

In his article 'The Real Cost of Cheap Food' Bryan Walsh breaks the point of the quality and quantity of food, which can be bought very cheaply as well as revises two large food chains: conventional and organic. The modern tendency in USA is awful, because agricultural industry is able to produce unlimited quantities of meat and grains at relatively cheap prices. The article is aimed at depicting the evolution of farming in America, consisting of three parts. The first paragraph is introductory one and the second stands for criticizing the conventional farming, which serves as the basis for strong argument to support organic farming in the third part. According to Walsh, organic food is generally considered to be more sustainable than conventional food.

He uses inductive approach by presenting clear and strong argument in the first paragraph, depicting the entire evolution of raising pigs in American farms with the linkage to meat production that has greatly contributed to the obesity epidemics, affecting more than two-thirds of population. To sound even more persuasive, the author intentionally explains the impact of the production techniques and processes on the environment, providing the examples of water pollution in Mississippi River and the Gulf of Mexico. Additionally, Walsh speaks about animals and humans, who suffer from this production: animals are raised under poor conditions and are finally killed; humans are affected by the low quality of meat, which can induce a lot of diseases. "The way we farm now is destructive of the soil, the environment and us" and this is exactly stated fact in the article (Walsh 2009, p. 2).

The structural organization of the article is good. The author divides all paragraphs into equal parts, each containing precise facts and specific examples. This speaks volumes of the profound consideration of information and scientific data before writing this article. In each part of his article, Walsh is noticed to use inductive technique, discussing specific issues and drawing the logical conclusion in the end. The information and way of its presenting are rather appealing and convincing, which makes us be sure that article is persuasive. The author is very strong in terms of using various statistical data like sums of money, percentages and other numbers in order to provide more powerful evidence for his argument and supporting ideas. The author's point of view is also supported by means of using the rhetoric questions like "So what's wrong with cheap food and

cheap meat?” or “So what can we do?”. He is targeted to ask not only himself, but also the reader so that the general audience understands the overall message and comes to the certain conclusion. In addition, he succeeds in providing objective truth, because he grounds his ideas upon the specifically quoted words of the interviewed people. This way, placing the quotation of Bill Wolf, he gets to know about the tendency linked to growth of organic food market and the huge demand for it.

The remarkable success of corn in terms of farming has led to the breakthrough in production techniques. According to Pollan and his *Omnivore’s Dilemma* approximately eighty percent of products in America are corn-based. Many fast-food eateries attract people because of pleasant and comfortable interior, courtesy of the staff, speed of service, bright packaging, promotions, and various toys for children. A huge amount of advertising around us, which shows us a big juicy burger or fried until golden brown potatoes, compels us to be tempted to visit the fast food restaurant. That is why, few people think about the fact that the true composition and harm is hiding behind a delicious meal from the images of fast food (Cox 2011).

Bryan Walsh believes that conventional farming food is dangerous in terms of its poor production techniques. Despite the fact that the cattle is kept in prison-like conditions with no space to move, the amount of waste goes in open-air lagoons. Respectively, in case of heavy downpours the nearby rivers and lakes can be easily contaminated (Walsh 2009, p. 3). The problem is even more complicated by the fact that American federal government fosters the fertility of land and provides essential funds for buying and using fertilizers and other chemicals. This way, the conventional farming turns into business area, where pharmaceutical and chemical industries prosper. To be more precise, the author lists the example that the overuse of antibiotics on farm animals leads to antibiotic-resistant bacteria, infecting both animals and humans.

Although the organic farming is considered to develop the idea of sustainable agriculture, almost 56% of Americans do not fully understand what the phrase ‘organically grown’ means (Ronald 2008). If to believe the stereotype, organic food is thought to be grown only fifty percent healthy. The highly-productive industrial model almost completely destroyed most of the rural and

family farms in America. That is why, very few farms are the entirely biological systems influenced by ecology and weather. Additionally, industrial methods of production badly affect the quality of soil and water, which causes the loss of biodiversity through monoculture production. And the author is prone to praise organic food, though both food chains are targeted to save the petroleum reserves and not to be engaged in pollution. The fact remains to be obvious: organic food is much pricier than conventional one, because it is associated with health and nutrients (Walsh 2009, p. 2). Due to the fact that the soil is exhausted, the price of oil increases and the global warming is expected to influence us in the nearest future. Bryan Walsh predicts that the industrial style of food production is destined to failure sooner or later.

In the final part of his article Bryan Walsh uses strong ideas to contrast the hazardous conventional farming. He starts with the placement of precise example of Niman's seaside ranch, which is considered to be a heaven when compared to hellish conventional farms. It is the example of how cattle should be kept. First of all, the spouse, which is in charge of rancho, periodically spreads hay from the truck so that the cattle has something to eat for a long period of time. Secondly, the grass is green and specially grown for animals (Walsh 2009, p. 4). Third, all the animals are given enough care during their three years of living there. So, organic farming tends to be more favorable in terms of raising animals, because it is based upon the effective model, which combines care, open air conditions and does not use chemicals and drugs. This model is seen to go far beyond organic food, attracting many customers in America.

Due to huge increase in food production, a lot of farmers neglect to grow healthy food, being exclusively interested in raising money. This way, the quality suffers and the quantity prospers. As the result of such unhealthy food consumption, people are noticed to suffer from cancer, obesity and to have some birth defects. It is impossible not to accept Walsh's conclusion at the end. It is recommended to use only organic food if possible, because it is usually grown under good natural conditions, where few chemicals and pesticides are used. If we choose to eat healthy organic food, we will become less prone to diseases and our nation will become even stronger. The best way to improve current situation at times of a strong market competition between organic and conventional

food is to establish the networks of small-scale farmers who need to work with their local farming-communities, but not corporations (Walsh 2009, p. 5). It is clear that it will aid each organic farm to earn the customer loyalty, resulting in increasing annual profits.

## Works cited

Cox, Jeff. *The Hazards of Conventional Agriculture*. 2011. Conventional Agriculture Hazards.

<http://www.ecomii.com/food/conventional-agriculture-hazards>

Ronald, Pamela, Admachak, Raoul. *Tomorrow's Table: Organic Farming, Genetics and the Future of Food*. 2008 Oxford University Press.

Walsh, Bryan. *Getting Real About the High Price of Cheap Food*.

<http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1917726,00.html>