



Baltic Sea Food

Report of the national closing workshop

1. Date and location of the seminar:	11 th of March, 2021, Online platform Zoom , organized by Lauku celotajs and LOSP
2. Number of participants:	44
3. Short description of participants (food networks, distributors, producers, food providers/chefs, media etc):	Local food producers and providers, food networks, distributors, chefs, internet portals/blogs, others interested
4. Speakers and topics:	<p>“Brief overview of the project “B2B distribution model to support local food producers in rural areas of the Baltic Sea region”, “Lauku ceļotājs” page for Latvian product producers.” <i>Asnāte Ziemeļe, LCTA “Lauku ceļotājs” president</i></p> <p>““Kuldīgas Labumi” cooperation with local producers, current experience in local food distribution from producers' cooperative point of view.” <i>Gunita Šteinberga, Chairman of the Board of LPKS “Kuldīgas labumi”</i></p> <p>“Products of local producers - from farm to consumer.” <i>Elīna Novada, host of the online store svaigi.lv</i></p> <p>“Local products on the restaurant menu. Restaurant meal in your home with the <i>Made at home</i> concept.” <i>Maris Astičs, chef of Restaurant FERMA</i></p> <p>“Experience of local producers operating during the pandemic - how to attract and retain customers - online stores, supplies, social networking activities”: <i>Inese Krūklīte, “Latvijas Ķiploks” - a shop of local rural goods uniting the entrepreneurs of the region;</i> <i>Māris Plūme, “Mr. Plūme” Cider Brewery - social networking activities, online store and deliveries.</i></p>
5. Summary of questions and feedback from participants related to the piloting results of the project:	<p>Questions for “Kuldīgas labumi”:</p> <p>1. How is B2B trading model working for pilot partner? <i>No, not at the moment, right now only B2C, because of the Covid, which caused all the cafes and restaurants being closed. B2B was started and tested before pandemic, and those were mainly local</i></p>

	<p><i>businesses like schools, hospital, museum and similar, and it was working quite well.</i></p> <p>2. What are the futures goals in short term, for next 1-2 years? <i>It is difficult to make any plans at the moment, right now situation is depending only on the restrictions and new regulations. But there were plans for the future before Covid and they are not forgotten.</i></p> <p>3. Have you tried to sell something abroad, for example, products that have long expiration date? Tried to sell something accordingly to the legislation of the country that you sell in? <i>No, it is not tried to sell abroad, so far there hasn't been any interest to do so, but cooperative is ready to send products abroad, if there would be costumers.</i></p>
6. Summary of questions and feedback from participants related to project results in general:	<p>-Adapting to the situation, a large number of producers have set up an e-shop (which has not been the case so far, very many use different platforms on their own) and make regular deliveries to customers. More focused on addressing customers on social networks.</p> <p>-Entrepreneurs are increasingly looking for ways to unite - in cooperatives, associations - in virtual markets.</p> <p>-Various activities are performed in catering companies - deliveries of products and meals, which have a small financial weight, but which serve as a marketing activity so that regular customers do not forget about them.</p> <p>-Less busy time gives an opportunity to rethink the concept and further direction of your company, to focus more on marketing - export of various materials, soc. networks, etc.</p> <p>-Entrepreneurs are mostly positive and shared their experiences and inspired each other during the meeting.</p>
7. Summary of expectations and suggestions highlighted by participants about future development needs:	<p>Elīna Novada, Svaigi.lv</p> <p>As a result of this pandemic, the customer has overcome the psychological barriers that previously prevented them from shopping online. So now it is a good time to start selling online. For the internet shop to work properly it is important to increase quality and stability of supply, and communication between the producer and the maintainer of the e-shop (as an example of Svaigi.lv). Producers need to start communicating about their product; this information should not be kept in secret, as this is the only way how the client can find out about the product. Producers need to be more active in marketing, talk and publish their products wherever possible - on social networks, podcasts, radio, TV, websites. Everything is information and in the way one person hands it to another one. Producers have to learn how to communicate the information about their product, because in average this kind of marketing is not used very actively by producers themselves – they choose to sell their product locally, in their own farms or local markets, and that leads to missed</p>

	<p>clients. For example, producers could share information about their products, recommended recipes, some useful tips, etc., this helps the customer and motivates them to buy specific product.</p> <p>It is important now to put the focus on the customer - in the design, packaging, communication of the product, to put the customer as priority, to highlight customers needs and what is important to him, to emphasize on how the specific product will be beneficial to his needs. The pandemic showed that many producers somehow “manipulated” with the customers, asking to buy from them, to support them, to help in this difficult moment, but this kind of communication creates burden, the heavy choice on which product to buy and support. Right now the customer should be the priority, his needs and wishes, and producer priority should be the need to fulfil the needs of his customers.</p> <p>Suggestion to the local producers is to realize that their product is good and it has value, and that it is worth promoting, selling, going a step further. To be aware of this fact and to start offering it to the clients, talking to them, opening up to a conversation with the public about their product.</p> <p>Māris Astičs</p> <p>Restaurants are advised to think about how to use local food, how to surprise the customer with local products to cook them extraordinarily.</p> <p>It is possible that this pandemic could be a cause that people will start to enjoy being at home, will be accustomed to cooking at home, but the need for delicious, restaurant level food is not gone. This allows restaurants to develop this offer, that there are restaurant food packages, with ingredients and instructions for cooking, and anyone can cook this food at home.</p> <p>This crisis prove that restaurants need to think of other options how to reach clients, and packaged food is a great option, because the ingredients are still restaurant level, good quality, and they can be cooked at home by anyone. There are many different people – some enjoy the fabulousity of the restaurant, but some just want a delicious food, and why not to offer it at their home.</p> <p>The discussion was opened about the price of the product that dominate in the market – the wholesale price and the producer price - the price determined by the producer when selling his own product in his own farm or in local markets, and the price that is for the same product for wholesale. There are two different views on this issue, from the producer and from the wholesaler. Because producer, and especially in this pandemic time, is trying to get the customer in any way possible, but of course for both parties to be beneficial, it is necessary to find a</p>
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	<p>compromise for the price to be at least similar, if not the equal, because otherwise the customer feels confused that there are two such drastically different prices for one product in such small market as Latvia has.</p> <p>In terms of marketing, Māris Plūme suggests that it could be useful for producer to make generic articles or videos about the product group, rather than directly promoting your product. Thus, when entering the store and intending to buy something from a particular product group, the video or article from specific producer can resonate in customers' memory, and he chooses something familiar.</p>
10. Summary of the feedback from organizers- how useful was the closing workshop for project partner(s):	<p>This meeting was really useful for all participants, as they had the opportunity to listen to other representatives of the food business and get acquainted with their ideas, thoughts, solutions, coping with the pandemic, etc.</p> <p>Discussions took place between the speakers, which were useful for all involved, inspiring and some of them agreed to continue the communication after the meeting. Representatives of the restaurants presented innovative ideas on how to create online master classes, or how to organize a party with a common meal, even if the "party guests" are in separate houses. It was observed that during pandemic customers got acquainted with the online markets, and trusts this kind of shopping more. So it is an option to shop online and to sell your produce not only for direct customers, but this way also other businesses notices the producer.</p> <p>In general this meeting reflects very well the current situation in the country, and how every business is trying to cope with it, also not forgetting about the future.</p>