

## Supply of local products in Parc Ela – constraints and possible solutions

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### Abstract

The aim of this Master thesis is to find out whether the farmers produce local products which are sold within the perimeter of the Parc Ela in Grison in Switzerland or not and why they follow the strategy they do. Further the processors like butchers and bakers within the Parc are asked about their strategy concerning using locally produced raw materials and products for their work. The constraints for the production or usage of local food products and the experiences with local products of different actor groups are tried to be found through qualitative interviews with farmers, local processors and gastronomes. Based on the results of the interviews possible ways of encouraging the supply with local products in Parc Ela are developed for the Management of the Natural Park.

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### Keywords

Local products, farmers, processors, gastronomes, constraints, Parc Ela

### Introduction

The Master thesis is composed out of three main parts

#### Theoretical part

In the theoretical part the current state of knowledge about local products is described, important terms are defined and aspects of the wide subject of local products that play an important role in the thesis are explained. Regional products are products of which the provenance is known and can be recognized by the consumers (SAUTER & MEYER 2004). Another important aspect of regional products are the short distances between the place of production and the one of consumption (KÖGL & TIETZE 2010). Further the policies of regional nature parks in Switzerland will be explained in this part.

The **research questions** for this part are the following:

- What's the importance of regional food supply (in general)?
- What are challenges and opportunities of regional food products (in general)?

The **hypotheses** that underlie this part are the following:

- The importance of regional products increases
- This is due to several reasons
- There are many opportunities and challenges related to regional products

#### Empirical part

The empirical part is the main part of the thesis. About 12 qualitative interviews are conducted with four persons in each actor group (farmers, processors, gastronomes). It is tried – as far as possible - to have an equal amount of people in each group that obviously follow a strategy of selling their products within the Parc (mainly direct marketing in the case of farmers), using local raw materials for their products (processors) and buying local products for their menus (gastronomes) and people who do not do that consequently. Through choosing the interview partners based on these criteria it should be possible to get an impression about the reasons why the actors chose the strategy they follow and about the constraints related to it.

The **research questions** for this part are the following:

- How is the supply of regional products within Parc Ela?
- What are obstacles to offer more local products in Parc Ela?
- From the point of view of farmers?
- From the point of view of processors?
- From the point of view of gastronomes?

The **hypotheses** for this part are the following:

- The agricultural policy does not provide enough incentives for farmers to do direct marketing.
- The processors and the catering industry use little local products / raw materials because they are comparatively expensive and the supply is not guaranteed in larger quantities.

### Synthesis

The last part of the thesis is the synthesis. In that part it is tried to identify the constraints that hinder a wider supply of local products in Parc Ela based on the evaluation of the interviews. Based on the identified constraints it is tried to formulate recommendations of action for the management of the Parc Ela what they could do to encourage the supply of local food products in Parc Ela.

The **research question** for this part is the following:

- How can the management of the Parc Ela contribute to a wider range of offers of local products?

### **Methods**

The theoretical part of the thesis presents the state of knowledge about the subject of regional food products. Therefore the method for the theoretical part is mainly desk research and literature research. The empirical part is made up of the qualitative interviews that are conducted with persons of different actor groups (farmers, processors, gastronomes). The approach for this part is therefore qualitative (interviews based on guidelines).

### **Results**

The work on the thesis started in spring 2017. That's the reason why at the moment there are still no results available. The expected results are the identification of obstacles for the supply with local products in Parc Ela. Based on the identified obstacles recommendations of action for the management of Parc Ela how they could incentivize and encourage the supply of local products will be formulated.

### **Conclusion**

The thesis tries to illuminate an aspect of life in the Parc Ela which is a Nature Park in Switzerland. Through encouraging the supply with local food products within the Parc the local economy and social connections can be strengthened. Also for the identification of the local population as well as of the tourists with the label 'Nature Park' that the area got in 2012, local products have a great potential. It could therefore be interesting for the management of the Parc to put more emphasis on that aspect of life in the Parc. Possible ways how that could be done should be shown up by this thesis.

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