

Lessons from research

Values, motivations and perceptions of farmers along the transition

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DG Agri EU Commission, 15th of February 2024



Comparison of goals between certified organic vs. conventional farmers

- Compare the types of goals and values that motivate organic and conventional farmers in their choice of farming system
- Comparison also made across three country case studies: France, Sweden and Ireland

Characteristics used by farmers to qualify their choice of farming system

- France:

Conventional: **Sustainable approach, diversified practices**, less restrictive, progressive, use of chemical inputs



Sustainable approach, diversified practices, technical, low-intensive, adapted to social demand, premium.

- Ireland :

Conventional: Suited to farm context, traditional, local supply chain



Sustainable approach, self-sufficient, soil composition, environmental

- Sweden:

Conventional: Suited to farm context, less restrictive, precision, use of chemicals, in contrast to organic farming



Sustainable approach, naturally raised animals, no use of chemicals, environmental

What goals drive farmers to farm organic vs. conventional?

- Results indicate that both **economic** goals and **non-economic** goals drive conventional and organic farmers' decision.
- Organic farmers: Economic goals include, “**maintaining the business**”, “**earning a living**”, “**ensure production**”, “**fewer costs**” as well as more social motives such as “**morality**”, “**care for others**” and “**prove the value of organic farming**”
- Conventional farmers: motivated by non-economic goals such as “**preserving traditions**”, “**morality**”, “**think about future generations**”, “**sense of community**” and “**supporting family**” and economic values “**earning a living**”, “**fewer costs**”, “**being autonomous**” and “**ensure production**”

What goals drive farmers to farm organic vs. conventional?

- However, a same goal between organic and conventional farmers can be achieved in different ways :

- Suited to farm context or Efficiency → **Ensure production** (conventional)

Vs. Soil composition → **Ensure production** (organic)

- Quality feed (through fertilizers) → **Animal welfare** (conventional)

Vs. Quality feed or Naturally raised or Less chemical inputs → **Animal welfare** (organic)

- Efficiency → **Free up time** (conventional)

Vs. Technical → Avoid constraints → **Free up time** (organic)

- Ensure production → **Sustainability** (conventional)

Vs. Avoid dependency or good environmental impact → **Sustainability** (organic)

What values drive farmers to farm organic vs. conventional?

- **Abstract values:** both of **personal** and **social** type
- Conventional farmers: divided between personal type of values such as “**personal development**”, “**pride**”, “**sense of achievement**” and social types of values such as “**societal security**”.
- Organic farmers: value both personal values such as “**life quality**”, “**lifestyle**”, “**satisfaction**” and social values in regard to “**societal security**”, “**holistic view**”.
- Both conventional and organic farmers share the abstract value of “**life quality**”, “**societal security**”, “**security**”, “**pride**”, and “**joy**”

Some perceived barriers

- Quotes from Swedish respondents with conventional production:
 - **Organic is not necessarily sustainable:** "Ecological farming as done within KRAV perspectives is contradictory in regard to sustainability"; "Ecological is not only what is KRAV certified"; "Why pay an extra cost for something that does not provide additional value"
 - "Circumstantial necessity to use conventional methods as KRAV-criteria fulfillment would not be feasible"
 - "Expensive to be KRAV-certified"
 - "Certification would reduce flexibility to use certain production methods"
- Emphasize the value of other ecological practices than organic farming for environmental sustainability ?

Key message

- The identified values and goals → promotion/marketing of perceived benefits of organic farming which are **economic, social and environmental** → can be mirrored with conventional farming in order to encourage conventional farmers to make the switch and increase uptake of organic farming.

LIFT: Low-Input Farming and Territories

- Integrating knowledge for improving ecosystem-based farming -

COORDINATED BY:



PARTNERS:



IRWIR PAN



This work is part of the LIFT ('Low-Input Farming and Territories – Integrating knowledge for improving ecosystem-based farming') project that has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 770747.



www.lift-h2020.eu



Additional material

Approach taken

- We interviewed: **48 certified-organic farmers** including 19 farmers from Sweden, 15 from Ireland and 6 from France
- & **50 conventional farmers** including 20 farmers from Sweden, 13 from Ireland and 5 from France.
- Targeted farms: mixed-farming
 - During interviews, farmers were asked to list 5 characteristics of their farming system that led them to choose this type of production
 - From each characteristics, respondent was asked a series of probes: “Why is that important to you?” → sets of linkages between characteristics, consequences and the associated values

Farmers' types of reasoning

- Conventional farmers' reasoning do not often reach abstract terminal/instrumental values as much as organic farmers do. They sometimes tend to end their reasoning based on explicit economic motivations such as “having less costs”, “make best use of resources”, or to “free up time”.
- Organic farmers: more complex train of thoughts with long chains of different motives & sometimes circular chains → organic farmers are more reflective on their activity

What goals drive farmers to farm organic vs. conventional?

- Nevertheless, conventional farmers identified more numerous and wider type of **economic** motives to justify their choice of farming system while in the case of organic farmers, they were of **non-economic** type (**social, lifestyle, environmental**).
- Conventional goals: Optimize, Avoid more work, Being flexible

VS

- Organic goals: Health, Preserve finite resources, Contribute to natural life cycle, Resilience

Results

Differences among countries?

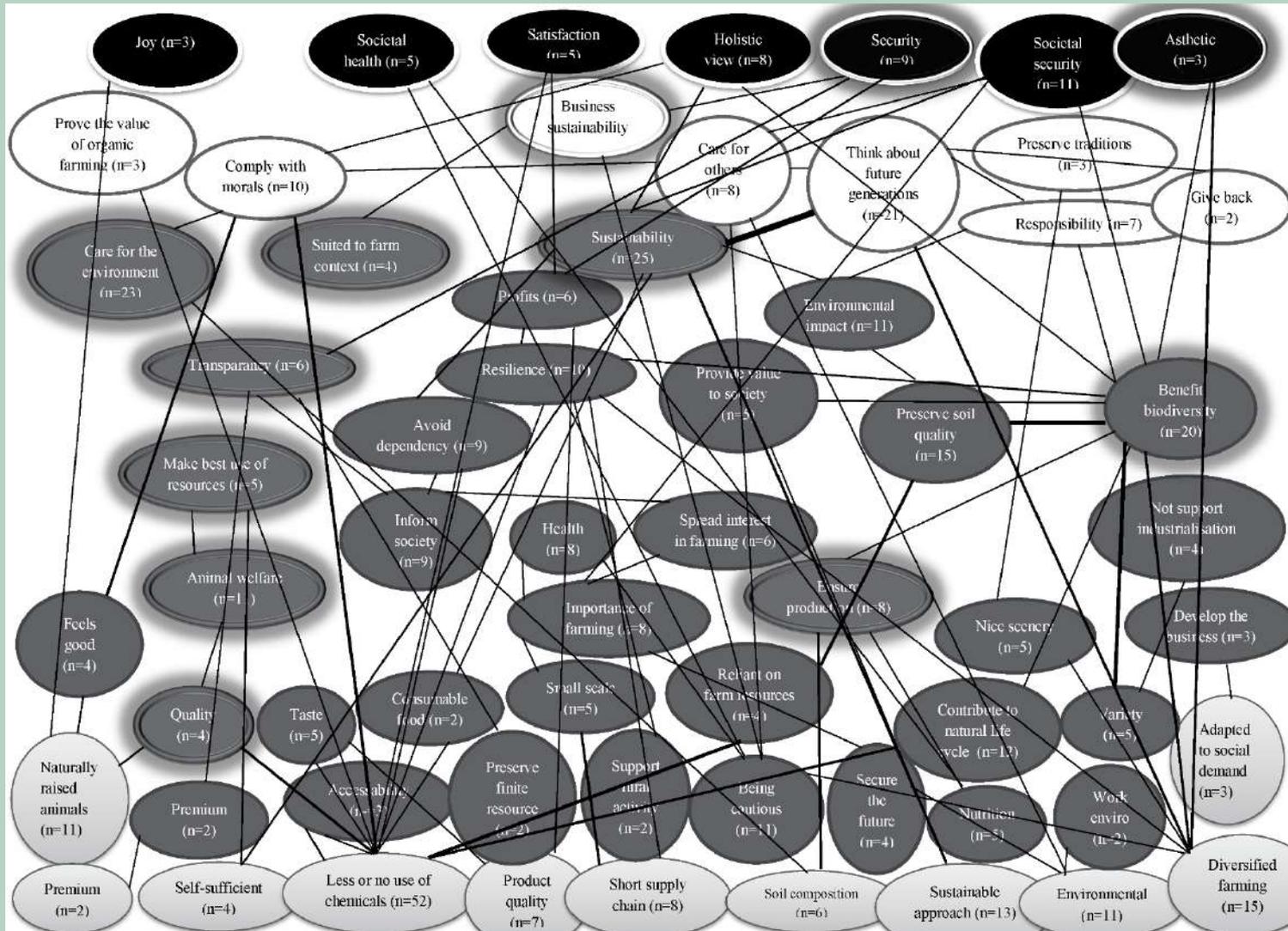
- Irish respondents:
 - Conventional: traditions and inheritance + "not meny driven";
Organic: "profits" center reasoning
- French repondents: "quality" → both for conventional and organic
- Swedish respondents with conventional production → tended to justify why they were not certified organic:
 - "Ecological farming as done within KRAV perspectives is contradictory in regard to sustainability"; "Ecological is not only what is KRAV certified"
 - "Circumstantial necessity to use conventional methods as KRAV-criteria fulfillment would not be feasible"
 - "Expensive to be KRAV-certified"

Results

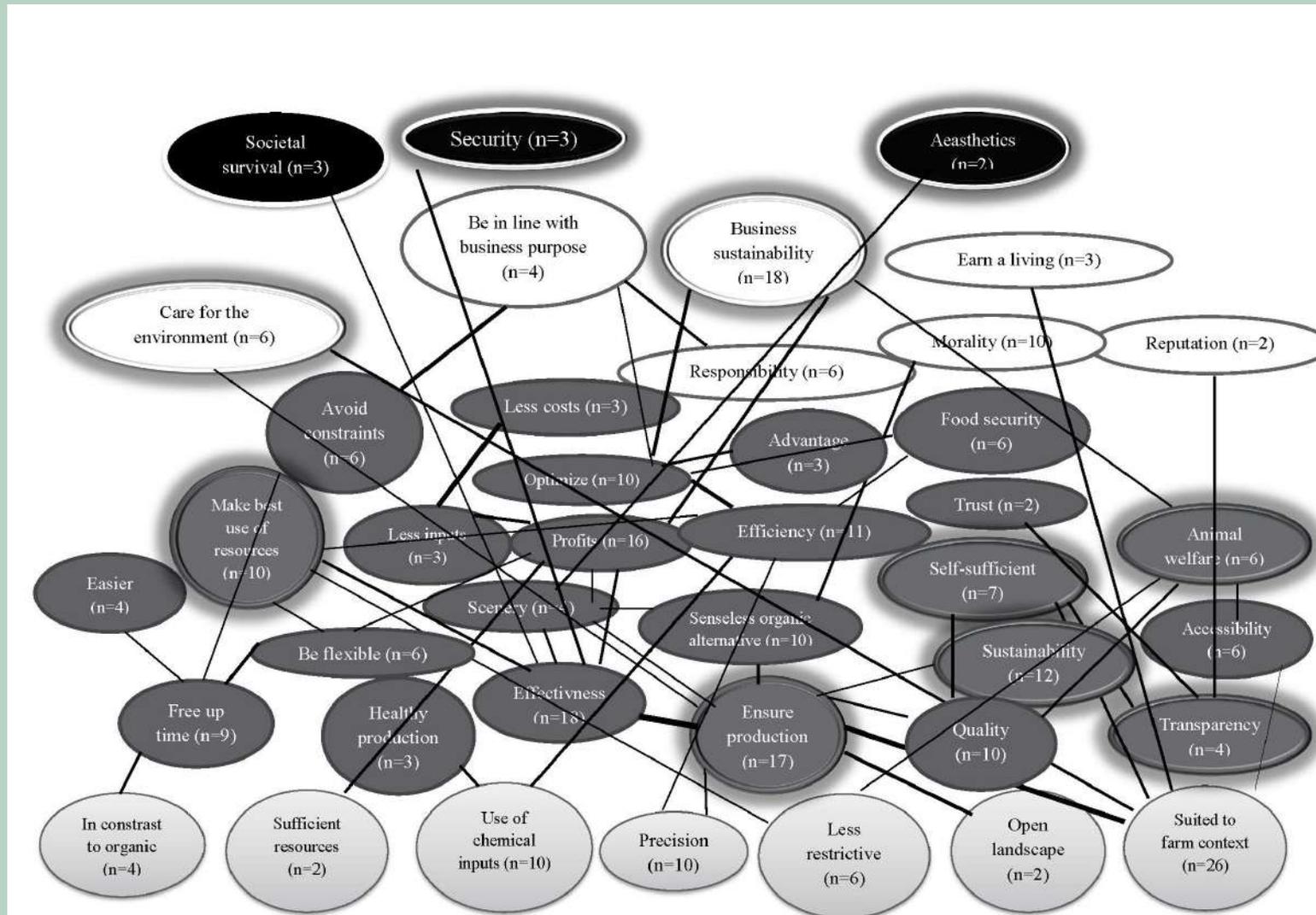
Swedish case: comparison organic vs. conventional

- Respondents with certified organic farm:
 - Consequences of “Sustainability” centre their reasoning
 - Prominent terminal value: “Societal security” (social)
- Respondents with conventional farm:
 - Consequence of “Ensuring production”, “business sustainability” centre their reasoning
 - Prominent terminal value: “Security” (personal!)
- Similarities: “Make best use of resources”, “Animal welfare”, “Ensure production”, “Sustainability”, “Security” (personal)

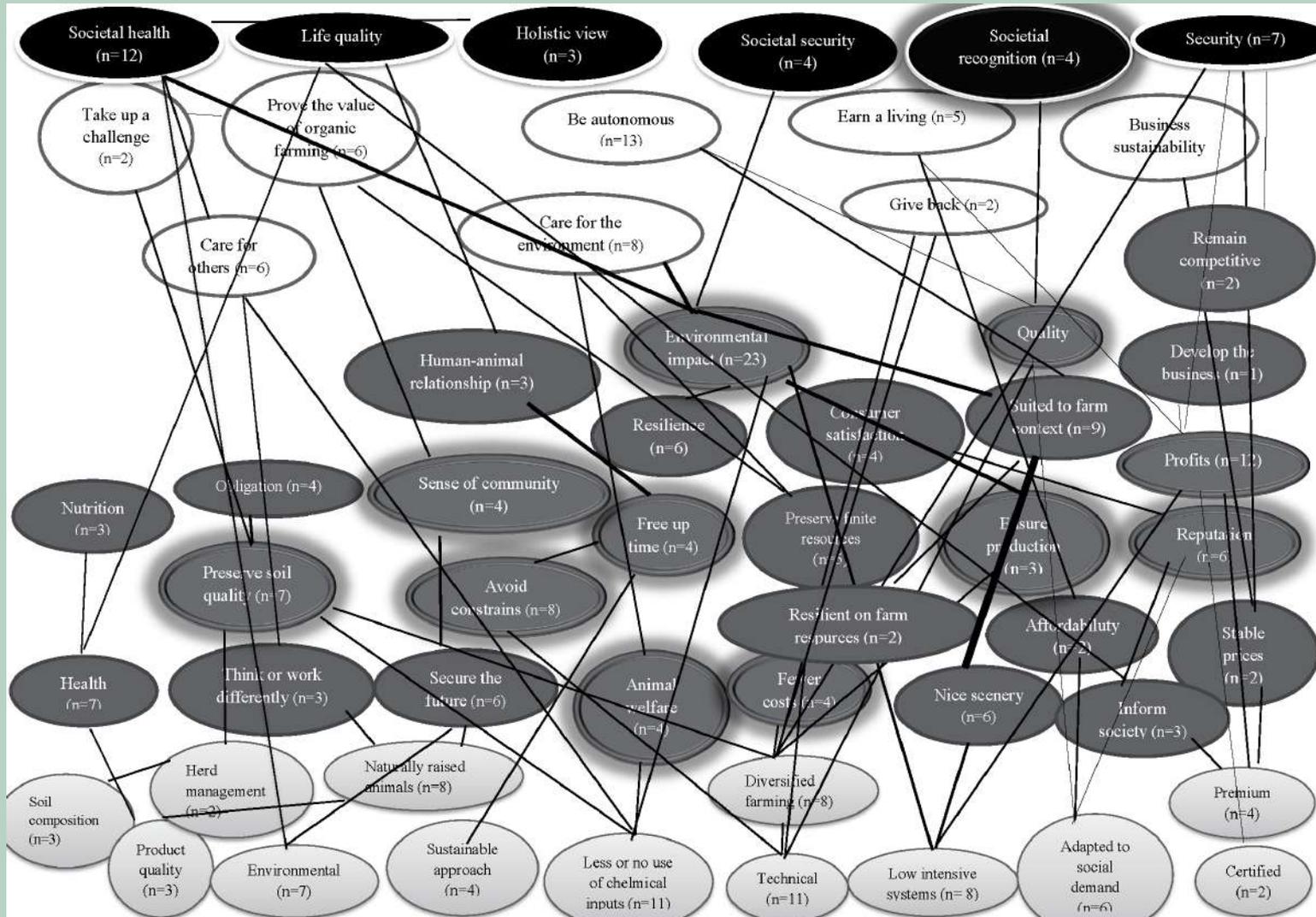
Swedish organic mind map



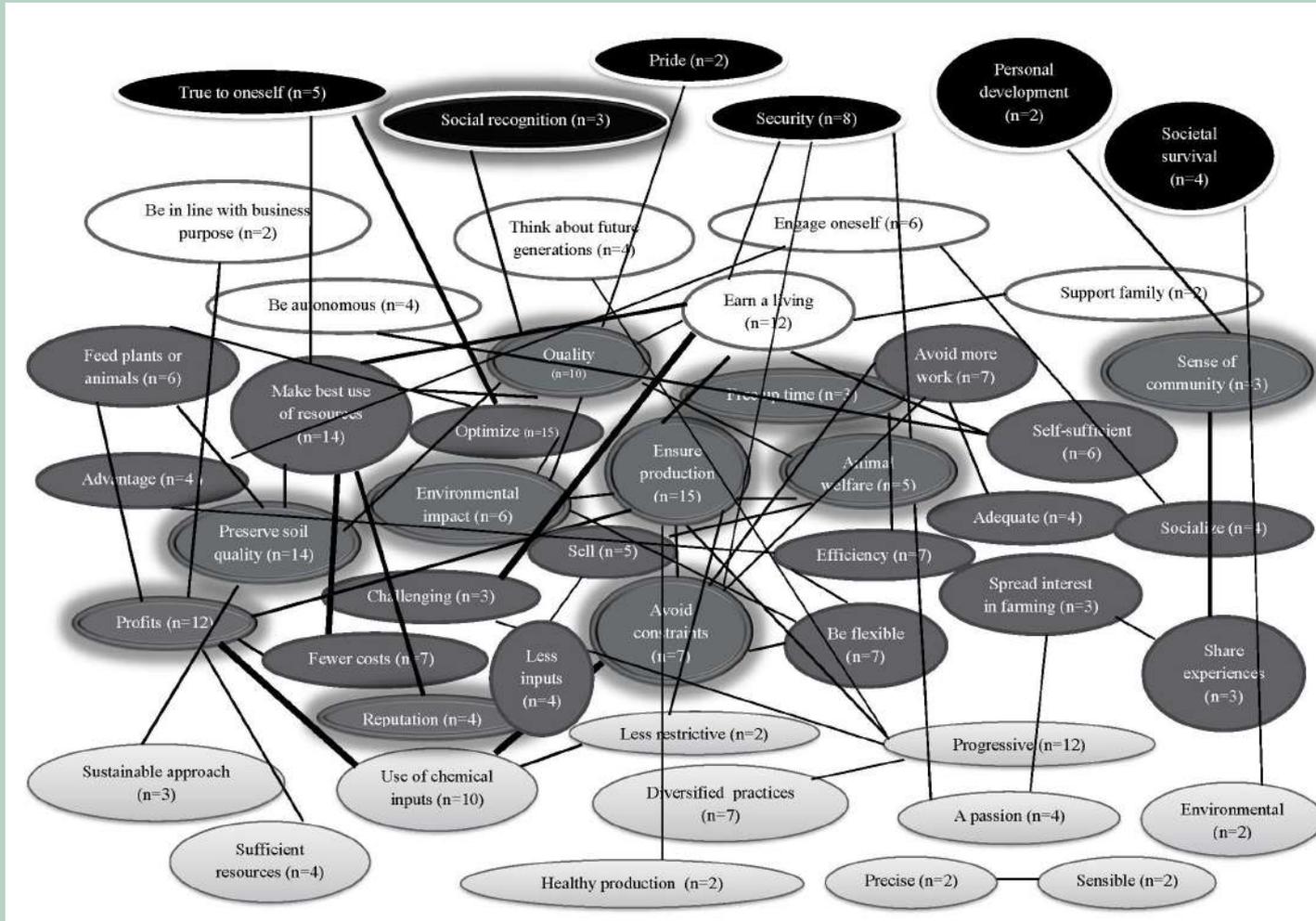
Swedish conventional mind map



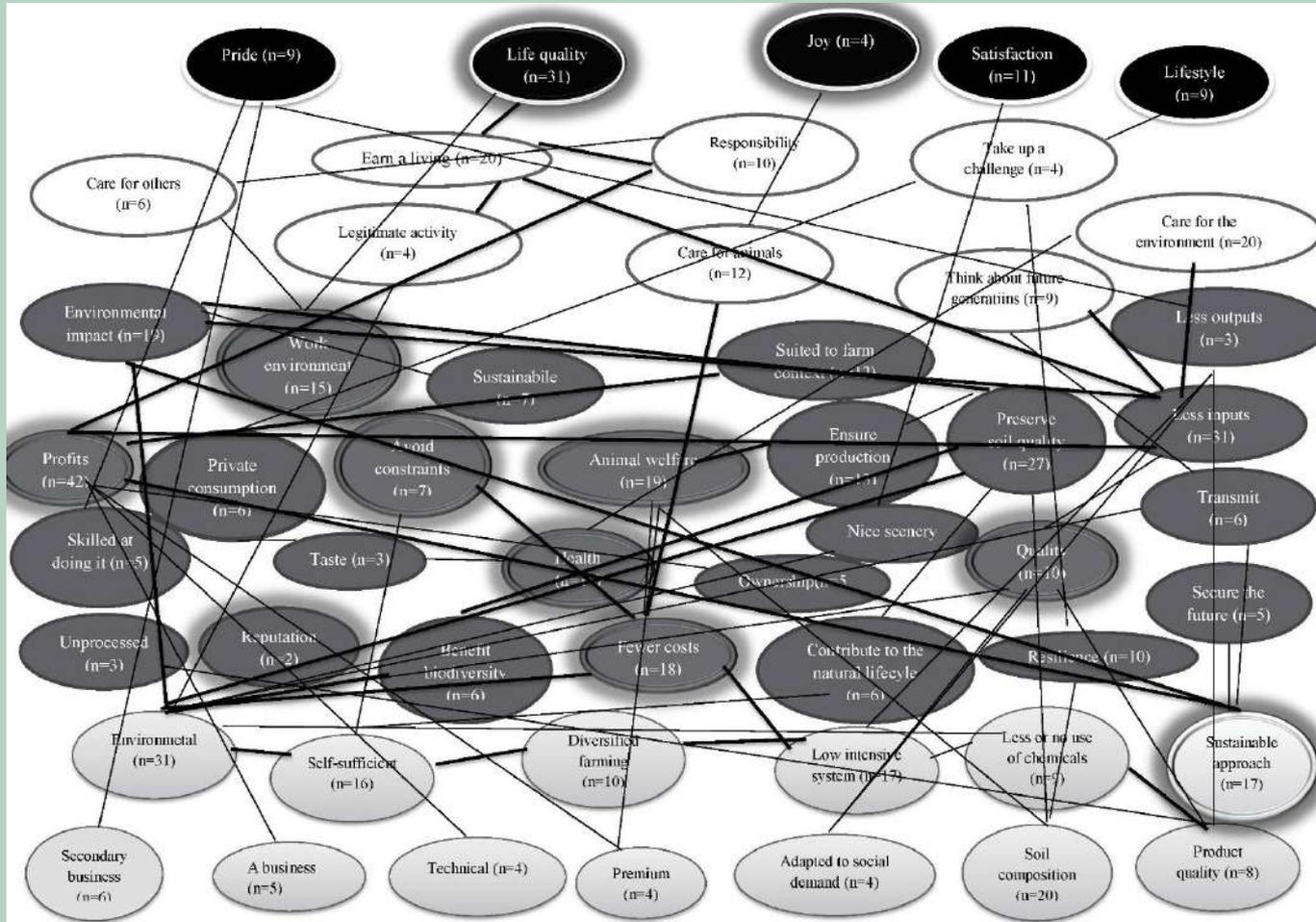
French organic mind map



French conventional HVM



Irish organic HVM



Irish conventional HVM

