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Poland

Organic Products

New Government Sponsored Media Campaign for Organics

2006

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Report Highlights:

Polish Ministry of Agriculture officials recently announced the start of a three-year USD 4 million promotional campaign for organic farming and products, half of which will be funded by the EU.

Includes PSD Changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
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Polish Ministry of Agriculture officials recently announced the start of a three-year USD 4 million promotional campaign for organic farming and products, half of which will be funded by the EU. The Agency for Agricultural Markets will be responsible for administering the funds, which can be used for media advertisements, and training for farmers, advisers and teachers.

A leading advertising agency in Poland has been selected to manage the campaign that will run until September 2009. The campaign will include: television, radio and print advertising; participation in local and foreign trade shows; contests for children; information booths in supermarkets; and public relations activities such as press conferences and contest for journalists. The campaign will also include 16 seminars and training sessions for extension agents and agricultural schoolteachers, and 350 training sessions for food producers and two sessions for traders. A special web page will also be created for consumers and producers.

Ministry officials are hopeful that tangible sales results will be seen after one year, but caution that several years will be needed to change consumers' habits and increase the number of organic farms in Poland.

Currently, Poland's organic sector represents only one percent of all food production, compared with seven percent in Germany and ten percent in Denmark. Polish officials believe that the reason Poland's organic industry lags behind other countries is the limited consumer and producer awareness of the sector. However, farmers believe that very onerous certification procedures for organics and a variety of distribution problems are the reason the industry has not grown. For example, organic products must be stored in dedicated organic-only facilities, though few are available. Other special handling requirements and extra middle-men result in a thirty percent price premium for organics as compared to the same conventional products. Both consumers and retailers are reluctant to pay the premium for organics, and so in some cases farmers must sell their organics as conventionally-grown products.

Organic farmers also are dissatisfied with the new Rural Areas Development program for 2007-2013. Under the program, subsidies for sustainable agriculture will be almost tripled from PLN 160 (USD 55.87) per hectare to PLN 450 (USD 157.13) per hectare, while subsidies for organic farming will be kept at the current level of PLN 260 (USD 90.97) per hectare.