Wellbeing at work among kitchen workers during organic food conversion in Danish public kitchens: a longitudinal survey - DTU Orbit (03/04/2019)

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Background: In 2011, the Danish Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Fisheries launched the Danish Organic Action Plan 2020 intending to double the organic agricultural area in Denmark. This study aims to measure experienced physical and psychological wellbeing at work along with beliefs and attitudes among kitchen workers before and after participating in educational training programmes in organic food conversion. Method: This longitudinal study applied an online self-administered questionnaire among kitchen workers before and after the implementation of an organic food conversion programme with 1-year follow-up. The study targeted all staff members in the participating public kitchens taking part in the organic food conversion process funded by the Danish Organic Action Plan 2020. Results: Of the 448 eligible kitchen workers, 235 completed the questionnaire at baseline (52%) and 149 at follow-up (63% of those surveyed at baseline). No substantive differences between baseline and follow-up measurements of organic food conversion were detected on physical or psychological wellbeing at work. Kitchen workers reported a significant improvement in the perceived food quality, motivation to work and application of nutritional guidelines. Reported organic food percentages for the kitchens also increased significantly (P < 0.001) and a shift from using ready-made food products to producing more food from base was indicated. Conclusion: Within 1 year, a significant increase in motivation to work among kitchen staff was observed with no substantive changes in physical or psychological wellbeing at work identified. The results support the Danish Organic Action Plan 2020 and initiatives of similar kind.

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