



BEST PRACTICES in

Local Food for Local development



Nine rural territories of Austria, Cyprus, Finland, Ireland and Sweden - took part in a Trans National Cooperation Project called Local Food For Local Development. This publication represents a harvest of successful examples from local food fields and companies in these areas.

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FOREWORD

Local Food helps the European economic giant renew – and it tastes better!

This publication presents the best local food related practices across nine rural territories in Austria, Cyprus, Finland, Ireland and Sweden. You will also learn 15 reasons for buying local food products – and help maintain hundreds of local jobs and the biggest European industry. The publication was produced in a transnational LEADER project “Local Food for Local Development” in 2013-14.

According to *the Data and Trends of the European Food and Drink Industry 2012* the sector’s total turnover amounted 1,017 Billion Euros, giving it number one position among the European manufacturing industries. The industry’s share in the EU’s added value was 12 per cent, leaving e.g. automobile industry (11 %) and chemical industry (10 %) behind. Through the economic downturn years the food and drink sector has performed very well in sustaining its jobs, some 4.25 million all together.

So what’s the issue, one might ask. When it comes to investment in research and development, the sector’s expenditure is only 0.37 per cent of food and drink output. This is lower than other industries, but also lower than the food manufacturing sector in other developed countries outside Europe. Are we seeing food only as a necessity product, business as usual? Also the sector’s labor productivity is fairly low, just 7,500 Euros investment per employee compared to 14,000 in chemicals and 11,500 in automobile.

So we need a change! Not only to keep the sector competitive and rural territories viable but also to make our food-related ecological footprint smaller. This won’t happen overnight – it takes time to turn a big ship, but at the end of the day every captain must listen to consumer behavior. The change begins from our individual choices where ever we buy our food and drink. And like this publication shows, the right choices are not difficult to make: locally produced food simply tastes better!

Finally I want to thank the multi-national project partnership in five countries for the good and successful cooperation: “If more of us valued food and cheer and song above hoarded gold, it would be a merrier world” (J.R.R. Tolkien).



Petri Rinne
Manager
Joutsenten Reitti LEADER Local Action Group

AUSTRIA

Sauwalderdäpfel - Potatoes of the Region Sauwald

Categories: *Product development, logistic planning, marketing and branding*

Description of the project:

The umbrella brand “Sauwalderdäpfel” was founded in 1990 in a time, when local farmers lost their income when potato-breeding in order of big traders was moved to other regions. The fertile soil and favourable climate enabled farmers to start their own business. It was one of the first successful cooperation-projects of small farmers in Austria. Clear rules about quality and production protocol were defined. High level of innovation was used in production management, storage and trade.

After taking part in the LEADER+ Transnational-Cooperation-Project “Adding value of potatoes on the raw product”, they developed the distillery-product brand called “Sauwaldwodka” which is again very successful in business.

From the year 2001 on, LEADER and other initiatives as “Genussregion” (see project 8) enabled few more options to professionalise the products and the branding.



Results:

- 8 farmers are growing potatoes under the same rules and quality management. They are providing one stock-hall with innovating technologies and selling all potatoes under the umbrella-brand “Sauwalderdäpfel”.
- The potatoes are sold out each year to an excellent price, higher than the normal market price.
- Consumers consider the Sauwald-Potatoes one of the best!

Lessons learnt:

- To establish cooperation between small farmers in business and quality management is a hard job and it takes years to make it stable. But it's the right way for small farmers who would never otherwise have a chance to get into professional food-market with their own products

Elviras Genussküche - Elviras Enjoying-Kitchen

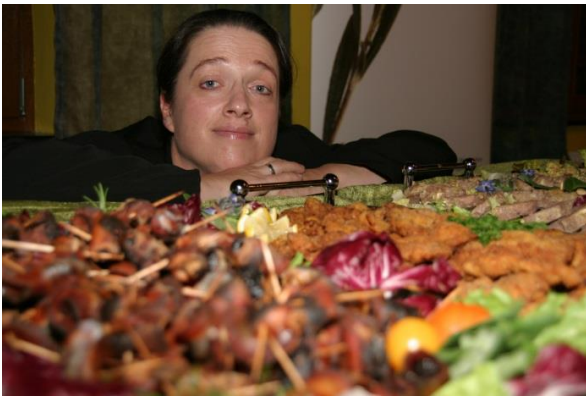
Categories: *Linking local food with tourism*

Description of the project:

Mrs. Wirth worked as a cook and waitress in different restaurants until she married and got children. With her marriage she came to live on a farm. There she developed the idea to start a catering business with a strong focus on regional products. LEADER funded the adaption of two food-preparing and – cooking rooms, the necessary equipment and the marketing.

Results:

The success was mind-blowing: the business went up from estimated 50 caterings to 150 events a year. Mrs. Wirth is well connected and experienced in bringing regional products to plate. She is employing two workers and many seasonal helpers. Also many farms on the region are making profit along with her business



Lessons learnt:

The initiative and energy of a single person can have a tremendous impact in local food development. With her marriage she settled down in the region Sauwald and saw the variety and quality of the regional products. Elvira's energy and communication skills created jobs and a new awareness of our regional products.

Sauwaldsaft - Juice from natural organic orchards

Categories: *Product development, marketing and branding, linking local food with tourism*

Description of the project:

Traditional orchard meadows (natural meadows with fruit trees, no plantation) are a typical part of the Upper Austrian landscape. Traditional soft drinks and wines ("most") have been produced already hundreds of years ago from old types of apples and pears and enjoyed in taverns. The modern nutrition changed a lot and these drinks nearly got lost. New initiatives as the mentioned projects are raising awareness for regionally produced drinks and rescuing the traditional landscape with the old trees.

The family Penzinger started with the production of juices in 2007 and got LEADER funding for factory machines, for a small shop on their farm and for the branding of the typical name "Sauwald" in the product-name.

Results:

The first test-production was around 1.000 litres of juice and was sold out in a few weeks. Now they are producing 25 000 liters under their own brand and more than 50 000 liters for other private tree owners who are bringing their fruits to be pressed for juice



Lessons learnt:

You cannot compete against global players in the market with a traditional orchard system.

But: when you spread the knowledge of exquisite taste and special type of landscape, people are willing to pay more and business for local farmers becomes possible!

“Klarlbau” Chillies and Tomatoes

Categories: *Product development, marketing and branding, linking local food with tourism, on-line food selling*



Description of the project:

The seeds from chillies and tomatoes you can buy from common market and shops are usually a type of “hybrid”. This means, you get the perfect fruits, but you can’t reseed the seed. You have to buy a new one the next year.

The family Walter and Monika Stockenhuber started producing seeds from old natural plants of tomatoes and chillies for the association “Arche Noah”, a well-known NGO in Austria, responsible for archiving old seeds.

The Family Stockenhuber was invited to build a new garden houses in the Sauwald village “Engelhartszell” beneath the monastery “Stift Engelszell”, a tourism destination with more than 50.000 tourists a year. They started there and are very happy about the location and the touristic environment around.

Results:

More than 300 different types of tomatoes and again more than 300 different types of chillies are planted in their new garden houses. Busloads of tourists visit the monastery. The gardeners have created enthusiastic awareness of old vegetable varieties - people like it!



Lessons learnt:

Don't forget your roots! Have trust in old varieties in farming. Be the one to serve more choices and variation to markets' shelf selections!

There isn't really a big diversity of vegetables in the usual market selections. It's definitively a pity that the modern nutrition focusses so strongly on few different types of food.

The Family Stockenhuber has worked hard and with enthusiasm to revive the old vegetable varieties and are now quite successful with their concept!

Baumkronenweg Gasthof Oachkatzl

Categories: *Product development, linking local food with tourism*

Description of the project:

In the funding period of LEADER+ the area of Sauwald had the crazy idea of hiking between tree-tops and it was written down into the development strategy. Finally a farmer grabbed the idea. With good management and LEADER funding he could make it work successfully.



Results:

Around 150.000 visitors each year are coming to visit this special attraction and have meals in the restaurant "Oachkatzl" (traditional Austrian name for squirrel, means "oak-cat")

This restaurant is still managed by the farmer. The restaurant is serving typical Austrian meals in combination with regional products, for example meat from local beef and potatoes.

Lessons learnt:

Experts doubted: "No, who would come to this isolated area in the Sauwald-Region?" LEADER said "Yes, this is our strategy!". Finally we had success and the local food is a very important part for the local development.

Kneiding Mills-Shop

Categories: *Linking local food with tourism*

Description of the project:

The village “Kneiding” is very special: situated in a Granit valley along a wild river, it was one of the first villages with electric energy supply already hundred years ago. Nearly each house there had its own generator which produced more energy than the connected house needed.

When the agriculture and food production became very modern it also caused difficulties for the small mills, such as Kneiding, to survive. But Kneiding mill still exists. In cooperation with other small mills they developed many creative products like cereals, noodles, liquors and some more. People can buy the products from the Kneiding Mills Shop as well as the specialty of the place: self-made bread, which is baked in the rebuilt wood-oven (LEADER supported measure). The bakery is following the traditions dating back hundreds of years.

Results:

The income of the mill is stable. The shop and the bread bakery are an attractive place for tourists to visit in the village.

Lessons learnt:

Never give up updating a situation. It's always worth to engage yourself if the people are committed and love their profession.

Kneiding “Wirt z’Kneiding”- Tavern and restaurant

Categories: *Linking local food with tourism*

Description of the project:

The village “Kneiding” is very special: Situated in a Granit valley along a wild river, it was hundred years ago one of the first villages with electric energy supply.

The owners of the traditional tavern “Wirt z’Kneiding”, family Jodelbauer, were connected to the family Wallner from the mills-shop, who was a motor in activating this small, isolated, but very special village. Luckily the female owner married a male farmer from the neighbourhood and now they are both supplying locally produced meat and other regional products at this tavern.

Within a LEADER-project they started with new branding and marketing of the village and are establishing a few joint actions with all inhabitants of the village. For example on the 8th of December there is a famous advent market and on the 1st of May they are arranging a local spring-fair which attracts over 4.000 visitors.

Results:

The business of the tavern is sustained and stable. The activities of the village and the tavern are bringing lot of people to the small village.

Lessons learnt:

It depends on the initiative of the local people if a place can attract tourists. Recognizing the value of traditions and being proactive can result in success!

Genuss-Region Sauwald Erdäpfel, Genuss Region Austria

Categories: *Product development, logistic planning, marketing and branding, linking local food with tourism, on-line food selling*

Description of the project:

Genussregion Österreich (enjoying regions of Austria) is a top down project provided by the ministry of agriculture and started in 2005. It started with a tender for areas which have - beneath others - ONE special product to deliver. Until now, around 125 areas of Austria are selected. The Sauwald-Area is focused on their excellent potatoes with the brand Sauwalderdäpfel.

A lot of local actions around the Genuss Region Sauwald Erdäpfel, supported by Leader, animated the area and fostered the region as a leading potato area in Austria.



Results:

The organisation “Sauwalderdäpfel”, a cooperation of small farmers, funded the association “Verein Sauwald Erdäpfel” in which they connected the agenda of farming, tourism and supplying food together. Finally this was a very important part in developing the brand and adding the value of their products. The area is profiting from tourism and people have become more aware of their attractive living surroundings.

Lessons learnt:

It is very important, that the national policy is giving top down support in creating awareness for regional products. But finally the local farmers and suppliers have to realise the possibilities of the project, take a chance and fill it with life.

MITOS Project - The free GPS application for Tourists in Cyprus

Categories: *Product development, marketing and branding, linking local food with tourism*



Description of the project: The development of sustainable tourism and cultural tourism could have positive effects in many socioeconomic factors of a country. A way of promoting tourism is by using the knowledge and the experiences of different people for presenting the natural and cultural resources.

The key attraction to draw tourists into mountainous areas is primarily being associated with activities that allow visitors to explore and enjoy the breathtaking scenery of these areas.

MITOS project is utilizing GIS technologies for the promotion of Cyprus tourism and the enhancement of its competitiveness. MITOS, which is developed in cooperation with the Cyprus Tourism Organization, will be a full scale GIS navigation system for the island of Cyprus which at the same time will include all the places of tourism interest (wine routes, gastronomic routes, religious routes, hotels, walking paths, bird watching, agro tourism etc.). The application will be available in Android, iOS, Windows and will be available for free and will also be offered as a web application.

The research project had the following goals:

1) analyze the role and the utilization of geo-portals' information and web map services for enabling the promotion of local food and products to both foreign and domestic tourists

2) provide a framework (through the utilization of GIS technologies) for integrating local food and products into the travelers decision making process and holiday experience, and

3) identify and measure the macro-economic role and impacts of geo-

collaborative portals on supporting sustainable/alternative tourism management strategies, e.g. promoting gastronomic tourism, special interest tourism with emphasis on local economies, tourism resources and special forms of tourism, diffusing tourism demand and spending geographically and in different time periods, cataloging the problems and state of tourism resources.

Emphasis was given on integrating GIS the web 2.0 enabled functionalities on the geo-collaborative portals (i.e. active user involvement and group work based on the top of a map). The impacts of these applications on the trip planning and decision-making processes of travelers were investigated. In addition, several practical implications and guidelines on how to design the functionality of a geo-portal for enabling travelers to plan personalised trip plans and itineraries either individually and/or collaborative within travel social groups was assessed. Finally, guidelines and suggestions on how to



use the information and services of geo-collaborative portals for supporting community based strategies for sustainable tourism (e.g. promotion of gastronomic tourism) was also provided.

The specific scientific and technological objectives of the present research project were:

- 1) to analyse the design parameters, functionality and services (cataloging and promoting local food and products, assisting tourists to design their trip by diffusing them in geographical and time period terms within the tourism destination) that a geo-collaborative portal should offer,
- 2) to construct a web-based and handheld based collaborative geo-portal, based on existing GIS technologies and WEB 2.0 tools,
- 3) to identify the types of value that travelers get from passively and/or actively using the geo-collaborative portal,
- 4) to ascertain the effects of the portal's use on the travellers' experience, perceptions, future intentions and loyalty to use the particular website as well as to visit and recommend the destination and its product offerings, and
- 5) to demonstrate its impact on travelers' trip planning and decision making processes (including purchase decision making process for local food and products)

The geo-collaborative portal as a trip planning tool has also greatly assisted in the geographical/space and time/tourist season diffusion of tourism demand in the tourism destination as well as assist in the cataloging of tourism resources and their current situation (e.g. tourists' complaints or suggestions for improvement). In this vein, the project will measure and provide evidence of the impact of e-commerce for supporting sustainable tourism development management strategies.

Results:

It is widely acknowledged that planning requires travelers to gather and assess a huge volume of information in order to assist them with three types of decisions (Fesenmaier and Jeng, 2000).

The geo-portal and GIS application that was developed has provided travelers with the opportunity to enhance their overall tourism experience by getting additional and more precise information concerning the local food and products. Ultimately, the application has offered numerous tools to identify, search, share and evaluate all required trip related information in relation to local food and products



Overall, the applications has offered a more sophisticated and precise way for tourists (individually and/or in groups) to enhance their holiday experience while at the same time has offered to the local communities a state of the art approach to promote their food and locally produced products and disseminate them effectively and without barriers to tourists. In addition to the commercial benefits of this activity, the cultural aspect cannot be undermined, since the cataloguing of local food and products has enormously contributed to the preservation of this information and their transfer to the newer generation.

Local communities, as a result of their involvement in this initiative have realized the importance of web and GIS technologies for promoting their tourism products (in all of its aspects).

Furthermore, the initiative had positive and measurable effects on the organization and administration of alternative / special forms of tourism in Cyprus, in terms of more visibility, information and an enhanced dialogue between travelers, hosts and local authorities, the competitiveness of small tourism companies, the degree of innovation they exhibit and the quality of their tourism product, as a result of the use of modern technologies, new distributions channels and electronic trade, and on promoting a more sustainable tourism development, emphasizing issues affecting the host destination, the quality of the local environment and the overall tourism product.

Lessons learnt:

- Local communities are in great need of advanced/sophisticated technologies for promoting their tourism product and offerings
- Geo-portal and GIS technologies are a very efficient and effective way for promoting local foods and products, especially due to the nature and kind of the products
- In terms of preserving culture and heritage, the recording, listing and digitalization of information related to local gastronomy and products is greatly beneficial.
- Tourists are very acceptable and eager to endorse new technologies that enhance their overall tourism experience.

FINLAND

Sikses parasta – True Flavours of Satakunta

Categories: *Product development, marketing and branding, linking local food with tourism, harvesting nature food*

Description of the project:

Sikses parasta – True Flavours of Satakunta is an information project which speaks for the food products and flavours from Satakunta. The project concentrates on increasing the image and recognisability of the food produced in the area of Satakunta as well as promotes the market access of the food from that area. The aim is also to encourage smaller farms and food enterprises to offer their products to markets selections.

Results:

Sikses Parasta – True flavours of Satakunta project coordinated meetings connecting local food farmers, food markets and catering enterprises. The meetings proved to be successful. The project arranged a local food campaign with the supermarkets: during five days, 20 different local food enterprises were presented at the shops. The local food market campaign also brought new products to the supermarket Keula's selections. The meetings raised the interest for the local food products and opened eyes to the possibilities of local food.

True Flavours of Satakunta have been presented in different events and shows. At the Elma Countryside Show in Helsinki, the Satakunta booth attracted over 8000 visitors and at the fair in Turku over 3000 consumers enjoyed the Satakunta food tasting.

One of the popular campaign materials has been the "learning game", which has been in busy use at the fairs, events, on web-pages and among catering school students. Learning game promotes food products from Satakunta and also shares knowledge of local food production through a playful game. The game also includes some traditional as well as regional information.

The Sikses Parasta-project has created a uniform marketing appearance for Satakunta food products (roll-ups, banners, leaflets, recipe-booklet, newsletters, web-pages and facebook). The campaign materials have concentrated in bringing forward the main food products of Satakunta. The models in advertising materials are genuine food producers and professionals from different areas of food production, not models from an agency, this way bringing the “real life” food makers closer to public.



Catering services and professional kitchens were gathered around a seminar “Luonto Lumoaa Ruoanvalmistajan” (Nature Enthralls the Cook) about using wild food in menus. According to theme, the seminar succeeded to enthrall the kitchen professionals! People taking part in the seminar commented that they have grown apart from the nature, not knowing what plants to collect and use, but realizing during the course what a treasure source of ingredients the Finnish nature actually is. In Finland, gathering some of the wild plants, mushrooms and berries is allowed by so called “Everyman’s Rights”, but it’s always correct to check with the land owner where and when to collect.

One of the popular events has been the “Buy from the Farm Day” which will be arranged again. The event was also noted widely by the media.

Lessons learnt:

- Effective marketing is challenging since advertising is very expensive. The use of social media has proved to be an excellent way. For example marketing the “Buy from the Farm Day” through facebook, nearly 25 000 people in Satakunta area were reached!
- One of the advantages in Satakunta area is that there already exists a number of companies with bigger production volumes on nation-wide level, making it therefore relatively easy for the Satakunta food stores to fill their shelves with local products and thus adding the interest and attention towards local food.

To find out more, visit: <http://www.siksesparasta.fi/>

Joutsan Ekokaasu Oy - Biogas Plant and Public Bio methane (CBG) Filling Station

Categories: *Bio-energy*



Picture 1: Biogas fermenters 800 m3 and 2000 m3.
Methane content in rw biogas is around 65 %



Picture 2 Methane content in biogas is increased up to 98 %
with Metener Ltd upgrading unit



Picture 3 Upgraded biogas is ready to use as vehicle fuel,
Biomethane (CBG) filling station in Joutsa, Finland

Description of the project:

There is no natural gas pipeline over in South-Finland. About 2000 CNG/CBG cars have to use biogas filling stations if they want to use gas for example when they go on holiday to Lapland. There are only a few biogas filling stations so far. Joutsan Ekokaasu has built one station in the middle of Finland and the biogas is from their biogas plant nearby. Biogas plant receives for example household bio waste, waste from food industry and municipal sewage sludge. Biogas is collected and upgraded to bio methane. Local farmers use the fermented residue as a fertilizer on their fields.

Results:

Bio methane (=upgraded biogas) is produced from local food waste and municipal sewage sludge. Local people and those who pass by the highway can fill in their CNG/CBG cars at Joutsa Ekokaasu station.

Lessons learnt:

Local waste management is good for the community because the money stays in the region

Public biogas filling station also brings good publicity, utility and money into the community.

Biogas plant construction process, waste management and bio methane sales also create employment.

Biogas itself is very clean and environment friendly fuel with very low emissions.

Biogas is renewable fuel and it is proved that there's 96 % greenhouse gas emission reduction by changing gasoline to biogas.

To find out more, visit
<http://www.joutsanekokaasu.fi/>

Biotehdas Oy Biogas Production Plant

Categories: *Bio-energy*

Description:

Producing biogas, heat and power as well as hygienised fertilizers, all products originate from biodegradable waste.



Results:

Producing energy from leftovers of the food industry and recycling nutrients and organic carbon safely and homogenously for plants to use all over again.

Furthermore, Biotehdas Oy provides regional waste management service for producers of biodegradable waste.

Lessons learnt:

Recycling biodegradable waste through a biogas plant makes perfect sense not only from protecting our environment standpoint but saving costs for the customers also. Biotehdas Oy provides a true win-win solution for all of us to benefit from.

Biolin Linseed Products

Categories: *Product development, marketing and branding*



Description:

Linseed grown in Finland or other Nordic Countries has beneficial qualities. Clean soil and a summer of long daylight hours grow a harvest with a rich content of valuable fatty acids.

Flax has a long growing period. Cool climate during the time of ripening of the seeds, raises the alpha-Linolenic acid content. Therefore linseeds grown in northern countries have a higher alpha-Linolenic acid content. Alpha-Linolenic acid is an essential omega-3 fatty acid.

Linseed has been renowned for ages for its positive effects on blood cholesterol levels, digestion and skin health.



Biolin started 15 years ago to manufacture linseed products first for horses. Now their product range extends from milled meals and linseed oils for horses, dogs and laying hens and to linseed oil based paints and oils for treatment of wooden surfaces; house renovation, boats etc.

The company masters the whole production chain; from seed to house wall in their case! Starting from the field; the raw material is produced locally - Biolin Oy has contracts with local farmers for growing linseed. The harvested linseed is pressed to oil and the dry matter milled to meal-products. The cold-pressed oil is used as a base for many products in the company's product range.

Biolin relies on research in product development. Traceability is also an important factor to the company. All the products can be traced back to the field. Traceability and research are building stones of a reliable product that is easy to promote and sell.

The linseed meal products and linseed-camelina oils for dogs were developed together with Satafood Development Association. Biolin has also been involved in a fibre-project by Satafood.

The company enjoys experimenting and showing people how this versatile plant can be utilized in many ways. Traditions were cherished in a spinning wheel event, where linen yarn was spun with old spinning wheels.

Biolin likes to work and to co-operate on local level and create local products. The company also carries the label "Avainlipputunnus" for Finnish Work.

The production, product development and marketing are all handled by the same company. This means a lot of work, but the overall control ensures the product quality and growth of the company has a solid base.



Results:

Pressed linseed meal was first marketed for horses. After getting so much good feedback from horse owners, Biolin had an idea "why not try these products for dogs as well?" And they worked wonders! Linseed products have been useful for allergic dogs, helpful for rashes and skin problems, a good aid for digestion and weight control, adding shine to coat and helping joint problems with senior dogs. Locally produced, gluten-free Biolin-products for dogs are now marketed through a large pet shop-market chain called Faunatar and one of the recognized warehouse brands called Stockmann. Customers range from pets to working dogs (for example husky sled dogs in Lapland).

After taking care of the welfare of horses and dogs, the Biolin products were introduced to local hens. The company is supplying camelina seed oil for the producers of the local egg-company Satamuna. Free hens are fed Camelina oil as a part of their feed diet, resulting in eggs containing more Omega-3 fatty acids and A-, D-, E- and B-vitamins.



As mentioned in the beginning, Biolin products start from the seed and at the moment they end on the wall: one of the latest ventures is the collaboration together with a recognized brand company Uula that manufactures traditional and environmentally friendly paints both for renovation and new buildings. Biolin produced 25 000 liters of high quality varnish that is marketed together with Uula. After cold pressing the oil from linseeds grown in Satakunta area, the oil was processed in Netherlands into varnish (double boiled linseed oil). This high quality product contains a lot of natural pigments; 9 liters can weighs 16 kg. Cold pressed linseed oil is also marketed for treating wooden surfaces, wooden boats etc. Biolin is also manufacturing their own paint-series.

The next step was to acquire a traditional Finnish wooden house, where they can show case and exhibit the paints for the customers in attractive and natural surroundings. Villa Pellava (Villa Flax) provides knowledge and advice with skilled sales personnel who know what they are talking about.

With this enterprise, everything will continue to start from the seed, but there's no telling where it ends with their innovative minds - beyond the walls probably!



Lessons learnt:

- Choose your partners wisely! Especially when you are a small enterprise you need to be able to trust in your co-operation partners.
- Think smart! You need to have common sense in your business thinking. Keep track of costs and pricing of your products. Concentrate on having the right number of products, so you are able to market them efficiently. After developing a new product, you should have swift access to markets to gain your position there.
- Be proud and value your work! When you can trust your own products it's also easy to sell them with confidence. Remember to set a justified price for your own work.
- Be creative! Keep your eyes open for new ideas and business development.

- Make a good impression! Remember to brush your teeth, smile, look people gently into eyes and hug if necessary.
- Have the right attitude! Never look back. Avoid panic. Spread good things and happiness around you - they will return back to you. Don't keep your hands in your pockets and enjoy business with an open mind. Always keep your promises and never give up!

To find out more, visit:

<http://www.biolinpellava.fi/yritys.html>

<https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.459428644191804.1073741834.212796265521711&type=3>

Frantsila Organic Herb Farm, Well-Being Centre and Vegetarian restaurant

Categories: *Product development, marketing and branding, linking local food with tourism, harvesting nature food*



Description:

The Frantsila brand consists of herbal, phytotherapeutic products, Frantsila Well-being Centre and vegetarian restaurant Kehäkukka (Calendula). Virpi Raipala-Cormier together with her Canadian born husband Jim Cormier have done extraordinary pioneer work, which is widely recognized. They were both interested in herbal world already as young. Jim enjoyed gardening and Virpi developed her first herbal tea when she was 14 years. They were fascinated about organic farming of herbs and medicinal benefits of wild plants. They have utilized both traditional healing and the research results of modern medicine in their product development. Today, they offer a range of over 200 products; herbal teas, herbal extracts, spices and cosmetic products. Frantsila labels are playful in describing their products, which is found as an attractive marketing way among customers.

In the beginning, Virpi and Jim started first to improve the farming methods on Frantsila and later on continued to build their knowledge for product development. To secure the supply of raw materials they formed cultivation contracts early on with other organic farmers, gardeners and included harvesting of wild plants.

Frantsila also answered to the educational needs and started up the Frantsila schooling center which offered courses and training in natural treatments; herbal therapy, aromatherapy, flower therapy, shiatsu, zone therapy and others. Nowadays the schooling center is in the hands of other entrepreneurs and Frantsila is schooling only herbal therapists.



In Frantsila Well-being Centre the customers can pamper themselves with various natural treatments, massages, peat sauna, hot tubs etc. Customers may also take part in a scent workshop and develop a fragrance designed purely for them. Frantsila oils, salves, liniments, tonics, teas and other products can be bought from the shop on the premises.

Frantsila has been a leading herbal company already for three decades. They have been awarded with several prizes and acknowledgements.

The vision is still the same – to promote the wellbeing and balance both for humans and nature.

To find out more, visit www.frantsilanhyyvanolonkeskus.fi

Yrjölä Berry Farm

Categories: *Product development, marketing and branding, linking local food with tourism*

Description:

The Yrjölä Berry Farm has been run by the same family from 18th century. Nowadays the farm is concentrated in berries and vegetable farming. The main crops are strawberry, raspberry, peas and potatoes. In addition the farm has also black currants, Saskatoon berries, apples, plums, pears and blueberries. Also sweet corn, garlic, tomatoes, herbs, salads, zucchinis and carrots are grown. Summer flowers are sold as bouquets or the customers can pick the flowers straight from the fields.



New plants and varieties are eagerly sought and tried out. The farm also strives to answer to customer demands and offer the berries and vegetables customers are asking for. The “pick-your-own” concept is popular among customers. The customers pick the berries themselves and pay a different price than buying from the market.



An old grain dryer barn has been newly renovated as a cafeteria, farm shop and a view tower with scenery over the gardens, fields and the lake. At the farm shop the Yrjölä family sells jams and juices made from the berries and fruits grown on the farm. They also have sheep and hens on the farm; eggs, wool and sheepskins can be bought from the shop. In addition to their own products they also sell other local products; honey, goat cheese, highland cattle beef, chocolate, candles, soap. The bakery uses wheat from the farm.



One of the very popular and absolutely delicious products of the Yrjölä Berry Farm is the Italian styled gelato, which contains no eggs, milk or fat, but instead has 70 % berry content, made from the berries grown on the farm.

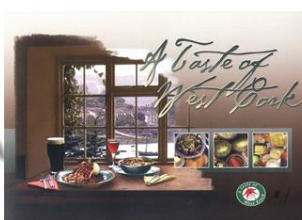
Yrjölä Berry Farm has a wide range of products and knowledge to offer. Together with berry and fruit orchards, cultivation, and animal husbandry, they also organize events on the farm.

Tiina and Tommi Yrjölä are also forwarding their expertise: giving advice on fencing, how to take care of the landscape, renting or selling sheep to work for clearing old pastures or landscapes. The everyday life and change of seasons is shared to wider public on the farm blog. On top of everything else they are constantly developing new products and managing the old family farm as an ecologically balanced and innovative way.

To find out more, visit <http://www.saunalahti.fi/toyrjola/tila/>

IRELAND

Regional Branding – Fuchsia Brands



Categories: *Product development, logistic planning, marketing and branding, linking local food with tourism*

Description of the project:

Fuchsia Brands is a quality regional brand for food, tourism and craft from West Cork, Ireland. The Fuchsia, long associated with West Cork has been chosen as the symbol of origin and quality

for the food, tourism and craft products of the West Cork Region and it reflects the positive local characteristics, such as environment quality, as well as the richness and diversity of the heritage, culture and landscape. Producers and providers sanctioned to utilise the “Fuchsia” logo must adhere to strict quality criteria, thereby ensuring excellence in all aspects of product and service quality.

Results:

Fuchsia Brands network has played a major role in enterprise development and has become actively involved in market development and product promotion, it has provided an infrastructure to network various development/public agencies (founding and supporting agencies) and commercial enterprises, it has provided support to enterprises in the region particularly enterprises that add value to indigenous resources. Fuchsia Brands has endeavoured to initiate and support a variety of measures aimed at assisting local initiative, and has maximised the development potential of local resources and has utilised these resources to satisfy specific market demands. The Fuchsia Brand has played an integral part in promoting West Cork as “*A Place Apart*” with particular emphasis on the environment, cultural and heritage resources of the region.

The following have resulted with the development of the Fuchsia Brand;

- Strong Enterprise Development
- Enhanced Market Access
- Networking and Co-operation
- Improved Consumer Awareness
- Environmental Impacts
- Improved Production Processes
- Coherent Marketing
- Development of Niche Markets
- New Product Development
- Importance to Local Economy
- Job Creation/Maintenance
- Enhanced Market Access
- Improved Consumer Awareness of local produce.
- Environmental Impacts



Lessons learnt:

A number of underlying themes have emerged such as regional identity, collective action and partnership, quality, resources, knowledge, synergy, and commercial and development strategies. Access to new markets and market information were the main factors deemed important by the brand participants as well as being part of a recognised brand which has enabled producers to gain access to large retail multiple groups. Networking and a high level of interaction among members has emerged as very important, with a large percentage of producers finding the sharing of knowledge/information has greatly enhanced their own enterprise development and has formed a strong bond with other food enterprises in the region, as well as improving their own standing in the business community due to group strength and brand profile.

The following are the most frequently cited benefits from participating members of Fuchsia Brands and include;

- Direct access to LEADER information and supports (91% of respondents)
- Beneficial contacts with other Brand members (84%)
- Improved skills through training (83%)
- Attainment of quality standard (82%)

- Enhanced recognition/prestige (82%)
- Increased consumer awareness of products/services (76%)
- Improved production/process/service efficiencies (77%)
- Greater marketing efficiencies (70%)
- Increased Value-Added (60%)
- Reduced Distribution Costs (55%)
- Improved consumer awareness (90%)
- Improved trade awareness (85%)
- Marketing, development and representation via Fuchsia Executive (80%)
- Improved joint/collective marketing activities (73%)
- Improved product innovation (85%)
- Improved product/service quality (82%)
- Improved production processes (73%)
- Increased product innovation (60%)

Thornhill Organic Farm

Categories: *Product development, Marketing and branding*



Description:

Thornhill Organic Farm is run by Anthony Boyle & Morgan Hurley and is situated 2km outside the market town of Skibbereen. They offer a wide selection of locally grown organic vegetables, salad leaves, varieties of strawberries, courgettes, tomatoes, potatoes & cucumbers. The farm is also home to a large extended family of Saddleback and Gloucester All Spot pigs. The pigs are Free Range and are fed from vegetables & barley that are grown on the farm. From these

pigs the company produce burgers & sausages that are sold along with the vegetables on a weekly basis at local farmers markets and in local retail stores. The farm was recently awarded the best West Cork Artisan Food Award for their commitment to excellence in their artisan products.



To find out more, visit

<http://www.thornhillorganicfarm.com/>

UnionHall Smoked Fish Products

Categories: *Product development, marketing and branding*



Description:

This family owned company has been in existence for the last 25 years. It is located in the fishing village of Union Hall on the southerly tip of Ireland amidst the spectacular

scenery of the West Cork Coastline. They specialise in numerous fish products including

Smoked Salmon, Smoked Trout, Smoked Barbequed Salmon, Smoked Mackerel, Smoked Kippers, Smoked Salmon Pâté and Smoked Mackerel Pâté. The fish are bought from local fisherman that fish off the Atlantic Seas. The fish are filleted in-house by their experienced fish mongers, brined and then slowly oak smoked in a centuries old traditional manner that has been handed down from father to son. The company, including the owners Sean & his wife Siobhan, currently employs 6 full time staff.

To find out more, visit <http://www.unionhallsmokedfish.com/>

Skibbereen Food Festival

Categories: *Linking local food with tourism*

Description:

The Taste of West Cork Food Festival was first established in 2003 and is now one of Ireland's longest running food festivals. The ten day food festival showcases the wonderful food and food creators of the West Cork Region. The festival brings together a unique mix of Cookery Demonstrations, banquets, food talks, markets, children's workshops and more. The festival is about much more than food, it carries an inherent feeling of a geographical area of wild and wonderful natural beauty, layered with ancient spirituality and human tragedy (Irish Famine) and liberally sprinkled with a purity of culture, art and craft that makes this event a very special one to tempt every palate. The festival understands how important local food is to our economy with a wealth of food producers, retailers, and farmers markets, talented chefs and award winning restaurants. "A Taste of West Cork Food Festival is a perfect festival for all the family".

To find out more, visit <http://www.atasteofwestcork.com/> and <https://www.facebook.com/atasteofwestcork>

Scally's SuperValu Supermarket

Categories: *Product development, logistic planning, marketing and branding*



Description:

Scally's SuperValu supermarket is located in the tourist town of Clonakilty and is a longstanding business that has won numerous awards for their commitment to local food. The store has many exciting fresh food departments and provides an exceptional experience in local & fresh food that creates the atmosphere of a farmers market. The retail store is dedicated to local produce and, over the years, has sourced a wide range of local, artisan products from the West Cork region and further afield. The retail shop showcases a host of food products and many other gourmet delights which are unsurpassed, not alone in the region but, in the island of Ireland. The butcher department in store

carry a range of local West Cork reared Organic beef and sumptuous Organic Lamb, their cheese counter carries an extensive range of local, Irish and continental cheeses, as well as the only

supermarket to supply a full range of the now famous fresh Irish Buffalo Mozzarella cheese balls produced locally in West Cork. The award winning bakery consistently delivers freshly baked bread on a daily basis that leaves the consumer spoilt for choice.

Somewhat uniquely, Scally's supermarket has built their business model around developing a competitive advantage from promoting local food and providing a market-like shopping experience.

To find out more, visit <http://www.supervaluclon.ie/>

SWEDEN

Kungälvsmat

Categories: *Product development, logistic planning, marketing and branding, on-line food selling*

Description of the project:

The main goal of the project Kungälvsmat, initiated by a group of local producers, has been to facilitate communications between small, local food producers and local consumers. This was done by first interviewing 145 local producers about product range and public interest. The majority showed interest in cooperating and were open to developing local sales of local produce. After a start-up meeting, a financial association, which main objective was to apply for funding through a Leader-project, was founded.

The association had the following goals within the project:

- Build a functional and attractive web page where it would be possible to find and buy local produce such as meat, vegetables, eggs, honey, marmalade, jam and lemonade in one place and get door-to-door delivery; www.kungalvsmat.se
- Create a brand and a logotype. After a dialogue with the board of directors, a local company presented a range of logotype suggestions, which were voted on by the association's members.



- Design and produce labels
The association received advice from the County Administration Board in regards to how food labelling should be presented. Two different labels were produced; one containing general information suitable for all the products and one label for thermal printers with date and source of origin.
- Design and produce packaging
Two different types of boxes were designed and produced in cooperation with local butcheries; one standard box for EUR-pallet (for meat boxes), and one for SRS-trays (for stores). A paper bag with the association's logotype was produced to be used for vegetables and refined products.
- Create information material and market the association
Leaflets, roll-ups and banners with the association's profile were produced and used during local activities, such as markets. The association has mainly marketed themselves towards the local consumer market, through advertisements in the local paper and through pamphlets at local events, but also worked actively to create articles in the media and start a Facebook page.
- Build up an attractive product range
As the association's goal was to have a comprehensive range of products, three groups: the Beef group, the Lamb group and the Vegetable group (including refined products and honey)

were formed. The Beef group worked with optimisation of cutting and packaging in regards to meat boxes contents and developed a time plan for butchering among producers (two animals every other week). After a test run, the product range was expanded with a cheap "every day box", a "weekend box" with finer meat, and a "club box" for local sport clubs to sell.

Early on the project contacted one of the local larger grocery stores which agreed on changing their range of "fine meat" to the meat from Kungälvsmat.

In cooperation with the grocery store, Kungälvsmat also organised a "Farmer in the Store" day, where one of the members was present, promoting the products and a famous chef cooked with Kungälvsmat produce.

Due to a current excess of lamb in the local market, the Lamb group found it difficult to plan ahead and get profitable the first year, but have now found a working configuration between butchering time plans and sales.

When there has been a surplus of beef and lamb, the meat has been frozen or further refined into hamburgers, sausages or smoked products, something which has potential for further development.

The Vegetable group have had the majority of their sales at local markets and through Kungälvsmat activities. Because of the variation in volume of produce, it has been difficult to sell via the association's web page. A test run was made during Summer of 2012, but unfortunately the harvest was not favourable that year.

- Ensure delivery of products all year around (develop a butcher time schedule etc.)
A challenge as a small cluster of producers has been to make sure deliveries can be guaranteed all year around. Animal rights legislation says that the animals have to graze outside during summer, and getting animals home requires extra work from farmers, which has called for enthusiasm and strategic planning. Especially for lamb meat it has been vital with a high ratio of pre-sold meat before slaughter.
- Build a working system for delivery to consumers
In the beginning the members of the association all carried out their own deliveries to the customers. When this was no longer possible due to increased sales, one of the farms became pick-up point for most of the purchases. This also meant an unbroken cold chain to the end customer.
- Build a pricing- and revenue system
One of the main goals with the project was to make it worth-while for the producers to be working under the Kungälvsmat brand. Initially, there was add-on to the charge of the butchery, but as margins fluctuated, the board decided to change to a fixed rate.
- Build an effective dispatch system
Initially, each producer handled their own orders, delivered the goods and invoiced the customer to maintain customer relations. After a while this became impracticable as customers ordered meat boxes from "their" contact, not from the one delivering that week, and payments were made to "their" contact, not to the farmer who supplied the meat. To ease invoicing, the association took on the responsibility of all invoicing and payments to producers.



Results:

- 30 local producers have formed a financial association, which now is a contractor for a large local grocery store.
- Joint sales of local products such as beef, lamb, vegetables, eggs and honey through web page and direct sales.
- A web page, currently with about 70 visitors per day and 300 registered customers, for the selling of joint products, such as meat boxes.
- Deliveries to; a large local grocery store (CityGross) and local schools. The association is an important sales channel for small producers as grocery stores are reluctant to have multiple small suppliers, but welcome clusters like Kungälsmat.
- The association currently has a turnover of approximately 1 800 000 SEK.
- The association hosts local events such as "Kosläpp" ("Cow Release"; when the cows are let out on the pastures in Spring), which gathered close to 1000 visitors, who got to meet local farmers and producers.
- Have employed a part time administration officer.

Lessons learnt:

- The more people helping out - the stronger the association and the better the result.
- Build sustainable systems for logistics, billing and settlements at an early stage.
- When selling meat, aim to pre-sell as much as possible before butchering.
- Learn from others and get help with the tasks that you cannot handle.
- It takes time and money to build a brand.
- Speak for your product. Spread the knowledge why locally produced food is so important and why it motivates higher costs.
- Satisfied customers come back. Not only is it important with high quality products, it is also important to be responsive, clear and flexible.
- Engage and listen to the consumers. Satisfied customers are the best marketing tools and might also possess special competence that framers do not have.
- Activities, such as markets and other events, demand personnel. The work load has been high for a small association and it is important to find a win-win situation that works both for the association and its members.
- It is important that events that involves the consumers are family friendly, to attract a bigger number of people
- It's important that the association's board consists of people from various interest groups and preferably with big contact networks.

Tavlebord – lokala producenter och hantverkare i samverkan

Categories: *Product development, logistic planning, marketing and branding, linking local food with tourism*

Description of the project:

Tavlebord, a trading post from 1856 was a country store and meeting place for locals until it closed for business in 2002. The idea with the project was to open up this cultural historical place to the public once again, by facilitating for small local producers to sell their goods in the facilities on Saturdays. By renting out space to a range of local food entrepreneurs, it became a market hall where each trader decorated their own stall. The project funded a project manager to start up the operations, and marketing material to attract people to come to Tavlebord.

For more information, see www.tavlebord.se or <https://www.facebook.com/tavlebord>.



Results:

The “new” Tavlebord opened 20th November 2010, and has now 32 merchants. It is very popular with locals, but even bus loads have come to visit the store specifically to learn about the business and to shop local produce.

The coffee shop on the premises is run by local non-profit organizations in a rotational system (which is fully booked months in advance). In return of selling homemade sandwiches and cakes to customers, they use the premises for free, and hence make a profit, which goes back into their organizations. The coffee shop has also served as an invaluable meeting place for locals.

The merchants have developed and refined their product ranges and have ALL increased sales, some of them even doubled their earnings. Many of the merchants describe how they have developed their sales skills and business network as well, all thanks to Tavlebord.

Lessons learnt:

- Rent needs to be set as low as possible, to get as many merchants as possible.
- The opening times needs to be limited, otherwise it's not seen as a special event, and you also wear out the merchants.
- Good marketing makes a difference in getting visitors.

Bohuslän Erbjuder

Categories: *Product development, logistic planning, marketing and branding, linking local food with tourism*

Description of the project:

The association Bohuslän Erbjuder (Bohuslän's offerings) was founded in 2008 by a group of local food producers, who since then run a small local food shop at Sundsby Säteri (an old local farm house/ café). The shop has been profitable since the start, but the producers now wanted to take business a step further, by developing the market area and increasing the supply of local products under the Bohuslän Erbjuder brand. The project was initiated to develop joint marketing activities and promotion materials within the area, and to expand markets, and joint products (e.g. Christmas hampers).

For more information, see <http://www.bohuslanerbjuder.se/>.

Results:

- The project has facilitated a comprehensive network, where Bohuslän Erbjuder now is a partner of choice for local and regional events within local food.
- It has resulted in increased sales and improved ways of running the mutely operated local food shop at Sundsby Säteri
- Study trips have meant individual food producers now know more about each other's products, and are able to sell each other more effectively.
- Marketing material (such as brochure, signs, maps and a website) with the Bohuslän Erbjuder brand is now widespread - from local shops to restaurants, and all tourist agencies in the area.
- Joint logistic solutions (such as joint deliveries of goods to end-customers) and joint sales (of e.g. Christmas hampers to companies throughout the region) have been initiated.



Lessons learnt:

The initiation of the project activities took longer than expected, as all members were busy with the own operations. One of the members stepped in as project manager, (instead of an external resource), which meant that there is lots of knowledge kept in the association, but also that there was a limited amount of time spent on managing the project. It has been challenging to find the best means of cooperation, due to businesses being spread out geographically, the various sizes of businesses and difference in types of product offerings.

To be successful, make sure everyone is onboard before you initiate, and make sure you have a steering committee that makes sure the project keeps the right track and with a good speed.

Matvandring Uddevalla

Categories: *Marketing and branding, linking local food with tourism*

Description of the project:

Hushållningsgillet Lane (Lane Economizing Fraternity) in Uddevalla has been organising an annual harvest festival a weekend in September for a couple of years, where local food producers were invited to have stalls at the local cultural centre. The festival had room for about 10 producers. In addition to this, some producers chose to have an open house sometime during Autumn – sometimes colliding with the harvest festival.

Hushållningsgillet Lane was curious to the idea of combining the festival with the open houses, and let all take part in the same event rather than competing for attention. They turned to Hushållningssällskapet, the national Rural Economy and Agricultural Society, for advice. (The Rural Economy and Agricultural Society is a cluster of independent member organizations dedicated to enhancing an enterprising spirit in rural areas and promoting good rural and urban living environments.) The society conducted a survey and a couple of meetings as part of a pilot study to see if there was an interest among local producers to be part of a joint activity. The members showed interest in a food trekking event, where the stalls at the cultural centre would be complemented with a map of food producers with open houses, that could be visited during a weekend in September.

The Rural Economy and Agricultural Society, with support from Hushållningsgillet Lane, applied for a Leader project with Terra et Mare in 2012. In the initiation process, two meetings were held with all small food producers in the area, to elaborate on how the event could be further developed.

Today, the name of the event has been changed from Matvandring Uddevalla to Matvandring i Väst (Food trekking on the west coast).

For more information, see <http://www.matvandringivast.se/> or <https://www.facebook.com/matvandringivast>.



Results:

Matvandring Uddevalla (Food trekking Uddevalla) became an instant success. 21 companies were found on the map with open houses, in addition to the handful exhibitors at the cultural center (the goal was 13 participating companies). During the weekend the event had around 9000 visits, which was beyond the expected 2000 visits. 380 of them took part in a competition open to people that visited a minimum of three different open houses during the weekend (which means quite a lot of people visited a number of producers, not just one!) A lucky winner won a variety of local food products from the participating companies.

The participating companies have already experienced an increase in customers and sales network. The project facilitated meeting a new client group, that before did not know what the local food producers had on offer. For example, a group of immigrants found out that it is possible to purchase fresh lamb meat from a local farm, which they are now able to do. In 2013 (when the project was finished) Matvandring Uddevalla extended north and had 42 participating businesses!

Lessons learnt:

- The most important thing is to gather a group of producers that believe in the idea and are prepared to put in the work needed for a weekend event like this.
- It has been more time consuming than anticipated to plan an event during the summer months, when participants have their peak season.
- It is important to unite the producers under a common brand or concept that potential visitors find exciting.
- It is vital to invest in marketing. The marketing campaign within the project (brochure/map, ads in local newspapers, facebook ads, website promotion etc) was successful partly because so many people helped spreading the word.
- The authorities can be a useful resource. They have been surprisingly positive to the initiative, and have been very helpful with permissions, but also with answering questions and giving feedback.

Mathelg på Marstrand

Project categories: *Product development, marketing and branding, linking local food with tourism*

Description of the project:

The project was initiated by a local entrepreneur who wanted to change the existing attitude amongst vendors on the island in regards to the short summer season (15th June – 15th – August). He wondered what it would take to keep the spirit alive during September, and how it could be communicated that businesses are still open. The entrepreneur invited all local business, and a group of six local vendors were nominated to identify all current/ongoing/annual happenings (around 30 different ones), and create a new event, with corresponding activities, that focused on local food. The event was named Matstrand (Food Island), and included many different activities during the first weekend of September.

A Gastronomic Trekking was organised both Saturday and Sunday (with separate ticket sales). A food market was held on Saturday, and ten exhibitors had food stalls in the town hall on Saturday and Sunday. On stage were chefs from the local restaurants and famous food entrepreneurs. A chef battle between local chefs gathered big crowds, and were widely spread on social media.

For more information, see <http://www.matstrand.se/> or <https://www.facebook.com/smakamarstrand>.

Results:

Thanks to sunny weather and good marketing (a postcard, two ads in one of the bigger newspapers, and lots of advertising in social media) the number of visitors tripled compared to the average September weekend. The goal was 500 visitors during the weekend, but by 3pm on Saturday, 900 tickets were sold! In all, Marstrand had 5000 visitors during the event. 40 businesses got involved,

which means all shops were open. The goal was to have 8 restaurants open, but 10 was open for business and only 2 chose not to participate (those 2 restaurants are however interested in being part of the event next year). The guest harbour was almost completely full.

A result of the project (perhaps an unexpected one) was the newly found sense of community amongst vendors on the island. It was so successful that the vendors decided to start an association that would purely focus on organising, participating and financing events on and around the island of Marstrand. The goal is to create 20 initiatives/projects/events by 2020. The start-up of the association is by the project participants described as a milestone in the development of Marstrand as a tourist destination, and would according to them most likely not have been initiated if it was not for the Leader project. The association now cooperate with Smaka på Västsverige (Taste West Sweden), which has so far resulted in a local food exhibition, with both local and international exhibitors. The project has also made the municipality more interest in cooperating around events on Marstrand, and there is currently a dialog around developing Nordic food tourism with the municipality in conjunction with the other Nordic countries.

The project resulted in one new company/association, one new product (taste sample booklet), two new services (food market and food tasting), and one new meeting place.

Matstrand 2014 will take place 6-7 September.

Lessons learnt:

- All preparations for the event were made during the peak summer season, which meant that everyone was really busy. Thanks to an external project manager the planning could move forward in a reasonable pace.
- It is possible to affect tourism and new activities by good marketing and a bunch of dedicated people. Increased tourism means more jobs!



A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR - WHY BUY LOCAL FOOD?

LAG-partners in each country have contributed to this publication by sharing their examples of successful local food projects. They were also given an extra assignment - give ten reasons why buy local food! The purpose of the assignment was to make everybody think about the many sides and effects the idea of local food has.

Local food has become one of the most fashionable trends in food culture. Yet it lacks the precise definition. Local food philosophy holds a wider scale of issues than just production certification. One of the major effects undoubtedly is the awareness of ecological impacts of food production and consumption.

While the consumers in modern world grow further away from farming, the idea of local food brings the issue closer and awakens people to consider their food choices from a wider perspective. Attention has been paid to health benefits of food, nutrient values, calorie contents, low fat, low cholesterol etc. With the changing eating culture, one of the words that seem to keep popping up at the moment is **taste!** And taste, is one of the strong advantages of local food.

Everyone producing or marketing local food products face now and then customers who question the idea – why buy local food? A mere “well, because it’s good?!” is not enough. How to convince that doubtful customer? In the world of food market, price is a very determinant factor in decision making. Local food prices are often above those alluring cheap food products. By listing out reasons with this project assignment, we aim to bring the value of local food to the attention of those that either doubt it or maybe haven’t yet discovered it at all. After all there’s more to buying and eating than just the price tag!

While I was editing this collection of local food projects, a friend of mine asked me “what’s your favourite reason now?” After some thought, I replied I cannot choose one above the others. In the beginning the idea that food should be consumed near where it has been produced seemed most important. But after working with people in various roles of local food production and seeing many successful projects in local food, I am most impressed by the dedication people have for their work. They strive for their goals. It’s hard work but their enthusiasm works as a fuel to get them there! People in local food world appear to be more open to new development ideas. They cherish the traditional values but at the same time they also see the modern technology as a useful tool. The close contact with consumers leaves room for experimenting and makes the monitoring of consumer acceptance easier. Local food entrepreneurs are more open to new product development. They also see the strength of co-operation and networking, whether they are farmers or entirely from different professions, they can contribute to the success of the business. Therefore, I name the combination of this attitude which can be felt in the air of local food, to be my favourite reason!

After harvesting all the reasons to buy local food together, there was not ten but 15 reasons in the end. Many of them are closely related, yet they are also separate, depending on the emphasis you place upon them or on the product in question. We certainly didn’t want to narrow them down to 10, but are proud to present all the values of local food!

It has been a joy to meet so many inspiring people in local food culture – thank you for sharing your experience and keep up the good work!

Johanna Jahkola, Satafood Development Association

15 reasons to support local food

1. Local consumption means less transportation

- Fuel costs are reduced
- Food arrives to consumer fresher, tasty and full of nutrients when it's not travelling long distances in trucks or stocked in warehouses
- "Why buy juice made of foreign apples when our own trees are full of fruits?" - make the best use of local food supply whenever possible!

2. Taste

- Shorter time from field to plate ensures better taste and quality
- New local food customers are often surprised when they experience the difference in TASTE
- Local food producers are often introducing more choices and flavours in their products
- Exquisite taste is more desirable than perfect looks or economically packable shape

3. Local Food supports local families and employment

- Keeping the money and the taxes for the benefit of the local development
- Helping to maintain jobs in the area - and to create new jobs!
- Indirectly farmers provide work and income in other areas of business in the community
- Adding value and increasing profitability of local production
- Creating a chance for growth
- Demand for local food creates new chances for local farmers, services and enterprises

4. Local food encourages new product development

- Striving for new markets and customer satisfaction, local food farmers are open-minded and willing to use new technologies for creative ideas in product development

5. Local food brings more interaction and co-operation + more culture!

- Local food producers are often willing to search for new management and farming models
- Interaction and co-operation with different partners has proved to be a fruitful and effective way of business development
- Local food is engaging co-operation partners from many different areas and creating synergy between sectors
- Local food is not only about the food - it means the whole culture in the living environment combining handcraft, art, music, socializing etc. together

6. Educating people and improving consumer awareness

- Having transparent and reliable production methods and being devoted to skillful land management, local farmers are open for consumer conversation
- Interacting with consumers gives farmers a chance to educate people on real-life food production
- In return farmers have a chance to get direct feedback on their products
- Educational measures should be directed towards restaurants and markets
- Open farm-days and food experiences are an excellent opportunity to introduce also young children to farming life – they are after all the future customers and decision makers!

7. Local food emphasizes regional identity and keeps the heritage of the area alive

- Taste of the local food is taste of the region
- Special environmental characteristics (soil, climate, season, farming methods) are unique for the products
- Regional food culture, areas known for certain type of plants, animals or products
- Food is an essential part of the rural heritage
- Local food enhances the tourism experience – tasting the culture!

8. Local Food helps to preserve open landscape and rich wildlife

- When farmers are able to continue farming, the landscape stays open.
- Sustainable farm environment creates living surroundings for rich wildlife.
- Responsible farmers realize how dependent they are on natural resources, fertile soil and clean water. They are committed to environmental aspects and careful stewardship of the land

9. Local Food preserves genetic diversity

- Reviving and restoring old plant and breed varieties
- Old plant varieties may be better accustomed to the regions farming environment and thriving under these conditions
- More selection on our food tray
- The value of different varieties lies in taste and character; trying to produce vegetables with long shelf life, logistically best size and shape, and appealing looks should not limit the search for taste and character

10. Origin of the food

- Knowing where your food comes from!
- Local farmers aren't anonymous – they have a name and a location and are welcoming the customers to receive further information on how your food is produced

11. Local food means more food safety

- Preserving the farming land for local and national food production → leading to higher percentage in self-sufficient food production
- Traceability of food products
- Control of the quality and production methods (use of herbicides, pesticides, fertilizers, antibiotics, control of environmental impacts, disease prevention)

12. Local food focuses on seasonal eating

- Celebrating food at its best flavour and the peak of taste
- Eating food according to natural harvesting time

13. Traditional food culture meets modern consumer!

- Traditional cookery is back in fashion
- Restoring traditional food culture and introducing it to consumers of today in new attractive ways
- Old recipes and cooking methods can be utilized in local food marketing and product development
- Traditional cooking methods often honour the flavours and nutrients of food
- No use of artificial ingredients is an important factor for many consumers today

14. New cultures meeting local food producers

- Immigrants and mingling of new food cultures gives an opportunity to new flavours and product development
- Smaller scale food enterprises and producers are often willing to try out new crops and products. These try-outs can turn out beneficial for both the customers and the producer/company offering them

15. Local Food is an investment for the future

- By supporting local farmers today, you are helping to ensure that there will be farms in your community tomorrow

CONTACT INFORMATION – People in Projects

AUSTRIA



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SWEDEN



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Kneiding Mills-Shop

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Kneiding “Wirt z’Kneiding”- Tavern and restaurant

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Baumkronenweg Gasthof Oachkatzl

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