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# **The Japanese Market for Organic Fruit and Vegetables**

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree  
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## **Abstract**

This thesis reports the results of a study conducted in 1997 concerning Japanese consumers' awareness and consumption of organic fruit and vegetables, and their attitudes towards organic produce, food imports in general, and New Zealand in particular, as a supplier of organic produce. The study involved a self-completion survey of 998 Japanese consumers, a further 22 personal interviews with both consumers and people in the food industry, and observations of the retailing and merchandising of organic produce in Japan.

Despite difficulties associated with the Japanese organic market, the study concludes that there is continued potential in Japan for New Zealand organic exporters. There is a significant niche market in Japan for higher priced organic produce, although the price premiums achieved appear to limit the size of this market. New Zealand organic exporters must emphasise the safety of their product, and ensure that certification labelling and explanations are clear and comprehensive. The healthiness, taste, and freshness of the produce are also important points to emphasise in packaging or promotional materials.

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