

What to keep in mind when formulating a food-policy

REFRAME is about local food – about promoting local food in the different partner regions. REFRAME aims at creating better conditions for local producers to make profitable business on a regional market. There is an increasing demand for local produce. More sustainable, healthy and local has become mainstream. REFRAME aims to stimulate buyers of institutional kitchens and caterers to buy local. Influencing public buyers will have a major effect and big spin off in local communities.

Public procurement of local food

How to procure local food is an important question. One critical question in this is how procurement procedures can be adapted to handle local food and local food businesses. Within the different partner regions various projects have been exploring how to proceed. The projects have for example studied how to exchange knowledge and adapt to the needs of both producers and procurers. Theme days, workshops and farm visits have been organised to get to know the pros and cons of both sides. Caterers, restaurant owners, public procurers and producers got to know and understand each other's needs and demands. Based on the newfound knowledge adjustments in procurement tenders were made. Adjustment highlights includes:



- Dividing the procurement into smaller parts to make to more feasible for small producers to deliver
- Creating a partnership
- Formulating requirements about product production and delivery (for example animal welfare and traceability)
- Following the Best Value Procurement Strategy

Solutions have been found and tested in pilots. Producers have adapted to the demands of the kitchens and restaurants. Packaging and sometimes adjustments to the product itself have been made possible by working closely together. Public kitchens have for example tested using unpeeled potatoes instead of the pre-peeled they are used to. Furthermore, staff has been educated and consumers have been informed about the produce and its origin.

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Food policy

Another important question is how to formulate the overall food policy. There are many things you should keep in mind when formulating a policy, such as who is the target group, what is the target group's attitude towards the subject, and what motivates them?

Based on the experiences that have been gathered through the project we have developed a step by step guide of things you as a public actor should keep in mind when writing a food policy:

1. Make a problem definition based on an analysis, discussion or the like.
2. Identify the strengths and weaknesses of the target group and describe the critical issues that need to be solved to achieve success.
3. Make clear what your goal is and what you want to achieve with the policy. The goals should be smart, specific and measurable.
4. Connect a project or a practical example to the policy to demonstrate and visualise the issue or goal as this makes it easier for people to relate to and understand.
5. Ask yourself if you need to write a policy or if can you solve the issue by organising initiatives such as demonstrations, meetings, etc.
6. Secure a broad participation and commitment among industry and other public actors so that the parties involved know what their role is and what they can do. This generates ownership.
7. Define your target group – e.g. producers, procurers, politicians, consumers, schools, etc.
8. Find out what the target group's level of knowledge is
9. Collect data that can support the goals of the policy and stress the expected impact of the policy in terms of jobs, health benefits, business growth, environmental benefits, etc.
10. Design specific messages/activities that match the target groups and their level of knowledge.

We are aware of the fact that it is impossible to make a one-size-fits-all guideline when writing a policy. You should therefore use the guideline above as an inspirational checklist where you extract the things that make sense in your particular situation.

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