Exploring Lost Appetites for Organics

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Sustainable Food
Organic Market

Growing in most areas despite the GFC
- Australia AUD947 million pa (Mitchell et al 2010)
  - Grown over 50% in last 2 years
- US – USD 23 billion pa (Sahota 2010)
- Europe USD 26 billion pa (Sahota 2010)
  - Largest in the world
- Growth predicted to slow in some areas

- 1% heavy users (Lockie et al 2002) but most are occasional users
- UK Soil Association (2010) reports 9% households account for 56% of market
### ‘Switchers’

- **CONVENTIONAL SHOPPERS**
- TRIGGERS TO CHANGE BEHAVIOUR
- NOT INTERESTED (remain conventional shoppers)
- ORGANIC SWITCHERS (consumers that switch between organic and conventional food)
- DEDICATED ORGANIC USERS

(LAPSED HEAVY USERS)

### Methodology

- **Aim** to understand and explore the 60% of people that switch between organic and conventional
- **Grounded theory** – in depth interviews
- **21 research participants**
  - Buy at least 3 organic items per week but not the majority of food as organic
  - Rural and urban
  - Spread of household demographics
...I guess once we had children and things got pretty busy and there was – yeah, possibly more came from the supermarket than going to different sort of shops to buy organic stuff
Elizabeth

...when my kids were little and I had more time I wasn’t working or anything. Sam

I’ve lived with the same person now, my friend, for the last 3 years and in the last year or so we’ve taken to going food shopping together... I’d probably tend to buy more expensive food and tend to buy organic... but he is cost conscious. Mary
Lapsed Heavy Users

Guilt

Guilt ridden I suppose. It’s out of guilt. I don’t want to feed poison to my kids...silly I suppose Sam

Importance of this segment

- Previously unidentified group
  - 3 out of 21 lapsed heavy users
- Change their behaviour when considered heavy users (die hard / committed)
- Is this a segment worth researching?
  - Organic Industry needs to know
    - Once committed organic user ≠ always committed organic user
- Further research required


