

ORGANIC TOURISM AS A TOOL TO RAISE HEALTHY TOURISM DESTINATIONS: AN INVESTIGATION IN TURKEY

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Abstract: The aim of the paper is to specify the items that effect the importance of organic tourism both for human life and sustainable tourism destinations. The fundamental point of the study is to focus on organic farming both as a tool for welfare of the destinations and their importance and potential for the upcoming future of healthy generations using the data collected from segments of the society such as administrators, non-governmental organization members and farmers. The study is also based on an extensive secondary research analyzing the diverse literature regarding the organic/ecological/sustainable/destination tourism. The results are supplemented by semi-structured interviews. To date, many people have been interested in visiting villages and having an experience in living farms. This tourism activity is combined with facilities to create potent economic force to small villages. Besides, consuming organic food is one of the most important attitudes to live healthier and longer by being or working in the farms or villages as a visitor which creates a new era in tourism named as organic tourism. Organic tourism primarily targets tourists, tours organized for the purpose of health, relaxation activities, agriculture education, culture and gastronomy. The research offers a practical help for farmers, local governors, local people (especially villagers), tour operators and visitors fleeing from the intensity of city life in the light of the findings.

Keywords: Organic tourism, Farm tourism, Food tourism, Sustainable tourism, Tourism destination

Introduction

Tourism is for people who travel, to know different cultures, lodging, eating and drinking, having fun, including activities such as recreational, social, cultural and economic events. All are connected to the natural and cultural resources activity. These resources are very important for human-being; today and tomorrow. It is very important to ensure sustainability. In order to ensure living of human life depends on the presence of sustainable development in all sectors including tourism. A country's natural, cultural, historic resources, social and aesthetic values, essential ecological processes and biological diversity are necessary to prevent damage and ensure sustainability in tourism. In this way, attractiveness of countries will be provided continuously. Sustainable tourism is tourism development that avoids damage to the environment, economy and culture of the locations where it takes place. The aim of sustainable tourism is to ensure a positive experience for local people; tourism companies; and tourists themselves.

Organic tourism can be used as a tool for sustainable development of a destination in minor territory and whole country. Origin of organic tourism comes from ecotourism. Ecotourism is exclusively focused on nature, culture and

farms which are part of this nature and culture. When ecotourism evolves around organic products is referred to organic tourism. Organic farms offer an additional economic resource for environmental farms and their protection. When farms convert its agriculture to organic management and are managed well, it may develop some other connected tourism activities. If organic farms organically managed, they can increase the motivation for tourists' visits. Organic farms can become economically viable if quality products are produced and marketed and income is supplemented by tourism activities, especially in areas of nature and culture. Organic farms are also vital for human health because organic foods are produced without conventional pesticides; fertilizers made with synthetic ingredients or sewage sludge; bioengineering; or ionizing radiation. Before organic foods get to your local supermarket or restaurant must be certified organic, too. Organic farming methods which have also been shown to be for safer environment since there are not any synthetic chemicals, antibiotics and hormones in the production.

Organic tourism is an organic farming system used in tourism business but it is also subject to health and agriculture sectors. Consumers from industrialized countries are increasingly interested in buying food and animal products free of pesticides and other chemicals. Organic tourism is a

good business venture on a working farm which offers lots of activities for visitors such as educational, recreational and fun experiences while generating supplemental income for the owner. Visitors friendly participate in learning activities in natural or agricultural settings. While they are testing organic foods, they also learn and make organic products with fun. It is sure that visitors who experience farm living are more considered with natural and health life afterwards. It is called organic tourism or as some calls agrientertainment, agritainment, or farming tourism. Demand of organic tourism is growing day by day.

In this study, I will concern on the importance of organic farms for human health, environment, business, and welfare of local economy. I will make an assessment on how to use organic farms for tourism purposes. In order to understand the specific subject, I will investigate some applications in Turkey considering and comparing some other applications worldwide.

Theoretical Framework: Organic Tourism within Alternative Tourism Products

Tourism is synthesized from mass and alternative tourism. Mass tourism is characterized by large numbers of people who seek holidays relevant to their culture in popular resort destinations. Alternative tourism is sometimes referred to as “special interest tourism” or “responsible tourism” and it is usually taken to mean alternative forms of tourism which give emphasis on the contact and understanding of inhabitants’ way of living and the local natural environment (Smith & Eadington 1992). Alternative tourism can be broadly defined as “forms of tourism that is made to be friendly to the environment and to respect social and cultural values of the communities, and which allow both hosts and guests to enjoy positive and worthwhile interaction and shared experiences” (Wearing & Neil 2000).

The concept of sustainable tourism creates alternative tourism activities depending on nature named such as nature tourism, agritourism, rural tourism, ecotourism, farm tourism, food tourism and organic tourism. As many terms are used under the rubric of alternative tourism or sustainable tourism, it is needed to analyze the differences between these descriptions:

Nature-based tourism is a type of tourism based on natural attractions of a destination. For instance; trekking, hiking, bicycling, fishing, hunting, camping, visiting parks and forests, caving, stargazing, bird watching, photography etc. Nature provides lots of incentives for local people and tourists who visit a destination. Destinations have habitats and culture for those people and people have the responsibility to conserve all what nature has within the destination. While local people as landowners already live in the destination, experimental tourists are interested in a diversity of these natural and cultural resources here. These people spend their holidays and expect to have amazing experience at the destination with local people, culture, history, gastronomy and

so on. Interest in nature-based tourism is rooted in a growing understanding among landowners that providing recreational opportunities for emerging markets of experiential tourists is another important way to derive economic benefit from the natural resources found on private lands.

Rural tourism can be defined as the “country experience” which encompasses a wide range of attractions and activities that take place in agricultural or non-urban areas. Its essential characteristics include wide-open spaces, low levels of tourism development, and opportunities for visitors to directly experience agricultural and/or natural environments (Irshad 2010). Rural tourism is not just farm-based tourism. It includes farm-based holidays but also comprises special interest nature holidays and ecotourism, as same activities as nature based tourism. Rural tourism is located in rural areas. It is more traditional and cultural. It comprises natural, cultural and historical heritages, village life, organic foods, less developed and small region and small and less modern houses for people and barns for animals. People who live in rural areas deal mostly with agriculture, their life and work place is rural area and whatever they have they supply from nature of rural area. People who visit rural areas for touristic matter wish to visit villages and farms with purpose of enjoyment, education or having experience of rural life. Rural tourism income supports social and economic life of farmers and as well as development of agriculture and villages of rural premises.

Ecotourism is a form of nature-based tourism that strives to be ecologically, socio-culturally, and economically sustainable while providing opportunities for appreciating and learning about the natural environment or specific elements thereof (Weaver 2009). This definition combines three criteria about ecotourism. First, ecotourism is a form of nature-based tourism because the focus of attraction is natural environment (e.g., a rainforest or grassland) or specific components. Secondly, ecotourism emphasizes learning as an outcome of the interaction between eco-tourists and the natural environment. In this way, ecotourism is differentiated from nature-based tourism activities that are more leisure based (such as the classic “3S” vacation of sea, sand, and sun) or those that are adventure oriented (such as trekking, climbing, rafting, etc.).

Honey (2008) also states that “although often equated with nature tourism, ecotourism, properly understood, goes further, striving to respect and benefit protected areas as well as the people living around or on these lands”. With these somewhat opaque definitions in mind, it is important to separate ecotourism from an emerging “greening” of tourism generally. Honey (2008) stresses the additional components of education and experience as essential to ecotourism proper as well as engagement and conservation of nature and environment for local communities, present and future. Ecotourism activities occur in nature area and ventures impact on the lives of people living in, and around, the environments which eco-tourists frequent. Local people share equitably in the benefits emerging from ecotourism activities. Ecotourism therefore created rural entrepreneurship that emerged small rural business and ecotourism contributed to development of

rural regions. Local people, on the other hand, use the earnings for the development of their agriculture business. It should be considered that impact of ecotourism on local people can be seen at the level of social, economic, psychological and political issues. As long as ecotourism is beneficial for regions, interest to ecology and ecotourism will grow.

Farm tourism is a sub-sector of rural tourism and also associated with the agricultural tourism. According to *Roberts and Hall* (2001), farm tourism is one of the five categories of rural tourism, the others being ecotourism, cultural, adventure and activity tourism. The broader sector of rural tourism can be defined as tourism activity in rural areas and has different meanings in different countries. *Hill, D., E. Sunderland, C. O’Cathain and G. Daly* (1996: 50) define rural tourism as “the natural life tourism, through which the customer may access the natural environment as opposed to commercially developed tourist activities and locations”.

Rural tourism has been initiated to satisfy tourists who are seeking healthy, active, relaxing and culturally valid experiences to escape urban crowds and stressful workplaces. The term “farm tourism” is used in some regions or countries with agrotourism or agritourism. Whatever the label, most often it refers to “rural tourism conducted on working farms where the working environment forms part of the product from the perspective of the consumer” (*Roberts and Hall* 2001). Farm tourism may include accommodation, food and beverage outlets, farm visitor centres, galleries and museums, farm shops for products and crafts, guided walks and farm trails, educational visits, farm activities, such as mustering, fruit picking, horse riding and fishing. Farms are managed by the owner/farmer with help from the family household. Tourism is usually secondary to the farm activities.

Agritourism is similar to farm tourism or rural tourism. Agritourism is also known as “agrientertainment,” “agritainment” or “agrotourism.” Agritourism is a business venture on a working farm, ranch or agricultural enterprise that offers educational and fun experiences for visitors while generating supplemental income for the owner (farmer or agricultural producer).

Agritourism can provide learning activities and entertainment to visitors in natural or agricultural settings. It can also provide some benefits to farmer. For instance; cash flow during the off-season, opportunity to sell the “experience” of agricultural venue, opportunity to sell products grown and harvested in farmer’s agricultural operation and opportunity to share farmer’s passion of agriculture with others.

Food-Tourism is an appealing factor in the marketing of different destinations which increases the destination value and prominence. Food can grant success, tranquillity, thrill, status and lifestyle (*idosi.org*).

The term of food includes requirements for both culture and people. It marks social differences and strengthens social bonds. Common to all people; yet it can signify very different things from table to table. Food is a part of customs which shows culture of a community with its customs, beliefs, consumption attitudes and spiritual rituals such as birth, weddings ceremonies etc. Purpose of journeys of some tourists

is the food. They wish to taste flavours that are particular to the destination where they decide to visit. They wish to be involved in these local delicacies and find out the stories behind them. During their journey they will get pleasure to see, hear and taste that entire destination offer them as food tradition. After all, new food routes will be created for new tourists who journey for gastronomic reasons. Food tourism, therefore, considered with gastronomy tourism and culinary tourism which may resemble. Even more, it is considered with wine tourism as well. Since gastronomic tourists experience foods in farms, this form of tourism also can be categorised as sub-sector of farm tourism, too. So it may be said that food tourism cannot be separated from these forms of tourism.

Organic tourism based on agriculture and carries similarities with agritourism. Agritourism helps preserve sustainable nature and rural lifestyles. Organic agriculture is a cultural evolution that finds its origins in an environmentalist culture. Furthermore, the focus on these products is due to demand on healthy foods with high quality standard limiting chemical substances usage. The link of the organic agriculture with agritourism and tourism services is quite clear. Organic tourism is a kind of tourism that brings the visitors in direct contact with agricultural activities at organic farms. They have a considerable role in the future development of rural areas.

Until recently, tourists were looking for comfortable luxury hotels and their locations. Now, they are looking for suitability of natural life rather than stars or luxury of the hotels. This situation has brought a new concept of tourism: *Organic tourism*. Holidaymakers prefer comfortable but simple, clean and unpretentious preferences, while they wish to get up early in the morning and collect tomatoes, cucumbers and peppers from the garden for their breakfast. Holidaymakers now are in search of new expectations. They do not care more about how the hotels promise a lot of fun, how they are comfortable or where they are located but they are more considered about how the hotels have sensitivity to the environment and people. So, they are looking for healthy places to stay, eat and visit. People try to find places to stay, which do not use toxic cleaning products, and organic eateries from restaurants and delis to groceries serving organic foods, location of local farmers markets, and even pesticide-free parks. Organic tourism producers or sellers highlight the term “organic” on their advertising. They guide and suggest to holidaymakers for organic farms, organic foods, organic wineries, natural food markets, eco or green hotels, natural and eco-friendly attractions, and more.

Today, farmers and tourism investors realized that organic farming is a kind of sustainable tourism and also good solution for agricultural development. Organic farming is a farming method without using any pesticides or synthetic fertilizers. The methods that are used are usually centuries old and include crop rotation, using animal manure or compost as fertilizer and natural methods such as plant extracts and mixed cultivation of plants to protect the crops from diseases and harmful insects. The main idea is to promote as much biodiversity as possible, so that the crops are less vulnerable

to any infections. In simple words, if you have a field full of corn and a plant disease or insect that likes corn comes along, your whole crop is doomed. If, on the other hand, you have a field with many different sorts of plants, insects and animals, both cultivated and wild, the chance of a pest affecting you is much smaller. The ecosystem itself will maintain a balance (greencorfu.com).

As organic farming has grown, so has the interest of people in such projects. Many organic farms offer accommodation and food in the farm so that guests can see for themselves and even participate in the farm activities. The food served is also 100% organic and the truth is that food tastes much better if you have gotten your own hands dirty to help produce it! This shows that; not only holidaymakers, but also people who travel for business, conference or other reasons also prefer accommodations which provide organic products. And today not only farms but also five star hotels are applying organic tourism methods. For example, there are more than 200 organic (bio/eco/green) hotels in Italy and tours to Alps of Switzerland and Germany, which are favourite organic tourism destinations. These hotels have five star hotel comforts but the differences from other hotels are; products are 100% organic and staff and belongings are very sensitive to environment (<http://www.turizm.net/turizmde-yeni-trend-dogal-tatil.html>). Some applications of organic hotels use less plastic utensils, not plastic shampoo bottle (both offering glass bottle), tissue paper and plastic bags in the room, not wrapped in a piece of paper and rope connecting and bed linen, curtains, etc. that are made from organic yarn. They purify waste. They are careful to use water and energy wastes are avoided. Today's holidaymakers, businessmen realizes the importance of having and using organic life and therefore investments in the organic tourism is growing and demand to attendance of organic tourism too.

The Effects of Organic Agriculture to Human Health and Environment

“Organic” is defined by the USDA (United States Department of Agriculture) as food produced by farmers who emphasize the use of renewable resources and the conservation of soil and water to enhance environmental quality for future generations. Organic meat, poultry, eggs, and dairy products must come from animals that are given no antibiotics or growth hormones. Organic food is produced without using most conventional pesticides; fertilizers made with synthetic ingredients or sewage sludge; bioengineering; or ionizing radiation. (usda.gov).

Organic agriculture is growing very rapidly in industrialized countries as consumers are increasingly interested in buying food free of pesticides and other chemicals. But it may have its most important application in developing countries, particularly as the costs of fossil fuels, and the fertilizers and pesticides derived from them, continue to escalate, and as we enter a world where droughts are increasingly common and where water for irrigation is at a premium.

Organic agricultural methods are internationally regulated and legally enforced by many nations, based in large part on the standards set by the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM), an international umbrella organization for organic farming organizations established in 1972 (Paull 2010). The USDA National Organic Standards Board (NOSB) definition is “Organic agriculture is an ecological production management system that promotes and enhances biodiversity, biological cycles and soil biological activity. It is based on minimal use of off-farm inputs and on management practices that restore, maintain and enhance ecological harmony.” (Gold 2014). Lampkin (1999) also defines organic farming as “a viable, environmentally and socially sustainable method of agricultural production” using no synthetic chemical fertilizers or pesticides. Reliance on external inputs is extremely reduced while maximum use is made of farm-derived resources and natural products and processes are employed for plant nutrition and pest control. The same principles are applied to livestock breeding and rearing practices where animal welfare is safeguarded. Moreover, organic farming provides consumers with quality products that are healthy, have natural flavours and fragrances, and contain no harmful residues while contributing to maintain and enhance soil fertility and biodiversity.

Organic farms work in harmony with nature rather than against it. Farmers use techniques to achieve good crop yields without harming the natural environment or the people who live and work in it. These methods are used for preserve natural resources and biodiversity, support animal health and welfare, provide access to the outdoors so that animals can exercise their natural behaviours, receive annual onsite inspections, separate organic food from non-organic food, to keep and build good soil structure and fertility, to control pests, diseases and weeds, careful use of water resources and good animal husbandry.

One of the most significant expositions of the aims and principles of organic farming is that presented in the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements basic standards for production and processing (IFOAM, 1998); these are presented in *Table 1*. As the statement makes clear, the scope of the principles extends beyond simple biophysical aspects to matters of justice and responsibility.

The Effects of Organic Agriculture to Sustainable Development of Tourism Destinations

One of the important functions of tourism is food and beverage products and services. People now also travel just for purpose of having experience of food culture of the destination. If this gastronomic purpose of travel reaches healthy, enjoyable and comfortable original products and services, it might be considered as an organic product and service which travellers have always been looking for. Gastronomic tourists are more interested in health and healthy eating and drinking while they are travelling. They desire to experience different culinary culture, eating fresh, organic and healthy local foods. Some

of them especially visit the destination to have experience of local tastes as well as participate to production and/or cooking the foods what they eat. Someone who may participate in one or more culinary or wine activity, other may collect to tomatoes, peppers, cucumber for their own breakfast. During their visits to the destination they may involve in driving on a wine trail, gourmet food shopping, or dining out in a local restaurants or hosted by a local resident. Their common expectations are; having a unique and memorable experience while trying the good food and beverages.

Table 1. The principle aims of organic production and processing

To produce food of high quality in sufficient quantity.
To interact in a constructive and life-enhancing way with natural systems and cycles.
To consider the wider social and ecological impact of the organic production and processing system.
To encourage and enhance biological cycles within the farming system, involving microorganisms, soil
Flora and fauna, plants and animals.
To develop a valuable and sustainable aquatic ecosystem.
To maintain and increase long term fertility of soils.
To maintain the genetic diversity of the production system and its surroundings, including the protection of plant and wildlife habitats.
To promote the healthy use and proper care of water, water resources and all life therein.
To use, as far as possible, renewable resources in locally organised production systems.
To create a harmonious balance between crop production and animal husbandry.
To give all livestock conditions of life with due consideration for the basic aspects of their innate behaviour.
To minimise all forms of pollution.
To process organic products using renewable resources.
To produce fully biodegradable organic products.
To produce textiles which are long-lasting and of good quality.
To allow everyone involved in organic production and processing a quality of life which meets their basic needs and allows an adequate return and satisfaction from their work, including a safe working environment.
To progress toward an entire production, processing and distribution chain which is both socially just and ecologically responsible.

Source: IFOAM (1998)

Food and beverage is important products for visitors who wish to taste and experience local one. Tourism establishments of tourist destinations therefore are serving especially local organic food and beverages as an important tourist attraction and enhances or putting it central to visitor experience.

Gastronomy/Culinary tourism is an alternative touristic attraction for the destinations. It can differentiate the destination from others. If the local people and management support agriculture at the destination, the destination's image and brand value through produced organic products may increase.

Other benefits of organic agriculture to development of destinations are:

- Organic product producers or firms will be well-known in both home country and international.
- Export of organic products will increase and foreign

exchange earnings will be achieved. In this way, the people and the country's share of national income and wealth levels will rise.

- Due to organic products; competitiveness of companies will increase sales, profits and market share in international markets; so this will make contribution to the national economy.
- Producers and sellers of organic product will gain international brand, so the region will be well-known in international market. Some gastronomic tourists may be expected to be travelled to the region as well.
- Agricultural products according to their types, which generally depend on and consist water inside, with organic production, will avoid some corruption and devaluation of productions, so producers will increase their earnings.
- Agriculture sector is such a outdoor factory, production is limited in spring, summer and autumn months only. Farmers are able to work during these months. Organic agriculture can provide new business opportunities for a longer time period, is a great contribution of organic agriculture in employment.

Organic Tourism in The World and in Turkey

Organic tourism depends on organic agriculture. Organic agriculture refers both health of human and welfare of local business. From this point, organic agriculture or organic tourism both has same responsibilities and therefore together with tourism which can be called as responsible tourism are the fastest growing sectors in the world. Organic agriculture studies were started professionally by IFOAM (International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements) first in Germany in 1972. IFOAM is the first in the world that defines the rules for the organic production. The first legal regulations in the European Union (EU) took effect in 1991.

According to developments in organic agriculture around the world, as far as demand is concerned, a new genre of tourists (gastronomic tourists) has emerged. For example; the main sources of gastronomic tourists are Europe and North America, with the largest populations coming from the United States, France, Italy, Germany, Spain, the Netherlands, and the UK. In Wales, at least 150 organic producers are involved in some form of agri-tourism offering accommodation and meals with local and/or organic produce and frequently providing employment opportunities for local people (Wacher 2007).

The US government has implemented several regional and state-wide development projects to increase the effectiveness of rural tourism/farm activities. The Australian and UK governments have also offered a wide range of products and services to promote tourism in the rural areas (agric.gov.ab.ca). Some destinations in tourism world has brand image connected to gastronomic values. Since organic agriculture is grown sector, organic tourism is developed in Australia, Argentina, USA, Brazil, Spain, China, Italy, Germany, Uruguay and France. Some other countries like Greece, Poland, Portugal,

Belgium, Austria, Peru, Mexico, Chile, Peru, Indonesia, Bali, New Zealand, Japan, Malaysia, South Africa and Singapore is also important rural tourism destinations in the world. It is significant, for example, that the Mediterranean diet of Spain, Greece, Italy and Morocco was included in UNESCO's list of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in November 2010 (UNWTO, 2012).

Culinary tourist segment is now viewed by governments and alternative tourism producers. Studies have documented the strong impact that food experiences can have on local economies (Richards, 2012):

Italy: *The Wine Tourism Observatory found that the average wine tourist spent almost EUR 200 per day in 2010, higher than the EUR 55 per day that the average domestic Italian tourist spent. The five million Italians who engage in wine tourism in Italy generated up to EUR 5 billion in 2010.*

Ireland: *In 2009, EUR 2 billion was spent on food and drink by tourists, with food and drink representing 36 percent of total visitor expenditures. Overseas visitors accounted for 60 percent of the total.*

Barcelona, Spain: *Around 30 percent of tourism-related expenditures in Barcelona are towards cuisine. The importance of food led to Barcelona's Year of Gastronomy in 2005 and 2006, where over 300 activities were developed for tourists.*

Ontario, Canada: *In 2010 the food sector in Ontario had annual sales of CAD 22.5 billion and employed 404,000 individuals. Of the annual sales, tourists spent almost CAD 2 billion on food and drink, with "deliberate culinary tourists" accounting for almost 50 percent of that."*

Organic tourism has been developed all around the world according to agricultural development and sustainable tourism targets of governments. Italy (Rocky Italian vineyards at Mountain ranches), Taiwan (island's tea plantations), Mallorca (luxury farmhouses in the middle of orange or fig groves), Grenada (the place of nutmeg, mace, cloves, cinnamon and turmeric within organic farms with Caribbean-based farm experience), Brazil (developing farm-based economy), Hawaii (coffee plantations in the Big Island's Kona region and organic farms on the island of Oahu), California (wineries and vineyards of the Central Coast and Sonoma areas) and Philippines (huge pineapple plantation, orchid farms, bee farms and exotic tropical produce such as dragon fruit or papaya) are some important organic tourism destinations in the world.

Despite popular agritourism destinations mentioned above, there are some other important countries in Europe should be considered within alternative tourism as well. Hungarian, Romanian, Austrian, German, Poland, Greece and Turkish farmhouses have been greatly developed in agritourism that may be connected to organic agriculture. Agritourism has been popular in these countries with their organic foods, traditions and cultures.

Ecotourism is growing in Turkey parallel to world ecotourism. It constitutes around USD 77 billion of the travel and tourism industry's global revenue and is continuously growing. Turkey has great potential for ecotourism since it is

not only a natural peninsula but also 26% of its land is covered in forest (UNWTO, 2012). Turkish villages take important part for development of ecotourism and accordingly ecotourism protects Turkish villages by adhering to local customs and supporting the local economy. The Ministry of Culture and Tourism and The Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Livestock are developing strategies to attract more visitors for rural tourism activities. There are many organic farms in Antalya, Burdur, İzmir, Datça, Bozcaada and in several other locations that host visitors.

One of the alternative holiday places preferred by tourists are ecological farms in a decade. Many regions of Turkey has these kinds of farms that provides vacation to all who prefers having ecological life experiences whether they can live for a while in the farm either voluntarily guest or customer. Volunteers perform unconditionally farm works like hoeing, collecting fruits or vegetables, milking the cow, etc. without any payment to the owner of the farm on the contrary customers have to pay fee for their performances and accommodations in the farms.

Regarding to vacations in the farms; a well known project in Turkey is "Eco- and Voluntary Knowledge and Skills Exchange on Organic Farms", organized by Bugday Association for Supporting Ecological Living. This project is called as TATUTA in Turkey which is the official member of ECEAT (European Centre for Ecological and Agricultural Tourism) for Turkey, the national WWOOF (World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms) organization of Turkey, and an accredited EVS (European Voluntary Service- Supporting Youth Actions in Europe) organization. TATUTA project is combined with organic farms for the reason of tourism in Turkey. WWOOF is a worldwide movement linking volunteers with organic farmers and growers to promote cultural and educational experiences based on trust and nonmonetary exchanges helping to build a sustainable global community. WWOOFing is voluntary help in exchange for food, accommodation and learning opportunities in organic farming. Volunteers collaborate on the farm with their labor, knowledge, and/or experience for the duration of their stay. It is also possible to stay in the farm as a guest. Guests give monetary support directly (without intermediary) to the farm to compensate the host farm regarding accommodation and rendered services. Guests are not required to work.

This system is supposed to pay the membership fee is 30 Euro/person for those who want to vacation in all the farms (89 farms by October 2014) in Turkey and online directory for one year. If not paid any money to be made as a volunteer vacation, about 30 Euro payments per day compared to those who wish to make the holiday as a guest ranch. Organic tourist season is between March and November. However, the period of each farm's hospitality is different. Some farms accept the guests in the first four months of the year and some of them all year. Only organic farms can be member of TATUTA projects. There are criteria for being the member of TATUTA project. These farms have to suitable for organic farming system and architecture as well as having/producing organic products. Farmers can generate extra income by opening their homes/

farms to tourists/guests. There has to be accommodation or space for the visitors. They can independently do farm works or incorporate into the TATUTA project. Farmers do not have to pay for the project but they have to do some investment for organisation and establishments of the farms for the guests' comfort. The Farms which are suitable for organic tourism are shown in *Table 2*:

Table 2. Distribution of Organic Farms According to Regions in Turkey

Regions	Total Farms
Black Sea	27
Aegean	22
Mediterranean	14
Marmara	13
Central Anatolia	6
Eastern Anatolia	6
South-eastern Anatolia	1

Source: (tatuta.org)

Launched in 2004, TaTuTa has grown considerably. In 2011, overnight volunteers and guests increased from 2,822 to 3,035, and the total amount of overnight stays over its lifetime has reached 10,673. The majority of visitors hail from the US, Turkey, and the UK, with a firm representation from Germany, France, Canada, Australia, Holland, Austria, China, Czech Republic, and Brazil, among others. Visitors prefer mostly North, East and South regions of Turkey for farms. At West; Muğla's district of Fethiye, Datca, Marmaris, Ida Mountains (Kaz Dağları) which is located on the outskirts of Edremit Bay and its surroundings, at South; the springs and the region of Antalya, in the western Black Sea Region; villages of Istanbul, cities of Kastamonu, Bolu, Düzce, and Sakarya, in the eastern Black Sea region; the cities of Samsun, Ordu, Rize, Giresun, Trabzon and Artvin are not only ecological structure, are also preferred destinations for cultural trips.

Methodology

This study conducts qualitative research method. Interview technique on site is used to gather data. The study also employs literature information, such as catalogues, brochures, information books, and internet regarding the organic/ecological/sustainable/destination tourism. The research does not tend to explain numeric data. The results are supplemented by semi-structured interviews.

Semi-structured interview method is commonly used method by researchers since it is applicable to many research questions. Semi-structured interviews are preceded by observation, informal and unstructured interviews. Representatives of farms were involved in the study and observation during visiting farms and villages were also helpful to see organic tourism applications. Thrace region (part of European continent) of Turkey was chosen as research area where agriculture and

livestock breeding is the main economic potential. Some farmers in the region have already been involved in tourism by renting a room to the visitors in their farm and selling organic products such as wine, fruit juice, olive oil, oil, yoghurt, cheese, honey, egg, meat, fermented sausage, sunflower, home-made bread, vegetables and fruits, etc.

Total six farms which are using organic farming methods and related to tourism activities are visited. Two of six is same as TaTuTa farms which are professionally dealing with organic farming, producing and selling organic products and renting farm houses to visitors. Palivor Farm has farm houses in the natural parts of Demirköy, Kırklareli, Turkey. Visitors rent a house and experiencing farm life as well as enjoying visiting natural environment during their stay in Palivor Farm. Palivor Farm is producing organic products and selling them in the organic product store in the farm. Visitors may tend to join activities such as natural photography, bird watching, hiking, riding, off-road, the bike tour, hunting. Food and beverages are unique gastronomy experience. Visitors are coming to Palivor for health and such reasons as getting pleasure from nature and on the other hand, owner of the Palivor Farm is also satisfied with the business they are running. Other farms, organic product producers and sellers and village people around the Palivor Farm are also hopeful for growing business.

Arcadia Vineyards is another big farm making natural and unique wines that reflect the mountainous region called Strandjas of Northern Thrace of Turkey. Farm is using organic production methods for wine production. Arcadia wines are all made from estate-grown fruit. In 35 hectares of vineyard we grow nine different types of grape: Cabernet Sauvignon, Cabernet Franc, Merlot, Sauvignon Blanc, Sauvignon Gris, Sangiovese, Pinot Gris, Öküzgözü and Narince. Arcadia Vineyards is open to public throughout the season. The tour event of Arcadia includes walks in the vineyards, visit to the winery, tasting and a pleasant and relaxing dinner in the Gazebo by the lake. The menu has been prepared to be an elegant expression of the local and gourmet tastes. Arcadia opens an agro hotel to activate farm/agro tourism with organic grape and wine production. All products of the hotel will be organic and all equipments will be compatible with nature. Hotel plans to open its doors to eco-tourists in summer 2015.

Other small farms are doing organic tourism unplanned ways. Their main job is farming however they always are producing more than adequate of organic foods (special local foods) and beverages (including fresh milk, fruit juice and wines) and collecting vegetables and fruits for the purpose of sales for visitors of their villages. Owner of the small farms all agree that they need sponsor and/or grant from Government to grow and innovate their farm business.

Results and discussion

Many farmers have turned into organic farming than conventional ones. The reasons that may come into mind first is pollution of soil, water and air as well as the increasing prominence of medication in the performance of agriculture.

However, while being economically more profitable, to be a good method of seizing the many opportunities have also been making organic farming more attractive. Organic farming may strengthen local economy, create job opportunities and new business, and as a result make great contribution to development of region. Governments today promote much more organic farming since it is not only essential for people's health, but also the development of regions and protecting the environment. People are now looking for organic products to consume and are interested in organic agriculture which may be the reason of creation of organic tourism, too.

Privitera (2010) highlighted the special characteristics of organic agritourism enterprises compared to traditional ones. Study indicates that the development and expansion of an agritourism sector, in particular organic, may be one alternative for improving the incomes and potential economic viability of small farms and rural communities, but it is by no means a remedy for all farms looking for additional income. This consideration could highlight chances and differences of this type of tourism. Changes in agricultural methods and needs of consumers will lead experimental and wonder to subculture of gastronomy. People will wish to join gastronomy tours for healthy food and consuming it where it has been produced. In any case, organic agriculture will create attractiveness and will cause trips to destination. Organic agriculture can contribute simultaneously to rural development and tourism as well as prevention of gastronomic culture and environment.

People are travelling for the reason which is memorable experience. Some of them chose gastronomy or rural tourism or other types of tourism. Many people are interested in visiting a working farm and having an "on farm" experience. As a result, growing number of farms have chosen to add elements of tourism to their operations. Some common examples of agriculture tourism include corn mazes, horse riding and pick-your-own operations. Considering the growing and more sophisticated demands of people, farmers are using organic agriculture in their farms. While people want to have memorable farm experience with healthy life style during their stay, farmers, on the other hand, are earning money by presenting healthy food, accommodation, activities to visitors. Beneficiaries of organic tourism are not only for farmers and visitors. Its utmost contribution is to local destination and its residents. Its structural, technical and commercial aspects to destination are as important as its contribution to people's health. Organic farming, on the other hand, is an important method for prevention of environment for healthy generation. Finally, organic tourism is related to implications of organic farming, will contribute to rural development, i.e. innovation, conservation, participation and integration. We should never forget that organic products have to be consumed for healthy generations.

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