

Branding the Landscape – a guide

The great variety of cultural landscape as we know and value it from many regions of Europe has originated through human use. In the past 20 years, regional marketing has proven itself to be an effective instrument for creating value from preserving the landscape and in so doing safeguarding this value economically.

This guide has been developed within the framework of the “LIFESCAPE YOUR LANDSCAPE” European project and is supported by means of the EU INTERREG program and the German Federal Ministry for food, farming and consumer protection. It offers both new and experienced regional initiatives the possibility to extend and professionalise their work. The booklet uses questions rather than answers as a guide, thereby helping one to prepare for own decision-making instead of making decisions on their behalf. For this reason it is a valuable support for both “beginners” and “advanced” in their work.

With this booklet, the project partners of the “LIFESCAPE YOUR LANDSCAPE” project and the German Association for Landcare (DVL) e.V., as the umbrella organisation for the Landcare Associations, the biological centres and similar organisations, offer the regional marketer a practically orientated and easy to use guide.



Branding the Landscape – a guide

How to use this guide

The goal of the authors and commissioners of this work is to support regional marketing initiatives, regardless of their degree of experience, size or range of products.

This guide does not seek to outline a precise path towards a solution; in view of the wide variety of regional initiatives, this would not be possible. We prefer to give help in arriving at one's own decisions rather than presenting ready-made instructions. However, the guide should provide concrete support for the particular matters that are of concern to regional initiatives, and not simply give a broad description of the field. Therefore, instead of prescribing the "right" decision, the authors and commissioners of this guide have chosen to approach the subject through questions rather than answers in order to illustrate the alternatives and the consequences of different courses of action. However, if the experience of several projects suggests a particular approach to a problem, then recommendations are presented. The authors have chosen the following instruments to achieve this:

- **Key questions:** point to the areas which should be taken into consideration.
- **Tips** pass on concrete experiences from practice, which has proven helpful to several projects.
- Successful and sometimes not so successful **examples** show how other regional initiatives decided on one course of action and the results it had. Help can be derived here too in making decisions for one's own action or in solving problems.
- The **list of addresses** in the appendix should make it possible for all people interested to locate contacts with whom they would like to discuss particular aspects in greater detail. Not only is this permitted by the authors and commissioners, it is also their express wish.

Good Luck!

Neil Hill, *South Downs Joint Committee, England*
Patricia Clement, *Parc naturel régional des Caps et Marais d'Opale, France*
Maria Somocurcio, *Parc naturel régional de l'Avesnois, France*
Barbara Fiselius and Nicola Koczy, *MainÄppelHaus Lohrberg, Germany*
Yuca Waarts, *ECNC-European Centre for Nature Conservation, The Netherlands*
Eddy Nieuwstraten, *Provincie Noord-Brabant, The Netherlands*
Leen van den Bergh, *Vlaamse LandMaatschappij, Belgium*
Liselotte Unseld, *Regional Development Unseld, Germany*

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1. STARTING STRONG

There are many and varied motives for “marketing the landscape” through products which have a natural affinity to the landscape. For the most part, the impetus for these motives does not emanate from one single person. Preservation of the cultural landscape is often an important motivating factor.

1.1 Threats to regional produce

Many of the various traditional forms of cultural landscape are under threat, because they – having originated through use at one time – are no longer made use of. Cultivating them is often very costly, laborious and time-consuming with a high share of manual work and at the same time small yields. Value can be created through marketing regional products which come from these landscapes. In this way, the landscape can be preserved on a long-term basis. Which types of landscape are especially under threat see in the table at the end of the page.



The “Bleue du Nord” breed of cattle supply top quality meat to the regional market (Avesnois, Northern France).

Bottom-up or top-down initiatives?

In the past, regional initiatives were put forward by citizens from the region concerned (bottom-up) as well as the authorities and politicians (top-down). For instance, experience from the EU structure program LEADER shows that hybrid forms with a strong bottom-up approach are most successfully sustained.

At the same time, the will to act and the commitment of regional stakeholders is supplemented by expert knowledge, administrative support and more often than not with start-up funding also.

Landscape	Danger	Reason
Meadow orchard	Trees are no longer cut, they age, are felled, grass is no longer mown/grazed	Fruit-growing only still in highly productive fruit plantations
Infertile grasslands/hillsides	Shrub encroachment through lack of use	Agriculture only takes place in highly productive locations, medium locations are taken out of production (mowing/grazing)
Bocage (land with hedgerows)	Shrub encroachment, dilapidated hedgerows and embankments, ageing hedges	Cultivation is not suitable for machinery, is too costly and uneconomic
Vineyards	Dry walls become dilapidated, shrub encroachment on hillsides	Smaller, unproductive hillsides are taken out of production
Use of copse and composite forest, hedges	Intermixing due to a lack of regular use	In the past, wood has lost its significance as a material for gaining energy (labour-intensive). Increasing energy costs could however change this again in future.

Table 1: Types of landscape under threat



Bottom-up or top-down?

Het Groene Woud (the Green Forest), located between the cities of Den Bosch, Tilburg and Eindhoven in the Province of Noord-Brabant, the Netherlands, is a designated National Landscape. Various stakeholders in Het Groene Woud have gained good experiences in starting with an idea on regional branding, working on it with a group of enthusiastic entrepreneurs, and similarly discussing the development of a regional brand with regional policymakers. In this way, both levels are and have been involved in the development of Het Groene Woud brand. It makes no sense starting with a pot of subsidies and then gathering the entrepreneurs to see how these subsidies can be used. Also, it might be a good idea to have an intermediary between the various stakeholders because entrepreneurs, policymakers and experts sometimes do not communicate in the same way. Entrepreneurs are usually practically-oriented and things should not take too long otherwise they lose interest. In working with them, it is important not to think too much in terms of processes, rather think in actions.

*Source: Innovatieplatform Duurzame Meierij, and Het Groene Woud:
<http://www.duurzamemeierij.nl/>
<http://www.hetgroenewoud.com/>*

1.2 Staking out common goals

What is important, however, is to clarify the fundamental purpose of the initiators and to determine why they want to market their products and services together and in relation to the landscape.

As a rule, initiators move in a triangle between economic, ecological and social cornerstones. Practice has shown that a different emphasis on these points of focus by individual active participants can be especially beneficial to the initiative. Yet this initiative can only exist in the long term if it makes money and observes the ecological criteria which protect the countryside with which it identifies.

The promotion of social aspects serves to create a stronger local and regional acceptance of the initiative and its products as well, because it represents important purchasing criteria for a good many target groups.

More often than not, the initiators are a group of people who are already involved in the topic: farmers, advisers (nutrition, farming, food), fishermen, hunters, shopkeepers etc. Idealistic motives can be put into practice too (Sustainability, Agenda 21, Save the Planet, to name but a few). Some of these people take on either an overt or covert leadership of groups of initiators: these people are described as key players.

1.3 The role of key players

Regional initiatives are structured in a different way to "classical" businesses, although they do act as businesses on the market. Key players and their participation in the initiative play a major role in its sustained success. Their knowledge, contacts and image make a decisive contribution to anchoring the brand on a regional basis and communicating the values associated with it to the end users in a credible way. At the same time they shape co-operation within the regional initiative and are important for motivating the participants and their willingness to work.



Many hands make light work!

1. STARTING STRONG

The characteristics and abilities which distinguish a key player are many and varied, and can hardly be covered by one person alone. Here individual personalities can complement each other.

These key players:

- preserve their honesty and integrity
- are open to new ideas and drive developments forward
- recognise marketing potential which is of advantage
- analyse markets and competitors and draw conclusions
- can think in a general, strategic and specific way, at the same time integrating people and different opinions
- are able to resolve problems and make decisions even in risky, complex and conflict laden situations
- can convince other people
- can communicate with other business partners and understand their interests
- are well versed in dealing with journalists.

(from SCHMID et al., adapted)

1.4 Procedure

Step 1

Gather a core group (at the most three to eight people), approach possible candidates for this directly.

- First exploratory talks usually take place unofficially: A meets B, a common area of interest develops during the conversation, they decide to pursue the intention further.

Roughly stake out common purpose and vision.

- At the first "official" talks (invitation, topic, place and time) expectations and objectives must be clarified to avoid possible misunderstandings. This also applies to a timeframe for the project as well as the costs for individual time allowances (Who can spend how many hours per week on the project?).

Form a working group, which if need be can also be split into several focus groups.

- Open questions (see checklist in the appendix) are collected in the working groups and prioritised according to the urgency with which they need to be answered. Finally, the participants clarify who is responsible for settling the respective question: Who has access to data, who knows an expert, who has knowledge of successful examples?

Timetable

The timetable for the project can basically be drawn up in two ways:

1. The time for the market appearance is given (for instance, the seasonal yield of the product, Christmas business, set events such as anniversaries). Then work backwards from this time to set all dates for each individual milestone.

2. The starting point is set, the participants themselves decide on the pace and set the milestones.

The individual time allowance for each ally must be taken into consideration with both methods. If the participants only have a little time at their disposal, the preparation time using the second method is simply prolonged. With the first method, however, either new allies have to be found or the regional initiative has, as regards the market appearance, to cancel its plans.



Step 2

Bring your subject into the (trade) public arena through:

- discussions with journalists
- news releases
- appeals for collaboration.

Make use of the personal contacts of individual participants with representatives of the media. Supply copy and pictures which communicate your cause well. Mention contact details in the press for further prospects.

Decide by this date at the latest, who will represent the initiative externally.

Step 3

Invitation (public and personal) to a public introduction of the project by the core group.

Content:

- Inspirational presentation on best practice
- Introduce own vision and purpose
- Gauge the intentions of guests
- Introduce time frame and details of further action

Information event

Tip

Start only with those who want to be involved, do not talk people into it.

Prepare written handouts which the guests can take with them.

Don't rely on written handouts alone, make use of personal conversation at the event to gain prospects for collaboration.

Include a reply slip in the handouts for prospects to notify you of their involvement. Mention contact persons (3 max.) for enquiries as well as a time frame for feedback.

Use the event for press work.

Step 4

Frequent working discussions with the extended circle of active participants, who work on the following points:

- Marketing and brand policy
- Product and pricing policy
- Distribution and communication
- Financial framework conditions (who will be paid for his/her work and from when, who will invest money in the project)
- Legal form of the regional enterprise
- Organisational and decision-making structure (who makes the strategic decisions, who does the routine work)
- Business plan

In order to organise this work efficiently and to share it out among many people, it is important to collect individual competencies and to share out responsibilities. Problems which arise from the open questions (see Checklist in the annex), are dealt with urgently.

If required, the contacts or expert knowledge of the participants can be activated or external specialists consulted.

MainÄppelHaus Lohrberg (Orchard center Lohrberg)

Example

The tradition of orchard cultivation is very common around Frankfurt. MainÄppelHaus Lohrberg has been founded to support the conservation of the orchards and work towards an improved marketing of the products. The original project area includes around 380 ha of orchards in Frankfurt – Bergen-Enkheim and the City of Maintal (east of Frankfurt). To find out about the possibilities of networking and to broaden the product offers a survey was carried out in 2005. The task was to find organisations working with orchards and their products.

Results – fields of activities:	yes	%	no	%	Not specified	%
Maintaining of orchards	65	79.25	7	8.54	10	12.19
Harvesting	60	73.17	15	18.29	7	8.54
Services for landowners	38	46.34	19	23.17	25	30.49
Marketing	43	52.44	35	42.68	4	4.88
Certification ecological farming	20	24.39	34	41.46	28	34.15
Monitoring of relevant data for nature protection	42	51.22	35	42.68	5	6.10
Public relations	72	87.80	6	7.32	4	4.88
Only non-profit work	46	56.10	26	31.71	10	12.19

The range was around 30km in the surroundings of Frankfurt. 110 initiatives were found, of which 82 responded to the questions.

Further plans of co-operation include an exchange of information on the practical maintenance of orchards, sources of finance, and harvesting and marketing the products. The area of the network is estimated to be ten times as big as that of the original working area of MainÄppelHaus Lohrberg.

1. STARTING STRONG

1.5 Potential stakeholders and supporters

In setting up and developing regional marketing initiatives further, it is beneficial to cast one's eyes over the region to find possible allies. The following is a non exhaustive list of groups of people which includes both stakeholders and supporters. Some groups of people are listed twice as representatives of these groups qualify for both roles.

Stakeholders

- Craftsmen in the food sector: Mills/millers, brewers, bakers, butchers
- Farmers ...
- Direct marketers
- Landlords/young landlords
- Retailers
- Representatives of the country women, farmer and conservation guilds
- Abattoirs
- Countryside Protection Agencies
- Craftsmen in the non-food sector: carpenters, builders, fitters ...
- Consumer associations
- Politicians

Supporters

- Conservation agencies
- (Local) Politicians
- Church Representatives
- VIPs

1.6 Motivation

Preparing the brand for the market and establishing it can take a long time. The important thing here is that the different working groups and members of the regional initiative remain motivated.

The key players and later the management of the regional initiative should encourage the following factors:

- Minor and major successes, which happen after a short period of time (such as the test marketing of small quantities, the participation in a regional market, positive press feedback);
- Visits to an experienced and successful marketing initiative;



Experience and commitment are at the heart of every regional initiative.

- Open and honest relations between participants;
- Mutual exchanges of experiences by the stakeholders on other themes as well;
- Stakeholders feel that they are benefiting from this co-operation:
- Ideas and results of the work by the stakeholders are taken seriously;
- Recognition of work achieved.

1.7 Networking

Effective networking both within and outside the region is a decisive factor for the success of regional initiatives.

Communication plays a key role here. In the first case it is a matter of connecting to existing networks. Each active participant in the regional initiative has contacts which can be used, such as contacts to further suppliers, consumers, processors and to retailers, to experts, authorities or sponsors.

In addition the network needs to be extended and established. For instance, if products are to be offered to the food retail trade, a trusting relationship with market managers, buyers or logistics providers enables problems to be flagged quickly and dealt with efficiently. Opportunities for new products, customer requests or enquiries about the availability of additional services also reach the regional initiative sooner when the people concerned speak to one another on a regular basis.



Rhine-Main Area around Frankfurt

For several hundred years, orchards in the Rhine-Main area have been of great interest to the inhabitants of Frankfurt and its surroundings. They have been planted and taken care of mainly for growing the fruit used in making traditional apple wine.

Many initiatives have been founded to support local orchard owners with advice and practice in fruit-growing, some having even been formed before 1900. Traditionally strong, they often had several hundred members per village.

In the 1980s nature conservation groups discovered the unique quality of the standard tree orchards as wildlife habitat with high biodiversity. These groups emphasised the value of the amount of wild and endangered species occurring there. In the meantime, both directions have moved towards each other: the traditional fruit and horticulture organisations realised the lack of interest in the subject by younger people. The range of topics has had to be enlarged to attract members. The nature conservation groups took greater account of the fact that this habitat would not exist if man had not made and maintained it. Therefore, there has been a need to know more about horticultural practice. With the changes in society and the new value placed on having beautiful space for recreation, there were new reasons for conservation.

In 2003 a new organisation "MainÄppelHaus Lohrberg" was formed, which tries to unite the two movements in parts of the Rhine-Main area. The partners are local horticultural organisations and several conservation groups working on a local to international level. The shared aim is to conserve the orchards by marketing the landscape and the products in a better way and by building up an information centre with shop and catering.

This aim seems to be rather attractive and welcome for regional identification, so since 2006 surrounding towns, cities, counties, the pomological society, gardening societies and others have become members.

Both movements have enlarged their target public, the raising of sponsorship has been facilitated, and interest from outside both movements has been raised.

Networks can be strengthened through:

- Regular meetings in pleasant surroundings (for instance during company visits to participating businesses)
- Informal get-togethers
- Circular letters
- Events, to which either the whole circle or individual groups of involved persons are invited
- Lectures followed by an exchange of experience.



Farmers and direct marketers visit a regional abattoir.

1.8 Collecting "know-how"

In the beginning, initiators of regional marketing initiatives often only dominate separate areas of their field of work. They gather knowledge mainly through "learning by doing", where they are supported by the shared competences of the network and external advice.

This is a tried and tested strategy and does not stand in the way of success, as long as bad mistakes do not endanger the whole plan. The decision-makers in the initiative should not be afraid to discuss questions openly with external people as well.

Sources of information and "know-how" are:

- Experienced marketers, also from other regions
- Advisory organisations for trade, craftsmen, industry which also often offer cost-effective advice
- Educational establishments such as universities and academies
- Government offices
- External advisory bureaux.

1. STARTING STRONG

1.9 Management

A survey by the German Association for Landcare (DVL) into the reasons for the failure of regional initiatives, found that the most frequently mentioned factors were poorly motivated personnel and a lack of co-ordination.

In comparison, a large number of the people, companies and organisations involved reflected positively, as did the strong motivation of the people involved, especially the producers (farmers).

These results point to the importance of having a management team which is as professional and full-time as possible. This management team has to mesh the economic and idealistic objectives of the business. At the same time, it has to motivate the people involved and deal with them in a solution-oriented way.

This requires:

- top communication and leadership skills
- sound market knowledge
- a talent for organisation and
- controlling and quality management skills.

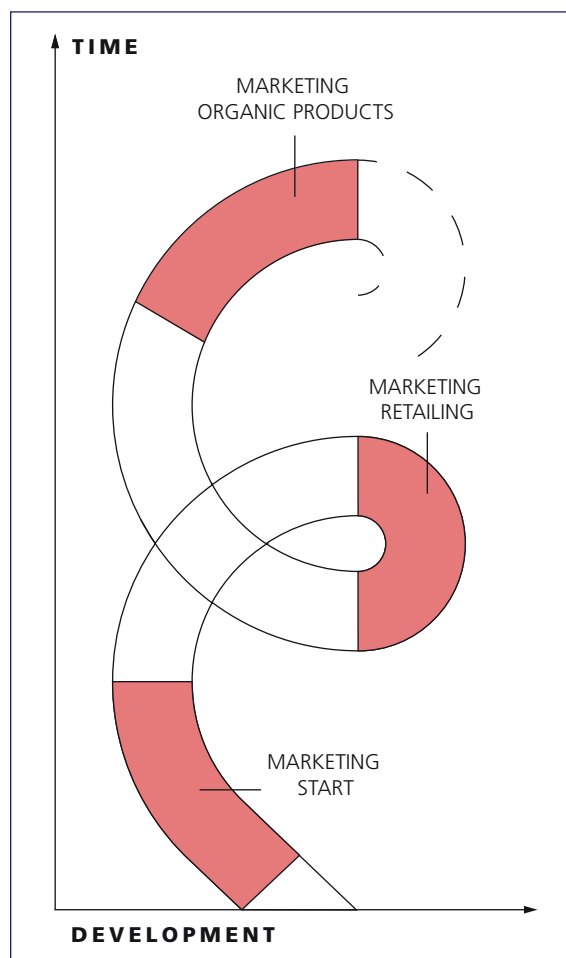
So that the management of the regional initiative can meet these challenges, responsibilities must be clearly sorted out and decision-making channels set up in the shortest and most efficient way. Moreover the network should support management effectively.

1.10 Feasibility study/ Business plan

The first working steps of the core group should serve to compile facts which allow the feasibility of the plan to be assessed. This includes a first rough market analysis (for detail see Chapter 3–5) with the following factors (compare with Chapter 3–5):

- Framework conditions and objectives
- Size of the region
- Supply
- Demand
- Competition
- Target groups
- Strengths and weaknesses
- Opportunities and risks
- Financial requirements
- Time requirements (see Info Timetable).

How to deal with these requirements can best be illustrated by means of a spiral: In the first round, rough data is gathered and evaluated, which leads to new starting-points, others are no longer pursued. In the next round more detailed data is ascertained, new data added and the situation evaluated again, which results in further decisions. Then the next round follows and so on.



Again and again matters arise along the way for regional marketing initiatives (here for example Marketing) and often from another or additional viewpoint. In each situation the same questions serve to prepare for new challenges.

If, in the course of this, the plan gradually starts to look promising, that is it seems to be feasible, then the same method is used to set up the business plan.

A business plan is made up of eight sections:

- 1: Summary
- 2: Type of Company
- 3: Product/Service
- 4: Sector/Market
- 5: Marketing/Distribution
- 6: Company Management
- 7: Three-Year-Plan
- 8: Capital requirements

Basic rules for the Business Plan

Info

1. Make an impression through clarity and objectivity
2. Formulate your business plan so that it can also be understood by an outsider
3. Draw up your document as a unified whole
4. Test your draft document again and again
5. Rework your business plan as often as necessary
6. Find support for yourself in good time
7. Do not let yourself be disheartened

(from: www.startup-Initiative.de)



Signed contracts build a qualified base for co-operation.

Content of the Business Plan for South Downs Lamb

Example

1. 2004 Test outputs:

- Supply chain
- Branding and promotion
- Marketing program
- Environmental, technical and assurance protocols

2. Objectives

3. Timetable:

- Outline

4. Technical Aspects

(for 2 scenarios):

- Products
- Markets and outlet types
- Capital Expenditure
- Competition Taste
- Production
- Costs
- Slaughtering
- Traceability
- Yield
- Carcass quality, conformation and weight
- The carcass 'jigsaw'

South Downs Lamb



REPORT 2004

5. Marketing and selling:

- Corporate branding
- Product branding
- Pricing
- Personnel and systems
- Economics of the initiative
- Profit and Loss
- Cash flow
- The risks

2. OBJECTIVES AND VISIONS

Objectives can only be achieved if they are clearly defined. The objectives in marketing the landscape are naturally different to those of classical businesses. Therefore, stakeholders should try to formulate clear objectives for the whole range of their plans.

Objectives serve as a point of orientation for the direction and structure which all planned activities will take. The more precisely the objectives can be defined in terms of quantity and quality, the easier it will be to check success (SCHMID et al. 2005).

2.1 SMART Objectives

A good instrument for formulating objectives in a capable way is **SMART**. This is a good description of the way in which objectives should be defined. According to **SMART** objectives are formulated as follows:

- S**pecific (concrete) – as regards both the objective and the stakeholder;
- M**easurable through a clear description of the situation to be attained;
- A**ctively influential, attractive and accepted;
- R**ealistic – highly placed, but still achievable; therefore relevant to the organisation;
- T**imetabled with a schedule and milestones.

In setting objectives, the individual area of business and the whole initiative should always be kept in mind. Therefore, the core team and perhaps even additional participants should formulate the objectives together. This discussion of objectives also clarifies the common basis for further plans. One should be able to keep track of the number of objectives otherwise it will be too costly, laborious and time-consuming to measure performance. A limit of five to eight objectives has proven to be practicable.

Finally, the people who are involved – it is advisable to bring together all the people involved – draw up a list of objectives. This is just as important internally for the regional initiative as it is externally for the appearance on the market. Moreover, clear terms of reference facilitate management decision-making in the event of a later conflict in objectives.

2.2 Landscape “objectives”

The fundamental goal for all initiatives in branding a landscape, is the preservation of a type of landscape through the economic support of products derived from it. Extensively farmed areas of space are frequently those which are to be used further or again by regional marketing. Cultural landscape is created by people and offers habitat for a variety of plants and animals. The objective of “protection through use” applies above all to the following forms of cultivation:

Type of landscape	Cultivation needed	Marketable products
Fruit trees scattered on agricultural land	Extensive fruit-growing	Fruit products (juice, fruit wines, dry fruit etc.)
Bocage (land with hedgerows)	Extensive grazing such as sheep flocks, suckler cow management system, hedge care	Lambs, wool, calves, cows, oxen, milk, cheese, butter, firewood from hedgerow maintenance
Types of landscape resulting from grazing such as juniper heathland	Extensive grazings	Lambs, wool
Scattered meadows	Mowing	Herb hay (pets, health care and relaxation)
Chalk/sandy infertile grasslands	Extensive arable farming, extensive grazing	Extensive yields of arable farming, such as rye, lambs, wool, calves, etc.
Mountain pasture	Twice-mown or extensive grazing	Herb hay (pets, health care and relaxation)
Multi-layered mixed woodland	Plenter forest-cultivation	Firewood, woodchips, pellets, furniture etc.

Table 2: Marketable products based on different types of landscape

2.3 Suggestions for quantitative objectives

Once an objective is defined a strategy must be chosen to help achieve this objective. In choosing a strategy, the strategies of fellow competitors should be taken into consideration alongside the individual objectives of the initiative. Market research, specialist trade press, a telephone call to prospective commercial partners or a conversation with an external adviser can help to select the right strategy.

In the following table, suggestions for quantitative objectives are listed, according to HAINES, 1999,

adapted. Several objectives can be combined with each other, the main areas of focus are determined by the regional initiative. It has also proven not to be manageable if an objective is formulated for each one of the following points.

Suggestions for qualitative objectives:

- active shepherd finds a successor
- company from the region develops a prefabricated house made of wood from the region
- tourist operators participate actively.

Objectives regarding the landscape	
Protection of the landscape measured by:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultivated areas, which will be used to produce goods for the regional brand • Biodiversity (animal and plant life) • Effect on valuable parts of the cultural landscape, such as the number of replenished fruit trees (types, size...) • Keeping livestock under natural conditions • No use of genetically modified organisms • Use of resource-friendly methods of working • Proportion of biologically farmed space to usable agricultural area
Economic objectives	
Position in the market measured by:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Position compared to competitors • Degree of innovation • Technological lead
Breadth of market measured by:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of products on the market • Size of customer base • Size/number of regions (states/counties perhaps) supplied to
Customer service measured by:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Usefulness and quality of the product • "Reliability of the product" • Availability of product (number of points of sale)
Growth measured by:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Net profits of sales • Quantity of sales, such as lambs marketed under the regional label in the first, second, ... fifth season; • Additional earnings of market participants through higher market prices • Market share
Profitability measured by:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Profit margin • Profit • Share in the profit of turnover
Customer satisfaction measured by:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of repeat purchasers, that is repeat sales (or "once and never again" buyers) • Number of complaints • Results of customer surveys
Effectiveness measured by:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Net profit of sales • Period of time for outside financing • Movement of goods • Liquidity
Personnel measured by:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of employees • Average wage of the employees • Staff attitudes to the business • Net profits of sales per employee
Social objectives	
Social responsibility measured by:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Image of the business • Capacity of resources • Public activities • Contribution to the common good • Number of jobs created • Contribution to regional development

Table 3: Types of objectives regarding regional marketing activities

2. OBJECTIVES AND VISIONS

Last but not least:

Set down regular dates (such as the last meeting in the year) to take stock of successes and failures. Then develop your objectives further together. This might involve drawing up new objectives or taking your leave of old ones.



Bee-keepers also contribute to regional development.

Example of objectives: South Downs Lamb

The objectives remain the same for the future of SDL as they were for 2004:



- 1. To safeguard and sustainably manage the delicate environmental balance of the South Downs by promoting grazing of sheep.*
- 2. To increase the number of sheep flocks as more arable is put back to grass.*
- 3. To help the farmer/suppliers become more profitable within SDL than hither to.*
- 4. To set up a marketing company that will give farmer/suppliers access to retail outlets and prices.*
- 5. To help farmers become less dependent on the commodity price for lamb.*
- 6. To build an enterprise capable of directing meat down an added value route with a focus initially on whole lamb.*



*People are willing to support causes which are important to them in their free time:
Grassland management campaign "A day for the mountain" at the Hesselberg, Middle-Franconia, Germany.*



Altmühltaler Lamm (Altmühl valley lamb)

The Altmühl valley in Bavaria distinguishes itself through valuable juniper heathland, which is constantly under threat from shrub encroachment. In order to be able to sustain shepherding, the "Altmühltaler Lamm" regional brand was introduced in seven rural districts. For many years around 3,500 lambs have been marketed under the brand each year. The following extract from the guidelines shows the requirements on landscape conservation and regionality.

A) Professional conservation criteria

- At least 50% of grassland surface area (according to the list of the surface areas of the lots) is relevant to conservation. Relevant to conservation in this sense means surface areas which have been concluded by contract according to the Bavarian contractual conservation programme or the Bavarian cultural landscape programme or surface areas which in habitat maps are recorded as 13d-surface areas or classified as equivalent (confirmed by the lower conservation authorities). Only surface areas cultivated without the use of pesticides, mineral fertilisers and liquid manure are considered.
- The working proprietor must rear sheep in flocks. Temporary grasslands are only tolerated if extensive

grazing is guaranteed under appropriate contractual conditions within the context of the Bavarian conservation program.

- Livestock is limited to a maximum of 1.4 GV/ha usable agricultural area.
- A minimum density for grazing for optimal pasture quality is to be assured.

B) Criteria for regional production

- The business must have part of its surface area which is grazed by sheep in the "Naturpark Altmühltal" project area.
- Bought animal feed must originate exclusively from the rural districts of the project area.
- Albuminous animal feed as a protein supplement (legumes, colza cake...) is only allowed to come from the rural districts of the project area. This applies after an initial period of adjustment from 01.01.2000.
- Transport of live animals is not permitted to exceed a journey time of one hour.
- Transparency and traceability of product routes must be guaranteed by the business.
- Marketing initiatives must comply with the objectives of the project.
- Purchase of lambs is only permitted from businesses involved in the "Altmühltaler Lamm" project.



The juniper heathland in the valley of the Bavarian "Altmühl", Germany, is old cultural landscape which can only be preserved through grazing.

3.1 Analysis of supply

Product safety and delivery represent a challenge for regional initiatives.

A fluctuation in quality can vex even the most tolerant of consumers. Alternatively, seasonal availability of goods often enhances the attractiveness of the product, but not if it is out of stock in a couple of days and unavailable again for months on end. Therefore, at the very start of marketing, an exact record is needed of when the product can be brought onto the market and at what price, quality and in which quantities.

Key questions:

- Which products/services are there in our region that might be marketable because of their regional origin?
- Which products/services is our region traditionally well-known for?
- Which products/services have the greatest need for regionally based marketing (from the point of view of the region or the view of initiators)?

Seasonality

The fact that most regional products are available on a seasonal basis is not only justifiable to the customer, it is seen in many cases to be a matter of product credibility. Moreover, it increases the appeal of the offer if it is only available from time to time. Therefore, seasonality is not an obstacle, rather it encourages commercial success (if communicated well see Chapter 7, Communication).

For this, the following questions have to be answered:

- Is it a purely seasonally available product?
- Is it possible to extend the season and at the same time ensure that quality remains constant?
- Are there products in the range that complement each other in seasonal sequence?

3.2 How will the region be determined?

The borders of the region should be chosen with the utmost care – if they can be chosen at all. Regional borders are often already established by the initiator, management or sponsors beforehand.

Criteria	Advantages	Disadvantages
Administrative or political borders: administrative district, region, department, communal alliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-operation with authorities is easier due to clearer responsibilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Borders are often perceived to be artificial • Little changeability, for instance in the event of expansion
Historic borders See example: Rhine-Main area around Frankfurt, Germany	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong identification of the population with the region • Harnessing of positive image for marketing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possibly too small • Possibly a negative concept or old-fashioned image • Possibly several authorities are responsible
Geographic borders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilisable for marketing with well-known regions (e.g. The Black Forest) • Strong identification by the population 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smaller units hardly known nation wide • Possibly several authorities responsible • New artificial names hardly accepted and need a higher level of marketing effort
Amalgamation for a specific purpose, for instance Nature Parks (EU), National Parks (EU), National Landscape (NL)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive connection through proximity to nature and product quality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In part very large areas • Often several authorities responsible • Own place of administration often weakly equipped financially
Processing or retailing structures, for instance the catchment area of a dairy or an authorised slaughtering business See example: Beemsterkaas, Netherlands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shorter transportation channels • Traceability of products and transparency are easier to administer • Value created remains in the region • Retailing supports marketing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires decentralised processing structures • Tied to single food businesses

Table 4: Decision support regarding the determination of the region



Traditional market gardening in the Parc naturel régional des Caps et Marais d'Opale (France)

The Audomarois marshland is a specific wetland, covering 3700 ha with a water course network of 700 km. It is one of the last areas of marshland still cultivated using traditional agricultural practices in France. These practices have created a typical landscape of inland polders with a rich natural and cultural heritage.

The Parc naturel régional supported a group of local farmers in setting up a direct sale shop. Most of the produce sold there is produced on the marshland (beef and vegetables mainly). The project helps farmers to widen their activity and promote traditional agricultural practices, and it also aims to link urban people to the countryside; in the shop consumers and producers can meet in person.

Initially, the seasonality of the production, especially vegetables (cauliflower, chicory etc.), appeared to be an obstacle. The farmers decided not to extend the season of production (which would have been nonsense compared with the traditional practices they are promoting), but rather to place a greater emphasis on communicating this specifically.

It was a big challenge to take on, but direct contact with consumers helped them a lot in their task.

By communicating well about the product, its origin, its method of production, its seasonality, positive health aspects, farm visits ..., they reached their aim.



Traditional market gardening brings added values to rural areas (Merkendorf near Nuremberg, Germany).

Defining a core or buffer zone has proven to be worthwhile in many regions. This facilitates dealings with producers and processors on the outskirts of the region.



National Landscapes in the Netherlands

Borders of the region in which branding can take place

The borders of the National Landscape het Groene Woud (the Green Forest) in the Netherlands are not used for the Groene Woud brand. The borders of the National Landscape are used as an indication, but if an entrepreneur from just outside of it feels part of it and contributes with his production to the quality of the landscape, then he can join in the branding scheme.

Source: Innovatieplatform Duurzame Meierij, and Het Groene Woud:

<http://www.duurzamemeierij.nl/>

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

3.3 Range

At the start of the branding initiative a registration of all available and marketable products in the region is to be made. Existing catalogues from direct marketers or other businesses for instance can be used as a basis for analysis. Public information meetings for potential marketers can be used in order to give full particulars of the range through short questionnaires. Experience shows that the variety of goods supplied is mostly considerably larger than expected.

The following facts should be checked:

- Type of product and methods of processing
- Available quantity
- Type of availability: seasonal, permanent
- Participation in programs, for instance state branding programs, bio-certificates, quality assurance programs
- Services offered
- Other product ideas.

The evaluation of the results of the questionnaire clarify the prerequisites for regional supply:

- Which products/services can be marketed?
- In what form should the products be offered (raw, processed, household or bulk-purchasing packages?)
- Which products/services should come on the market and at what time (timetable for extending the range)?
- Which processing systems are available for this?

3.4 Analysis of quantity

An analysis of quantities to be made available at short- and medium-term notice creates a further basis for decision-making about methods of marketing for instance.

The following should be assessed:

- What quantities are to be obtained?
- Are the quantities also available in the years to follow?
- Do the quantities available justify a public appearance on the market?
- Are there producers who would, in the event of low supply, switch over production to this product?

Note: The provisos in offering new products are not to be underestimated. The demands placed on regional products by caterers are a good example of this. For example upmarket catering businesses are by all means interested in a premium, varied offer of different sorts of poultry (such as guinea fowl, pasture-fed goose, free-range turkey hens). However in many cases it was difficult to find a farmer prepared to rear poultry.

- Is it possible to even out fluctuations in the quantities of products offered?

Note: It is not just the weather which influences harvest quantities. Especially in regions with a high proportion of surface area for one single fruit there is the danger that an attack by pests can destroy the whole harvest. Examples of this are vegetable gardening (asparagus) or meadow orchards (Rhine-Main area).

A further aspect is long-term sustainability: If a regional initiative markets products which need a long time to yield income, the initiative has to take care to plant again in good time.

3.5 Quality

Traditional, regional or local food is generally thought of as food associated with a specific area or locale: the climate and geology of that area determining soil type and fertility, hence giving rise to specific flora and fauna suited to the physical conditions. The use of indigenous raw materials is essential in giving traditional, local and regional foods their defining characteristics. Yet the use of locally produced raw materials constitutes only

a part of the food's definition. The methods and processes in producing food can be just as important.¹⁾

In measuring quality it is important to assess the quality available at the time and the quality desired. The formulation of guidelines plays an important role in this.

¹⁾ *Good Food on the Public Plate, 2003*



Keeping livestock under natural conditions is prerequisite for the highest quality of meat, as shown here by the "Bunten Bentheimer" meadow-reared pig.

Key questions:

- What qualities differentiate the products from others (freshness, taste and appearance, delivery service, degree of processing, speciality?)
- Does the quality of the product comply with the average or rather with that of a premium product?
- How can consistent quality of the original product be assured (advice to producers, quality criteria for deliveries)?
- How can consistent quality of the finished product/service be assured?
- How can quality assurance be organised cost-effectively (use of existing systems)?
- Which ecological, economic, ethical or social sales arguments do the products/services offer?

In many cases it has proven to be beneficial using the guidelines of a national branding program as a basis and to supplement these with criteria specific to the region.

The state branding programs are monitored by independent controlling committees at moderate costs. The regional initiative only has to check the additional criteria. The situation is the same if the regional initiative chooses the EU guidelines for organic products as a basis. In this case the base criteria are checked and safe guarded by a national standardised control procedure (Reference: see Chapter 8, Organisation and Finances).

3.6 Guidelines

A regional initiative should set guidelines for the production and processing of its products. On the one hand they should reflect the objectives of the initiative. On the other, the guidelines should not be too detailed as controlling them will prove more costly, laborious and time-consuming accordingly.



Innovative-traditional ways of keeping animals with regional identity

“Die Rottaler Strohsau” (The Rott valley straw pig), Bavaria, Germany.

The “Rottaler Strohsau” (Rott valley straw pig) is kept under natural conditions on rural farmyards in the Rottal area. The pigs are reared in accordance with special guidelines on feed and surroundings. The farmers involved provide opportunities for a visit to the farm. The pigs can root, play and chew just like animals in natural surroundings do. This keeps them energetic and healthy. Movement, a lot of fresh air and optimal food and surroundings – this is the basis for the excellent quality and special taste of the meat.

“The Rhön brown trout returns”

A distinctive brown trout is being bred today in the biosphere reservation of Rhön (on the borders of Bavaria, Hesse and Thuringia) in traditional but extensive pond farming to protect an indigenous type of fish. The native brown trout had up until then almost been driven out by the North American Rainbow Trout. Supply has become established in the local catering trade and because damage to the environment has been minimised (through extensive pond management) the situation in the streams has improved and the Rhön has developed into an upmarket region for fishing.

*Both examples:
danner & partner, Ruhstorf, Germany*

A combination of state branding programs, in which the suppliers have to take part, coupled with other criteria has proven worthwhile. Temporary deadlines can be laid down for this. A possible list of criteria see at table 5 at the following page.

3.7 Packaging and labelling

The supply of regional goods has to be labelled in accordance with national and EU guidelines. In the EU-Member States the EU guidelines are complemented by national regulations. Added to this are the requirements of quality programs as well as the guidelines for the regional initiative which uses packaging and labelling to distinguish its products from market competitors. The regional initiative should clarify the following:

Key questions:

- How will the products be labelled (logo, CI, lettering and marking)?
- What distinguishes regional products from the products of competitors?
- Is the packaging coherent/credible with the message you want to convey (protection of the landscape, sustainable development)?
- How will the products be packaged (form, material, degree of processing, packaging company)?
- How can packaging be optimised for advertising and information purposes?



Firewood from hedgerow maintenance can be marketed well on a regional basis (Bocage, France).

Product group	Possible criteria (choice)
Cattle for milk and meat production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Origin (birth, rearing) in the region • Duration of transport to the abattoir • Certain way of keeping cattle • Duration of grazing cattle during the period of vegetation • Prohibition of certain types of food (silage, GMO, soya etc.) • Use of certain types of food (regionally grown protein/legumes) • Method of processing meat or milk • Maturity of meat
Pigs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Origin (birth, rearing) in the region • Certain way of keeping pigs (outdoors, on straw etc.) • Combination of feed • Duration of transport to the abattoir • Processing of meat
Lambs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Origin (birth, rearing) in the region • Certain way of keeping lambs (sheep flocks) • Share of areas committed to grazing (for instance proportion of areas with nature conservation contract)
Fruit trees scattered on agricultural land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certain selection of varieties • Stem size • Care of undergrowth
Vegetables, grains and other plant products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultivation of certain kinds and varieties • Method of processing • Type of fertiliser and quantity • Cultivation of the soil • Agreement on cultivation plans with regional initiative
Animal welfare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grazing (duration, type) • Stall area per animal • Daylight • Floor (bedding, material, arrangement) • Group size etc.
Landscape maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measures which contribute to the conservation of the respective type of landscape, such as tree-cut with fruit orchards, care of stone walls and hedges, grazing, removing shrub encroachment • Special protective measures for outstanding kinds of animal and plant life which are associated with the respective type of landscape such as leaving dead wood in meadow orchards and woods
Education and awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offers of environmental education for children and adults • Joint campaigns for conserving the landscape (Example: "A day for the mountain", Hesselberg region, Bavaria)
Changes to the farming method of production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing the proportion of ecologically cultivated surface areas • Certification of production according to EU guidelines for biological farming • Extension or change to crop rotation (intercrops, perennial crops) • Expansion of extensive use of surface areas, such as suckler cow management system • Measures to reduce soil erosion

Table 5: Possible production criteria for regional products



Packaging and labelling in the Parc naturel régional de l'Avesnois

The marking or labelling laws in France and in Europe have to be respected:

France: *Consommation code (April 1993) – L214-1; L214-2; L112-1*

Europe: *(CE) n°1760/2000 for beef and beef products. For beef, if we want to provide information about one region, we have to respect this law. It means that there has to be:*

- *1 lead partner: owner of the brand*
- *1 charter in existence*
- *monitoring to ensure requirements are being met and are validated by the state-owned company (in France it is Direction Générale de la Concurrence, la Consommation et la répression des fraudes)*

(precision: the regional nature park of Avesnois, chose to adhere to one existing approach – INTERBEV).

Label of the Nature Park of Avesnois

The logo is present on the packaging of the product (ex. plastic bag with the logo printed, or sticker).

Beef is wrapped in butchers paper and put in a plastic bag or a box. The logo is present on the bag or the box with a sticker.

Additionally, there is a poster at the point of sale which communicates brand specifics.

3.8 Traditional offer or new product?

Commercial activity usually starts with foods which have been traditionally produced in the region such as beef or milk products from grassland regions. How should the regional initiative now deal with “new” products, the targeted production of food external to production so far? Should it market ostrich meat or lavender, even though neither the keeping of ostriches nor the growing of lavender has been usual up to now? What about producing “regional energy” such as wind energy or growing wood for energy?

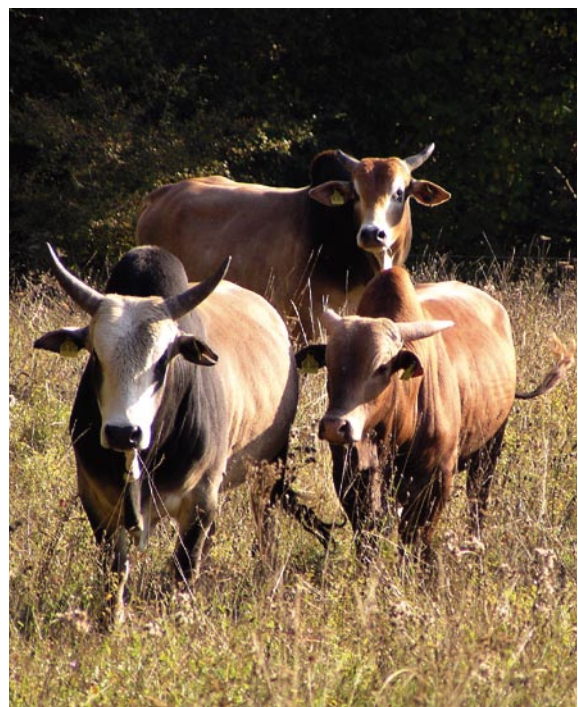
These issues cannot be decided on a general level, rather they have to be decided on an individual basis. A steering group should take on responsibility for this, comprising regional representatives from the fields of nature conservation, agriculture, tourism and/or food trade. This steering group can call in experts, such as historians, to deal with special

questions. They should take into account the following criteria:

- Does the new product fit in with our regional identity?
- How is it compatible with the image of the region?
- What images does the product itself have?
- Is production compatible with an existing model perhaps or with the guidelines and objectives of the regional initiative?
- Does production influence the natural scenery for instance (and how relevant is this to the initiative)?
- Does the new product support or undermine our credibility?
- Is the product of economic use commercially?

Experiences from other regions can also be exploited, for instance existing contacts of the initiative or through research on the internet.

The decision regarding diversification of production to new products is in each case for the regional initiative itself to decide. However the authors recommend orienting oneself as closely as possible to traditional production especially in designated protected areas. Their view is that in protected areas it is particularly a question of integrity and credibility as brand values are based on honest attributes of your region.



Do zebu enrich the landscape or look out of place?

4. DEMAND

Two current factors offer very favourable conditions for regional strategies:

1. Private demand in particular (and partly corporate – owner-run businesses above all!) for a regional supply of products/services is currently growing (especially if it is a product typical to the region). There are various reasons for this – ranging from newly awoken strong emotional ties with one's homeland to an ecologically-based wish to minimise transportation up to the view that regional produce always guarantees quality.
2. Moreover, market transparency quite frankly leaves a lot to be desired. In many cases it is not known what offers, products, possibilities and/or channels of distribution are available within a region or can be used. In case of doubt (for example, if prices/costs/services are the same) regional structures still have the advantage today – it is just a matter of making them well-known.

The consumer, whether bulk purchaser (canteens, food trade) or family households, associates several expectations with regional produce. These expectations are more or less the opening filter for analysing the demand of all target groups; special target group filters are added on top of this.

In general, consumers associate the following with regional products:

- a particular quality of product (fresher, keeps longer)
- small, clear “friendly” structures
- proximity creates trust: trust in the offer through physical proximity to the place of production



The Orchard Centre “Main Appelhaus Lohrberg’s” Marketing Mobile captures the attention.

- loyalty to one's own region and its producers and
- environmental conservation aspect (less traffic, less pollution of the environment).

4.1 Statistical analysis of demand

There are several methods for analysing demand. Past experience can be evaluated using statistical sources. This includes studies on consumption, parts of the agrarian report issued by the ministry responsible and other sources regarding growth per capita and food consumption trends. These can be converted according to a defined target region (such as the producing region and its adjacent conurbation) and an estimated market share of regional products. In this way, the figures calculated simply stake out the pitch.

From a survey on food consumption it follows that: every person eats on average 700 g of lamb per year. Taking a population of 200,000 people in the region, this means a statistical consumption of 140,000 kg of lamb per year. If a market share of 2–5% is added for lamb certified as regional, this means a potential market of 2,800 to 7,000 kg lamb in the region each year.



4.2 Trends in demand

A further method used for analysing demand is an evaluation of emerging trends. This allows for more of a qualitative estimation: which values are more important to the consumer, what quality and service do they expect, which solutions to problems should the provider be able to offer? Suggestions for the choice of product and its development or for the communication strategy can be gathered from this.

Questions of demand

Own surveys are an effective way to complement statistical evaluation.

Methods for this are:

- Interviews with the representatives of the chosen target groups
- Interviews with opinion leaders and representatives of associations (landlords, hoteliers, retail, canteen kitchens)
- Consumer marketing tests, such as sampling sessions with a short questionnaire.

Co-operation with higher education establishments or training colleges also provides opportunities whereby students could carry out surveys as part of their final work. Existing final work or publications by higher education establishments could also be studied carefully.



Consumers accept sustainable agriculture; but are they disposed to pay more money for the products?

Before the survey, it is important to clarify:

- **Objectives:**
What should be ascertained? What information is really important?
- **Target group:**
From whom – i.e. which target group – is information needed?
- **Method:**
Which method should be used? How will the data be recorded so that it can be used well again?
- **Processing:**
How should the data be processed and used? To whom should it be accessible?

- **Costs:**
How high are the costs and are these fair? Is there a “leaner” form, which might be cheaper?
- **Time:**
When are the results needed?

4.3 Main questions in drawing up the survey

4.3.1 Range

- Which products (and to what degree of processing)/services does the consumer/do certain consumer groups want?
- Are there other products/services in addition to the existing offer from the region which the consumer would like to take advantage of?



People enjoy shopping regional products in a traditional ambience.

Sources of information:



Means	Use
For statistical analysis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agrarian report (per capita consumption of individual products, trends) • National studies on consumption • Final work at higher education establishments • Published market studies (via Google) 	Staking out the whole area: how many regional goods are sold in my target market No basis for strategic decision-making
For a qualitative assessment of the whole development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special trade press • Interviews with market experts, such as landlords, chefs, managers in the food trade • Shelf checks in food markets • Market observation in other regions • Consumer surveys • Final work at higher education establishments • Internet 	Suggestions for product and service offers and further developments Often valuable tips for developing the marketing process

4.3.2 Quantities

- What quantities will be bought by possible buyers and at what point in time?
- Will quantities be fixed by contract?

4.3.3 Quality and price

- What quality do buyers expect and at what price?
- What level of service do buyers expect?
- To what extent are they prepared to pay more for more service?

Consumer survey of the Parc naturel régional d'Avesnois



*Regional Nature Parks Survey:
Image in France.*

*"Added value of park products and companies using the Regional Nature Park brand",
Institut d'études LAMCO (octobre 1995).*

The federation and the park wanted to survey consumers with regard to the existence and the nature of the demand for the park's products:

- *to measure the awareness and image of the brand*
- *to identify the contents of the brand*
- *to know the elements of "added value", credibility and attraction brought by the brand to the products*
- *to measure the degree of awareness and the specifics of the park in the eyes of the consumer*
- *to appreciate the relevance of a system of distribution to urban centres.*

This study leads to the discussion of favourable and unfavourable elements of using the park's brand as a way of evaluating products and services in the park. This analysis relates also to the validity of the criteria selected up to now of whether or not to grant the brand to the products.

The survey: all France

1650 surveyed 900 people (tourists) from large built-up areas – outside and far from a Regional Nature Park – 750 people (locals) from a built-up area – outside and near a Regional Nature Park.

Contents: meeting with groups of consumers, consumer surveys, conclusion and recommendations.

Objectives of surveys

Surveys can be implemented, in order to:

- filter out certain target groups for regional products
- put in concrete form the desires of chosen target groups
- reduce the number of complaints
- make the product familiar or to draw attention to a new offer.

4.4 Drawbacks of surveys

Answers to questions which record the view of the consumer should be seen as just that: declarations of intent. Examples do exist of later demand correlating with the results of the assessment of the questionnaire or even superseding it, as well as of real demand being considerably lower than expected by these results. It is frequently the case that consumer intentions to buy regional products hardly tally with the actual goods purchased. Therefore beware of an all too optimistic assessment of the results of surveys (See example at the following page).

Conclusion:

Questionnaires do not always give correct insight into the situation! The sales strategy of "Bergwinkelamm" had to be changed, so that the main quantity was sold through local farmers markets.

4.5 Requirements of special target groups

In considering which target groups to serve, it is helpful for the regional initiative to know about the needs of even very diverse special target groups. These include groups with special dietary requirements based on their religious beliefs, ethnicity, health or ethical background.

The religious groups include: Buddhists, Christians, Hindus, Jews, Muslims, Rastafarians and Sikhs. The people with different diets for ethical or health reasons include vegetarians, whilst some are vegans, or even fruitarians.

A differentiated list of the requirements of the respective groups is given in the appendix.

“Bergwinkellamm” Questionnaire

A lamb initiative in the 1990s around Schlüchtern – east of Frankfurt in Germany – wanted to create added value on local products, so that it would be easier for local farmers to maintain their business. Part of the strategy was to sell lamb to local caterers.

Initially, a survey of 10 selected local inns and restaurants was conducted to find out the selling potential and the preferred offers for selling.

The main questions concerned the parts of the lamb used and the preferred degree of processed food. The restaurants were asked whether they would be able to use the whole lamb or preferred cuts only (loin, joint), and if they wanted processed products such as lamb sausages. Another question concerned the frequency and quantity of the desired delivery.

The results of the questioning:

- 9 restaurants wanted to buy local lamb, even at a higher price to support the farmers.

- 4 of these had used only cuts up to then, but were willing to buy a whole lamb and process the different cuts themselves, as the meat was cheaper that way.
- 5 already used the whole lamb and would continue to do so.
- 3 restaurants were interested in buying extra lamb sausages.
- 6 restaurants gave estimations of the price they would be prepared to pay (whole lamb) – about double the price of new Zealand lamb (10 to 14.50 DM, i.e. around 5 to 7.25 Euro).



The reality after one year:

None of the restaurants surveyed used the whole lamb, 5 regularly took “Bergwinkellamms” meat, but only premium cuts such as loin or joint, none bought sausages. The reasons given were “too expensive”, “no staff for processing”.

The reality after 10 years:

Only one restaurant remained with “Bergwinkellamm” on a regular basis.

4.6 Catering trade

The catering trade makes other demands on regional products than retailers or the end user: larger packaging units or sizes of flower arrangements, returnable containers, constant supplying,

direct delivery to the buyer’s address. To determine needs, the landlords who are interested should be surveyed directly. Experience shows that this mainly concerns landlords with a qualitatively higher value offer. Landlords may be interested in:

<p>Meat (beef, meat, lamb): Sucking calf, young beef Oxen reared in meadows Cattle in general reared in meadows Pigs reared in meadows, pigs reared on straw Old country breeds Sucking lambs, lambs</p>	<p>Vegetables: Tomatoes, peppers, various green lettuces kohlrabi, cauliflower, Brussel sprouts, radish, celeriac, spinach, sauerkraut</p>
<p>Poultry: Ducks, geese, chickens, guinea fowl, pheasant, partridges, turkeys...reared in special ways, such as free range or special feeds</p>	<p>Herbs: Parsley, chives, chervil, dill, borage, sage, basil, ...</p>
<p>Game: Hares, rabbits kept in hutches, fallow or red deer reared in reserves</p>	<p>Berries: Raspberries, strawberries, red currants and black currants, blackberries</p>
<p>Milk products: Milk (pasteurised), yoghurt, sour milk, cream, special sorts of cheese, butter</p>	<p>Fruit: Apples, pears (each particular kind!), plums, small yellow plums, cherries, cornelian cherries, ... Juice, champagne, liqueurs</p>

Table 6: Products for catering trade

4.7 Marketing of non-foodstuffs

In many regions not only regional foodstuffs but also increasingly services or products from the non-food area play a role in regional marketing. This includes on the one hand the whole area of renewable primary products as well as parts of inanimate nature such as stone, shale, granite, chalk, pebble, fossilisation.

The third area which is currently registering strong growth is the provision of energy, be it by photo-voltaics, photo- or geothermics, biogas, plant oil, esterified plant oils or alcohol.

In expanding this sector the same requirements as in the food area apply in principle, if it is to do with the introduction or the expansion of certain field crops or with big changes to the natural scenery such as the construction or expansion of quarries, quarry ponds.

For decision-making the authors refer you to Ch. 3.8 "Traditional product or new offer?"



The red heartwood of beech trees is no longer a flaw, it is an eye-catcher.

Red heartwood beech trees and wood refinement



Red heartwood in beech trees sets in as beech tree trunks start to age. Technically, red beech wood is completely usable, but red heartwood counts as a wood defect, the wood has a flaw, it loses its value. Therefore, red heartwood endangered beech trees often have to be used long before the stock reaches maturity.

In the Rhön, a low mountain range on the borders of Bavaria, Thuringia and Hessen, bio-carpenters, wood retailers, sawmills, forest and regional authorities and nature conservationists have joined together in defiance of this trend. The wood 'blemishes' are worked in such a way as to create furniture and components where the red heartwood displays impressive patterns and designs. This strategy has also been applied in other regions, e. g. in the county of Reutlingen, Baden-Württemberg, Germany.

A high level of mastery has turned an alleged weakness into a strength. The result is beneficial to all. Beautiful furniture, added value for the creative woodworkers, avoidance of losses for forest owners and plenty of ecologically valuable mature beech forest in the Rhön. The following pictures refer to a similar project near Reutlingen, Baden-Württemberg.



A representative portal or ...



"Herb hay" in Hunsrück (Rheinland-Pfalz) Germany

In meadows of natural cultural landscapes up to 400 animal species and over 40 types of plant can be found. Meadows rich in herbs, whose biodiversity can be ascribed to traditional mowing practices over the generations, are the result of agricultural usage.



Valuable herbs and regional origin are plus factors for Hunsrück herb hay (Germany).

Farming can only be sustained if farmers can manage the meadows cost-effectively. In the rural district of Birkenfeld, which encompasses parts of Hunsrück, a low mountain range, co-operation between nature conservation and farming led, on the one side, to the marketing of "herb hay" as special feed for rabbits and horses and, on the other, to "fragrance hay" for the health market, such as that used in "hay baths".

The result: For the same amount of mown surface area, the costs to the local authorities for mowing during the same period were halved as farmers regained interest in regular cultivation.



... a comfortable bed made from red heartwood beech and crafted by local artisans (Reutlingen, Germany).

By marketing we understand a series of considerations, measures and actions which should serve to guarantee the commercial success of a product, brand and/or a company. So that a central theme weaves its way through the activities and these measures are effective and efficient, a marketing concept is developed.

The foundations of a marketing concept are:

1. Definition of strategic objectives
2. Selection of target groups
3. Collection of information to compare performance
4. Resources, knowledge and skills
5. Budget
6. Selection of marketing instruments
7. Timetable and plan of action

5.1 Marketing strategy

The marketing strategy is the basis for all the measures which are to be taken for marketing. It lays down the objective which marketing should achieve, the way to proceed and the image which the initiative wants to communicate to customers about itself.

The strategy is derived from the objectives and visions which the regional initiative has defined for itself (see Chapter 2). It makes statements on the following points:

Key questions:

- What image does the initiative want to convey externally?
- What image should the products convey?
- What is the key marketing message?

Here are a few examples:

- our products offer a zest for life and pure enjoyment
- our products will keep you healthy
- the earth is only on loan to us from our children
- we in our region stick together.

Choosing a marketing strategy is dependent upon the results of the SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats). It must be noted that every strategy consists of various elements which have to be brought together into one uniform direction. For this reason, the following four questions should always remain at the forefront in choosing a suitable strategy.

Beemsterkaas, Netherlands



Until 1995 the medium sized dairy cooperative CONO supplied Gouda cheese to wholesalers and supermarkets which sold it under their own store-brand. As a result they were operating in a market driven by price competition and the continuous need to reduce costs. In 1995 CONO changed its marketing strategy shifting from a production-led focus towards a market-led one and competing on quality rather than price. In so doing they made Beemsterkaas their flagship product. Selling to the 5–10% of the population that is willing to buy a high quality product.

The factory is based in the Beemsterpolder, one of the oldest areas of reclaimed land in the Netherlands, dating from the early 17th century. Branding the cheese involves a variety of labels making use of specific claims and images, such as grazing cows and an association with the Beemsterpolder UNESCO world heritage site since 1999.

The dairy provides economic incentives for the farmers to maintain traditional practices of outdoor grazing and not feeding their cows maize. Building a direct relationship with supermarkets also had consequences for logistical management. Supermarkets require supplies to be available at short notice ('just in time' delivery) and for the cheese to be pre-packed. This necessitated changes in CONO's logistical arrangements. CONO has been obliged to contract a company to pack the cheese in fresh packs that meet supermarket requirements.

- Which product should move into which market?
- How should this market be tapped into – through a special quality of product or through price incentives?
- Who are the target groups for the products? (segmentation of market)

And last but not least it is about the story behind the brand or the products. For customers, the story is often a major factor in the purchasing decision – provided that the quality is right too of course!

Further elements of the marketing strategy developed are strategic objectives for target groups, distribution, pricing policy and communication.

and exactly, evaluation of their performance will be relatively easy. Experience shows, however, that strategic objectives especially are very general and do not give anything other than the pitch. In this case it is even more important that action objectives are clearly defined.



Customers value pleasant surroundings and good advice.

5.1.1 Formulation of strategic objectives

It is helpful to formulate objectives as far as possible along the lines of SMART (see Ch.2: Objectives and Visions). If the objectives are defined precisely



Milestones derived from strategic objectives of South Downs Lamb

Fixed items	Explanation	Assumption		Comment
		Scenario 1	Scenario 2	
1 st Year Lamb Sales	Estimate of lamb sales in year 2	4000	4000	4000 is probably the smallest volume of lambs that will work with anything like logistic and sales efficiency. 4000 lambs over 26 weeks equates to 150 lambs per week to be delivered.
2 nd Year Lamb Sales	Estimate of lamb sales in year 2	7000	7000	An estimate of what should be achievable if 2005 goes well.
3 rd Year Lamb Sales	Estimate of lamb sales in year 3	11000	11000	An estimate of what should be achievable if 2006 goes well.
Season Start Month (1 to 12)	Lamb sales start: Month 1 = January	7	7	The season is unlikely to begin much before the end of June.
Season End Month (1 to 12)	Lamb sales finish: Month 1 = January	12	12	Season should end in December.
Average Lamb dw KG	Cold weight	19.0	19.0	The average for 2004 has been approx. just under 19.0 kg.
Lamb Selling Price (£/KG)	Payment by butchers	3.30	3.30	£3.30 has been the target 2004 price and we do not anticipate that changing next year. To help achieve the maximum price there must be consistent volumes and quality.
Lamb Buying Price (£/KG)	Payment to farmers	2.70	2.70	£2.70 has been the target 2004 price; the average has been £2.65. For SDL to be successful 60p spread (£3.30 less £2.70) is essential.

Table 7: Milestones derived from strategic objectives of South Downs Lamb

5.1.2 Formulation of action objectives

Action objectives must be based on strategic objectives and must translate these into everyday work. They should be understood as milestones, which have to be passed on the way to achieving the strategic objectives. They not only make reference to economic parameters such as turnover, profit, market share, but also to indirect economic parameters such as degree of fame, proportion of regular customers, number of editorial publications in various media etc.

5.1.3 Price

Discussions about the right price for products are often not easy and are often managed very superficially by the producers as well as the buyers. The initiators should above all try to bring in more-value arguments such as particular qualities, freshness, origin from the region or special recipes and practices.

Although establishing price is a decisive factor for successfully marketing the landscape, two factors are all-important here:

1. Supply: What price do the producers need for their product, when the additional criteria they have to comply with are taken into consideration?
2. Demand: What price is the customer prepared to pay for such a product, that is, what price is it possible to enforce on the market?

A compromise has to be found between both factors to enable the commercial initiative to cover the costs of processing, marketing, logistics and administration and to create reserves for further development.



Transportation vehicles also can deliver publicity.

In establishing the price, therefore, the following questions have to be clarified:

Key questions:

- At what price are the original products available?
- How is the price established for the producers (pegged to a fluctuating market price, perhaps with a surcharge, at a fixed price)?
- With a fixed price: what do the producers do when the market price exceeds the fixed price?
- What are the competitors' prices?

5.2 Selection of target groups and adjustment

The marketing initiative should pay great attention to choosing target groups. This should also be done on a regular basis once the regional initiative is up and running. In this way the assessment which the regional initiative has made of the target groups can be adjusted to the reality. This makes it easier to tap into potential new target groups directly, to improve the offer for regular customers or to adjust the range exactly to the target group.

In considering which target groups to serve, it is helpful for the regional initiative to know about the needs of even very diverse special target groups. These include groups with special dietary requirements based on their religious beliefs, ethnicity or ethical background.

A differentiated list regarding the requirements of the respective groups is given in the appendix.

Key questions for the selection of target groups:

- Which market do I want to serve?
- What are the possible target groups?
- Which target groups are not being dealt with?

- What are the wishes, desires and visions of each target group?
- What is the main bottleneck of these target groups?
- How do the individual target groups expect problems to be solved?

As a double check:

- Why don't the non-customers buy?
- How can non-customers be made into customers?

A very specific contemplation of the target groups is recommended and through regular reworking approaching them even more specifically on the basis of experience. Example: first step: people on holiday in our region; second step: people on holiday in our region who still have room in the trunk of their car on the day of their departure.



Target groups for Parc naturel régional de l'Avesnois

Target groups:

a) Beef brand: The product is sold at the farm's point of sale. The selling is done once or twice a month. The target group is people from the region (local people). The objective is to guarantee one economic activity in the village for the village.

b) Local sweets (Chique de Bavay):

The product is sold at different points of sale:

- Producers points of sale: people from the region.
- Local products points of sale: people from the region who are looking for a wide choice of local products. People on holiday looking for local products and specialities, easy to carry.
- Supermarkets: people from the region.

Terms of reference:

Regional Nature Park of Avesnois: this park has a defined hiking/rambling area. The limits of a regional nature park are negotiated between different partners, but the definitive area corresponds to those of the local counties, which voluntarily adhere to the park's charter. These limits are therefore not fixed with respect to administrative limits: they may overlap in several counties or regions.

5.3 Collecting information to compare performance

Before the regional initiative starts to market its products, the market should be tested. This involves the initiative obtaining an overview of how the products which it wants to market are presently offered on the market.

Procedure:

- Check offer, perhaps even test purchasing, at various sales locations: in supermarkets, beverage shops, at farmers and weekly markets, in farm shops, subscription boxes for households.
- Conduct discussions with processors, market managers, landlords and resellers.
- Visit trade fairs for the food craft industry, for certain target groups of end users, such as gourmet trade fairs.
- Survey other regional initiatives from other regions.



Foodmiles: The kilometres needed for transportation illustrate the advantage of regional products (Rhön, Germany).

In addition to this a checklist should be developed to evaluate the results of surveys. The following factors should be assessed:

- What product is offered at which sales location and at what price?
- How are the goods presented?
- Which stages of processing are offered (fresh goods, frozen goods, pre-processed, dried etc.)
- How are the goods packed (size of packaging, packaging material)?
- How is the packaging designed?
- What service is offered (delivery to end customers, dispatch, regular customer bonus, information material for customers)?

5.4 Resources, knowledge and skills

Marketing measures have to be planned, designed, implemented and evaluated. For this the regional initiative needs resources, knowledge and skills. These help it to decide on the amount of effort needed, what they can accomplish by themselves and where they have to buy in knowledge or time from the outside.

Procedure

The employees of the regional initiative from the different areas say what they can make available to marketing in terms of know-how and time (graphic design, printing, surveying, market research, evaluation). This overview is taken into consideration in determining the marketing instruments, as is the budget available, when each separate marketing instrument is set up.

5.5 Budget

As a rule, regional initiatives have a very low marketing budget to work with. Yet, even with this small budget they often attain a surprisingly high level of awareness.

So that the strategic objectives can be efficiently pursued, the size of the budget and where it is coming from has to be clarified. License fees can flow into this as well as a share of turnover or a starting investment from the commercial partner. State programs for the marketing of regional products

support marketing campaigns and/or the production of information and promotional material.

5.6 Choice of marketing instruments: The Marketing Mix

The regional initiative has a broad range of instruments for marketing at its disposal. It is made up of the classic building blocks of the marketing mix. The usually tight marketing budget and the particular intentions of the regional initiative very much determine their selection. According to experience, regional initiatives are very imaginative in ensuring they remain in the public eye and in introducing products to male and female customers.

Once the strategy is fixed, the instruments appropriate to it are chosen. By marketing mix we understand a mixture of different instruments used to guarantee the commercial success of a product, a brand and/or a business. The typical marketing mix consists of product policy, pricing policy, promotional policy and distribution policy. A host of further instruments exist behind these factors.

As logistics and communication policy represent a special challenge for regional initiatives they are taken separately as a main theme. Product and pricing policy are dealt with as follows with examples for clarification.

5.6.1 Product policy

Customers place very particular requirements on products. The product must first fulfil its function (such as nutritional value, a certain consistency or appearance, taste, ingredients and additives (i.e. lack of), packaging, degree of processing). Furthermore, customers expect an additional use such as an emotional value associated with the product, specialities or particular recipes, product novelties, craftsmanship, special social or environmental aspects in rearing or traditional methods of production.

Customers have very specific expectations when they buy regional products.

They expect:

- transparency and credibility of production and processing (monitoring)

- freshness
- medium to high quality of product
- craftsmanship in terms of processing
- specialities or traditional recipes
- regional origin of original products.

They will also pay a higher price for this, as long as the basic conditions are met, which include:

- clean, sorted and in part also processed products can be bought
- the quality of the product is relatively constant, standards are maintained
- the products are relatively easily available
- the range of products embraces several products.

Processors and resellers expect a standardised quality, as this can be prepared, processed, packaged and resold more easily. Standardisation of products is necessary for both national and international sales.

5.7 Time and action plan

The instruments chosen for marketing are structured in a time and action schedule. This applies to the strategic, mostly medium- and long-term, as well as the short-term action objectives. This should include regular checks to see if the measures have achieved their objective. If needed the measures can then be strengthened, changed or replaced with others. In the medium term, a re-working of the formulated objectives may be necessary.

The financial and temporal resources which the participants bring into the marketing campaign also influence the time and action plan. An example of a time and action plan can be found in the appendix.

5.8 Development of a regional brand

A regional umbrella brand conveys values such as origin, guarantee and goodness, trust, identification. It represents the backbone of the marketing strategy. Therefore, the considerations about how the brand is to be designed and organised are of great importance for the long term.

Key questions:

- Who initiates the introduction of a regional brand?
- What are the aims of the initiators? (Of relevance here is the viewpoint of the “key players”)
- What roles do the individual stakeholders play?
- What are the advantages to them of being involved?
- Who must/should be involved and how?
- What form can participation take?
- Who has the power to make decisions? Who wants to, can or should have this?
- Which region does the brand apply to? Here it is better to choose the larger area, but be discerning.
- Which products should be included? (Food, non-food, skilled trade services)
- Is the brand designed to be an individual brand or an additional brand?



Beemsterkaas – a successful regional brand in the Netherlands.

5.8.1 Purpose of a regional brand

The regional brand has to fulfil the following requirements:

- It signalises and guarantees the regional origin and the “typical” nature of the products
- It stands for consistent quality
- Those products branded with it offer the customer functional or emotional advantages
- It communicates specific values to specific groups of customers
- It is associated with a specific lifestyle
- It supports the recognition of the regional initiative’s offers.

Attention: A brand loses credibility if it is used carelessly on too many products.

Whether a new product is sold under an existing umbrella/regional brand label or if efforts are made to establish a new brand, depends first of all on the requirements of the existing regional brand.

- Does the existing brand stand for the same or at least similar values, as intended for the new product line?
- Are these in line with the objectives for the protection of the countryside which the regional initiative supports and can they be associated with objectives which have already been formulated?

As a final point:

- Is it more useful for the regional initiative in the long-term to develop an own profile and to take the effort to establish it?
- Is it more advantageous to integrate its own features into channels which have already been broken in?

5.8.2 Suggestions for using the brand

The best way forward for the regional initiative has to be decided on an individual basis and strongly depends on conditions in the region. The following suggestions help round off these considerations.

1. Concept of singularity: The essence of the marketing process is building a brand in the minds of consumers. A successful branding program is based on the concept of singularity. It creates in the mind of the prospect the perception that there is no product on the market quite like your product. When you put your brand name on everything, that name loses its powers. Line extension, megabranding, variable pricing, and a host of other sophisticated marketing techniques are being used to milk brands rather than build them. While milking may bring in easy money in the short term, in the long term it wears down the brand until it no longer stands for anything.

2. Contract your brand: While extending the line might bring added sales in the short term, it runs counter to the notion of branding. If you want to build a powerful brand in the minds of consumers, you need to contract your brand, not expand it. In the long term, expanding your brand will diminish your power and weaken your power and your image.

3. Establishing with publicity: The birth of a brand is achieved with publicity, not advertising. When your brand can make news, it has a chance to generate publicity. And the best way to make news is to announce a new category, not a new product. What others say about your brand is so much more powerful than what you can say about it yourself. That’s why publicity in general is more powerful than advertising.

Procedure	Advantages	Disadvantages
Develop own brand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Autonomy • Not dependent on other brands or their fate • Clear image • Novelty value 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building up an image and establishing it is expensive • A lot of marketing effort • Brand has to be managed • Rules for brand management have to be developed • No recognition value (at least not in the beginning)
Slip under the umbrella of an established brand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less marketing effort • Cost effective • Rules for the use of brands already exist • Recognition value exists • Brand image exists 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No own image • “one of many” • No decision-making powers • Products share same brand fate

Table 8: Different ways of branding, advantages and disadvantages

4. Keeping alive with advertising: Once born a brand needs advertising to stay healthy. If you want to build a powerful brand, you have to build a powerful perception of quality in the mind. You become a specialist rather than a generalist. And a specialist is generally perceived to know more, in other words to have “higher quality”, than a generalist.

5. Strict quality level: The essence of a brand is some idea or attribute or market segment you can win in the mind. Subbranding (inventing a cheaper product line) is a concept that takes the brand in exactly the opposite direction. Subbranding destroys what branding builds.

Source: AL and LAURA RIES:
The 22 Immutable Laws of Branding

The use of the brand, its rules, costs and implementation have to be contractually agreed between the brand owner and the brand user. This

type of agreement is shown in the following example from the north of France.

Introducing new products which go beyond the traditional area is by all means manageable if done sensibly. Decision-making guidance is in Ch. 3.10. “Traditional offer or new product?”.



The high quality of meat from the “Bleue du Nord” breed of cattle is marketed as a premium product (Nature Park Avesnois, France).



Contractual regulations: Parc naturel régional de l’Avesnois:

There are two kinds of contractual regulation:

1. The charter: where the specifics of the brand are defined

- agreement on the product to be branded.
- identification of the product specifics
- local product – the animal is born in the park’s hiking/rambling area, the farm is in the park’s hiking/rambling area
- protected environment – a product from the local landscape, the Bocage, which will be protected; the farmer will respect the local agro-environmental measures
- authentic product – the farmer participates in maintaining the landscape identity; extensive system (grazing system) with cattle feeding system based essentially on grass
- non-industrial production: man’s work is the priority (artisan product); the product is prepared and sold on the farm
- legal Policy: French and European laws respected
- identification and traceability system
- the reception and welcome
- access to the point of sale
- informing the public about the specifics of the regional nature park
- monitoring
- the evolution of the charter.

2. The convention: the contract between the park and the beneficiary (person taking advantage of the brand).

Content:

- product’s identification and definition
- beneficiary of the brand
- brand usage (graphic charter, logo, ways of promoting the brand and branded products’ points of sale)
- the monitoring of the brand
- quality of the products
- information exchange between the regional nature park and the beneficiary of the brand
- regional nature park’s obligations
- advice and guidance
- marketing
- conditions for participation (e.g. worked in this activity one year ago and sells a minimum of six animals per year)
- economic participation of each member and contract period
- cancellation requirements or terms.



Marketing concept for South Downs Lamb

2004 Test outputs

Supply chain

This phase has involved testing the practicality and progress of the following:

- How and where to source lambs with the right genotype
- Slaughtering facilities
- Likely processors
- Likely retailers; including butchers
- Monitoring milestones and financial budgets

Branding and promotion

How the SDL logo is perceived by the retailer and the consumer, the relationship between these two elements of the supply chain and the affiliation with the other elements of the chain is now understood.

Marketing program

A considerable amount of time has been spent understanding the link between the value of the SDL proposition, the price paid to the farmer and the price charged to the butcher. The result is a series of robust financial computations that give confidence, providing that sufficient volumes of lamb are available, that appropriate sales targets are achievable.

The computations that form part of the financial model include:

- 1st, 2nd and 3rd year lamb sales
- Season month start and end
- Average lamb dead-weight
- Lamb selling price and buying price
- Slaughter charge and fleece price
- Credit and payment periods
- Staff pay
- Distribution costs
- Fixed costs

There are nearly 400 (source: EBLEX²⁾ butchers within the proposed National Park boundary with more outside that will also be potential targets. In the first year SDL will need approximately 25 butchers, in the second 45 and in the third 70. This represents 6%, 11% and 18% respectively of butchers within the National Park.

Environmental, technical and assurance protocols

Most of the protocols have been completed although no SDL monitoring has taken place. Protocols are based on FABBL³⁾, with additional SDL criteria, including environmental standards, based on the Environmental Stewardship Scheme. Discussions with the monitoring body are still continuing.

²⁾ English Beef & Lamb Executive ³⁾ The FABBL Farm Assurance Scheme was set up in 1992 to provide a farm assurance scheme, to give retailers and consumers confidence in British livestock production standards.

5.8.3 Using additional markings at an EU level

The European Union offers additional protection for regional foodstuffs. These three labels have different main points of emphasis:

A **PDO (Protected Designation of Origin)** covers the term used to describe foodstuffs which are produced, processed and prepared in a given geographical area using recognised know-how.

In the case of the **PGI (Protected Geographical Indication)** the geographical link must occur in at least one of the stages of production, processing or preparation. Furthermore, the product can benefit from a good reputation.

A **TSG (Traditional Speciality Guaranteed)** does not refer to the origin but highlights traditional character, either in the composition or means of production.

What types of products are involved?

A list with products, ranging from hay to beer to mineral water to fish, fruit, vegetables and pastries, can be found on the following website: http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/foodqual/protec/types/index_en.htm

How do producers and processors go about registering a product name?

- A group of producers must define the product according to precise specifications.
- The application, including the specifications, must be sent to the relevant national authority. This relevant authority can be found on the following website: http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/foodqual/protec/national/index_en.htm
- The relevant authority will study the applications first and thereafter transmits it to the Commission.
- Here the application will undergo a number of control procedures. See for the list of applications the following website: http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/foodqual/protec/applications/index_en.htm

- If it meets the requirements, a first publication in the Official Journal of the European Communities will inform those in the Union who are interested.
- If there are no objections, the European Commission publishes the protected product name in the Official Journal of the European Communities.

Source: http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/qual/en/1bbab_en.htm is the official EU website for protected products.

Another European label concerns the production of organic farm products. See for more information: http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/qual/organic/index_en.htm

Time and effort

According to present experiences the application process takes from between one and a half and three years to definite registration. According to statements from various regional initiatives the accumulated costs amount to around 2,000 to 4,000 Euro. The application procedure is presently being revised, with the aim of simplifying the procedure. What is more, many (federal) states encourage the registration of products from their states at present, by advising regional initiatives and supporting the filing of the application.

Benefits

At present the advantages to regional initiatives can still be measured only slightly, as on the one hand the advertising impact of the seal – already on account of the low level of awareness – is zero. On the other hand, they are of little use within the region as more regionally well-known logos make identification easier here.

The seal is targeted at the national and international market. Many regional initiatives, however, do not have the quantities at their disposal to market themselves in great style outside their own region.

Nevertheless, regional initiatives should keep this segment in mind as at present the appearance of the seal as well as the administration at an EU level is being revised. This is to achieve a better advertising effect for smaller marketers as well.

5.8.4 Combining regional brands with national brands

Likewise there are quality programs that exist at a national level which have been set up with a lot of marketing effort. A regional brand can definitely profit from an affiliation with a known national marketing program. What is decisive here is that the program and the logo associated with it are known and used positively. If this is not the case, then the disadvantage to the regional initiative is far greater than its use. This additional marking will only confuse the customer rather than strengthen their product purchasing decision.

A further argument for participating in national quality programs are the relatively cost-effective and independent monitoring, with which a part of the criteria and production guidelines of the regional initiative can be checked and documented. This reduces the effort needed for monitoring and the costs to the regional initiative.

In this case decisions have to be taken on an individual basis according to the region and the brand program offered.



Regional liqueur made of rye as a typical field crop of sand habitats around Nuremberg, Germany.

6. DISTRIBUTION

Quantities, products and qualities are now clear. It now has to be decided who to sell the products to, in what way to distribute them (establishing channels of distribution) and how they are to be bought and paid for (organisation of selling).

6.1 Defining channels of distribution

In determining channels of distribution it first has to be decided who specifically to sell to. This involves thinking strategically with regard to the spatial distribution of marketing as well as the selection of commercial partners. The decisive question here is where can the most potential customers be reached? After commercial partners have been selected, the most logical channel is set up.

As the regions have very different operations, markets and structures for distribution, a very individual solution has to be found for each regional initiative. Opportunities for co-operation often exist between members of regional initiatives. The following key questions can help establish a good method of distribution:

Key questions:

- What channels of distribution for which products are already available?
- Do these channels of distribution reach the target group particularly well?
- What effort in terms of time and money can and does the regional initiative want to expend?
- Which markets can be reached by this?
- Can the existing contacts of members of the regional initiative to new partners be used for distribution purposes?

6.1.1 Spatial distribution

Depending on the quantity of the products, regional marketing initiatives have to decide whether local or regional distribution is sought. Here the following rule applies: more people who buy regional products can be reached in larger more distant towns, in nearer smaller towns the sense of

regional belonging is stronger. What is important is that goods are sold where there are sufficient potential customers e.g. in the area of town where teachers, higher earners or people with alternative lifestyles live.

6.1.2 Choice of commercial partners/resellers

The decision about which distribution channel to use mainly depends on the quantity and quality of the products.

With small quantities, the end customer can be sold to directly. This creates personal contact and increases the willingness of the customer to purchase these products on a regular basis. The fewer steps that exist between the producer and the customer, the less dependent the regional initiative's success will usually be on the decisions of other stakeholders on the market.



Retailers expect a professional appearance, but often help get over teething troubles.

Regional initiatives should find resellers, who are well disposed to the initiative and who, best of all, are themselves involved in regional marketing. This is because they are in contact with the customer and have to communicate the advantages of regional products to them. Around 5% of purchasers are interested in regional products, but only 5% of resellers too, and it is a matter of finding them. Is the regional initiative more likely to have smaller quantities which are to be marketed to individual retailers or rather larger quantities of products which will have to be marketed to middlemen or bulk buyers?

The number of partners depends on regional circumstances and can rarely be influenced. Dependency on the sales organisation is greater with fewer partners, with more partners the expenditure is higher.

Smaller quantities

Smaller quantities are more likely to be sold through direct marketing or to smaller bulk purchasers such as caterers or individual food retailers.

Specialities of a much higher or more unique quality and higher price should, in addition to direct marketing, rather be sold to speciality and gourmet businesses, health food shops or organic food shops.

Distribution channels for smaller quantities:

- Direct marketing (markets, farm shops, subscription packages etc.)
- Catering trade
- Processing businesses, such as butchers or bakers
- Individual food shops, health food shops or organic food shops
- Speciality or gourmet businesses.

Larger quantities

Larger quantities demand a higher degree of organisation in distribution, a uniform and constant quality of product and packaging appropriate to the channel of distribution.

To ensure uniform and constant quality an initiative has to make agreements with many suppliers in good time, which extend into production and processing. With meat for example, breeds, weight at time of slaughter and feed have to be laid down, determining the use of permitted and non permitted additives in processing etc. Written agreements have to be reached, which must also be checked.

Distribution channels for larger quantities:

- Many organic food shops, health food shops and speciality businesses
- Individual regional shops
- Many processing businesses, such as butchers or bakers
- Food retailers and regional chains of stores
- Catering trade, canteens
- Wholesale trade.

6.1.3 Different channels of distribution – different expectations

Skilled trade businesses such as butchers or bakers

Expectations of product quality are high, the businesses often struggle to survive and stand out against other retailers.

For this reason, arguments such as safety and health play a big role (e.g. own feed, no additives or even the skilled trade of processing itself). In the food retail trade, around 90 per cent of food is marketed, this leaves little room for manoeuvre for skilled trade businesses. They usually accept the goods quite simply from the producers.

Organic food shops, health food shops, speciality businesses

Customers of organic food shops, health food shops and speciality businesses are connoisseurs and very discriminating. They place value on a particularly high quality product, a sophisticated ambience and moving stories on the production or region. Packaging does not have to be lavish, but should be tasteful with information/recipes or narrative accounts. There are no high expectations of logistics, but it should be reliable.

Individual food retailers

Marketing to the food retail trade requires a lot of organisation skill. In the food retail trade distribution is optimised to be “just-in-time”, this means that supermarket staff are only available to unpack and stack shelves with the products at



Whether prepared traditionally or highly imaginatively – regional recipes go down well!

certain times. The retailers expect reliable delivery of goods from the initiative and a qualitatively high-value product. In marketing to the food retail trade, products must stand out positively against the other products. The creation of the packaging is therefore the deciding factor and should be designed professionally.

On the one hand it serves as a signal for locating the product, on the other hand it serves as a conveyor of information for the initiative. Legally prescribed information such as a description of contents and information expected by the trade, such as the EAN line code, should be featured on the packaging.

Catering trade/canteens

It is sensible to pre-process the products when marketing to the catering trade and canteens. Only very few canteen kitchens have enough staff to wash vegetables, clean and chop them. With meat, often only the most choice pieces are taken in large quantities, which is dissatisfying for the producers who are left with the rest. In consultations with the cook, suggestions for recipes using the remaining pieces of meat (with possible price reductions) can lead to an increased use of the slaughtered animals.

If co-operation with a canteen kitchen runs well, plans for cultivating vegetables and keeping animals can be planned the year before in accordance with menu requirements.

Wholesale

In the wholesale trade, selling is usually a matter of price. Products which are on average more expensive than popular goods need a good sales policy to stand out in the central market. Wholesale customers do not have the time to inform themselves about regional marketing. They have to want regional products right from the start.

If the regional marketing initiative has customers from many different areas, who purchase in the central market (resellers, heads of canteens etc.), then marketing via the wholesale trade can be a very favourable solution for distribution. Contacts of regional producers who successfully market their wares via the wholesale trade really should be used.

6.1.4 Logistics

There are many different ways to bring products to the commercial partners and direct marketing customers. The logistics chosen depend on the quantity, amount, distances and the place of sale and sometimes also on the commercial partners themselves. Initially, a marketing initiative can operate logistics via the producers. However, if the product range is extended or if the quantities increase in size other solutions have to be considered.

The first concept is usually to establish an own logistics operation. However, this is only worthwhile if the quantities are so large, or the customers so near to each other or the financial support high enough, that sufficient capacity means that a member of staff and vehicle can be financed.

Many commercial partners are supplied through regional logistics providers and regional producers. For a charge these channels of distribution can often be used more cheaply than own logistics. Commercial partners know their suppliers and can normally offer good advice about such possibilities.

Possible logistics solutions:

- *Logistics of the producer*
- *Logistics of the trading partner*
- *Regional logistics providers*
- *Own logistics*



When setting up logistics it is important to keep to a set rhythm of delivery (in the retail food trade just-in-time can even mean at exact times of the day). The retailers themselves know which quantities are to be sold. Experience should be used here and delivery quantities should be jointly agreed.

Making additional goods available following boosts in demand due to, for example, food scandals, sales campaigns or news reports, should be clarified with the producers, otherwise new customers could possibly be put off by empty shelves. Producers know only too well the seasonal fluctuations in demand, e.g. school holidays or product specific seasonal demand (eggs at Easter, poultry at Christmas) and this should be planned for together with the commercial partners.

Care of shelves is important in retailing. Filling shelves according to demand of certain products should always be carried out by the retailer himself,

as it will be too costly, laborious and time-consuming otherwise. The initiative can organise or take on shelf care if it has a regional shelf with its own logistics.

In addition the **exchange of spoiled goods** and a simple **returns procedure** have to be settled, these can also be demanded in the contract.

All in all, **clear rules** should exist about the distribution of responsibilities for all partners in the distribution channel and from the start it should be made clear what is to happen in the event of a problem occurring at any point in the chain.



Recommendation for rhythm of delivery:

Fresh goods such as meat, fruit and vegetables three times a week to daily

Dry products at least twice a month to weekly

6.2 Organisation of selling

The selling of products starts with their storage, sorting and packing; then the transport has to be accompanied and the costs processed, the ordering and accounting procedures have to be organised.

Key questions:

- How much effort is needed, who will do the work (storage, sorting, packing, transport, ordering and accounting, handling complaints)?
- Which work will the individual members take on and which tasks will be passed on?
- How can the remaining work be shared out in a sensible and professional way? (e.g. Tasks are evenly distributed among all members or one member sets up a kind of office for a fee or someone is employed...)
- Are complaints or customer requests referred back to the group and if necessary taken into account; if not, how can this be organised?

6.2.1 Storage, sorting and packing

At the start of regional co-operation the quantities or range are still easily manageable and are stored with the producers. For larger quantities and ranges or with joint processing, sorting and packaging (e.g. with potatoes and vegetables), it is worthwhile having joint storage, sorting and packing facilities.

The size of packaging depends on the point of sale, which has standard packaging sizes that the regional initiative also has to keep to. Discussions with several representatives of the customer group concerned offer the regional initiative the opportunity to tailor packaging to meet individual requirements.

Supplies must be regularly checked to avoid difficulties in delivery. Regular contact between the warehouse, office for orders and accounts, and the producers is necessary.



Customers enjoy attractive presentation of regional products (MainÄppelHaus, Frankfurt, Germany).

6. DISTRIBUTION

	Channel of distribution	Investment(s) for the initiative	Considerations
Direct marketing to end customer	Door to door	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport* • Orders, route planning, accounting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sales pitch only in certain areas in order to guarantee effective planning of route
	Market stall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport* • Possibly additional sales staff • Sales stand • Possibly standardised crates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Markets usually have a very low price threshold • Sales stand has to stand out against the others • Calls for a broad range of goods
	Farm- regional shops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sales space • Storage space • Shop fittings • Possibly standardised crates/baskets • Shop rental charge • Sales staff • Parking spaces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the location near enough to the conurbation (sufficient customers)? • Is the range attractive enough? • Offer an experience as an incentive: e.g. an additional café, petting zoo, exhibition
	e-marketing/post	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate computer (regular upkeep of data) • Internet with Selling-Provider • Packing space • Possibly packing staff • Packaging materials • Transport* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dry products and durable goods
Marketing to major customers	Canteen kitchens/hotels/caterers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport* • Orders, route planning, accounting • Possibly sorting • Facilities for pre-processing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Especially pre-processed products (peeled potatoes, washed and chopped vegetables or pieces of meat) – offer ideas, e.g. through co-operation with butchers, peeling and cleaning businesses or setting up own facilities • Weekday accessibility • Effective route planning with smaller quantities • Presentation of the initiative in the dining room/on the menu
	Wholesale trade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crates (perhaps special crates are necessary) • Possibly transport* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure guaranteed quantities of consistent quality • Logistics must be absolutely reliable and on time
Marketing to food retail trade	Own distribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possibly standardised crates are necessary • Transport* and shelf care • Storage space • Professional and positively attractive untreated packaging materials • IAN codes • Product folders • Office and office staff for orders, route planning and accounting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there sufficient capacity for the transport network? • Weekday accessibility • Just-in-time! • Professional and positively attractive untreated packaging materials • EAN codes • Product folders (Sizes of packaging materials, arrangements, appearance, address for orders, information flyer about the initiative and co-operation partners)
	Nation wide distributors or food retail trade distribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possibly special crates are necessary • Professional and positively attractive untreated packaging • IAN codes • Product folders • Office and office staff for orders and accounting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With food retail trade demand e.g. poultry, fruit and vegetable producers, beverages wholesale trade

Table 9: Channels of distribution and its requirements

* Vehicle and driver

6.2.2 Transport

Depending on what form of logistics is chosen, the external output, the output of the producers or that of one's own employees must be supervised and paid for. The important thing here is not to get bogged down, but rather to stick to a set rhythm for delivery and set route plan. Initially, a surplus in demand or supply might occur, yet after a short space of time one should find out how high the actual quantity of sales are at each location. Customers who have waited once for a product might buy a competitor's product straightaway the next time.

The carrier is responsible for communicating important information:

- whether sufficient, too much or too little is delivered
- whether shelf care is good
- whether the commercial partner is satisfied and, if not, what is wrong etc.

He is the only person who has contact with the commercial partners and can specifically see what the position is like on site. It is important for the initiative to recognise discontent immediately and put it right, as otherwise valuable customers may be lost.

The regional marketing initiative should declare a clear policy on how to deal with a surplus in demand.

6.2.3 Ordering and accounting

Ordering and dealing with payments is time consuming – and the amount of time needed for this greatly increases with a growth in customer base. It is not always necessary to employ personnel for this. If cooperating partners deal with this work, they have to be recompensed. The following descriptions apply to larger marketing initiatives which also function as middlemen. Yet from the start the system should be set up to cope with growth and development.

6.2.3.1 Care of data

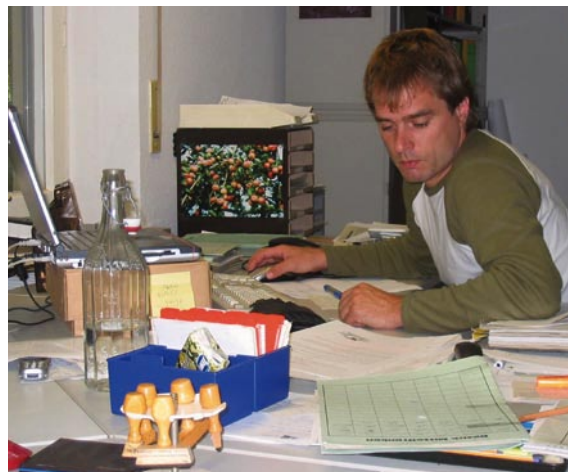
- **About producers:** Addresses (when and how to reach them in the best way), kinds of product and sorts of product (e.g. potatoes of special varieties), sizes of packaging, prices, delivery

quantities, delivery date, where to be delivered etc. (only details of products which are to be marketed via the marketing initiative)

- **About products:** sorts and kinds, quantities, sizes of packaging, producers, delivery times, if available article numbers, EAN codes etc.
- **About suppliers:** Addresses (when and how to reach them in the best way), route plan, rhythm for delivery etc.
- **About customers:** Addresses (when and how to reach them in the best way), which products (kinds, sorts, quantities), who he delivers to, when and where etc.

6.2.3.2 Orders

On taking orders details should be stored in an accounts system, in preparation for the invoice. **Set office hours** are necessary for the taking of orders, dealing with customer enquiries and resolving problems. It should also be possible to order by fax or e-mail, so that customers do not have to wait until office opening hours to place their order.



Good office organisation is a factor for the success of regional initiatives.

6.2.3.3 Invoicing

With joint marketing and logistics arrangements, the marketing initiative should process invoicing together. It can also be carried out by the producers themselves. With a joint arrangement the following tasks are involved:

The invoice, which has been prepared for by the order, has to be checked with the help of the delivery notes.

6. DISTRIBUTION

The invoice is drawn up on the basis of the agreements made regarding:

- cash discounts
- quantity discounts
- authorisation of collection
- terms of payment (e.g. 14 days).

For joint accounts the receipts and outgoings are checked, unpaid invoices are sent a reminder note and if need be also prosecuted under law.

Every region is different and has various channels of distribution and organisational solutions to offer. It is up to the initiative to find the best solution in terms of cost-effectiveness and customer satisfaction!

“Brucker Land Solidargemeinschaft” (Brucker County Collective)

The “Brucker Land Solidargemeinschaft” was founded in 1994 comprising a broad alliance of farmers and craftsmen, as well as representatives of the church, environmental and conservation organisations. Today the initiative has a very successful regional marketing trade to over 90 supermarket branches, bakers, and butchers in the region with an established product range of more than 60 items.

The aim of the involved participants was the preservation and creation of regional economic structures, “the preservation of basic needs for humans, animals and plants in the area” (SEILZ 2002) and with it environmentally agreeable farming with a spin-off in craft businesses. In order to involve as many farmers, processors and consumers in the process as possible, strong ecological criteria were not held onto, rather a middle way was chosen in this respect. Above all commercial success with the regional food retail trade is attributable to a successful communications policy, professional logistics and “neat calculation” (SEILZ 2002).

Instead of listing charges, business partners were offered a comprehensive public relations service, for instance numerous information and sampling session campaigns (between 1994 and 1998 alone around 1,400 campaigns were implemented) and, since 1998, a free customer newspaper “Brucker Land Post” with a circulation of 25,000. Personal contact plays a key role in the communications policy of Brucker Land, which is why the sampling sessions were carried out by promoters and farmers dressed in Bavarian national costume to create more rapport with the consumers. Innovative ideas such as the Brucker Land Gift Basket for example, the “Brucker Land

Adventure Game”, a program of events for visitors, or school and environmental events also support sales. From the very beginning public relations work involved approaching key regional players who support the project. Research by the Technical University of Munich in 1996 showed that Brucker Land is known to over 92 per cent of the population in the Fürstentum district.

The first Brucker Land limited company was founded in 1995 (with the aid of subsidies) to meet the growing needs of the business. Today the Brucker Land initiative comprises four companies and a BRUCKER Ltd. abattoir. Brucker Land Ltd. has established its own distribution system which ensures orders are processed, invoicing is centralised via the umbrella brand and delivery made to Rewe, Tengelmann, Edeka, Neukauf or Spar supermarkets in the region. With its own logistics system, around 140 points of sale are served. These include in addition to the 45 supermarkets, bakeries, butchers, beverage businesses and restaurants, the district hospital and an old people’s home. The selling prices of Brucker Land products are around 30 per cent higher than conventional goods.

Expansion shapes the development of Brucker Land. And so the marketing concept of the initiative has spread to nine other districts around Munich, the umbrella brand for all districts being UNSER LAND (OUR LAND). (www.unserland.info).

Source: GOTHE/SCHÖNE 2002, adapted



6.2.4 Make an offer

Do you have resellers in mind, on whose lists you would like to be placed, or a purchaser in a canteen, then offer your goods!

Retailers or buyers usually do not have much time, therefore reckon on no longer than 10 to 15 minutes for the talk; make sure that perhaps an hour might be possible.

For this it is advisable to have the following documents with you:

all the information in writing, e.g. a folder, with the products, packaging materials and packing sizes, the initiative and suppliers, contact details and an address for orders.

The following facts can be relevant during the conversation:

- **Retailer:** Reliable delivery, how expensive the products are, if he can negotiate, whether the product is attractive for his location. Possibility of promotional measures, this increases the attractiveness of your offer.
- **Canteen kitchen:** The freshness of product, pre-processing, the quality and quality assurance, whether a display for the dining room or a logo for advertising or on the menu is available.

If interest is expressed or even an order placed, then the dates and deadlines have to be clear, namely:

- date of delivery
- quantities
- price
- payment agreements
- returns organisation etc. ...

A supplier contract can be requested by the retailer but can also be offered by the regional initiative. The contract makes it clear when, and under what conditions and how delivery is to be made.

Should the person you are talking to reject your proposal, then ask for the reasons. This can help to make future offers more suitable and more attractive for customer requirements.

In delivering to canteens the following difficulties frequently occur:

- **Short-term contracts:** Most supply contracts with canteens are agreed for such short periods (one to five years), that planting new cultures (eg. Fruit trees, vines, asparagus), or investing in a new infrastructure, a quality assurance system or a catering service for producers is not worthwhile or is too risky. If it becomes apparent in the supplier contract that there are difficulties with short terms, then draw this to the attention of the contractual partner and explain why longer contracts are necessary. You will not be able to achieve terms of several years with retailers. They are geared up for just-in-time and make decisions from week to week as to what quantities to purchase.
- **Limited budgets:** Canteens in public facilities normally only have a very limited budget available, with which no qualitatively high-value products can be bought or staff trained. The additional financial expenditure has to either be carried by the canteen customers themselves or be made available from other budget sources. Therefore, local decision-makers must set to work and be convincing. With canteens which are obliged to put out to tender, the decision-makers can call for a regional and sustained production of raw materials in the tender.
- **Lack of consciousness:** The canteen's customers, the buyers or even the decision-makers often lack consciousness about regionally sustained nutrition. Everyone has to be convinced about the arguments to be put forward for a regional menu and then campaign for this themselves. An initiative cannot do this alone as it is not on the spot.
- **Lack of incentive:** The success of the offer depends on how competitive it is, and whether it is worth the canteen offering the regional product. Canteen customers have to demand the product and they will not do this if there is no incentive to change their diet. Again and again incentives have to be found for buying the regional product, as otherwise the customers will fall back into the same old pattern

7.1 External communications

Without a communications policy, even the very best product or service will be overlooked in the multitude of offers which the consumer receives every day.

In a prevailing market in which customers find it difficult choosing between the various brands, only the product which is backed up by a “good story” will get noticed and survive. Not all consumers buy regional products. There are on average only five out of every hundred who are prepared to pay more money for regional and qualitatively high-value products. These consumers constitute the target group and have to be appealed to specifically.

7.1.1 Target groups

Key questions:

- Which customers do the members of the marketing initiative know and according to which socio-economic groups can they be classified?
- Can more customers in this group be approached in the region?
- Which newspapers do these potential customers read, which events do they attend?
- What best appeals to these customers for the least effort?

Target groups depend on the product and the region. Therefore, before implementing each measure it is important to decide where exactly to place it, in order to reach as many customers as possible. An advertisement should for instance only be placed by a business in the newspaper which is read by its own customers, expensive specialities should not be placed in a free sheet. Sampling sessions should only take place where the customers are who would buy the product, that is not in popular discount shops, rather perhaps at not so popular, but committed, independent retailers.

Leaflets should not be handed out to every passer-by in a pedestrian zone, rather only to those who are interested, such as at a high school event, at a popular farmers’ market or at an alternative event.



Markets at nice locations attract a lot of people (Klaffenbach, Saxony, Germany).

7.1.2 Focus on measures

The use of separate measures fails if no strategic direction has been developed beforehand.

One-off use of an instrument, e.g. newspaper advertisement, promises little success. The purchasing of food is determined by habits more than ever, which can only be broken into when long-term stimuli are sent on a regular basis. Stimuli include big special promotions, reports in the newspapers, advertisements, announcements, statements to the press.

In a regional initiative where various businesses work together, each one has developed its own strategies and measures for communication (Leaflets, newspaper advertisements, farm events, sampling sessions, etc.). In communication it especially makes sense to combine different methods and instruments with each other, in order to attain a higher advertising effect for one’s own business. Every measure pursued by one member involved in the initiative is promotion for all members. In this way more opinion-leaders, customers and prospective customers can be specifically targeted at different times and through different measures, than a single business could manage.



Good PR is an absolute ‘must’ for regional initiatives (Streekfestival, The Netherlands).

The stakeholders have to develop a concept that can on the one hand be financed and on the other be specifically geared to the target groups.

7.1.3 Communication targets

The first step is the collation of the individual measures already being undertaken by each marketer of the regional initiative. For instance these can be extended or consolidated in order to increase their effectiveness.

Key questions:

- What objectives does the regional initiative hope to achieve through its communication measures?
- How can the success of these measures be determined?
- Who makes the decisions regarding communication measures?

Communication should achieve measurable objectives which will have to be monitored regularly. Only in this way can it be seen which measures have been worthwhile and which have not, and which are worth consolidating and which are not.

Objectives are for example:

- raising the degree of awareness (e.g. every year ask 100 passers-by, in a popular pedestrian precinct on a Saturday, if they know of your initiative)
- increasing sales or
- gaining new customers or new market share.

Communication has to deliver:

Reducing the inhibition threshold: Consumers often have stronger inhibitions about trying out new ecological or regional products. The objective should therefore be to reduce the inhibition threshold and to intensify information and mobilise emotions (e.g. food tasting stands).

Taking up and cultivating contact personally: This is the basis for establishing trust. By taking up and cultivating contact personally, the chances increase



“Protection through use” – economic success supports the preservation of many types of landscape (hedgerow landscape in Thuringia, Germany).

that word-of-mouth advertising will be set in action. If the consumer is already in the town of purchase the first inhibition threshold is already surmounted, and the chances of taking up a relationship directly exist. Therefore, it is absolutely necessary to ensure that sales staff are sufficiently qualified.

Contents and labelling: The prospective customer is interested in the kinds of advantages which regional products have to offer. This involves statements of origin as well as logos/brand names as an assessment of quality.

7.1.4 Image/corporate design

All communication measures by the regional initiative develop a particular image of the regional initiative from the view of the consumer, which influences demand for the products.

However, consumers are particularly interested in the special benefits of the products.

- Why should they buy these particular products and decide against the products they have preferred previously?
- Are the products healthier, tastier, processed according to a certain recipe or by a special process or do they have a longer shelf life?
- Why is the regional initiative's product better, cheaper or more expensive than a competitor's product?

Especially when the price for the product is above average, consumers want to know whether the higher price will also give them more benefits personally.



An apple queen is a positive image factor for every orchard initiative.

Tell a good story!

If the advantage of the product itself is difficult to explain or too complex for consumer "speak" then a good story about the product is important. Customers are interested in reading or hearing about the story of a product, e.g. about the region, about the farmers and their work or about the animals. Above all, personal contact with the producers at, for instance, sampling sessions or farm events, remains in the memory of the visitors for a long time and creates a strong personal bond with the product.

The story should be positive or original, this is something which inspires consumers. This could be special procedures as for example the manufacture of a regional type of bread in a stone oven, as done 100 years ago, or very special stories about a regional product e.g. the discovery of Serrano ham. Regional dialects, expressions, traditional dress, buildings, elements of the landscape or traditions in the region which one is proud of should definitely be used for communication purposes. Yet even good communication cannot replace the quality of a product.

Corporate Design

There are many ways and methods for communicating the performance of a regional initiative. What is important is that the measures are always identifiable with the initiative. For this purpose a kind of corporate design has to be created. Initially it is probably enough to just place the logo or the brand name in central position when using each measure. If one wants to attract the highest attention possible, the packaging of products, leaflets, banners, signage, internet pages, market and information stands, decorations at, for example, sales, promotions and statements to the press should guarantee a uniform appearance and thus the effect of recognition.

Message

Also statements about the regional product and about the initiative on product packaging, in statements to the press, in leaflets and speeches should remain the same, to impress the main sales arguments in the minds of consumers. These statements should agree with the desires of the

target group. So, for example, a high product quality through the regional craftsmanship of butchers and bakers, securing high regional diversity through the enjoyment of a robust product or natural production processes without additives, pesticides or genetic modification.

Key questions:

- Which central messages will be selected for products/services?
- Which messages reach the target group in the most effective way?
- Do the messages chosen correspond with target group preferences?
- What are the standards for communicating with the public (reaction to complaints, enquiries, offers etc)?
- How is the marketing initiative to react in the event of public crises (food scandals etc.)?
- What instruments are available?

In regional marketing it is first of all a matter of using communication instruments to reduce the inhibition threshold, take up personal contact with the consumer and identify the products in a clear and credible way.



Children have fun doing practical work and learning how things are connected (Birkenfeld, Germany).

7.1.5 Instruments for communications policy

Communication measures can be divided into indirect and direct measures (see Table 10)

The right combination of individual instruments depends on the area of business, the product, the message, the competitors, the most important purchasing groups and last but not least on the available budget also.

Advertising / Sales support	PR work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional newspaper • Posters • Signboards • Local radio • Stickers • Product information • Samples • Place-name signs • Shopping bags • Vouchers • Promotional teams 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Campaigns • Participation in trade fairs • Open farm days • Training programs • Village event • Local radio • Site visits

Table 11: Regular and target group-oriented use of instruments

	Direct measures: Sales support and advertising	Indirect measures: Public Relations (PR)
High cost communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media advertising • Sales support • Merchandising 	
Medium cost communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information leaflets • Telesales • Direct contact with multipliers (e.g. teachers, doctors, regional managers, consultants, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trade fairs • Exhibitions • News conferences • Open days
Low cost communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Posters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • News releases • News reports (articles) • Newsletters

Table 10: Measures for communication

7.1.5.1 Press work

Targeted and effective press and public relations (PR) work is necessary in order to make the regional initiative, its core competency as well as the services it offers known to as wide a circle as possible.

It should look at:

- setting up a timetable for press activities in order to ensure that the regional initiative and its activities are regularly featured in the press
- arranging events relevant to the press
- supplying editorial contributions to the media
- cultivating personal contact with media people
- regularly providing the press with information e.g. press get-together.

7.1.5.2 Public Relations work

Public Relations is the cheapest form of communication. Many farmers and regional initiatives use this way of communication to, for instance, make their farm and its products known by e.g. hosting an open day. In addition to providing potential and existing customers with information it is also important to engage the interest of local news reporters. New innovative products can be made even more attractive to the press by the regional initiative at a later stage of development.

The chief aim of every activity within the PR framework should be raising the degree of public awareness and improving the image of the regional initiative. Above all in doing so, the regional initiative itself, and not the individual products, must be brought to the fore. These activities are not as cost-intensive as advertisements and contribute to improving the relationship between the regional initiative and the local and regional networks.

It is important to include associates and opinion-leaders in PR work. An invitation to commercial partners or also to the sales staff of the chains of retailers (e.g. every second or third year) can contribute to a better general mutual understanding. Also direct contact with the so-called multipliers (teachers, doctors, nutritionists, owners of health food shops, etc.) can be very helpful. This circle of people is in the position to pass on its own opinion about the regional initiative to a wide spectrum of consumers.

Key questions:

- Which public events do the members of the regional initiative host anyway?
- When do the public events take place – can they be integrated into a set timetable so that PR work is achieved on a regular basis?
- Which campaigns can be used to attract the target group?
- Which signs of identification can be used, such as a banner of the brand symbol, a certain type of decoration, market or information stands with products or information brochures about the regional initiative?

7.1.5.3 Advertising

The main purpose of advertising is to make products known and to build up a positive image for these among customers. At a later stage of development, it makes a lot more sense to use advertising rather than PR measures, as the regional initiative no longer stimulates public interest that strongly (see Branding rules, p. 36, Chapter 5.8.2). At this stage it is often very difficult to convince the local media to report on the regional initiative or about its new products. Through advertising the regional initiative has a greater influence on the image projected to the outside.

The more consumers are to be reached through advertising, the more effort is needed. Media such as television or radio reach millions of consumers, but cost a lot more than, for instance, magazine advertising. A cheaper alternative is adverts in local newspapers or mail box advertising. In view of their regional orientation and their relatively limited advertising budget, regional initiatives primarily use these forms.

A further more efficient method of communication is the use of synergy potential when cooperating with networks. Regional initiatives can, for instance, advertise in tourist information brochures or run a sales stand at regional exhibitions or trade fairs.

Key questions:

- What is the advertising objective (awareness in the region or outside, a good image, consumer information etc.)?
- How much time, money and manpower is available for advertising?
- Which methods of advertising reach the target group in the most effective way? (Flyers, brochures, sign-boards, shelf signage, posters, etc)?
- Which measures will be used to promote sales (food sampling, presence of the provider at the point of sale, training employees, distribution of information material, etc)?

7.1.5.4 Sales support

Sales support campaigns lead to direct contact with the consumers or resellers and serve to create a lasting impression and liking for the product. What applies here: always be friendly and reply to all questions in a polite and interested manner, even if the same question has been asked for the 1000th time!

By having contact directly, the consumers or retailers have the chance to gain an estimation of the product and its performance from a consumer point of view. Previously unspotted deficiencies or optimising potential or even the origination of a new product idea can arise from conversations with consumers as a positive by-product of sales support.

Retailers are very positive about sales support campaigns which are devised and implemented by the regional initiative itself, as they carry no financial effort or risk at all and the sales figures of the product advertised increases as a result.

Through them they also hope to achieve a positive effect on their own image.

Regional Platform Meetjesland (LEADER +)



The regional platform "Meetjesland" is located in Northern Belgium. It started 10 years ago and acts as a server for all organisations that work in the region "het Meetjesland". 12 municipalities are situated in this region. The regional platform Meetjesland has broad objectives: they organise municipality consultations/discussions, welfare consultations/discussions and the LEADER Program. The platform uses the following communication instruments:

Message

"you have taste" or "you are fashionable" if you are enjoying the regional products of the Groene Gordel in 2005

Creation of the website

- Is part of the general website of the regional products Flemish-Brabant
- Database with products, producers and partners
- Info forum for related activities

Publishing a book

- Living illustration of regional products
- Product and producer info
- Eating habits and historical backgrounds
- Illustrations, pictures and recipes

Training of guides

- In close co-operation with the various touristic vzw's
- Information exchange
- Development of a total packet for tourists (for example finish a walk in a restaurant where regional products are served)

Promotional material

- Uniformity of the Groene Gordel
- Strengthen recognisability
- For the producers and the shop keepers
- Link with development in the tourism sector

Publication in magazines for tourists

- Participation in events
- Tourism: commodity exchange Leuven
- (Cultural) heritage day Castle Gaasbeek

7.1.6 Effective communication with a limited budget

Even if only a very small budget is available, the communications policy must not be allowed to be neglected. Especially through articles in regional newspapers (background reports, introduction of cooperating producers, home stories or reports on campaigns and press conferences) one achieves a high degree of attention without having to pay for it.

It is worthwhile cultivating links to journalists, being available for their queries and offering them something for them to write about. Every regional initiative should, in this respect, carry out a minimum number of as many different campaigns as possible. The Brucker Land initiative, for example, implemented over 1,000 campaigns in the first three years (sampling sessions, information stands, farm events etc.) and through these activities achieved a level of awareness of over 90% in their county.

Normally a regional initiative cannot afford this alone, rather it needs voluntary supporters e.g. friends, children and committed acquaintances from church or social circles or from a sports, dance or local history society.

Recommendations:

- **At least once a year**, a major PR campaign for the regional initiative should take place e.g. Open Day, or a farm event to which customers are invited.
- **At least once a month**, an advertising measure or sales support as, for example, a report or an advert in the newspaper, a stand on the market place. Sales support campaigns can be organised by the regional initiative itself.



More direct contact with customers – Markets provide the best opportunity (Streekfestival, The Netherlands).

7.1.7 Structure

Key questions:

- Who is the spokesperson for the press?
- In the event of urgent press enquiries, what is the contingency plan?
- Who has contact with the press, radio and TV?
- Which topics could be of interest to the media and to customers?
- Launch event: What form should the positioning of the initiative and its products take (guest list, place, timetable)?
- Drawing up a plan of action for the media relations campaign: Time frame of 12 months for all media activities such as editorial contributions, product launch, press briefings, company visits, open days).

7.2 Internal communication

Internal communication is necessary for the exchange of information and to motivate the individual members. This exchange should therefore also take place within a pleasant framework. It makes sense to chair the meetings, so that they do not drag on.

A regional initiative should gather together at least once a year to exchange information and to make important strategic decisions. Important items for the agenda could be:

- Exchange of information (e.g. regarding legal or practical matters, sales of quantities using various distribution channels, production quantities for the next year, buyer and producer satisfaction etc.)
- Exchange of goods at production peaks or sales peaks
- Co-ordination and collaboration in the use of facilities (slaughter, cutting, cooling and storage capacities)
- Timing of joint campaigns (open days, campaign weeks in co-operation with landlords etc.)
- Clearing up conflicts, rumours, hearsay
- Co-operation with procurement (signs with logo, printing T-shirts).

7.2.1 Strategy

What is decisive for effectiveness, motivation and so the continued existence of the regional initiative in the longterm is the

Key question:

- Who makes the decisions?

This has to be clearly agreed on and preferably confirmed at the general meeting of members (see Chapter 8, Organisation and Finance).

7.2.2 Structure

Just as important as resolving the decision on strategy is the question of how internal communication is to be translated into practice. Clear rules support the exchange.

Key questions:

- Who is responsible and for what?
- How frequently does the core group and other helpers meet?
- How does news reach the helpers?
- How are urgent enquiries dealt with (arranging cover)?
- What happens when things go wrong?

To give all members of the regional initiative a sense of belonging, internal communication is of fundamental importance. A yearly report on a general meeting is not sufficient to cultivate a relationship with all members. A simple newsletter (at least four times per year) is considerably better, but it does not replace a personal meeting in the group.

8.1 Legal form

The legal form of the organisation to be marketed is of great significance. In order to make a decision here, possible forms should be checked against the following aspects:

The legal form defines the legal framework conditions of a company which is economically active in some form. It is often set down by businesses in the articles of association, which in exceptional cases may also be agreed verbally.

The legal form affects among other things the issues of liability for the associates and their right to manage the business. Moreover it determines whether the company has its own legal character (e.g. public limited company) or whether its associates act as natural persons/individuals/sole proprietors.

Depending on the type of legal form, the law allows for different rules concerning its establishment, operation or liquidation. In contrast to partnerships where at least one associate also has to personally vouch for the liabilities of the business with his own assets (exceptions are Ltd., SARL or Co. KG), liability with joint stock companies is limited (e.g. to the respective investments of the associates).

Key questions:

- How clearly can lean decision-making structures be defined?
- How high is the financial risk in the event of failure? For whom?
- Who is liable? Is the liability terminable?
- Who can/is allowed to represent the company?
- What is the tax classification? Is a preferential tax rate possible, what is the limit (e.g. non-profit making, small firm, agrarian production)?
- Is the organisation eligible for funding?
- What contractual policies are required between the members?
- How difficult is it to change existing members or take on new members?
- How complex are the responsibilities as defined by law?
- How much own capital is required from the members?



Clear legal framework conditions are a good basis for success. They do not, however, replace experience and enthusiasm (South Downs, England).

The type of organisation chosen should:

- be able to do business without limits
- limit liability to the wealth of the organisation and not reach through to private assets
- permit clear decision-making structures and channels, and at the same time
- be manageable in accordance with the ideal purpose of the regional initiative.

The regional initiative should take the advice of specialists (tax advisers, lawyers) as to which legal form is the most favourable form commercially. Talking to experienced commercial organisations can be helpful.

Experience shows that regional initiatives which are very active in business are split into two legal areas: whereas the idealistic objectives mainly remain as a legal form of private law (Society, Association) the business arm is usually organised as a legal form of business law (GmbH, SARL, Ltd.).

8.2 Decision-making structure

Experience shows that regional marketing initiatives are usually small businesses in the beginning, which do not need any complicated business structures. Above all, simple and pragmatic solutions should be at the forefront of any considerations to do with management.

Key questions:

- Who will lead the organisation (Board of Directors, Chairperson, Managing Director)?
- Who is responsible for which area?
- How can decisions be reached swiftly?
- Who has access to finances and how?

These questions can be sorted out within the framework of rules of procedure which the initiative sets for itself. The initiative usually has experienced managerial personalities who can give advice. Also, sharing experiences with other initiatives



UNSER LAND (OUR LAND)

“UNSER LAND” is the name given to a network of nine regional initiatives around Munich, which offer regional products in and around Munich. The individual regional initiatives are idealistically supported by so-called supportive societies, in which the “five pillars” of the movement, craftsmanship and trade, agriculture, environmental and conservation protection, as well as churches and consumers represent a common interest. The supportive societies are networked in the sponsoring organisation “Unser Land”.

Idealistic sponsorship:

UNSER LAND – The Association

As “custodians” of the idea, the society represents the idealistic interests of the network externally and internally. It lives off the commitment of the people in each supportive society and as a countermove creates the infrastructure to guarantee this commitment “on site” in the long term.

Function of the umbrella organisation

The umbrella organisation UNSER LAND e. V. supports and co-ordinates the work of the supportive

societies, building up and extending the network. It looks after nationwide affairs, concepts for new projects and for obtaining the necessary financial sponsorship. It is one of the business associates of UNSER LAND GmbH (Ltd.) which has the task of safeguarding the idealistic interests of the network and as it has the right to use the brand symbol (the logo) it also has vetoing powers.

Commercial business:

UNSER LAND – Limited Company (GmbH)

Just as the umbrella organisation uses the commitment of many people to carry the idealistic part of the network over to the outside, it also needs a common organisation to build up and regulate business by co-ordinating production, craftsmanship and trade.

The responsibilities of the Limited Company (GmbH)

UNSER LAND GmbH (Ltd.) is responsible for the establishment and co-ordination of pricing and product policy, marketing and logistics for all the participating districts.

info: www.unserland.info



SDL: Structure and Rules

SDL Supply Group, the Supply Group Board and the Marketing/Management Company

South Downs Lamb Supply Group

An organisation that incorporates co-operative principles within its constitution (e.g. one person – one vote, surplus allocated according to throughput – not to investment etc).

The Supply Group would have Mutual Ownership, in that the people who use the services of the company (the members) are its owners.

The members would supply the Supply Group with their product under the terms of the members' agreement and the Supply Group would market members' product on their behalf – as agent i.e. would not take ownership of the product.

Supply Group (S/G) Board

Board constituents.

The board is elected from amongst the farmer members but with provision within the Rules or Memorandum and Articles for usually up to two non-farmer directors. The Management Company through a nominated person would report to the Supply Group Board but would not have voting rights.

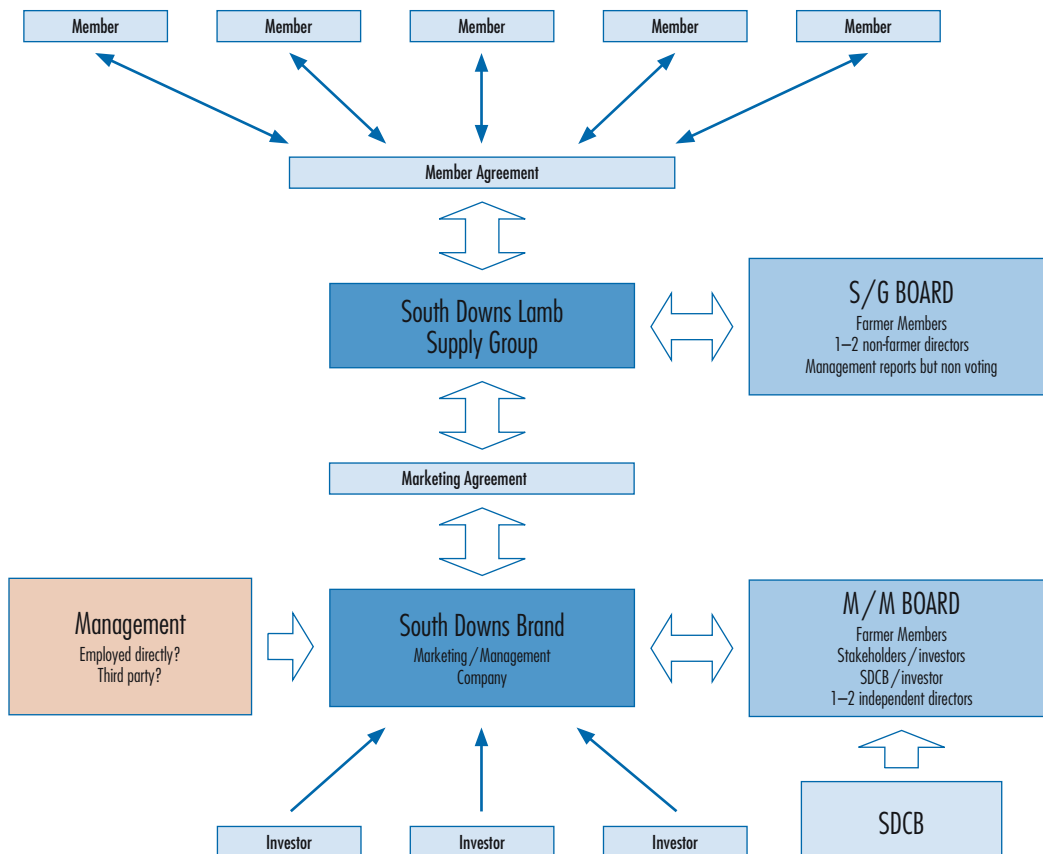
South Downs Lamb Marketing/Management Company

Funding requirements and therefore investment will be determined to a great degree upon the terms and conditions relating to payment for produce to the Supply Group i.e. working capital and also the extent to which the Supply Group members themselves are prepared to fund their own organisation. The company will own the brands and protocols and will act as management/marketing agent for the Supply Group under the terms of the Marketing/Management agreement. Fees would be agreed on an annual basis by negotiation. The company would also be bound by the terms of the Supply Group's members' marketing agreement.

Management

Management of the Marketing/Management Company could be through its own employed staff or through contract with a third party contracted to provide a service. The appointed manager or third party company would report directly to the Board but have no voting right.

The management would not be permitted to invest in the company but remuneration should be linked at least in part to performance.



is to be recommended. Gaps in “know-how” can be filled with the help of external experts.

“Learning by doing” is certainly a widespread procedure for regional initiatives which can be successful. In questions of law and organisation, however, the financial risk is too great for the initiative to rely on handmade solutions.

8.3 Organisation structure

Many regional initiatives elect a board of directors when setting up the commercial organisation which then appoints or employs a manager/manageress. In smaller organisations, the board of directors takes on certain management duties or rather is responsible for certain tasks.

The necessary capacity for personnel follows on from the strategy chosen, which in turn results in the organisation structure. The organisation set up during the starting phase should not be so rigid as to constrain the growth of the business. It must be flexible enough to be able to be developed further.

Experience has shown that many regional initiatives find it difficult developing a structure in which decisions can be made efficiently. Some of them have changed from a co-operative style in the beginning into a classical directive style of organisation again.

Alternatively, there are co-operatives which still work very effectively. What can be learnt from this? The legal structure of the organisation for the regional initiative is not the decisive factor. More important is the fact that responsibilities both within and between levels of management are laid down precisely.

Rules for members

South Downs Lamb



Members

Members are farmers who have a written contract (Member Agreement) to produce and market produce through the ‘Supply Group’ and are therefore entitled to hold a voting share in the organisation.

Members, depending on the funding requirements of the ‘Supply Group’, may be required to pay a one-off joining fee or provide a qualification loan based on throughput.

Member Agreement

The members’ agreement is vital to the viability of this initiative. It can be summarised as follows:

- To ensure that members are committed to using the facilities and services of the Supply Group for a minimum period of time.
- To set out the quantity or percentage of members’ produce that will be committed to the Supply Group for marketing.
- To set out the protocols that committed produce has to adhere to to be marketed through the Supply Group.
- To ensure that any investment and/or charges paid by members to the Supply Group relate to both commitment and actual usage.
- To set out how the operational activities of the Supply Group are to be administered.
- To bind the Supply Group to the marketing of committed produce.
- To ensure the stability of the Supply Group, and to give confidence to members, customers, suppliers and bankers.
- To ensure continuity of supply to customers.
- To ensure the protection of the member in his relationship with the Supply Group and the protection of members between themselves.

Who?	Responsible for?
Board of directors	Mission, strategic objectives, development of main working themes or main leadership themes, controlling, investments, special working groups with regard to leadership
President	Supports Manager, network, controlling
Manager	Operational objectives and implementation of marketing plan, general management, finance
Employees with responsibility	Special duties, (specified in the job description)
General assembly	Budget, election of board of directors, strategic orientation (leading principles)

Table 12: Who is responsible for what? Source: SCHMID, OTTO et al. (2005)

8.4 Organisation of daily work

Key questions:

- How many employees does the organisation have (full-time, voluntary, financed for what length of time)?
- Who represents the organisation externally?
- Is there a customer service point and/or a head office?
- How is it manned?
- Is there direct access for customers?

8.5 Administration of the brand

A chief task for management is the administration of the brand because it embodies the credibility, quality and also the financial basis of the commercial organisation. On the one hand it needs to be decided how the brand will be allocated, how it is to be used and how it should appear in different areas of business.

On the other hand, management has to organise quality assurance and controls. It proves to be the case that company own labels appear less credible than independently controlled labels. This dilemma can be solved by participating in independent quality assurance programs (see Ch. 5, Marketing). The share of criteria to be tested through voluntary own monitoring should be kept as low as possible; own monitoring always has a whiff of flawed objectivity. Mode of allocation, mode of criteria and the guidelines to be adhered to must be transparent to the customer.

Key questions:

- Which procedure is necessary for the allocation of the brand?
- Who controls the use of the brand?
- Who creates and manages licensing arrangements?
- Who sets sanctions and by what means?

West Cork Handbook of Brand Identity Guidelines



A handbook should be produced on the implementation of the brand which describes the exact colours to be used, the size and other design guidelines for the brand identity. This is important for ensuring that the logo always has the same appearance, regardless of where it is printed (posters, stickers, packaging labels etc.).

The following example shows an extract from the handbook of brand identity guidelines used by the West Cork regional initiative in the Republic of Ireland, www.fuchsiabrands.org.

BRAND IDENTITY GUIDELINES 2

PROPORTIONS
The use of the West Cork Region brand mark should ensure that the proportions and the minimum dimensions illustrated here are adhered to at all times.

CLEAR SURROUND
Where possible, a clear space of 12.5% of the brand mark dimensions should be maintained around the mark in both directions. At no time should any text or photographs encroach on this clear space.

PROPORTIONS
The proportion of the height to width is 1:1.2 and must never be adjusted

MINIMUM DIMENSION
At no time should the height of the brand mark be less than 15mm.

Minimum size of mark
 mark height = 15mm

Minimum size of mark
 mark height = 15mm

Minimum area of clear space on white background
clear surround = 1.25 H
 mark height = H

Minimum area of clear space on white background
clear surround = 1.25 H
 mark height = H

8.6 Financing and profitability

The avowed goal of all participants has to be establishing the commercial organisation and operating it in such a way so as to make it self-financing. In doing so, start-up financing by public means should definitely be made use of.

There are several possibilities for independent financing. Which of these ways is used depends on the objectives set by the participants. The different means of financing are introduced and evaluated here below.

8.6.1 Funds

Funds are pots of finance which come from different sources to achieve special objectives. They are also suitable for setting up regional marketing as a personal connection between the inhabitants of or visitors to a region and the aim of the fund can be drawn. This personal connection is prerequisite for money flowing into the funds.

Definition of funds

(adapted from Gabler Wirtschaftslexikon):

General: Cash for specific purposes

Special: Separate property of an association, that is invested in accordance with special conditions in the terms of contract of the fund.

Experience shows that the connection between the depositor and the regional marketing initiative goes beyond that of a purely customer relationship. Therefore, the setting-up of a fund is also a good means of acquiring commitment, know-how and contact opportunities for production, processing and selling products. For this reason, the establishment of a fund should always be understood as an instrument for public relations and for retaining customer loyalty.

Types

- Open-end funds: The number of certificates for issue is not limited, shares can be sold freely.
- Closed-end funds: The number of certificates for issue is fixed.

Advantages

- Short channel of reaction
- Short time of reaction
- Financial basis without the owner of the fund being able to exert direct influence.

Possible forms

There are several possible ways to set up a fund:

- On one hand, the fund can be accessible to everyone; on the other, access can be restricted to one target group only, such as the potential sellers of regional products and services.
- Shares can entitle holders to the use of certain services (such as promoting the goods of share participants) or also be their prerequisite (only those who own share contributions can offer their products and services through the regional initiative).
- The proceeds of the share contributions can be certain services which the commercial organisation offers share owners, or money payments.

Important: Share owners do not have any influence on business decisions of the agency's management solely on the basis of being share owners.

8.6.2 Minimal fixed costs

High fixed costs endanger the continued existence of the commercial organisation in the long term because in times of low returns, a mountain of debts can accrue very quickly or ready sponsorship money can be used up.

Apart from this, high fixed costs restrict the flexibility of the commercial organisation, as obtaining profits through careful management has to remain the top priority. Because of this it would be unable to carry out other tasks, which although not profitable at first, would contribute a lot to the development of the region.

The intention has to be to keep fixed costs to the minimum possible, even with guaranteed start-up financing.

Therefore:

- start off with as few staff as possible (one manager, one secretary)
- hire reasonable office space
- try to gain start-up financing for refurbishment
- do not sign any expensive maintenance contracts
- try to get sponsors with long-term formal obligations for certain blocks of fixed costs (e.g. telephone costs, car, energy costs)



Setting up and establishment of a cost-effective structure

Parc naturel régional de l'Avesnois

Employees: The regional Nature Park of Avesnois, employs 2 people part-time. The park ensures the co-ordination and the development of the brand. It ensures the rules are complied with and develops the marketing work.

Monitoring is done by an external provider.

There is no official customer service point. Each producer deals with his products and customers independently. The regional Nature Park house is the head office, for communicating about the brand only.

8.7 Current income

8.7.1 Payment for agency activity

Goods, services and information are brokered as well as packages with elements of these three areas. The basis for these is the agency agreement.

There are various possibilities available for levying remuneration:

- Only the potential seller concerned makes a payment for business which comes about;
- Only the buyer pays a charge for brokering goods, services or information;
- The potential seller and the prospective customer pay for this service;
- Payment is calculated in the selling price; however, this can lower competitiveness.

Definition

(adapted from Gabler Wirtschaftslexikon)

Commission: fee for services rendered, calculated on a regular basis as a percentage of the value an object.

Brokerage: Broker's fees for business or agreements which are brokered by an agent. Usual in stock transactions and the insurance industry.

8.7.2 Own business activity

The regional initiative should be legally and economically in a position to carry out its own business with regional products. This is especially to be recommended in setting up new product lines, in order to obtain a presence on the market more swiftly.

8.7.3 Payment for use

The regional initiative levies payments for use:

- for taking on the company image or offer in its files and
- for the use of information by the prospective customer.

8.7.4 Allocation of licenses

For certain procedures and forms of business activity the regional initiative can develop concepts which are legally protected under law and which they can provide for a charge within the framework of franchise agreements. One-off charges are usually incurred on signing the contract and then on an ongoing basis as a share of the turnover.

This method can be used for example with

- shop-in-shop forms with regional products such as regional shelves
- mobile stands (see "Tyrolean farmers' market stands" p. 63)

These chains of franchises all work with the logo which the regional initiative represents.



Tyrolean farmers' market stands

Concept

The sale of delicacies at Tyrolean farmers' market stands safeguards the production-oriented existence of Tyrolean mountain farming. This small-structured rural culture built up over the centuries has become synonymous with ecologically sustainable farming and the conservation of human values.

Stands sell rural specialities from Tyrol (hard mountain cheese, bacon, Kaminwurz [a special type of sausage], bread, jam, "Zelten" [gingerbread], spirits, eggs, wine, mountain honey) at weekly and special markets in shopping and specialist trade centres, at trade fairs, festivals and events of all kinds.

Development

First franchisee in 1994, 2006 more than 100 franchisees in Central Europe.

Turnover forecast

Full-time management (from the 2nd complete year of business) turnover forecast of around 150,000 Euros per annum.

Franchise offer

Selected, partially exclusive Tyrolean specialities.

- Optimum logistics solutions.
- Know-how handbook, training, start-up help, information (up-to-date e-Mail service, weekly logistics newsletter, monthly information package), extranet, exchange of experiences, controlling, company visits, further development and grand annual general meeting.
- Lasting, strong and individual support (combined selling, advice in all matters and personal discussions) – established standard of support service.
- Professional marketing, strategic PR work and customer newspaper.
- Strong original brand.

Franchise requirements

- Start-up fee 3,600 Euro + VAT.
- Total investment volume from 25,000 Euro + VAT.
- Running charge: c. 5% of your turnover (payment by product delivery).
- Marketing pool: Already included in the turnover.

Source: <http://www.dertiroler.com>



8.7.5 Allocation of logos

The allocation of logos is based on production and quality guidelines which the commercial organisation of the regional initiative has worked out and established in co-operation with specialist committees and working circles.

The prerequisite for a financial rule regarding the award of logo is a clear regulation on right of ownership concerning logo, slogan and name. The regional initiative should inform itself about suitable protective mechanisms at state and EU levels to make a sound decision here. Exchanging experiences with other businesses from different sectors can help with decision-making.

CCP : PRODUCT CONFORMITY CERTIFICATION
A guarantee of reliable quality a cut above the standard product

The CCP (Certification de Conformité Produit) certifies that a product is compliant with predetermined, verified specific characteristics or rules of manufacture (relating, according to case, to production, packaging or origin).

CCPs apply to pig, beef and sheep meat, poultry, delicatessen meat products, fruit and vegetables and non-food farm products (livestock feed for example).

DUMEX FOWL, SLAUGHTER CALVES REARED ON WHOLE MILK, DELICATESSEN PRODUCT, BEEF, B.F. FLOTTANTE, FROMAGE FRAIS MADE FROM NORMANDY COW'S MILK, FRESH SALMON, LONG SHALLOTS, CRANBY APPLES, ROASTED COFFEE, CRISP SEAR BREAD, SUSHI/RISOTTO, AND SO ON.

This is the most recent quality sign. It was instituted in 1988 (by the law of 30 December 1988).

CCPs applying to animal products focus on good husbandry practices.

SOME STATISTICS

- About 340 product conformity certifications have been approved and 140 applications are being processed.
- Production subject to conformity certification accounts for 21% of pigmeat business (2,700 pig farmers), 13% in the case of poultry and 11% for fruit and vegetables.

TÉMOIGNAGE

Product Conformity Certification for fine tomatoes

Dominique Lassau, a market gardener in Ile et Vilain, feels that he grows a fine tomato, with the strict minimum of chemical treatment and picked only when ripe, which is a good thing where taste is concerned... It was to gain recognition for this difference that he undertook, along with other producers (working together in the Upper Brittany producers' association) to obtain official certification, a process completed towards the end of 2004. In addition, difficulties in selling product confirmed his view of the need to be able to point to special quality. The specifications to be met for the conformity certification apply to vine tomatoes and stipulate that they must be produced using good growing practices.

"We implement integrated pest control, meaning that we introduce into the crops insects parasitic on other, harmful insects. We make as little use as possible of insecticides, and only when necessary on a very localised basis".

Certification specifications also require picking at maturity and avoidance of storage: the tomatoes must be in the shop no later than 48 hours after picking, and they must be traceable from seed to final product. Four producers in the association (which has around twenty) have already adopted conformity certification and will be producing approximately 1,000 metric tonnes of certified tomatoes. Florence Lassau points out that "consumers who want a healthy product like to know how their vegetables have been grown. Certification makes it possible for us to show them that ours is a cut above the ordinary product".

Seals of quality require guidelines and controls – here for fine French tomatoes.

Potential sellers obtain the logo most suitable for them when they have proved that they have kept to these criteria. The logo is then allocated for a fee.

The logos are closely connected to the concept of an umbrella and subsidiary brand label.

8.7.6 Quality controls

Observance of the production and quality guidelines for each of the product lines is a key requirement for all who want to use the logos.

Checks to see if these norms are being observed are undertaken by the commercial organisation for a fee.

8.7.7 Promotional measures

The commercial organisation plans, designs and implements promotional measures also in co-operation with external specialists. Potential sellers may participate in these promotional measures for a fee; this is calculated on the basis of costs arising as well as a payment to the regional initiative.

To avoid problems in financing these promotional measures, they should not be initiated by the commercial organisation, but rather as the groups of potential sellers wish.

Nonetheless, the society can make suggestions to the groups of potential sellers.

8.7.8 Development of marketing proposals

The commercial organisation develops marketing proposals on behalf of the potential sellers and groups; costs incurred in setting them up are calculated cost-effectively.

8.7.9 Membership subscriptions/sponsors

Firms, organisations, businesses and individuals make a one-off payment or pay a certain amount regularly.

This includes:

- Members of regional committees, such as the advisory committee of the nature park, LEADER-steering groups
- Towns and communities in the region
- Banks
- Employers
- Associations
- Business partners
- Societies/Associations
- Citizens' action groups
- Citizens.

What can be a problem is that the supporting members want to influence the work of the commercial organisation and that looking after them

can be very time-consuming for the management of the company.

It might be worth considering using the connections of a patron to gain sponsors and to look after them.

8.7.10 Subsidies

Support programs co-financed by the EU or means of EU structural funding (ESF, ERDF, EFF) are usually available for rural areas (LEADER), which are often allocated through business development.

However, the time limits for subsidies pose a problem, i.e. structures could be set up with subsidies which cannot be maintained once the support program has expired.

Support programs also often leave very little room for manoeuvre in their use and so restrict the flexibility of the commercial organisation.

8.7.11 Events offered

The commercial organisation can organise exhibitions, trade fairs and seminars in co-operation with established educational establishments (IHK, Chamber of Commerce, County Council, Adult Education Centres etc.). They are financed by membership fees, entrance fees and stand costs.

8.8 Business plan

The business plan gives an estimate of how the commercial organisation's profit, turnover, profitability etc. can be developed. As ever increasing details clarify the work of the marketing organisation, the persons in charge should take on the business plan once more, and specify and adjust it (see Chapter 1, graphic p. 12).

The structural foundations for a business plan may be taken from Chapter 1.10.

Business plan: *SDL Profit and Loss Account projections*



Profit & Loss Account Projections			
	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3
Sales	250,800	438,900	689,700
Cost of Goods Sold	224,200	392,350	616,550
Gross Margin	26,600	46,550	73,150
Fixed Costs	12,000	12,000	12,000
Transport Costs	15,640	11,800	18,400
Other Costs	0	150	300
Salaries	18,000	19,800	21,780
Finance Charges	1,600	2,800	3,200
Total Costs	47,240	46,550	55,680
Profit before Tax	-20,640	0	17,470

SCENARIO 2	
GROSS MARGIN YR 3	10.5%
Profit as a percentage of turnover YR 3	2.5%
Cash equity	£40,000
YR 1 overdraft	£20,000
YR 2 overdraft	£35,000
YR 3 overdraft	£40,000

8.9 Budget planning

The instrument used for daily work is the budget plan. It covers a shorter time frame than the business plan, namely the current budget year.

How a budget plan is set up is shown in the following example:

- Where have developments been wrongly estimated?
- How can we react better to these developments in the future?
- Which measures were (were not) helpful in attaining the objectives?



Non-Profit Organisation Information Centre XYZ

	Budget Title	Function and explanation	Budget Starting point 2005 / Euro	Annual Accounts 2005 / Piece	Budget Starting point 2006 / Euro	Estimated Forecast 2007 / Euro
Income	1.	Membership contributions	5,000	8,880.00	10,000	10,000
	2.	Sponsorship contributions	500,000	324,218.15	250,000	300,000
	3.	Donations contributions	10,000	28,345.23	15,000	15,000
	4.	Project specific subsidies	23,600	22,567.34	100,000	100,000
	5.	Government programs	16,300	10,267.40	10,000	10,000
	6.	Interreg	50,000	39,478.22	80,000	30,000
	7.	Farm shops	20,000	18,105.00	18,000	18,000
	8.	Guided tours and seminars	3,000	4,480.00	4,000	4,000
	9.	Catering	2,500	2,600.80	2,500	2,500
	10.	Interest	500	1,959.43	1,500	1,000
	Total income		630,900	460,901.57	491,000	490,500
Expenditure	11.	Development, construction	180,000	134,090.74	145,000	175,000
	12.	Design of external facility	20,000	12,678.32	30,000	7,000
	13.	Staff	150,000	137,242.49	150,000	150,000
	14.	Office items and travel costs	10,000	12,438.04	17,000	17,000
	15.	Concepts	30,000	12,450.00	14,000	0
	16.	Projects	125,000	104,115.57	110,000	108,000
	17.	PR work and training	20,000	17,862.25	20,000	30,000
	18.	Taxes	2,000	1,837.30	2,000	3,000
	19.	Reserves	93,900	28,186.86	3,000	500
	Total expenditure		630,900	460,901.57	491,000	490,500

8.10 Controlling

Planning is only sensible when the nominal condition is compared to the current status once the measures have been carried out. This comparison reveals various findings:

Key questions:

- How realistic was the planning, what needs to be corrected in future planning?

The findings integrate into further planning in which measures are more refined, more effective instruments are chosen, negative trends are targeted specifically.

The areas in which nominal and actual conditions should be compared with each other and reasons for the divergence researched are as varied as the tasks of the business.

They include:

- Supplier management (support, supplying, acquisitions, processing complaints and returns)

- Marketing measures (Selection of instruments, effectiveness)
- Communications measures, internal and external
- Product policy (range, quality, new developments, market opportunities)
- Price design
- Financial management (accounting, liquidity, profitability)
- Personnel policy (motivation, qualification)
- Work efficiency and time management
- Information management (who should receive what information and when).

The Controlling effort has to fit the size of the business. Controlling is not an end in itself, rather its purpose is for the business to get better and better.

8.11 Quality assurance

General quality assurance and quality assurance in connection with the regional brand is the basis for the credibility and with it the long-term success of the brand. It is a compulsory standard for the regional initiative.

EU or national programs can be used as a basis for quality assurance, as these are independently validated at relatively reasonable prices.

The official QUALITY AND ORIGIN SIGNS	
	AOC : APPELLATION D'ORIGINE CONTROLÉE <i>A guarantee of quality based on an origin in a local soil or terroir</i> PDO : PROTECTED DESIGNATION OF ORIGIN <i>The European equivalent guarantee</i>
	PGI : PROTECTED GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATION <i>A guarantee of the link between a product and its geographical origin</i>
	TSG : TRADITIONAL SPECIALITY GUARANTEED <i>A guarantee of the traditional character of a product</i>
	AB : AGRICULTURE BIOLOGIQUE <i>A guarantee of quality linked to a type of production protective of environment</i> ORGANIC FARMING <i>The European equivalent guarantee</i>
	LR : THE AGRICULTURAL QUALITY LABEL OR LABEL ROUGE / RED LABEL <i>A guarantee that the product is of superior quality</i>
	CCP : PRODUCT CONFORMITY CERTIFICATION (CERTIFICATION DE CONFORMITE PRODUIT) <i>A guarantee of reliable quality a cut above the standard product</i>

Seals of quality require guidelines and controls – this is given with EU seals of approval and French markings.

EMAS

The EU-Eco Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS) is a way to help all types of organisations, large and small, make a commitment to continual improvement, measure their progress and produce an independently validated public report about their performance. Since March 2001 when the scheme was revised, EMAS has been open to organisations in all economic sectors, including public services. Now local authorities have the opportunity to register for EMAS in the same way as all other organisations.

See <http://www.emas.org.uk/>



Documentation/Quality Management of the Parc naturel régional de l'Avesnois

e.g. Regional Nature Park's beef brand: This brand is not a quality sign, so, this means that this brand cannot communicate information about the quality of the product. But there are some obligatory requirements which have to be respected: details about the park's brand specifics (local product, environmentally respected, authenticity and hand-made), have to be controlled and verified. For that, a control per year is done by an external expert. And also, for each animal sold, there is a traceability slip.



8.12 Control of the criteria

The control of the criteria needs to be established too. This cannot only be done by entrepreneurs who are using the brand. An external party is necessary. The idea is to form a platform with stakeholders from nature conservation and management organisations (like the State Forestry Service), users of the landscape, consumers, and policy representatives. This platform still needs to be established.

Setting up quality criteria and introducing a quality assurance program only makes sense if regular checks can be made to see if the objectives regarding quality have been achieved. This evaluation is prerequisite for correction and supplementing which should continuously improve the offer of the regional initiative in the end.

9.1 Product design and equipment

The regulations for product design and equipment are very detailed and are based on world-wide agreements such as the Codex Alimentarius and various EU regulations, which are translated or supplemented in national, state or county law.

Key questions:

- What are the legal regulations concerning the manufacture and quality for each group of products and services?
- What are the obligatory requirements for labelling the product?
- How can the products be labelled acceptably further?
- What policy will be coming into force in the future?
- What is the simplest way of observing the rules?
- Who can advise the organisation on these matters?

What is relevant for the potential European seller are the basic regulations of the European Union.

9.2 Product labelling and packaging

Labelling, presentation and advertising of foodstuffs

Pre-packaged foodstuffs must comply with compulsory harmonised standards on labelling and advertising. The details that must appear on packaging include the name under which the product is sold, a list of ingredients and quantities, potential allergens (products which may cause allergies), the minimum durability date and conditions for keeping (Directive 2000/13/EC of 20 March 2000).

The Directive applies to pre-packaged foodstuffs to be delivered to the final consumer or to restaurants, hospitals, canteens and other similar mass caterers.

It does not apply to products intended for export outside the Community.

The labelling, presentation and advertising of foodstuffs must not: mislead the consumer as to the foodstuffs characteristics or effects; attribute to a foodstuff (except for natural mineral waters and foodstuffs intended for special diets, which are covered by specific Community provisions) properties for the prevention, treatment or cure of a human illness.

9.3 Compulsory labelling particulars

The labelling of foodstuffs must include the following:

- Name under which the product is sold
- List of ingredients
- Quantity of ingredients or categories of ingredients expressed as a percentage
- Allergens: Directive 2003/89/EC
- Foods containing meat: Directive 2001/101/EC
- Net quantity
- Date of minimum durability.

See more details:

Codex Alimentarius Commission of the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO):

www.codexalimentarius.net/web/index_en.jsp

Europe

- Health and Consumer Protection Directorate General of the European Commission http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/health_consumer/index_de.htm
- Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development of the European Commission http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/agriculture/index_de.htm
- SCADPlus data base of the EU: <http://europa.eu/scadplus/leg/en/lvb/l21090.htm>
- TransGen: <http://www.transgen.de/home/>

9.4 Transport and warehousing

Since January 2006, a package of five regulations on food hygiene came into force across the EU, which sets down clear and harmonised rules on "the hygiene of foodstuffs, specific hygiene rules for food of animal origin, and specific rules for

controls on products of animal origin intended for human consumption" and which replaces 14 different directives that were applicable in the past.

These rules are translated into national, state and county law. Here too it is recommendable to engage in talks with experienced marketers and advisers. The organisation which monitors that rules are being observed usually has comprehensive information material available and supports the firms with practical advice.

Key questions:

- How are the products to be stored (temperature, packaging, separating individual groups of products from each other)?
- How are the products to be transported (temperature, packaging, separation of individual groups of products from each other)?
- What is the simplest way to observe the rules?
- What needs to be documented and how?
- How will this be monitored?

9.5 Food safety

There are numerous pieces of legislation and regulations concerned with food safety, which place as much of the onus on producers and suppliers as on caterers and retailers. It is very important to be aware of, and follow the guidelines provided by the relevant authorities.

Europe

A magazine "Food hygiene and safety" has been published by the Commission, to inform the public and Member States about the new legislation. It is very useful!

See: <http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/biosafety/hygienelegislation/dvd/index.html>

A CD-ROM with this information can be ordered as well at: http://ec.europa.eu/food/food/biosafety/hygienelegislation/index_en.htm

See more details at: <http://www.foodqualitynews.com/news/ng.asp?id=68941>

Great Britain

The major pieces of legislation are

- The Food Safety Act, 1990
- The Food Safety (General Food Hygiene) Regulations, 1995
- The Food Standards Act, 1999.

Consulting organisations:

The Local Authorities Co-ordinators of Regulatory Services (LACORS) oversees trading standards and food law enforcement by local authorities (food hygiene inspectors or environmental health officers). In addition, the Food Standards Agency oversees the food chain to improve safety and reduce the incidence of food poisoning.

Contact:
www.lacors.gov.uk
www.food.gov.uk

Germany

Access to the legal regulations on product safety and legal standards for each federal state (Bundesland) as well as national and European-wide applicable framework regulations are to be found on the internet pages of the Ministry of Agriculture for the respective states or on the sites of the individual State Farmers' Associations.

Information brochures and flyers are available for specific and current regulations regarding markings for individual products. They can be obtained from the advisory organisations of the ministries, professional associations and consumer organisations.

What is feasible for regional initiatives are own market checks and conversations with experienced marketers and advisers.

Contact: www.vzbv.de, www.reginet.de,

as well as all the home pages for the agricultural ministries.

9. LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

France

Ex. Regional nature park's beef brand sold by the farmer:

Exact rules have to be respected.

- Production (contact – Chambre d'Agriculture)
- Sanitary (contact DSV – Direction des Services Vétérinaires):
- AM. 9th May 1995 Food Hygiene (application, locals, equipment, water, staff, distribution, ...)
- AM 8th September 1994 – exempt of sanitary agreement
- AM 17th March 1992 – locals conditions which prepare butchered meat die cut, boned or not.
- Commercialisation (contact DGCCRF – Direction Générale de la Concurrence, la Consommation et la Répression des Fraudes)
- Consumption code

The Netherlands

The "Voedsel en waren autoriteit" is the governmental organisation that guards the safety of food and consumer products (<http://www2.vwa.nl>). A direct link to VWA can be found on the website of the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality (www.minlnv.nl). On the site of the VWA, much information can be found on regulations, controls, hygiene, and information per branch (sector, e.g. animal food, eggs, primary sector etc).

The following laws, applicable to food, its production and consumption, can be found:

- Warenwet (general law on goods)
- Destructiewet (law on destruction of animals)
- Bestrijdingsmiddelenwet 1962 (on the use of pesticides)
- Drank- en horecawet (on alcohol)
- Diergeneesmiddelenwet (on animal medication)
- Gezondheids- en welzijnswet voor dieren (on health and welfare of animals)
- Wetgeving algemene productveiligheid (on general product safety).

Also a lot of information can be found on food safety here (on a variety of products and what rules they need to observe e.g. for organic agriculture; on labelling; on illnesses; on chemical substances

OF : ORGANIC FARMING (AGRICULTURE BIOLOGIQUE - AB)
A guarantee of quality linked to a type of production protective of the environment

The indication "Agriculture Biologique" or "Organic Farming" certifies that the product is the result of a natural mode of production free from synthetic chemicals and protective of natural balances and animal welfare.

Most fresh and processed farm and food products are available in an organic version in specialist stores or supermarket chains. In France, these products are designated by the "AB" mark.

The first official recognition of organic farming dates back to the agricultural reform law of 1980, and later, at European level, in a regulation adopted in 1991 and supplemented in 1999. The Agence Bio, a public interest grouping, was set up in 2001 with the task of developing and promoting this approach to production.

SOME STATISTICS (*) IN FRANCE

- Organic farming involves over 11,350 growers and livestock farmers.
- Land devoted to this form of production now covers 550,000 hectares (or 1.9% of France's Utilised Agricultural Area).
- 4,860 operators are subject to controls for the preparation of products complying with the organic mode of production.
- In the EU, organic farming accounts for 3.5 % of total agricultural area.

(*) figures for 2003

ORGANIC FARMING, EUROPEAN LOGO:
There is also a logo at European level to allow products from organic farming to be recognised.

TÉMOIGNAGE
"Consumers of organic products see food as a priority"

"When I go into a field or a greenhouse, I want to be able to eat a tomato without having to wash it first"

This is how Antoine Cabaret, 37, a vegetable grower in France's Côtes d'Armor region, justifies his choice of organic production. Farming 7 hectares with a partner and three employees, he grows around thirty types of vegetables and fruit (leeks, radishes, tomatoes, green peppers, strawberries, etc) which he then sells on street markets or to two organic cooperatives. He also delivers around twenty produce baskets to private individuals every week.

"My aim is to try to keep things as clean as I can to avoid generating pollution. Organic farming is pure agronomy. When the soil is not ready, planting is postponed to avoid harming it, and the next year it will give off its best. I have always distilled crop treatment products. Although some of our products are little more expensive than conventional products (+10% on average) this is because they are often more labour intensive - weeding is done mechanically for example. But our customers are highly motivated, concerned for their health, and for the environment, so they find these products taste better and keep longer. They are not people who are "rolling in it", they have just decided to make food quality a priority".

Seals of quality require guidelines and controls – here for organic farming in France.

Branding Avesnois

The regional nature park's brand is not a quality sign, so the brand cannot communicate information about the quality of the product. In France, if we want to communicate information about the high quality of one product, we have to use a national official quality sign "label rouge".

The regional nature park's branding communicates information about a system of production which has to respect the charter. Generally it is traditional production, respecting the environment and giving added value to the landscape and local know-how.

The products will be labelled if they respect the charter (the minimum requirements of the charter). Branding has to respect all the policies but it has to go further than these policies, especially in protecting the landscape.

The Park does not monitor observance of the legal policy, it just verifies that it is respected. It is not the technician of the beef industry. It is just responsible for brand co-ordination. The farmers using the brand do not form a company, each one is independent in his system of production and selling.



and in general on producing foods safely. The last law in particular contains information on HACCP, animal pests, hygiene laws, canalisation of animal by-products [what to do with them], reporting and tracing, packaging, and food at fairs). Therefore, <http://www2.vwa.nl> is a very good site for information! On http://europa.eu/pol/food/index_nl.htm information on food safety from Europe can be found.

9.6 Documentation/Quality Management

Regional initiatives are forced to comply with European standards of documentation and quality management. This is particularly the case when they supply to the catering, pre-processing and retail trade.

Key questions:

- What are the minimum standards set for the organisation?
- From phase to phase: what should be documented and how?
- What is the simplest way of meeting the obligatory requirements regarding documentation?
- What is the responsibility of the initiative and where does customer responsibility begin?

The following rules are to be observed here:

9.7 HACCP

As a legal requirement any steps that are critical to food safety have to be identified and it has to be ensured that adequate controls are in place. The potential hazards facing producers and suppliers include microbiological, physical and chemical contamination.

The Hazards Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) system provides a method of highlighting and controlling basic food safety practices. There are three points to consider in the HACCP method:

1. Basic hygiene principles

- Control of contamination: by good cleaning, separation of raw and ready to eat foods and by good personal hygiene of food handlers
- Good temperature control to limit growth of harmful bacteria
- Stock rotation and control of storage life to limit growth of harmful bacteria
- Good heat processing to destroy microbial contamination

2. The concept of control

- Businesses must control and monitor critical points
- A system that identifies all the hazards but fails to implement control is not satisfactory

3. Training and supervision

- All food handlers must be supervised and instructed and/or trained
- Industry guides explain what this is likely to mean for different jobs in different sectors

The hazard considered under a HACCP system will depend on the type of food being produced and supplied. For example, there is a specific manual for HACCP methods in meat plants. Local food hygiene inspectors will be able to advise on introducing a HACCP in a business.

(Source: *Good Food on the Public Plate*, adapted)

Rules for members

To make the start of marketing easier for regional initiatives it seems to make sense to co-operate with established processors and logistics providers in processing, packaging and delivering regional products, especially where sensitive products such as meat are concerned. Not only does this reduce investment at the start, it also distributes legal responsibility for various areas of work over several shoulders.



10.1 Strategic turning points

At a certain time many regional initiatives reach the limits of the strategy they have followed up to that point. Just as each product goes through different stages of market interest and has to be “reinvented”, the regional initiative too arrives at a point in which it has to be “reinvigorated”. This means that the decision-makers have to develop new concepts and translate them into action in order to attain a new period of growth.

Present concepts, objectives and strategies have to be checked.

The basis for a rework is the “life cycle” of a strategy. After the initial phase there follows a period of consolidation. Towards the end of this a review takes place with the aim of reaching a decision as to whether an adjustment of the strategy used up to now is sufficient or whether a strategic turning point has been reached.

On the basis of this review an adjustment or re-orientation of the objectives should be possible without serious problems occurring. It can make sense to involve external consultants in the decision-making process as these offer an external perspective of the initiative and so can help to avoid corporate myopia.

Step 1: recognition of joint success: What have we achieved?

The basis for this are the defined objectives as well as achievements in areas for which no objectives have been set up to now. These achievements should not be taken for granted. Without joint efforts, the many considerations, decisions and activities of the regional initiative, these would not have come about. This is to be recognised and even celebrated!

Areas which the regional initiative can assess are

- Assessment of the landscape objectives
- Establishment on the market
- Public recognition and perception
- Co-operation as a team
- Contacts in the region
- Profit for each individual

Step 2: What is the next step for our regional initiative in accordance with our vision and our resources?

- What brings additional benefit for the cultural landscape?
- What raises our credibility?
- What makes sense strategically?
- What is profitable?
- What can we provide in terms of personnel?
- What offer is available and at what time?

Step 3: Development of innovations

Concepts and strategies can be further developed by introducing product innovations, innovations in their physical appearance or in communication, in the service or in the system of distribution. This is often enough to make the offer of the regional initiative more attractive again or to bind the customer tighter to the initiative. For this the individual main themes of this manual can be reworked once more from another viewpoint, in order to have an innovative effect here. All ideas which promise to be successful should be pursued further.

Alternatively

Step 3: Development of new strategies

Should no consensus be reached in discussions regarding innovations, an adjustment of the concepts or strategies will probably not be sufficient, rather the initiative is on the threshold of a turning point.

This can also make itself noticed by participants no longer being motivated, not having any ideas anymore or innovations appearing to them to be just more of the same. Then it is time to delve into the whole process of developing objectives and strategies once more (see Chapter 2).

Using an external moderator during this new process can be a sensible idea if:

- lasting conflicts exist
- the participants cannot easily break free from the limitations of the previous system, or
- work carried out up to now is interpreted as being unsuccessful.

10.2 Product range

- Should new products be offered?
- Extend existing product lines or add extra product lines?
- Another degree of processing?
- What additional services could be offered, who would provide these?
- Which people and/or processing companies have to be integrated?

Product design, integration in the present marketing strategy, corporate design:

- Is a test run possible?
- When will the “official” start take place (timing, subject to the results of the test run)?

Public Relations for new regional products and services:

- Timing of events
- Campaigns
- Responsibility.

10.3 Distribution

Which marketing channels should be extended?

- Catering trade
- Community catering (canteens, schools etc.)
- Food retail trade
- Delivery service for private customers
- Dispatch

Are the existing working mechanisms sufficient? If not, who can take on the new tasks?

10.4 Training and development of “know-how” and preparation for making decisions

There are various sources which the participants of the regional initiative can draw on for further decision-making. This applies not only to these fundamental strategic decisions, but also here especially.

- What knowledge is required?
- Who can provide us with this?

Sources of knowledge

- Exchange of experience
- Tours of companies
- Experienced stakeholders from the home region
- Experienced stakeholders from other regions
- Seminars
- Lectures
- Trips
- Specialist knowledge
- External consultants
- Representatives of Associations

Sparkling pear wine and wood from fruit trees

– a new revival for orchards
in the Hesselberg region, Germany.

Apple juice from meadow orchards is a classical product for preserving stocks from traditional orchards. This was not enough for the allfra Regionalmarkt Franken GmbH marketing association. They supplemented their range of goods with attractive products such as authentic dry apple wine, a sparkling pear wine made using traditional fermentation in the bottle processes and a fine dry summer elderflower wine.



Not only are fruit products to be offered in the “Hesselberger” range, an extension is planned for honey, obtained from the orchards. At the same time owners are obligated to plant a new tree for each fruit tree felled.

Further information: www.hesselberger.com



Everyone who has worked on this manual hopes that the suggestions, examples and tips mentioned here will help you in your work. Please use the contact addresses given for queries, good examples or for exchanging experiences. Your comments are always very welcome!

11.1 Ethical and religious beliefs

The offer of products and services (e. g. recipes) should also take account of the consumers' ethics and religious beliefs.

Buddhists	There are many variations of practice in Buddhism depending on which school the follower is associated with. Many are vegetarian or vegan.	See www.Buddhismtoday.com
Christians	Some periods of fasting e.g. Lent	
Hindus	No beef. Mostly vegetarian. Fish rarely eaten. Periods of fasting common.	See www.Hindu.org
Jews	No pork. Meat must be "Kosher" (specific slaughtering techniques). Only fish with fins and scales eaten. Meat and dairy food must not be consumed together.	See www.jewish.co.uk
Muslims	No pork. Meat must be "Halal". No shell fish. Regular fasting, including Ramadan.	See www.eat-halal.com
Rastafarians	No animal products except milk. Foods must be "I-tal" or alive, so no canned or processed food, no added salt, no coffee. Food should be organic.	See www.rastafarian.net
Sikhs	No beef. Animal must be killed by one blow to the head.	See www.sikhs.org

Table 13: Special diets for religious reasons (Source: *Good Food on the Public Plate*)

Note:

Be aware of the content of some processed meat products. For example turkey burgers sometimes contain pork, chicken nuggets sometimes contain beef. If in doubt, avoid these products.

Vegetarians	No meat or animal fat. Some vegetarians will eat fish.	The Vegetarian Society approves recipes and promotes vegetarian foods. See. www.vegsoc.org
Vegans	No meat, dairy products, honey, or other products from animal sources. Also, no products which do not contain animal products but where animal products have been used in their processing.	Various vegan alternatives are used as substitutes in certain foods, such as Soya milk as a substitute for cow's milk. The Vegan Society promotes and advises on veganism. See www.Vegansociety.com
Fruitarianism	The fruitarian diet consists of raw fruit and seeds only.	See www.Fruitarian.com

Table 14: Special diets for ethical reasons (Source: *Good Food on the Public Plate*)

11.2 Time and action plan

Topic	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	2007
Collecting		Press release and announce start of project	Calculation of harvest quantities	Press release, community leaflets, agricultural weekly paper: Reference to criteria, dates, price	Harvest, acceptance 60 to+ (?)			
		Plan collection days: Dates, place (weighing, conveyor belt, ramps) transport (containers)		Handling: clarify excess quantities				
				Develop acceptance form				
				Organise storage space for bags and bottles (logistics centre)				
				Get bags, boxes, pallets				
Marketing	Decision on graphic designer	Decision on Corporate Identity means of advertising, labels	Setting copy of graphic designer complete	Labels/Mean of advertising printed				
	Brand development: Name, layout for means of advertising, Corporate Identity							
Organisation	Concept for financing	Founding of company constituted under civil law						
	Start-up financing (?)	Designation of Manager						
	Clarify financial participation of company associates							
	Project outline							
	Time plan (hours needed)							
	Prepare shareholder contract							
Marketing		Evaluate results of market survey	Marketing concept (identification)		Squeezing, filling, storage			
		Clarify structure of sales (200 people drink 100 litres juice per year ...)	How many litres of juice etc. is produced in Hohenlohe, how many in Beyerberg?					
			Distribution logistics					
Means of finance needed	Graphic designer	Management		Bags, boxes, pallets	Raw materials (6000.- EUR)		Fruit pressing facilities	
				Printing	Container for transport			
					Warehouse			
					Collection staff			

Table 15: Time and action plan of an orchard project (Source: allfra GmbH, Hesselberg, Germany)

11.3 Checklist (List of key questions)

Starting strong

- What products/services are there in our region which might be marketable because of their regional origin?
- Which products/services is our region traditionally well-known for?
- Which products/services have the greatest need for regionally based marketing (from the point of view of the region or the view of initiators)?

Seasonality

- Is it a purely seasonally available product?
- Is it possible to extend the season and at the same time ensure that quality remains constant?
- Are there products in the range that complement each other in seasonal sequence?

Quantity

- What quantities are to be obtained?
- Are the quantities also available in the years to follow?
- Do the quantities available justify an public appearance on the market?
- Are there producers who would, in the event of low supply, switch over production to this product?
- Is it possible to even out fluctuations in the quantities of products offered?

Quality

- What qualities differentiate the products from others (freshness, taste and appearance, delivery service, degree of processing, speciality)?
- Does the quality of the product comply with the average or rather with that of a premium product?
- How can consistent quality of the original product be assured (advice to producers, quality criteria for deliveries)?
- How can consistent quality of the finished product/service be assured?
- How can quality assurance be organised cost-effectively (use of existing systems)?
- Which ecological, economic, ethical or social sales arguments do the products/services offer?

Packaging and Labelling

- How will the products be labelled (logo, Corporate Identity, inscription)?
- What distinguishes regional products from the products of competitors?
- How will the products be packaged (form, material, degree of processing, packaging company)?
- How can packaging be optimised for advertising and information purposes?

Traditional product or new offer?

- Does the new product fit in with our regional identity?
- How is it compatible with the image of the region?
- What images does the product itself have?
- Is production compatible with an existing model perhaps or with the guidelines and objectives of the regional initiative?
- Does production influence the natural scenery for instance (and how relevant is this to the initiative)?
- Does the new product support or undermine our credibility?
- Is the product of economic use commercially?

Marketing strategy

- What image does the initiative want to convey externally?
- What image should the products convey?
- What is the key marketing message?
- Which product should move into which market?
- How should this market be tapped into – through a special quality of product or through price incentives?
- Who are the target groups for the products (segmentation of market)?

Price

- Supply: What price do the producers need for their product, when the additional criteria they have to comply with are taken into consideration?
- Demand: What price is the customer prepared to pay for such a product, that is, what price is it possible to enforce on the market?
- At what price are the original products available?
- How is the price established for the producers (pegged to a fluctuating market price, perhaps with a surcharge, at a fixed price)?
- With a fixed price: what do the producers do when the market price exceeds the fixed price?
- What are the competitors' prices?

Target groups

- Which market do we want to serve?
- What are the possible target groups?
- Which target groups are not being dealt with?
- What are the wishes, desires and visions of each target group?
- What is the main bottleneck of these target groups?
- How do the individual target groups expect problems to be solved?
- Which customers do the members of the marketing initiative know and according to which socio-economic groups can they be classified?
- Can more customers in this group be approached in the region?
- Which newspapers do these potential customers read, which events do they attend?
- What best appeals to these customers for the least effort?

Development of a regional brand

- Who initiates the introduction of a regional brand?
- What are the aims of the initiators? (Of relevance here is the viewpoint of the "key players")
- What roles do the individual stakeholders play?
- What are the advantages to them for being involved?
- Who must/should be involved and how?
- What form can participation take?
- Who has the power to make decisions? Who wants to, can or should have this?
- Which region does the brand apply to? Here it is better to choose the larger area, but be discerning.
- Which products should be included (Food, non-food, skilled trade services)?
- Is the brand designed to be an individual brand or an additional brand?

Distribution

- Which channels of distribution for which products are already available?
- Do these channels of distribution reach the target group particularly well?
- What effort in terms of time and money can and does the regional initiative want to spend?
- Which markets can be reached by this?
- Can the existing contacts of members of the regional initiative to new partners be used for distribution purposes?

Organisation of selling

- How much effort is needed, who will do the work (storage, sorting, packing, transport, ordering and accounting, handling complaints)?
- Which work will the individual members take on and which tasks will be passed on?
- How can the remaining work be shared out in a sensible and professional way? (e.g. Tasks are evenly distributed among all members or one member sets up a kind of office for a fee or someone is employed ...)
- Are complaints or customer requests referred back to the group and if necessary taken into account; if not, how can this be organised?

Communication targets

- What objectives does the regional initiative hope to achieve through its communication measures?
- How can the success of these measures be determined?
- Who makes the decisions regarding communication measures?

Communication

- Which central messages will be selected for products/services?
- Which messages reach the target group in the most effective way?
- Do the messages chosen correspond with target group preferences?
- What are the standards for communicating with the public (reaction to complaints, enquiries, offers etc)?
- How is the marketing initiative to react in the event of public crises (food scandals etc.)?
- What instruments are available?

Public relations

- Which public events do the members of the regional initiative host anyway?
- When do the public events take place – can they be integrated into a set timetable so that PR work is achieved on a regular basis?
- Which campaigns can be used to attract the target group?
- Which signs of identification can be used, such as a banner of the brand symbol, a certain type of decoration, market or information stands with products or information brochures about the regional initiative?
- What is the advertising objective (awareness in the region or outside, a good image, consumer information etc.)?
- How much time, money and manpower are available for advertising?
- Which methods of advertising reach the target group in the most effective way (Flyers, brochures, sign-boards, shelf signage, posters, etc)?
- What measures will be used to promote sales (food sampling, presence of the provider at the point of sale, training employees, distribution of information material, etc)?

Structures for communication

External communication:

- Who is the spokesperson for the press?
- In the event of urgent press enquiries, what is the contingency plan?
- Who has contact to the press, radio and TV?
- Which topics could be of interest to the media and to customers?
- Launch event: What form should the positioning of the initiative and its products take (guest list, place, timetable)?
- Drawing up a plan of action for the media relations campaign: Time frame of 12 months for all media activities such as editorial contributions, product launch, press briefings, company visits, open days).

Internal communication:

- Who makes the decisions?
- Who is responsible and for what?
- How frequently do the core group and other helpers meet?
- How does news reach the helpers?
- How are urgent enquiries dealt with (arranging cover)?
- What happens when things go wrong?

Organisation and finance

- How clearly can lean decision-making structures be defined?
- How high is the financial risk in the event of failure? For whom?
- Who is liable? Is the liability terminable?
- Who can/is allowed to represent the company?
- What is the tax classification? Is a preferential tax rate possible? (e.g. non-profit making, small firm, agrarian production)?
- Is the organisation eligible for funding?
- Which contractual policies are required between the members?
- How difficult is it to change existing members or take on new members?
- How complex are the responsibilities as defined by law?
- How much own capital is required from the members?

Decision making structures

- Who will lead the organisation (Board of Directors, Chairperson, Managing Director)?
- Who is responsible for which area?
- How can decisions be reached swiftly?
- Who has access to finances, and how?

Organisation of daily work

- How many employees does the organisation have (full-time, voluntary, financed for what length of time)?
- Who represents the organisation externally?
- Is there a customer service point and/or a head office?
- How is it manned?
- Is there direct access for customers?

Administration of the brand

- What procedure is necessary for the allocation of the brand?
- Who controls the use of the brand?
- Who creates and manages licensing arrangements?
- Who sets sanctions and by what means?

Controlling

- How realistic was the planning, what needs to be corrected in future planning?
- Where have developments been wrongly estimated?
- How can we react better to these developments in the future?
- Which measures were (were not) helpful to attain the objectives?

Product design and equipment

- What are the legal regulations concerning the manufacture and quality for each group of products and services?
- What are the obligatory requirements for labelling the product?
- How can the products be labelled acceptably further?
- What policy will be coming into force in the future?
- What is the simplest way of observing the rules?
- Who can advise the organisation on these matters?

Transport and warehousing

- How are the products to be stored (temperature, packaging, separating individual groups of products from each other)?
- How are the products to be transported (temperature, packaging, separation of individual groups of products from each other)?
- What is the simplest way to observe the rules?
- What needs to be documented, and how?
- How will this be monitored?

Documentation and quality management

- What are the minimum standards set for the organisation?
- From phase to phase: what should be documented, and how?
- What is the simplest way of meeting the obligatory requirements regarding documentation?
- What is the responsibility of the initiative and where does customer responsibility begin?

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11.6 List of authors and contributors

Provincie Noord-Brabant

Postbus 90151, 5200 MC, s'Hertogenbosch, NL
Telephone: +31(0)73 6 81 29 12
Fax: +31(0)73 6 80 83 01
Contact person: Mr Rob Maessen
E-Mail: RMaessen@brabant.nl

Innovatieplatform Duurzame Meerij

Postbus 90151, 5200 MC, s'Hertogenbosch, NL
Telephone: +31(0)411 63 27 23
+31(0)6 18 27 45 84
Contact person: Mieke Gordijn
E-Mail: mgordijn@concepts.nl

Syndicat Mixte du Parc naturel régional des Caps et Marais d'Opale

BP 22, 62142 Colembert, FR
Telephone: +33(0)3 21 87 90 90
Fax: +33(0)3 21 87 90 88
Contact person: Patricia Clement
E-Mail: pclement@parc-opale.fr
web: www.parc-opale.fr

Syndicat Mixte du Parc naturel régional de l'Avesnois

Maison du Parc naturel régional de l'Avesnois
– Grande Dîmière – 4 cours de l'Abbaye – BP3,
59550 Maroilles, FR
Telephone: +33(0)3 27 77 51 60
Fax: +33(0)3 27 77 51 69
Contact person: Maria Somocurcio
E-Mail: info@parc-naturel-avesnois.com
web: www.parc-naturel-avesnois.com

South Downs Joint Committee

Victorian Business Centre, Ford Lane, BN18 0EF,
Ford, England (UK)
Telephone: +44(0)1243 55 87 00
Fax: +44(0)1243 55 87 01
Contact person: Neil Hill
E-Mail: nhill@southdowns-aonb.gov.uk
web: www.vic.org.uk

ECNC-European Centre for Nature Conservation

PO Box 90154, 5000 LG Tilburg, NL
Telephone: +31(0)13 5 94 49 44
Fax: +31(0)13 5 94 49 45
Contact person: Yuca Waarts
E-Mail: waarts@ecnc.org
web: www.ecnc.org

Streuobstzentrum MainÄppelHaus Lohrberg

Neuer Weg 39, 60388 Frankfurt, Germany
Telephone: +49(0)6109 3 54 13
Fax: +49(0)6109 3 23 97
Contact person: Barbara Fiselius c/o Landschafts-
pflegeverband MKK – Zum Wart-
turm 11–13, 63571 Gelnhausen,
Germany
E-Mail: info@MainAeppelHausLohrberg.de
oder info@lpv-mkk.de
web: www.MainAeppelHausLohrberg.de

German Association for Landcare (DVL)

Feuchtwanger Str. 38, 91522 Ansbach, Germany
Telephone: +49(0)981 46 53 35 40
Fax: +49(0)981 46 53 35 50
Contact person: Bernd Blümlein
E-Mail: bluemlein@lpv.de
web: www.lpv.de

CLM – The Centre for Agriculture and Environment Foundation

Godfried Bomansstraat 8, 4103 WR, Culemborg
Postbus 62, 4100 AB, Culemborg, NL
Telephone: +33(0)345 47 07 30
Fax: +33(0)345 47 07 99
Contact person: Natasja Oerlemans
E-Mail: noerlemans@clm.nl

Vlaamse Land Maatschappij

Gulden Vlieslaan 72, 1060 Brussels, Belgium
Telephone: +32(0)14 258 332
Fax: +32(0)14 258 399
Contact person: Leen van den Bergh
E-Mail: Leen.VandenBergh@vlm.be
web: www.vlm.be

Regionalentwicklung Unseld

Vorstadt 2, 91731 Langfurth, Germany
Telephone: +49(0)9854 97 61 88
Fax: +49(0)9854 97 62 44
Contact person: Liselotte Unseld
E-Mail: info@unseld-regional.de
web: www.unseld-regional.de

11.7 Glossary

Initiators

A group of people who start to define a regional project and take the first steps towards its realisation.

key players

People within the group of initiators who by virtue of their commitment, their personal experiences and contacts support the initiative both strategically and practically with regard to external representation, motivation, know-how, self-assessment of the group of initiators etc.

Core group

A group of people who take on the operational work and prepare strategic decisions. They are often empowered by the group of stakeholders, with or without legal form, to make decisions to a limited extent.

Stakeholders

People who are in some way or other involved with or participate in the regional initiative.

Regional initiatives

Groups of people in a region who for various reasons wish to promote the region. In addition to economic objectives, social or environmental objectives often come to the fore.

Marketing initiatives

(Sub-) groups within the regional initiative which want to promote the region by marketing regional products within and outside the region. Usually the largest and most active group within the regional initiative.

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PO Box 90154, 5000 LG Tilburg, NL
Telephone: +31(0)13 5 94 49 44
Fax: +31(0)13 5 94 49 45
Contact person: Yuca Waarts
E-Mail: waarts@ecnc.org
web: www.ecnc.org

Author: Regionalvermarktung Unseld, Vorstadt 2, 91731 Langfurth, Germany

Co-authors: Neil Hill, South Downs Joint Committee, England
Patricia Clement, Parc naturel régional des Caps et Marais d’Opale, France
Maria Somocurcio, Parc naturel régional de l’Avesnois, France
Barbara Fiselius and Nicola Koczy, MainÄppelHaus Lohrberg, Germany
Yuca Waarts, ECNC-European Centre for Nature Conservation, The Netherlands
Eddy Nieuwstraten, Provincie Noord-Brabant, The Netherlands
Leen van den Bergh, Vlaamse LandMaatschappij, Belgium

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Contributors:



South Downs Joint Committee



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