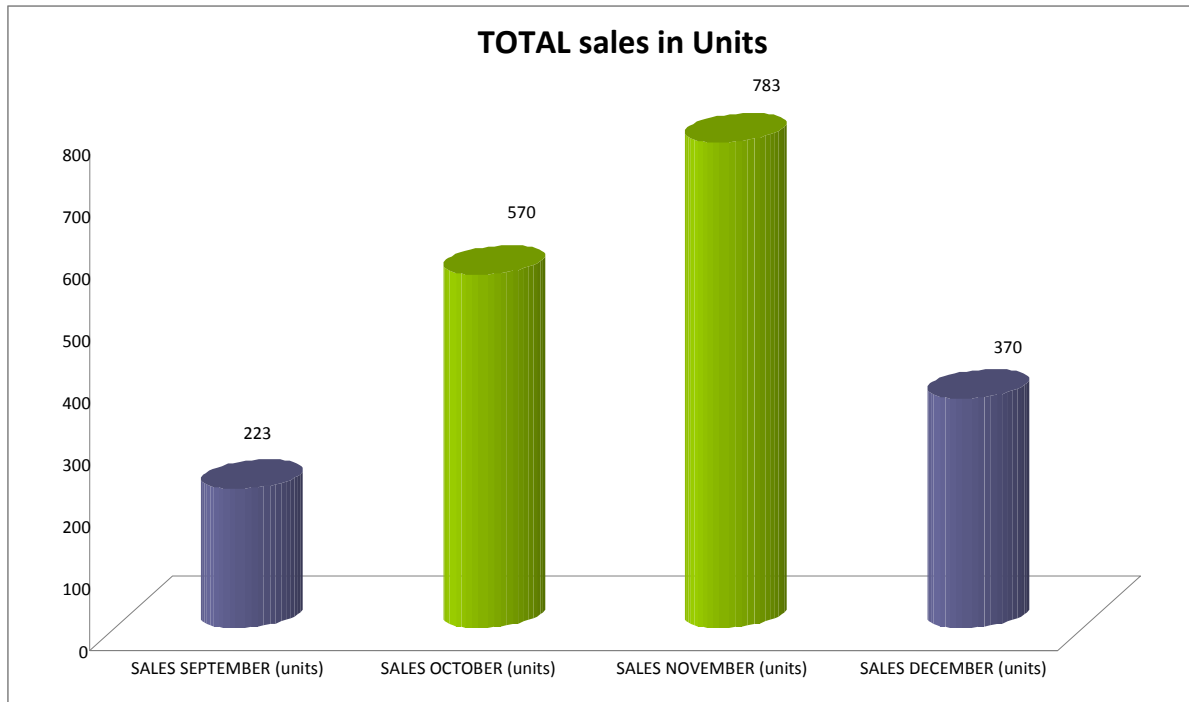
- In case of raising awareness of consumers and their education on OP the promotion in hypermarkets need to be carefully chosen. Considering lower availability of these products it is recommended to select hypermarkets that are already offering organic products, as it has shown in practice - after receiving information on OP consumers would like to purchase some of organic products which directly influences the growth of sale, attracts new and keeps current consumers. Also, it is important to well position promotional booths and engage promoters distributing promotional materials and communicating to consumers in accordance to the level of category of products that are being promoted.

Since domestic markets has in its offer fresh products, finalised and dairy organic products, promo booths were located just in front of the each category of products.

- Weekends were chosen due to the high frequency of consumers and more time they could dedicate to promoters and communication to them.
- Time duration of promotion from 9.30-17.00 showed that the majority of customers visited booth from 10.30-14.00.
- During the promotion it is important to provide discounts for organic products that are being promoted, which was done by contacting producers who were then in agreements with hypermarkets lowered prices for their products.
- Based on the previous experience recommendation would be to put in the promotional budget if possible monitoring of indicators of sale increase as one of quantitative indicators of evaluation of promotion. For this purpose can be chosen certain products from several categories and then to follow their sale during the promotion and in certain period after the promotion, for instance one month after the promotion. It is very beneficial to compare results of promotion with the data before and after the promotional period.

Here is given an example:

Results of sale in hypermarkets before, during and after the promotion.



The graph above shows results of sale monitored for 10 selected products in the period of promotion, before promotion has even started and after the promotion finished. Promotion took place at the end of October and November, September is time before the promotion, and December is time after the promotion.

Graphic clearly shows how the sale of products has increased during the promotion, but also the impacts of promotion that are kept even in the month after the promotion has been finished when sale was better in comparison to the month before the promotion has started.

ANNEX

Planning of the budget for promotion

The main components of the budget are designed according to the needed foreseen costs:

a) Design, text writing and printing of the promotional material.

Here there are 3 individual costs that should be part of the plan:

- 1) Design of the concept and writing of promotional leaflet/brochure.
Pay attention to the promotional material and messages that should be sent to the target group (in this case to the consumers). This cost is variable and depends on possibilities of engaging marketing agency or making own concept within the company/organisation
- 2) Design of leaflets/brochures. This is also variable costs and depends on who would be engaged for the work;
- 3) Preparation for print and printing of copies foreseen according to the planned numbers of promotion and anticipated number of consumers in certain hypermarkets.

Specific attention needs to be put to the quality of printing - paper, colours etc. since the effect of the successfully finalised previous phases reflects in the printed material and its quality.

Example: Promotional campaign consists of 8 promotions in the retail chain of hypermarkets in duration of 8 hours which requires around 1000 copies of promotional leaflets/brochures - in total 8000.

NASO printed for this promotion educational leaflets (9000) and educational brochures (1000) of higher quality and with a more information than usual. Promoters were given instructions to disseminate these materials to consumers who showed more interest in OP.

b) Design and construction of the promotional booths and shelves.

This budget component comprehends satisfaction of qualitative and quantitative needs. Qualitative needs represent aesthetic visualisation via design and branding of booths, and quantitative needs should be in compliance to the categorisation of products targeted for promotion. For example, if promotion is done on several products' categories (fresh, processed, frozen...), the number of promotional booths and promotional shelves with exhibited products should be in accordance to the number of spots where the direct communication with consumers is planned to take place.

If selected retail shop in its assortment already has wide range of organic products, promotional shelves in this case will not be needed, just the promotional booth. In fact, in this case is not even appropriate nor is in compliance with the business ethic to promote products that are already part of the retail offer.

Example: If fresh and processed products are being promoted, it would be needed: 2 promotional booths since those two categories of products are placed on different places in the market and this way the attention will be drawn by buyers of both products categories.

c) Engagement of promoters.

This component requires planning number of promoters in accordance with the promotional booths. It is sufficient to have 1 promoter for one booth.

Example: If there are 8 promotions planned, in the budget will be anticipated 16 fees for 2 promoters.

This cost includes education of promoters on products they are promoting and instructions on monitoring of indicators relevant for the evaluation of the results of the promotion.

d) Costs of transportation of promotional material (booths, shelves, leaflets, brochures, etc.).

These costs correspond to the planned number of promotions and costs for each individual promotion should be planned in this budget component.