

The Stavanger and Ryfylke Regions' Potential as Food Tourism Destinations:

Towards a Recipe for Success



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Foreword

This master thesis marks the end of our great student days at the Norwegian Hotel School of Management, University of Stavanger. The last semester has been challenging, but very exciting and valuable in terms of knowledge. The focus on local food in the study has made us more aware of what is in the food we eat, and where the food originates from.

First of all we want to express our gratitude to our supervisor, Professor Reidar Mykletun. His constructive comments, invaluable help and support, and last but not least his motivating character and big smile, has made this process both interesting and funny.

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Finally, we want to thank all of those who have contributed with useful information to our research. Thank you all!

Abstract

The purpose of the study was to determine how the Stavanger and Ryfylke regions can exploit their potential as food tourism destinations. This research was the first of its kind to combine data from the food and tourism industries in the two regions. In addition, the study has illuminated a new topic of interest, the food allergic tourist. Eight respondents from the food and tourism industry in the regions were interviewed, and the results witnessed a great agreement of the potential the regions possess. The study shows what the regions are lacking regarding organization, products and promotion, and how to improve these highlighted areas. In addition, areas with potential to develop were identified, and the interviewees provided the researchers with food and tourism related suggestions for improvement in the two regions. The study concludes with recommendations for further food tourism development in the regions within the fields of marketing, network building, and attraction development.

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1. Introduction

Stavanger is seen as the oil capital of Norway, and the region has benefitted from this industry since the 1960s when the oil adventure began (Norsk Oljemuseum, 2011). The oil is a limited resource and will eventually be drained, and then what? The region is in need of an industry for the future; a sustainable industry that will continue to grow.

The agriculture and the tourism industries are independent industries in the Stavanger and Ryfylke regions, but a combination of these two industries has appeared to be fruitful in other destinations. Food tourism is considered as an important element in today's tourism experience, and involves experiencing the food of a place, region or country (McKercher, Okumus & Okumus, 2008). In addition it might contribute to the development of a rural destination as it increases the revenue and improves the employment of a place (Barcelona Field Studies Centre, 2011).

1.1 Problem Statement and Research Question

The following research will be based on the Stavanger and Ryfylke regions, and seeks to explore their positions as food destinations today. It will be mapped out what is lacking in terms of organization, products and promotion, and finally concluded with recommendations to what the regions might need to do in order to succeed with their food tourism development. In addition, the study will enlighten a limited investigated area within tourism, the food allergic tourist and its potential as a market segment in the region. The problem statement in this study is:

“How can the Stavanger and Ryfylke regions exploit their potential as food tourism destinations?”

The study has been based on the following three research questions:

- 1) *What position do the Stavanger and Ryfylke regions hold as food tourism destinations today?*
- 2) *What elements are lacking in the regions regarding food tourism development?*
- 3) *What can the regions do to develop and improve as food tourism destinations?*

1.2 Concept Clarification

The several researchers in food tourism theory use a range of different words to explain and define the same terms. The researchers have therefore decided to clarify what they mean by the terms they will use throughout the research.

Food tourism or culinary tourism includes all food related activities when traveling. This can be everything from eating out, to attending a food festival, to buying strawberries from the local farmer, or attending a food course etc.

The food tourist or the culinary tourist is including the leisure traveler as well as the business traveler, which includes the MICE (Meeting, Incentive, Conference, Exhibition) and congress travelers.

Eating establishments include every place to eat, from the simplest cafeteria to a recognized gourmet restaurant.

The Stavanger region is in this research including the municipalities of Gjesdal, Hå, Klepp, Randaberg, Sandnes, Stavanger, Time and Sola, which the destination company Region Stavanger has defined as their region.

The Ryfylke region includes the five municipalities Forsand, Hjelmeland, Sauda, Strand and Suldal, which the destination company Reisemål Ryfylke has defined as their region.

2. The Tourism Phenomena

In this chapter the reader will be introduced to the tourism phenomena, and to who the tourist is, as well as what trends to expect in the future. In addition, a brief explanation of international and Norwegian tourism will be given, including the two regions that have been the study's focus area.

"Tourism is the aggregate of all businesses that directly provide goods or services to facilitate business, pleasure, and leisure activities away from the home environment" (Smith, 1988, p. 183). Kamfjord (2001) further uses the term *Det Helhetlige Reiselivsprodukt* (The Complete Tourism Product), where the main elements are transport, accommodation, meal service, attractions/experiences and dissemination. Kamfjord (2001, p. 180) defines the complete tourism product as: *"A collection of available products, services and other benefits that satisfy the travelers' needs in relation to the temporary stays outside their permanent homes. The place of consumption is also included as a part of the product"*.

2.1 The Tourist

The tourists of today are experienced travelers who have been around the world and are seeking new experiences (Hall, 2003). The last decades there have been many different definitions of a tourist, but according to the United Nations and UNWTO (2008, p. 10): *"A visitor (domestic, inbound or outbound) is classified as a tourist (or overnight visitor), if his/her trip includes an overnight stay, or as a same-day visitor (or excursionist) otherwise"*.

2.2 Tourism Trends

The tourism industry is rapidly changing, which certainly affects the trends in the market. Because the relevance of each trend will vary from place to place, it is not said that every trend is crucial for all destinations or businesses. Globalization increases the competition between destinations, but as the trends say; tourists choose experiences before destinations, and this might be what destinations should focus on promoting. The tourists are

choosing from the top shelf, both on price and quality. Homo sapiens are now turned into “homo zappiens” according to Kairos Future (as cited in Innovation Norway, 2010). They are also hard to predict and act different in different situations, as their traveling is decided by their needs and not demography as before. It is therefore important to know more about the customers and adapt products to the tourists’ needs. The new travelers are becoming more professional and omnivorous, traveling both package tours and self-made tours.

Today’s travelers are constantly online, seeking and sharing information with others through social media. Kairos Future (as cited in Innovation Norway, 2010) argues that the travelers are getting an overload of information from all angles; relevant and tailor-made products and communication channels are therefore crucial to reach the target groups.

According to Kairos Future the amount of healthy elderly with economy and available spare time is increasing, and developing healthy products and quality experiences is a possible future gold mine. But not only elderly people are into this, young tourists, both women and men, are also focused on a healthy lifestyle and taking care of their body and mind. Further, tourists are increasingly interested in taking care of the environment; to ease their own conscience, though they want the same comfort as before and is not willing to pay more for these products yet. Environmental certification is a tool to use to please these tourists (Kairos Future, as cited in Innovation Norway, 2010).

2.3 International Tourism

The last decades, the tourism industry has developed rapidly, becoming one of the fastest growing economic sectors in the world. Economic growth, purchasing power and development, in addition to new tourism destinations, has contributed to this (Barros et al., 2011; UNWTO, 2011). The number of travelers worldwide increased from 25 million in 1950 to 806 million in 2005. In 2009 the export earnings generated by international tourism reached US\$ 852 billion. In 2010, UNWTO have forecast a 3-4% growth in international

tourist arrivals, and by 2020 the number of international arrivals will probably exceed 1.5 billion people (UNWTO, 2011).

2.4 Norwegian Tourism

The first tourists came to Norway in the early 1800s to seek out the Norwegian nature, and were British mountain hikers, fishermen and hunters. The hotels in the fjords and in the western part of Norway started to arise. After the Second World War, the tourism industry in Norway exploded, and until the beginning of the 1970's there was a profit in the country's tourism revenue (Store Norske Leksikon, 2011), i.e. more international tourists traveled to Norway and the Norwegians traveled more domestic than internationally. After the 70's there has been an insufficiency in the country's tourism revenue, possibly because of low-price fares and available exotic destinations. Today, we can see that this is changing as the amount of domestic traveling Norwegians is increasing (SSB, 2010a).

According to OECD (2010), studies show that tourists now travel to Norway to experience the Norwegian culture and way of living, unspoiled nature, and high environmental standards. Further, quietness, calmness, value for money, safety, well-being and hospitality are other factors to why tourists choose Norway as their destination.

SSB's (2010b) statistics show that 139,000 persons (normal man-year) in Norway are working in the tourism industry. Statistics from year 2004 show that the tourism industry in the country is twice as big as the agriculture, forestry and fishery industry altogether (Innovation Norway, 2004). The total tourism consumption in the year of 2008 were NOK 108 billion, where NOK 76 billion were consumed by Norwegian domestic travelers, whilst NOK 32 billion were consumed by international travelers. In 2009, NOK 235 million was granted from the state budget to market Norway as a tourism destination (OECD, 2010).

The total number of overnight stays in Norway in 2010 reached more than 28 million, a 1.8% increase from 2009. The distribution between Norwegian and international overnight

stays was clear; about 20.5 million overnight stays was made by Norwegians, whilst the number of international overnight stays almost reached 8 million (SSB, 2011a).

According to SSB (2011a), the tourism industry holds 3.3% of the gross national product (GNP) and about 6.3% of the total employment in the country.

Innovation Norway, a public owned company, is Norway's tourism organization. Innovation Norway's task is to promote Norway as an attractive destination both abroad and domestic, and cooperates with different ministries in order to promote a range of diverse tourism-related activities within the country (OECD, 2010). Below, the organizational chart of the tourism body in Norway is illustrated.

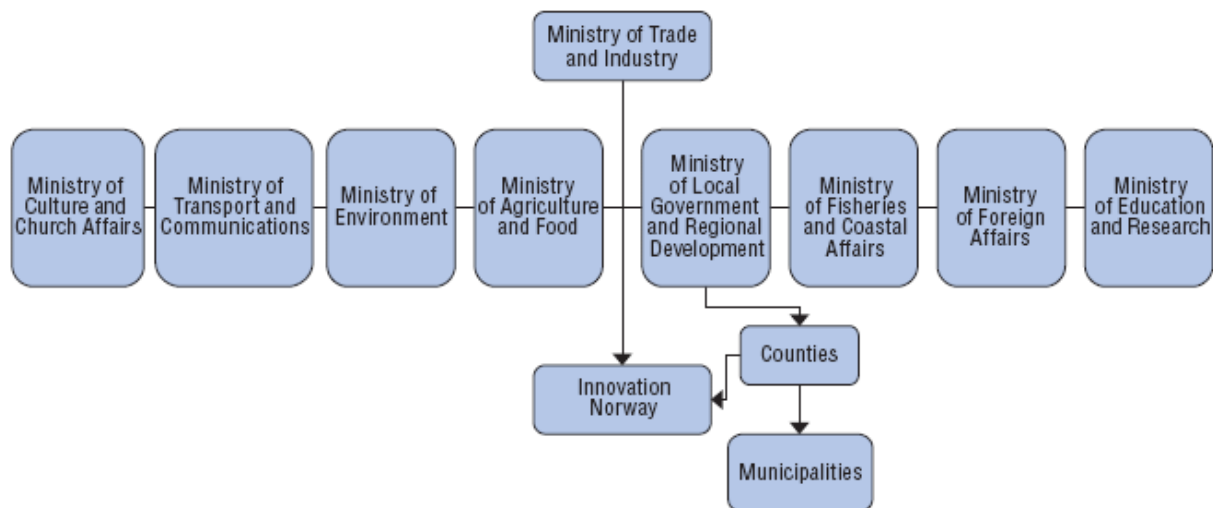


Figure 1: Organizational Chart of the Tourism Body in Norway (OECD, 2010, p. 228).

2.4.1 The Stavanger Region



Stavanger is the fourth largest city in Norway, with approximately 126,000 inhabitants, and is located in the Rogaland County where the population is about 436,000 (SSB, 2011b, 2011c). Alongside the great agriculture and petroleum industries, tourism is one of the largest and most important industries in the region. The beautiful nature in the area attracts tourists from all over the world, and is a good starting point when exploring the Fjord Norway area.

In the Stavanger region you can find several attractions such as The Norwegian Petroleum Museum, The Iron Age Farm and the lively bay area Vågen. The Stavanger region has a rich selection of cultural experiences, e.g. museums, architecture, buildings and monuments (Region Stavanger, 2011a). Accessible activities in the Stavanger region are hiking, sightseeing, shopping and sports activities, such as surfing, kiting and golf (Region Stavanger, 2011b).

Further, in the region you could experience well-known and large festivals and events through the whole year such as The Gladmat Food Festival, Rått & Råde Music Festival, the Maijazz festival, and the annual GrandSlam beach volleyball tournament (Region Stavanger, 2011c).

The number of overnight stays in the Stavanger region did almost reach 1.2 million in 2010. Of these, 900,000 stays were made by Norwegians, while nearly 300,000 were made by international travelers (Statistikknett, 2011a).

Stavanger is seen as the *oil capital* in Norway, due to the large amount of oil related businesses in the city. For instance, Statoil's corporate functions are located in Stavanger, in addition to the Norwegian Petroleum Directorate and the Petroleum Safety Authority (Hele Norge, 2011). This has consequently contributed to the high amount of business travelers in the region. Business travelers contributed to nearly 640,000 overnight stays in the Stavanger region's hotels in 2010, and in addition the MICE (Meeting, Incentive, Conference, Exhibition) market contributed with approximately 95,000 overnight stays. This shows the importance of the large market of business and MICE travelers in the Stavanger region, as it constitutes the main proportion of the hotel overnight stays in the region, compared to the 260,000 overnight stays made by the leisure travelers (Statistikknett, 2011c).

Because of the short distances between the attractions and activities, the region of Stavanger is seen as the region where everything is within reach, and referred to as the *ten-minute-region*.

2.4.2 The Ryfylke Region



Ryfylke is located between Stavanger and Haugesund in the Rogaland County and consists of the six municipalities Sauda, Suldal, Hjelmeland, Strand, Forsand and Finnøy. The total population in these six municipalities is nearly 27,000 (SSB, 2011c). Agriculture, aquaculture and tourism are important industries in Ryfylke, and also production of Christmas trees is growing in the area (Visit Norway, 2011a).

The Ryfylke region is offering a rich selection of nature based attractions, such as the Lysefjord, the Pulpit Rock and the Kjerag Mountain (Ryfylke, 2011a). In the area you can experience and choose from many activities, such as SPA-facilities, waterfalls, hunting and fishing, scenic roads, viewing points, as well as visit museums and galleries. In addition to being a summer destination, Ryfylke also offers activities in the winter season, such as alpine skiing facilities and cross-country skiing trails throughout the region (Ryfylke, 2011b, 2011c). From year 2011, the main thoroughfare in the region became a part of the National Tourist Routes. This route leads to many attractions and sights (Ryfylke, 2011a), as well as increasing the tourists' experiences and their understanding of the area's nature.

The number of overnight stays in the Ryfylke region in 2010 reached 215,000, with an almost even distribution of Norwegian and international travelers (Statistikknett, 2011a). Further, the hotel numbers indicates that nearly half of the total 80,000 overnight stays were related to the business market. This market contributed to almost 26,000 overnight stays, and the MICE market to approximately 13,000. The leisure market contributed to about 40,000 hotel overnight stays (Statistikknett, 2011c).

3. The Food Tourism Phenomena

In this chapter, food tourism theories will be discussed. First, by explaining the food tourism phenomena and identify the food tourist, as well as finally looking at the upcoming trends regarding food.

Hall and Mitchell (as cited in Hall et al., 2003, p. 10) define food tourism as: *“Visitation to primary and secondary food producers, food festivals, restaurants and specific locations for which food tasting and/or experiencing the attributes of specialist food production regions are the primary motivating factor for travel”*. According to Boyne, Hall and Williams (as cited in Hall, 2003) the fields tourism and food are being drawn together by academics at a theoretical level, by policy makers at a strategic level and is put into action by developers and practitioners.

One of the most important elements of the tourists' travel experience today is food, and food is also seen as an important component of cultural and heritage tourism. Food tourism also plays an important role when it comes to economic development, policy, identity, markets, consumers and lifestyles in a community (Hall et al., 2003). To illustrate the economic aspect of food tourism, Telfer and Wall (as cited in Kim, Eves & Scarles, 2009) argue that one-third of all tourist expenditures regarding a holiday are related to eating out; one can see the potential of a destination emphasizing the food element in their tourism product.

Hall et al. (2003), discuss that food tourism could include visiting a specific event (such as a food festival) or a built attraction (such as a local food producer). Food tourism demands that the tourist visits a location and consume, but on the other hand, due to its possibility to export, tourists can bring the food products back home. As Hall and Sharples (as cited in Hall et al., 2003, p. 10) say: *“Food tourism is quite literally the consumption of the local and the consumption and production of place”*. Further, Fields (as cited in Kim, Eves &

Scarles, 2009) says that the tourists are experiencing a new culture when tasting local cuisines.

Food tourism is seen as a great opportunity for rural destination development, as it increases the revenue and improves the employment of a place (Barcelona Field Studies Centre, 2011). According to Yeoman (2008), in a destination perspective, food tourism is the new culture capital, but the served food (fast or slow) must be of good quality.

3.1 The Food Tourist

Boyne, Hall and Williams (as cited in Hall, 2003) say that there is a lack of knowledge concerning how to understand the consumer's relationship to food in a tourism context. As mentioned before, the tourists of today are experienced travelers. They want unique and high-quality food experiences at a destination, and a cuisine that reflects the authenticity of a place (Hall, 2003). Tourists are seeking authentic and unique experiences and want to come closer to the host culture, which local food may contribute to (Plummer, Telfer, Hasimoto & Summers, 2005). MacDonald and Deneault (as cited in Plummer et al., 2005, p. 447) say that these tourists hope to: *"Immerse themselves in the culture they are visiting through authentic and engaging experiences with people, cuisine, wine and other cultural activities"*.

According to a research study conducted by The International Culinary Tourism Association (2010) where food traveler were surveyed, their behavior results showed that they support the global issues of buying locally produced seasonal products, are increasingly interested in organic food, are environmentally conscious and do not want to leave a high carbon footprint, as well as they want to eat healthy both at home and when travelling.

Food travelers are not homogenous. Several studies show that travelers who choose destinations based on culinary criteria, span genders, all age groups, and all ethnic groups. This highlights the importance of targeting marketing activities carefully in order to reach different market segments. The food travelers have two common characteristics; they have

higher income than other tourists and spend more money during their holidays (Yfactor, 2010). They also tend to spend a higher share of their income on eating out and food products. Some of the environmentally conscious food tourists are emphasizing the support of local businesses to avoid food and products that have been transported longer distances (Hall, 2003). The amount of tourists that want local, fresh and a high-quality cuisine in the destination is increasing, which helps preserve the agriculture, heritage and culture of a place.

Among several researchers, Refalo (as cited in Hall, 2003) has found that tourists want to experience and taste the region they are travelling to. Hall (2003) explains this by saying that culture plays an increasingly big part of tourism where food is a given element.

According to Godfrey and Clarke (as cited in Hjalager & Richards, 2002, pp. 41-42) destinations have different resources to meet the needs of their tourists. They have categorized these resources in two:

- *Principle resources* have the strongest pulling power, and are the main motivators for a tourist's travel decision.
- *Supporting resources* are a supplement to a destination's other resources but they are not prime motivators for choice of destination.

As Fields (as cited in Hjalager & Richards, 2002) mentions, food is viewed as a principle resource in some European countries, like France and Italy. In most other destinations, food is a supporting resource, even though it may be crucial for the destination.

Hudson (as cited in Hjalager & Richards, 2002) argues that there are two basic parts of a tourist's motivation, the *push* factor that make you want to travel and the *pull* factor which determines where you decide to go. Fields (as cited in Hjalager & Richards, 2002) argues that food can have both functions; people want to leave their daily food habits in search for new and exciting food experiences.

what Hall (2011) describes as *neophobics*, those afraid of trying new things and consequently avoiding it.

Rural and urban tourism

These tourists have a low involvement in food related activities when traveling. They have a low interest in food, and see it as an addition to their regular activities and something to do. This can for instance be activities such as visiting a food festival or a local brewery when staying in a destination. For the two latter mentioned food tourist types, food is only a subsidiary to their other interests.

Culinary tourism

This type of tourist is moderately interested in food, and is participating in food related activities when arriving in a destination. They seek out local markets, restaurants and festivals, all related to food. These tourists are more willing to try new things, as they see the opportunity to learn and experience something new.

Gastronomic tourism

The gastronomes have a high interest in food. Nearly all of their activities are food related, such as visiting a specific restaurant, food festival or market once they arrive in a destination. Further, these tourists can be described as *neophiles*, those interested in tasting new food and culture, as well as developing their knowledge.

Other researchers will rather look at food tourism in terms of motivation. For instance, McIntosh et al. has identified four categories of motivation, and Fields (as cited in Hjalager & Richards, 2002) has tried to explain how food fits into these.

Physical motivators

Our physical motivation is often related to a need, something that you are not achieving in your daily life, like total relaxation or exploring new food.

Cultural motivators

People travel to explore new cultures, which often includes food in some way. The authenticity of a destination is easier to spot through food experiences.

Interpersonal motivators

Most travels have some kind of social aspect, and the tourist's meals are increasing this. Several events based on food are encouraging people to socialize and get together regardless of knowing each other.

Status and prestige motivators

Eating in a Michelin star restaurant is for some people important as a status distinction drawer, as well as choosing the destination well known for its reputation as exclusivity. But to gain this status, people have to see or know that you have visited this restaurant or been at this destination.

3.1.1 The Food Allergic Tourist

An issue that is increasing and will continue to increase in the future is the food allergic tourist. Food intolerance and allergy in relations to food tourism has been paid very little attention to in the theory. The study has not been able to reveal any studies that discuss the area of food allergy in combination with food tourism, and have therefore seen the importance of highlighting this area. Below, the nature of food intolerance and allergy is discussed, before briefly explaining the relation to tourism and challenges it might cause.

The last decades, people focusing on their personal well-being are increasing, which also includes eating habits or diets. This focus has evolved the recent years, and some people are more conscious of what they eat. According to Arvid Flagestad (as cited in Valdres, 2009), the focus on health is becoming more important when planning a vacation and choosing destination. Other people, allergic to some kind of food need to be careful of what they eat, as it consequently might be fatal if they eat something they should not have had.

MedicineNet (2011) defines food allergy as: “...*an abnormal response to food that is triggered by a specific reaction in the immune system, and expressed by certain, often characteristic symptoms*”. Shortly, people might have intolerance/allergies towards different food groups, such as milk, egg, wheat, nuts or shellfish etc. According to The Norwegian Asthma and Allergy Association (2011), one out of four Norwegians says that they have some sort of food intolerance/allergy. From a US perspective, about 12 million of all Americans are afflicted with food allergies (The Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Network, 2010). According to the European Academy of Allergy and Clinical Immunology (2011), 17 million Europeans are allergic to some kind of food.

When traveling, especially to other countries, it might be difficult for people to know what they can eat in for instance a restaurant, often due to little detailed food menus. For instance, the Swedish Celiac Association has made a list of what people with celiac disease can eat and cannot eat, written in 41 different languages. In this way, misinterpretation between the food guest and the waiter and chef are avoided, and the people with food intolerances or allergies can feel safe when eating the food. This has also been done by other organizations regarding several other food intolerances and allergies to make it easier for people to travel and be secure. Further, this might lead to that people with food intolerance and allergies feel more secure to try new food dishes (Funkaportalen, 2011).

In Massachusetts, USA, a new state law has required restaurants to post a notice on their menu asking their guests if they have any food allergies. At least one of the restaurant managers must complete a training course in dealing with allergens. The local health inspectors will control the restaurants several times a year in order to ensure that the restaurants continue with the work (ABC News, 2010).

Due to the growing number of people with food intolerances and allergies, the tourism industry has become more aware of this growing group of tourists. For instance, the travel

bureau *ikultur* offers tailor made trips for people with food intolerances and allergies. They organize trips where allergic people, regardless of their food allergies, are able to eat gourmet food (*ikultur*, 2011).

3.2 Food Tourism Trends

Wagner (as cited in Hall, 2003) says that a growing trend within tourism is that tourists want to enjoy food of local or ethnic origin, as well as being interested in learning about the local cuisine. MacDonald (as cited in Hall, 2003) among others, have reported that gastronomical travels are on the increase, but destinations does not seem to take advantage of the seemingly large potential of food as a tourism resource.

At a food tourism seminar held in Drumshanbo, Ireland in 2006, several delegates shared their opinions regarding coming food tourism trends. The growingly wealthy populations are affecting the consumer's spending, and families are more democratic in food choice, which influence their preferences. Food generates a desire for new experiences and cultural capital. The future traveler wants to taste unique and authentic food when visiting a destination and food has become a social occasion to meet and connect with family and friends (*Hotel & Resort Insider*, 2011b).

Media, as well as celebrity chefs, are creating and increasing demands for specific food items, that otherwise may not have been popular in demand. Another media, the Internet will be a helpful tool for businesses to easily provide information about available food, offers, reviews, reservations and discounts in restaurants around the world. Media will also make it easier for the customer to find the information he is looking for. In addition, health conscious consumers want personalized and hygienic food products of high quality, which is a niche where the industry can charge a high price for the services. Yet in spite of an increase in healthy eating habits, the significance of organic food and an enthusiasm to check out local

produce the consumer seems to remain Hypochondriac at certain times (Hotel & Resort Insider, 2011b).

Below, the largest growing market groups within food tourism are listed (Barcelona Field Studies Centre, 2011).

- *DINKS*: Double Income No Kids;
 - *SINKS*: Single Income No Kids;
- (Both *Dinks* and *Sinks* are younger, wealthy people, between 25 and 35 years of age with no children)
- *Empty Nesters*: Couples whose children have left the family nest, who are between 45 and 55 of age, are well educated and have a high income;
 - *Boomers*: Members of the baby boom generation in the 1950s; and
 - *Divorcees*: Searching for new partners and will take prospective partners out for dinner and away for romantic weekends.

3.3 Sustainable Tourism Destinations

Today's environmentally concerned society wants to sustain the resources for the future, and make as little impact on the environment as possible. Especially, the last decade, travelers have become more aware of the environmental issues caused by traveling, such as aviation and other transportation. Below, sustainable tourism will be explained and discussed, and the contribution local food has to sustainable tourism destinations will be illustrated.

According to the World Tourism Organization (2001):

Sustainable tourism development meets the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunities for the future. It is envisaged as leading to management of all resources in such a way that economic, social and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity, and life support systems.

Further, according to Lee (2001, p. 313) sustainable tourism destinations is: *“An emerging term used in recognition schemes to promote sustainable development at destinations”*.

Handszuh (as cited in Hall, 2003) argues that destinations have the opportunity to strengthen their sustainability by utilizing local food. A local food initiative will contribute to enhance the destinations authenticity and the local economy, as well as providing for the environmentally-friendly infrastructure.

According to Telfer and Wall (as cited in Hall, 2003) the use of local food can contribute (directly or indirectly) to improve the sustainability in a destination by increase and support agriculture and food production, prevent authentic exploitation and strengthen destination attractiveness. Further it can create new jobs and encourage entrepreneurship, generate pride in the community and enhance brand identity.

Boyne, Hall and Williams (as cited in Hall, 2003) argue that development strategies on food tourism in rural areas often seek to generate benefits for both the tourism industry and the food businesses. The importance here is to enhance the link between these two fields, and Hjalager & Richards (2002) discuss the fact that both these industries are experiencing an increase in mass production which negatively impacts the small producers and providers. But as a solution to this problem the two industries have found potential in each other. The food is enhancing the tourism product while the tourists increase the producers market (Hjalager & Richards, 2002). From a UK perspective, Sims (2010) supports Hjalager and Richard's above mentioned study, by discussing the importation of cheap food from overseas and the increase of nationally and globally food chains, which make it difficult for small producers of local food to sell to tourists. Sims (2010) also discusses the importance of barriers concerning peoples' meanings, values and goals of local food. Interestingly, in Sims study, none of the local food producers or restaurateurs focused entirely on selling their products to tourists only.

Hall (2010) argues that one of the major issues in succeeding and taking advantage of the link between food and tourism is due to different activities that are done on governmental and local level. If there not is a common strategy, it could harm the whole industry.

3.4 Food Attractions and Destinations

Below, attraction theory will be discussed, and its importance in tourism destinations will be explained. Further, by giving concrete examples from other destinations the study will show how these have taken advantage of their resources and developed a food tourism initiative. Scotland, Sweden and Canada are well developed and growing food tourism destinations, while South Africa has a great potential to reach these destinations' level of success if they utilize their resources to their full potential. Finally, examples of successful Norwegian food initiatives and events will be emphasized.

A tourist attraction is defined by Harris and Howard (1996) as:

...a physical or cultural feature of a particular place that individual travelers or tourists perceive as capable of meeting one or more of their specific leisure-related needs.

Such features may be ambient in nature (e.g. climate, culture, vegetation or scenery), or they may be specific to a location, such as a theatre performance, a museum or a waterfall (p. 59).

According to Leiper (as cited in Botti, Peypoch & Solonandrasana, 2008), attractions can be distinguished between *primary*, *secondary* and *tertiary* attractions. Primary attractions are defined as attractions that play a significant role for tourists' choice of destination (Botti, Peypoch and Solonandrasana, 2008). Secondary attractions do not influence the choice of destination or where to travel, but according to Kamfjord (2001), secondary attractions might influence the travel route. He also claims that tertiary attractions are attractions that the tourist does not know about before visiting the destination.

Further, because people are different and make their own ranking of tourist attractions, attractions are being viewed in different ways (Botti, Peypoch and Solonandrasana, 2008). For instance, a Michelin star restaurant in Lyon could be the primary attraction for a gastronomic tourist, while it could be a tertiary attraction for other tourists who accidentally visited the restaurant because they were invited to join some friends.

Without any attractions it would be difficult to develop a tourism industry that benefits the place. In a tourism perspective, areas with major attractions have a competitive advantage over destinations that do not (Barros et al., 2011). Richards (2002) says that attractions often are the main reason why people travel to a specific destination, and according to Bessière (1998), an important element in tourist attractions is food.

As earlier mentioned, food is one of the most important elements of a tourist's travel experience today (e.g. du Rand & Heath, 2006). They seek new and authentic experiences, in addition to alternative forms of tourism. In order for destinations to attract travelers, they can take advantage of their local or regional cuisine by making it more available and known for the tourists.

3.4.1 The Food Destination Scotland

In a survey conducted by The International Culinary Tourism Association (ICTA) (2010), Scotland is ranked as the most prepared food destination in the world. The country has for a long time been marketed as *The Land of Food and Drink*, and according to The Scottish Government (2011) food from Scotland holds a positive image and reputation worldwide. The Scottish Tourist Board has in cooperation with local companies been using the quality of both local and regional food specialties to emphasize their destinations' attraction, as tourism is one of the key contributors to the Scottish economy. Scotland has set a goal to position themselves as one of top three producing nations of premium food and drink in the world, within 2017 (Scotland Food and Drink, 2010a).

According to Hall (2003), Scottish rural land-based businesses are encouraged to integrate with the tourism industry, as there is a need to improve the quality of the tourism in the country. The Scottish Executive (as cited in Hall, 2003) emphasizes the importance of the link between the two sectors in the Forward Strategy for Scottish Agriculture, to benefit the economy of the farmers and the infrastructure and services of Scotland's visitors.

The organization Visit Scotland has linked food and tourism in a lot of their promotional activities, both nationally and internationally. They have also established a quality assurance scheme for where to eat and drink in Scotland, where participants are classified and special gold and silver awards are given to exceptionally good members.



Figure 3: Eat Scotland Awards (Eat Scotland, 2011).

Since May 2010 to May 2011 Scotland has been celebrating *The Year of Food and Drink* with events all over the country. Initiated by the Scottish Government, this highlights the country's focus on food and drink, and is aimed both towards the Scots and the visitors.

The Isle of Arran Taste Trail

In the early 90's The Isle of Arran Taste Trail was established through a regional development initiative. Argyll & The Island's Enterprise wanted to found collaboration and promote those who produce, sell, as well as cook the food and raw materials from the Island of Arran. According to Hall (as cited in Hjalager & Richards, 2002), they also aim to promote Arran as a niche destination, focusing on the local catering and produce.

Some of the objectives they wanted to improve were (Hjalager & Richards, 2002) to strengthen the link between the food industry and the tourism sector, and educate visitors about the locally produce's quality, availability and use. In addition they wanted to enhance

the visitors' experience and promote the destination's available high-quality food, as well as encourage caterers and other food producers to make more use of their products.

A local enterprise company; Argyll & the Island's Enterprise (AIE), did the development work and implementing of the taste trail. Their local officer gathered local businesses and produced a guidebook with a focus on food and drink, with an equal focus on restaurants and producers. Boyne, Hall, and Williams (as cited in Hall, 2003) talks about a research where the purchasers of the guidebook was surveyed, conducted by the implementing company. The results revealed that the book had made people spend more money on meals consisting of local food, it had encouraged them to eat more out and influenced them to purchase more locally produce in the future, as well as the quality food was a listed as a reason for a prospective re-visit to the island. A survey of the participating businesses found that for some of them the guidebook helped to increase their turnover, profit and volume of produce. In addition each visiting customer spent more money on food, as well as the tourist season was extended because of increased interest about the island.

The Scottish Government (2009) is now working to develop an integrated food and tourism strategy, to increase the link and cooperation between these industry segments, as well as support successful food tourism activities. They have addressed several issues that their future success will depend on, such as innovation, collaboration, skills, scale and sustainability (Scotland Food and Drink, 2010b). These issues are all of great importance for the reputation of the land of food and drink.

3.4.2 The Food Destination Sweden

According to the Swedish Minister of Agriculture, Eskil Erlandsson, Sweden has a big potential in becoming a leading food destination in Europe. The Swedish government wants to develop the rural areas in the country because of the large potential of linking tourism and local food, which again most likely will increase the employment. They will grant SEK 31

million every year in order to improve the competitiveness of the Swedish food industry (Ministry of Rural Affairs, 2008), which possibly will indirectly influence and strengthen the food tourism.

To become the Europe's new food country, Sweden is highly focusing on five areas; public food, primary production, refined food, food tourism and restaurants. Concerning food tourism, the Swedish government has set some main goals (Ministry of Rural Affairs, 2010). They want to increase the number of tourists in rural areas, and consequently increase the number of overnight stays in rural areas with 20 percent within 2020. The Swedish government further wants to increase the tourists' knowledge about Swedish cuisine and raw materials, and how they produce them. Finally, they want that diversification should be an opportunity for businesses.

Further, other activities regarding food tourism that have been done since the first edition of the Swedish government's plan *Sweden – The New Food Country* in 2008, is e.g. investments in business premises and equipments, and study trips to learn how other destinations work to succeed regarding such as project management, networking and the slow-food concept. In addition Sweden will focus more on the link between nature tourism and food, and build on the importance of marketing game meat towards tourists. The Sami food culture is also an element that will be included in the project *Sweden – The New Food Country*. In 2008 and 2009 about SEK 62 million was granted to food tourism activities by the Swedish government (Ministry of Rural Affairs, 2010).

The Swedish government sees the importance of marketing this project. Together with a food expert group they communicate and market Sweden as a food destination in the web portal of Visit Sweden. By doing this they want to increase peoples' knowledge about the Swedish cuisine and meal tourism.

Moreover, 26 food ambassadors have been appointed to represent the counties, promoting the national food project and giving feed back to the government of actions and new ideas to improve the project. Annually there will be arranged a conference where initiators and other participants can meet and discuss the project (Ministry of Rural Affairs, 2010).

Gothenburg

“The traditions, seasons, the intimate restaurant life and not least the availability of raw materials of the highest quality” (Goteborg, 2011a), is what you hear about Gothenburg as a food city. In Gothenburg the focus on local food is high, and Bengt Linde, chairman of the Gothenburg Restaurant Association says that one of his main tasks is to develop a sustainable and strong cooperation and network between restaurants and local food producers in the local area of Gothenburg. He also emphasizes the importance of using local and natural raw materials when developing Gothenburg as a food city in the future (Goteborg, 2011b).

According to Linde, Gothenburg’s vision is that everybody who visits the city should get a culinary experience of the food; either it is working class food or fresh seafood. During the annual tourism exhibition in March, the attention is directed to the local food, in order to strengthen their food image. Together with the destination company Göteborg & Co, the city has developed an international cooperation with Barcelona and Chicago, where they share ideas and inspiration that might benefit the cities’ food development (Goteborg, 2011b).

The western part of Sweden is known for their local cuisine, and as a tool to highlight this, the project Västsvensk Mersmak was established in order to inform the tourists, and eventually increase the number of food tourists to the area. Västsvenska Tourist Association established the project in 2000, in order to develop the western part of Sweden’s cuisine, improve the cooperation between roadside restaurants and local producers, and enhance the

tourists' experience of the local cuisine. In 2010 there were twenty-five quality certified roadside restaurants in the western part of Sweden (Västsverige, 2011a).

In order to get the certification, the restaurants have to participate and complete an education program. The restaurants have to create a development plan for their business, and restaurant judges control the quality of their product every second year or more. When the restaurants have completed these three steps, they are certified and allowed to use the quality mark *Västsvensk Mersmak* to their benefit. This certification proves that the restaurant is of high quality, utilizes mostly local produced raw materials, and creates a unique meal experience (Västsverige, 2011b).

3.4.3 The Food Destination Canada

Canada has started incorporating food experiences into their national tourism product, in order to improve and strengthen their growing cultural tourism market. Because Canada is a large country, and their cuisine has been influenced by new flavors from immigrants, regional marketing is an important element of the food tourism development in the country (Telfer & Hasimoto, as cited in Hall et al., 2003).

Tastes of Niagara

Shortly, the *Tastes of Niagara* was developed in southern Ontario, Canada, and is one of the regions that have focused on the importance of local cuisine and food experiences (Telfer & Hasimoto, as cited in Hall et al., 2003). It is a non-profit strategic quality food alliance between food producers, processors, distributors, hotels, restaurants, wineries and chefs in the Niagara region, and this collaboration has improved the profile of the regional cuisine (Boyne & Hall, 2004). According to Plummer et al. (2005), the purpose of the alliance is to ensure high-quality products in the Niagara-based cuisine, and use local agricultural products in order to promote this. The Niagara region is also well known for being a part of

the fruit belt of Canada, producing products such as peaches, grapes, nectarines, kiwi and several vegetables (Telfer & Hasimoto, as cited in Hall et al., 2003).

There has been developed several food tourism routes in the area, such as *La Route des Saveurs* in Charlevoix and *The Gourmet Trail of First Island Tours* in British Columbia. For instance, the first mentioned food tourist route includes twenty-five producers and transformers, in addition to fifteen restaurants (La Route des Saveurs, 2011a, 2011b).

Further, there is a wide variety in food festivals and events in the region, such as the *SAQ Culinary Arts* of the Montreal Highlights Festival in Quebec and the Arctic Food Celebration in Nunavut (Plummer et al., 2005).

According to Telfer (as cited in Boyne & Hall, 2004, p. 84) the partnership in the Niagara region has given the local area several benefits, such as improved communication between members of the alliance and their customers. It has reduced economic leakages as a result of greater reliance on local food among food and beverage users. Further, smaller farm and non-farm businesses have been assisted to overcome barriers to direct marketing and to improve their competitiveness. Finally, exposing consumers to regional food and wine has stimulated new markets for local produce.

3.4.4 The Food Destination South Africa

According to the ICTA survey (2010) the least prepared food destination, but the one with the largest potential for growth, is South Africa. The country has nine provinces and 55 tourism regions, but even though they have a lot to offer of food resources, the potential is not exploited. According to du Rand and Heath (2006) the multicultural country has the opportunity to be among the best food tourism destinations, if their products are developed and marketed appropriately.

According to a South African research conducted by du Rand, Heath and Alberts (as cited in Hall, 2003), the destination seem to neglect promoting food if they do not have

sufficient funding available. The food product is not prioritized in terms of marketing, as the destination is of the opinion that food will be consumed regardless of being promoted.

Handszuh (as cited in Hall, 2003) argues that it is not only in South Africa where promoting of food tourism is lacking, and further claims that this is a global issue.

As World Tourism Organization (WTO) is regarding Africa as an undeveloped tourism market, and South Africa is still regarded as undiscovered (du Rand & Heath, 2006), it is reasonable to believe that the destination would benefit from including food tourism in their tourism marketing. Yoon (as cited in du Rand & Heath, 2006) argues that this could improve South Africa's economic and social benefits as well as their competitiveness as a sustainable tourism destination, in addition to provide the visitors with a better developed destination and more available attractions.

Food has received very little attention, despite its importance, in South African tourism promotional material according to du Rand and Heath's (2006) analysis. South Africa is best known for its nature based attractions, in addition to culture and outdoor activities. Food tourism should therefore be considered as a supportive attraction that may enhance the visitor's experience and South Africa's competitiveness as a tourism destination (du Rand & Heath, 2006). The researchers also argue that the country has the available agricultural resources and infrastructure that will make it possible to develop the food initiative. The results of the analysis du Rand and Heath (2006) conducted, show that the focus on food tourism in South African tourism promotion is lacking. The country needs to identify their food tourism products, as well as use the already well-established products (such as the wine routes) to complement the new products in their food tourism promoting. Establishing a framework to help organizations market and implement food tourism would benefit the different regions.

According to Elmont (as cited in Hall, 2003) for South Africa or other developing

countries initiating food tourism may contribute to generate more work places within the sector, as well as improving sustainability and competition. du Rand, Heath and Alberts (as cited in Hall, 2003), argue that South Africa is an emerging food destination and needs to learn from other best practices in the field to be able to grow and compete with leading food tourism destinations. On the other hand, they point on the fact that South Africa as well as other destinations must be careful when using food as a tourism attraction. By changing food traditions to suit the taste of the tourist one might risk to lose elements of a destination's authenticity, which could impact the sustainability.

3.4.5 The Food Destination Norway

First, the Norwegian government's actions and strategic plans to enhance the link between food and tourism, is discussed. Second, some of the existing and functioning food routes in Norway are illustrated to give examples of how this can be done.

At a national level, the Norwegian government has decided to increase the effort on developing areas concerning food and tourism. They want to strengthen the agriculture and food areas in Norway, and food tourism will be one way to promote this effort. State Secretary Ola T. Heggem raises the question on how to develop a policy focusing on the link between food and tourism that gather private participants, municipalities and counties, and make them work towards common goals, new tourism products and other offensive development steps (Regjeringen, 2010a).

The government in Norway has made strategies on how they want to develop especially rural areas in the future, because of its relevance to the tourism industry. They want to increase the focus on green tourism, and rural areas are a crucial element of this. In the Report to the Storting, they are focusing on the local cuisine in the rural areas that also might give new possibilities for the Norwegian agriculture (Regjeringen, 2010a).

As the Norwegian Minister of Agriculture and Food, Lars Peder Brekk, and Minister of Trade and Industry, Trond Giske, say: *“We have the best chefs and the best raw materials in the world, as well as the world’s most beautiful landscape”* (Regjeringen, 2011a). These two State Secretaries are now working with new documents regarding food and tourism in Norway, and they agree that it is important that these two fields must be coordinated. Brekk supports this by saying that the Norwegian tourism industry sells experiences, and that food is a crucial part of this. In order to improve, it is important that the recruitment to the tourism industry is good, and that new, high quality products are developed (Regjeringen, 2011a).

An effort to profile Norwegian food was done under the world’s biggest fair for food, agriculture and horticulture in Berlin, namely the Grüne Woche in January 2011, where Norway sent 20 chefs to promote the Norwegian food. In addition, during the Nordic World Ski Championship in Oslo in February/March 2011, the visitors, the press and the VIP-guests was served healthy Norwegian food, a project supported by the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, as well as the Ministry of Fisheries and Coastal Affairs (Oslo2011, 2011). Further, a project that is in progress is to offer high quality Norwegian food to train passengers on the popular Bergen Railway in order to get tourists to value the Norwegian food culture (Aftenbladet, 2011). Also, there are several projects that are implemented in order to strengthen the quality of the food along the road in Norway, such as the Ganefart project, Det Norske Måltid (Meal of the Year) and Food along the National Tourist Routes. The Ganefart project is collaboration between the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, the Norwegian Farmer Women’s Union and Innovation Norway, where they choose the best place to eat in Norway every second year. The two other projects will be described more in detail in a later chapter.

3.4.5.1 *De Historiske's Culinary Routes.*



De Historiske is a membership organization that contains a selection of 42 historic hotels and 19 restaurants in Norway. Many of them are focusing on using local ingredients from local suppliers, and this is something the organization wants to promote. *De Historiske* has worked out three culinary routes in Norway to show the visitors that our country has more to offer food wise than hot dogs and hamburgers (De Historiske, 2011a). The three culinary routes are:

- East to west or vice versa;
- From south to north, or the other way if you prefer; and
- With a flavor of coast and fjord.

As the tourists travel from east to west, or north to south, they will experience the variety of the Norwegian culinary art in hotels and restaurants due to variations in climate, weather conditions and landscape. The participants in the group have been handpicked to provide the visitors with Norwegian high-quality food experiences when travelling. The Norwegian seafood has gained popularity worldwide due to the high-quality fresh seafood the resources of the coast and fjords are able to provide (De Historiske, 2011b, 2011c, 2011d).

The hotels and restaurants in the culinary routes have been handpicked based on different criteria. The menu should be based on local ingredients and locally rooted dishes, as well as having a menu that changes through the seasons. All seafood must be traceable, and competent staff should present the menu with passion for their profession. The wine list

should complement the food menu, and a selection of Norwegian aquavit presented according to taste (De Historiske, 2011d).

3.4.5.2 *Mat Langs Nasjonale Turistveger.*



Nasjonale turistveger
National Tourist Routes in Norway

In the agricultural settlement in 2009 the establishment of the project *Mat Langs Nasjonale Turistveger* (Food along the National Tourist Routes) in Norway was passed. As Norway has a lot to offer as a food nation the idea is to contribute to the total experience of the attraction *National Tourist Routes in Norway* (Nasjonale Turistveger, 2010). Increasing the interest in Norwegian food, as well as enhancing what is offered to the tourists, can be done by promoting the locally produced raw materials, niche products, local food traditions and culinary art. The project aims towards an increased industry development and better available products, quality and service, related to food, tourism and experiences along the National Tourist Routes. In addition to this, the identity of the regions will most likely be strengthened, their reputation will be enhanced, and their income will increase (Nasjonale Turistveger, 2010).

According to the project leader Egil Ørjan Thorsen (Nasjonale Turistveger, 2010), local or regional based food, as well as a history, will contribute to strengthen a destination's reputation and identity. The project is striving to enhance and develop the food and tourism initiative in collaboration with the businesses along the road.

Along the National Tourist Routes there are several hidden food treasures, and food experiences related to activities, accommodation, farm restaurants, and local farm and food outlets, are now considered to be a part of the tourist's travel experience. The project is inviting businesses along the National Tourist Routes to participate in an industry cluster and work together towards common potential and challenges. This way the project group are

hoping to strengthen the total experience, enhance the high season as well as improving the shoulder season (Nasjonale Turistveger, 2010).

The first food route in the project was established in Sognefjellet mountain pass in 2009, where twelve eating establishments is collaborating and marketing themselves with local produced food. A well designed leaflet is developed for the food route (see Appendix Matbrosjyra for Sognefjellet), and gives an overview of the providing members (Sognefjellet, 2011).

3.4.5.3 Lokal Mat og Matkultur - DNT.



The project *Lokal Mat og Matkultur* (Local Food and Food Culture) in the Norwegian Trekking Association's Lodges is collaboration between The Norwegian Trekking Association (Den Norske Turistforening - DNT), Innovation Norway and The Ministry of Agriculture and Food. With this project they want to promote local food and food culture for the hiking visitors to their staffed lodges, as well as offering food experiences in their guided tours (Den Norske Turistforening, 2011). This way the hikers get the combination of nature, culture and a good food experience. The project increases the food supply at the lodges, and the offered food is based on local traditions and uniqueness of each lodge. The project contributes to increase the value of the raw materials as well as the demand for locally produces, which may also contribute to the development of new products and local innovation. Further it stimulates the lodge staff's urge for knowledge and increase the meaningfulness of their work. Finally, it increases the demand of the local products, to make local products easily available for tourists and others, not only in the lodges. This local food

project has received a lot of positive feedback from satisfied guests, which confirms that this was a step in the right direction towards meeting the needs and demands of the hikers (Den Norske Turistforening, 2011).

3.4.5.4 *Den Gyldne Omvei.*



Den Gyldne Omvei (The Golden Route) was established in Inderøy in the middle part of Norway, as a co-operative society with limited liability in 1998. The municipality selected 10 actors to join the project in the establishing phase of the cooperation. After a few years, the project faced some challenges, and they had to take action to survive. A big marketing initiative was taken, and they received financial contribution from Innovation Norway and the municipality. They promoted the cooperation heavily, achieved more visitors and are now reaching a larger market. This is also making it more difficult for the involved businesses as the visitors have higher expectations and demands. The participants of The Golden Route have several goals they want to achieve together, such as common marketing activities where the focus is the cultural landscape of the area, to become more visible as a tourist destination, and that cooperation is better than competition (Eva Wold, 2008).

The success has made the cooperation grow and it now consists of eighteen participants within tourism, restaurateurs, accommodation, art and handicrafts, local food, activities and attractions. The marketing is mainly implemented through their common web page, which has a lot of information on the actors, contact information, opening hours and a functioning interactive map (Den Gyldne Omvei, 2011).

The Golden Route is now meeting the demands of today's customers, as they have developed an application for mobile phones, selling electronic gift cards as well as increasing the focus on eco tourism in the area (Bondelaget, 2011).

3.4.5.5 *Mathallen Oslo.*



The development of *Mathallen Oslo* (Oslo Food Hall) is in the year of 2011 in progress, and it is estimated that the 3,800 square meter food hall will be finished within the fall of 2012 (Horecanytt, 2011a).

The meaning of the food hall establishment is to create a unique arena for both professionals and consumers, not only by promoting the Norwegian food, but food from all over the world. In addition to being a natural meeting place for food and drink festivals, banquets and competitions, the food hall in Oslo will be a center of education and research (Horecanytt, 2011a; Vulkan, 2011).

The coming food hall will be an important arena for the food initiatives in Norway, and become what Sverre Landmark, the marketing director of Aspelin Ramm, refers to as the “house of gastronomy”. The aim is to strengthen the product development, generate new producers, and the participants in the food hall will be depending on having commercial interest, as they will not receive any financial support from the government (Horecanytt, 2011a).

Harald Osa, a well-known Norwegian chef, and in the management of the foundation *Norsk Matkultur* (Norwegian Food Culture), is delighted about the forthcoming food hall in Oslo. He says that the food hall might become an exciting attraction, and enhance the link

between professionals as well as other people that have the same interest. Osa also argues the importance of enthusiastic professionals that promote local food (Horecanytt, 2011a).

3.4.5.6 Food Festivals in Norway.

There are many food and drink related festivals in Norway (Aktiv i Oslo, 2011). To illustrate the variety, some of the major food festivals in the country are described.

Den Norske Matfestivalen



In the middle of the 1980s, some farmers in the area of Ålesund, in the western part of Norway, wanted to highlight their good food products, and arranged a day of food. In the following years, this expanded to be *Den Norske Matfestivalen* (The Norwegian Food Festival) which is arranged annually. Today it consists of exhibitions, national championships regarding food, and food forums for producers. A unique characteristic of the festival is the positive collaboration between the different stakeholders, such as participants from the agriculture and aquaculture, the professional chefs and the tourism industry (Matfestivalen, 2011a).

According to the festival manager, Erling Østrem, the festival attracted approximately 70,000 visitors in 2010, and their budget for 2011 is NOK 3.4 million (E. Østrem, personal communication, May 29, 2011).

Matstreif

The food festival Matstreif was established in 2005, and is arranged annually in Oslo. The Ministry of Agriculture and Food has given Innovation Norway the responsibility to arrange the food festival, and from 2010, the Ministry of Fisheries and Coastal Affairs also take part in the arrangement phase. Today the festival has become a national food festival where raw materials and products from all over the country is being presented and promoted. The festival has an aim to become the leading food festival in the country, and in 2010, 150,000 people visited the festival (Regjeringen, 2010b; Salma, 2011).

Trøndersk Matfestival

Trøndersk Matfestival (Trøndersk Food Festival) in Trondheim was first arranged in 2005, and is an annual festival arranged by the organization *Oi! Trøndersk Mat og Drikke AS*. They refer to the festival as “*Norway’s largest venue for local food and specialties*” (Trøndersk Matfestival, 2011a). In 2010, more than 80 exhibitors from the area of Trøndelag participated in the festival, in addition to several well known professional chefs, such as Geir Skeie. They all presented and promoted local food from the Trøndelag area, and in 2011, the food festival is launching a festival paper in advance of the festival, giving exhibitors the chance to promote themselves and their products (Horecanytt, 2011b; Trøndersk Matfestival, 2011a, 2011b).

Visitors can buy local food, learn about the local food culture, taste different specialties, and participate in courses and activities. More than 100,000 people visited the festival in 2010, a new festival record (Trøndersk Matfestival, 2011a, 2011b).

According to the project manager, Brit Melting, the festival budget for 2011 is estimated to NOK 3.6 million (B. Melting, personal communication, June 1, 2011).

Bergen Matfestival



Bergen Matfestival (The Food Festival in Bergen), is collaboration between *Bønder i byd'n* (Peasants in the city) and *Sjømat for alle* (Seafood for everyone). The festival has a capacity of 100 exhibitors, and the criteria for producers to participate are that they produce their own products. The Bergen Food Festival's goal is to emphasize the link between the producers and the visitors. In the festival one will find the best local and organic food from farmers in the counties of Hordaland and Sogn og Fjordane. At the festival, producers will educate the visitors about their products (Fylkesmannen i Hordaland, 2011; Matfest, 2011; Visit Bergen, 2011).

In 2010, the number of visitors was about 75,000, and their budget for 2011 is estimated to NOK 1.9 million (G.N. Dahl, personal communication, June 7, 2011).

3.5 Food Tourism Branding

In this part, general branding theory will be discussed. Second, the importance of branding related to food tourism destinations, and how they might take advantage of it will be clarified.

According to Hall, Mitchell and Sharples (as cited in Hall et al., 2003) branding can be recognized at three different levels; national, regional and individual. Sims (2010) discusses

that food tourism may create products that could help the development process of a destination, such as branding of a place.

An increasing number of destinations have seen the importance of marketing themselves as food destinations, and differentiating from others is more important for destinations than ever. According to Cai (as cited in Lin, Pearson & Cai, 2011) destinations can use branding in order to create positive images of tourists' perceptions of a place. In order to form brand associations, Cai further claims that key elements of succeeding are e.g. brand name, logo and slogan. In addition, Hall (2010) highlights that the branding development must be understood in relation to the market they are trying to reach, if not they might fail.

Overall, the way the different destinations act in respect of branding depends on how the destination want to be perceived and recognized (Cai, Lin & Pearson, 2011). Both Aaker and Nandan (as cited in Lin, Pearson & Cai, 2011) argue that in order for a destination to become a successful brand it is essential that the brand message is well-organized and clearly conveyed. In addition, Aaker and Joachimsthaler (as cited in Lin, Pearson & Cai, 2011) further argue that a strong brand must create positive associations and be easily noticed and remembered.

Ooi (2004) argues that destination branding leads to cooperation between different parties in a destination, that work towards a common brand for the place. But some stakeholders do not want to cooperate, and would rather use the brand in their own way, which would make it difficult to realize a coherent brand. Jensen (2003) supports this by saying that a critical element is to obtain a common acceptance of regional brand concepts in the local societies in order to create brand credibility.

du Rand, Heath and Alberts (as cited in Hall, 2003) argue that the role of food tourism should not be underestimated in terms of destination marketing. There is a potential in utilizing food tourism as tool in marketing as well as incorporating it in regional promoting

activities. In several destinations food is a less exploited resource, and when it comes to promoting, the link between food and tourism should be seen as an opportunity to strengthen the brand of a destination. Most destinations have their own food specialty or tradition, which may be used to draw tourists as a supplement to the regular promotion as an attraction and pull-factor. Cai, Lin and Pearson (2011) mention that place-specific food can improve the development of a tourism destination brand, which is supported by Hjalager and Richards (2002) who are saying that food products with regional identity can help a destination differentiate from other destinations. Moreover, they argue that rural tourism destinations can improve their local economy by providing locally produced products for purchase and consumption by tourists (Hjalager & Richards, 2002).

Nield et al. (as cited in Lin, Pearson & Cai, 2011), among several researchers, emphasize the importance of using food in destination branding, as a tourist's experience of a destination can arise from food-related experiences at a place. Good food experiences might strengthen a tourist's total perception and experience of a destination, which again might lead to a re-visit and positive promotion in terms of word of mouth.

According to Cohen and Avieli (2004), eating establishments and restaurants have the potential to become tourist attractions and further develop the local cuisine. Local restaurants are crucial elements of the tourists' experience in a destination, as it influences his or her overall satisfaction. A restaurant's reputation may also strengthen or weaken a destination's identity, if the tourists have good or bad restaurant experiences it will be linked to their perception of the destination. Everett and Aitchison (as cited in Lin, Pearson & Cai, 2011) argue that food plays a significant role in destination identity. According to Crouch and Richie (as cited in du Rand & Heath, 2006), it is important to market the destination properly to make it more appealing and attractive. The proper marketing includes elements as product development, packaging, positioning and the promotion of the attraction.

Several destinations are using similar strategies regarding food tourism, which make it difficult to differentiate them from each other. Knowledge, relationship, reputation and people are four intangibles that are crucial when creating a regional development strategy concerning food and tourism (Hall et al., 2003). By exploring new food the tourists explore a part of the local culture, and by sharing this with the tourists, residents of a destination enhance the identity of place. The importance of taking the residents of a destination into consideration when making decisions that will affect them should not be underestimated.

Gursoy and Kendall (as cited in Cai, Gartner & Munar, 2009) suggest that the destination marketers take advantage of internal marketing to enlighten residents on which strategies and goals they want to obtain. The residents will then be the messengers, and the values and commitment to the brand will be delivered to the tourists. If the encounters between the residents and the tourists are friendly, it will contribute to the destination's image and positive promotion, which again will generate successful businesses and more facilities for the tourists.

3.6 Food Tourism Networks

In this chapter the importance of networks and cluster relationships in a food tourism destination will be explained and discussed. In addition, different food networks in Norway will be illustrated.

According to Hall et al. (2003, p. 37) networking: "*Refers to a wide range of co-operative behavior between otherwise competing organizations and between organizations linked through economic and social relationships and transactions*". In addition, including cluster relationship will help providing the social capital, which underlies regional development (Hall, 2010). Porter (as cited in Hall et al., 2003, p. 37) defines cluster as: "*A concentration of companies and industries in a geographic region that are interconnected by*

the markets they serve and the products they produce, as well as by the suppliers, trade associations and educational institutions with which they interact”.

Telfer (as cited in Hall et al., 2003) says that an important element of the wine and food tourism network development in the Niagara region in Canada is the cluster development.

Hall et al. (2003) argue that creating a direct relationship between producers and consumers is an alternative when creating a local network. This can be done by direct marketing, the use of local produce in restaurants, as well as purchasing at the farm. If the consumer is able to see where the produce is from, it will be a starting point for a long-term relationship marketing, which will gain the producer. Here there will be multiple sets of relationships working together in a network. This collaboration will be a foundation for branding and marketing, in addition to sharing knowledge, information, increased competence as well as research and development (see Figure 4).

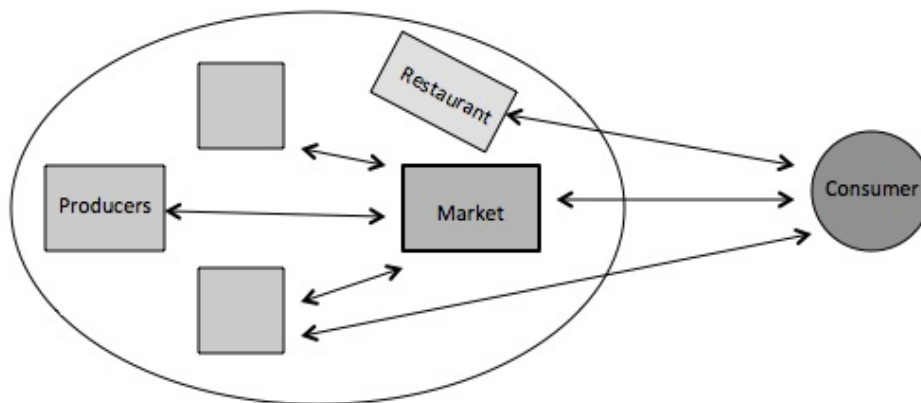
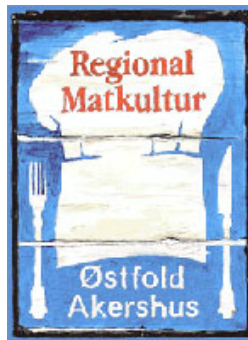


Figure 4: Supply Chain and Local Food System (Hall et al., 2003).

3.6.1 Food Tourism Networks in Norway

3.6.1.1 Regional Matkultur.



In the eastern part of Norway, the counties Østfold, Oslo and Akershus have been developing a network called *Regional Matkultur* consisting of nearly 90 participants within the food sector, including hotels, cafeterias, restaurants and niche producers such as farm outlets. The different actors have chosen to take advantage of local food and specialties. The network is a member of the European Network of Regional Culinary Heritage, a concept that has set a goal to promote regional and local food, and regional development of tourism (Norwegian Hospitality Association, 2010).

It has gone from being a project to become an organization. Their main objectives are to encourage increased volume and revenue, availability and visibility of local food in the food service industry. In addition, they focus on competence training in order to maintain a sustainable organization and network for the future that strengthens regional food as a brand. The food network has been supported by the County Agricultural Department and Innovation Norway in Oslo, Akershus and Østfold (Norwegian Hospitality Association, 2010).

3.6.1.2 *Arktisk Meny*.



Arktisk Meny (Arctic Menu) is a network consisting of 45 eating establishments, such as hotels and restaurants, in the northern part of Norway and Svalbard. They want to promote local raw materials, products and businesses, as well as to develop Norway as a tourism destination. Their goal is to offer the customers excellent raw materials in the menu, in addition to food culture and experiences (Arktisk Meny, 2011a).

All the eating establishments focus on local food and the best available seasonal raw materials, to increase the general knowledge of local ingredients and dishes. According to Visit Norway (2011c), typical local food temptations in the northern part of Norway consist of seafood, lamb, berries and vegetables, and game meat from reindeer and grouse. All the certified members of Arctic Menu have the network logo present in their eating establishment (Arktisk Meny, 2011a, Visit Norway, 2011c).

The network arranges several food related courses and events in the northern part of Norway, regarding topics such as preparation of seafood, dried fish and reindeer, in addition to contribute to the producers' product development and storytelling. They are also active participants in exhibitions as well as profiling and promoting events. The philosophy of the organization is that food is an important element of the travel (Arktisk Meny, 2011b, 2011c).

In their web page, you can find two practical and informative functions; presentations of each individual eating establishment and a map of where they are located.

3.6.1.3 *Smak av Kysten.*



The aim of the network *Smak av Kysten* (Taste the Coast) is to provide knowledge about the use of sea food, and encourage to an increased use of seafood by providing inhabitants, visitors and tourist with unique experiences related to seafood and coast culture. Further the project will contribute to develop a stronger collaboration of local coast based seafood, business development and cultural presentation. Throughout the project, the network has a goal for the members to increase their sales by minimum 5% (Smak Av Kysten, 2011a).

There are 43 members that constitute the food network. Knowledge development within the area of seafood is a strong element in the concept, and the eating establishments have been educated through a competence program in order to offer their guests the best sea food experiences. In order for the members to use the quality label of Taste the Coast, they have to focus on quality, season, nutrition, menu development as well as storytelling. The members of *Smak av Kysten* will offer a broad aspect of different types of seafood, and primarily represent the Norwegian coast (Smak Av Kysten, 2011b).

3.7 *How to Become a Successful Food Tourism Destination*

Hall (2003, 2011) says that a destination should be careful copying other destinations' strategies and plans in order to succeed with their food tourism initiatives. Every destination is individual and must focus on their own strengths, but there might be common guidelines of how to develop a food destination.

Food tourism involves many actors on a local level, who need to share networks and communicate effectively. Local cultural and business organizations should also be considered as partners. A strong leadership on top of these partnerships is important to maintain and

develop the food initiative's goal and identity, as well as keeping up the communication among the contributors. Long-term investment resources and financial support is essential, as most food tourism destinations need time to develop and eventually become a success. Partnering with government organizations on a national level may provide financial resources that are crucial for succeeding as a food destination (Yfactor, 2010).

Including the food tourism in the tourism strategy plan of a community, will benefit the already established tourism product in a destination, and help integrate the project or initiative. Promotion of one will benefit the other. It is important that the food tourism initiatives are unique to the region, and that the tourist has an experience that he could not have had at home. A destination can for instance take advantage of its distinctiveness by promoting and utilizing its local food specialties or production techniques that you cannot find elsewhere (Yfactor, 2010).

Instead of copying other food destinations' success recipes it is better to focus on the uniqueness of your destination. What has been done in other destinations in others times, might not necessary be successful at your destination (Hall, 2003, 2011).

A destination focusing on food tourism cannot succeed without collaboration, which some see as a success factor for a destination. Collaboration between several organizations within the supply chain is often provided with a leadership from a tourism or economy development organization (Yfactor, 2010). An essential element in building a network is to establish and maintain a website of high quality, both in design and functionality. As food tourists are more likely than other tourists to plan their travels and research their destinations online; having a good and maintained website is essential when promoting a food destination. The website should be a niche site with its own distinct appeal, but also focus on keeping the values and identity of the destination brand. It is important that the website and hyperlinks are maintained and is up to date at all times. The website should make it easy for the travelers to

choose products based on their own preferences, in addition to a map solution where travelers can plot in their own itinerary or get suggestions to interesting routes based on their preferences. Having a forum option or taking advantage of social media, where travelers may choose to be interactive and communicate with providers or share experiences and pictures with other travelers, is also of great potential (Yfactor, 2010).

3.8 Advantages and Disadvantages of Food Tourism

There are both advantages and disadvantages related to the development of food tourism at a destination. This concern issues at a food business level and in relation to the contribution of food tourism at a destination. Local and regional food should not be ignored in tourism marketing, and not be seen as trivial. Food tourism in general adds value to agricultural products, and provides a theme to build up attractions. It also utilizes culture of foods as a food related event, incorporates food into mega events, and in addition enhances the local identity for destination marketing and development (du Rand & Heath, 2006).

Hall (2011) has pointed out several advantages and disadvantages at a food business level. He says that advantages at a food business level might be that businesses expose themselves for consumers, create customer relationships and loyalty, and further brand awareness at multiple scales. In addition the businesses will enhance their margins, and thereby they are able to develop, and for instance establish additional sales outlets. Because of their development they will improve their knowledge regarding the market, products and consumers. Additionally they will get new sales opportunities via direct sales and/or new business-to-business relationships, e.g. from farmers to restaurants and food vendors.

Some disadvantages regarding food businesses and increased costs are also mentioned. Hall (2011) says that capital requirement and management time will probably challenge some of the food businesses. He also argues that food businesses, as many of them do not have the best location and accessibility, will struggle to increase their sales significantly. Opportunity

costs, seasonality issues and bio security risks may weaken the food businesses, and if they are struggling, they must ask themselves if they are dealing with the right market.

Hall (2011) further discusses the advantages of food tourism regarding contribution to a destination. If connected to local food, food tourism is a differentiated product. Hall mentions that destinations can be associated with quality products and attractions. This may contribute to strengthen the regional brand values of food, as well as improving the promotion of the destination and the region. Further, developing the food tourism initiatives in a destination may contribute to increase the visitors' expenditure on local products, and make them stay longer in the area.

According to Hall (2011), a disadvantage regarding contribution to a destination is that focusing too much on food and tourism connections may mean that other opportunities in the area are not explored or the market's perception of a region is not properly understood.

4. Research Method

Scientific method and empirical research has the intention of providing knowledge and is a practical recipe to how research is being conducted. According to Jacobsen (2005) the collected empirical data needs to be valid and relevant, as well as reliable and trustworthy. The choice of research design depends on the problem statement of the research, and what the researchers want to investigate. A *qualitative* method is used when it is desirable to map varying descriptions of how people understand and interpret a situation, as well as when you have an ambiguous problem statement and need to analyze more. A *quantitative* method design is convenient if the researchers want to describe the extent or frequency of a phenomenon or to investigate several units to be able to generalize to a larger population (Jacobsen, 2005).

4.1 Method and Design

The research started with a wide and undefined problem statement that aimed to look at the condition of the Stavanger region as a food tourism destination. Due to the researchers limited knowledge of food tourism it was appropriate to choose a qualitative and exploratory design, as the study aimed to achieve an overall understanding of the phenomena and its position in the region. The use of a quantitative method might have limited the interviewees' answers (Jacobsen, 2005), and valuable information might have been lost. Patton (1990) explains the exploratory design like this: *"In new fields of study where little work has been done, few definitive hypotheses exist, and little is known about the nature of the phenomenon, qualitative inquiry is a reasonable beginning point for research"* (p. 13). The qualitative method would provide in-depth knowledge about an issue that the researchers did not know much about and provide detailed information from the limited sample (Jacobsen, 2005).

Utilizing the flexible exploratory design enabled the researchers to change the problem statement along the process, and adjust it gradually as they were gaining insight

(Forskningsetiske Komiteer, 2010). During the ongoing learning process, a characteristic of the exploratory design, it became clearer what the study would give in terms of knowledge, and the problem statement was determined. The study is aiming to map out what the Stavanger and Ryfylke regions has to offer food wise, what they are lacking in terms of organization and products, and what can be done to develop and improve the regions as food destinations.

4.2 Sample

Marshall (1996, p. 523) argues that: “*An appropriate sample size for a qualitative study is one that adequately answers the research question*”, and claims that the choice of sample is an important step in any research projects and that in qualitative studies, samples sizes tend to be small.

The researchers found it appropriate to utilize a purposeful sampling as it “*is directed at a particular purpose the researchers might have to examine certain qualities in a group of people*” (Lapan & Quartaroli, 2009, p. 90). In addition it was convenient to use a snowball sampling technique in the study, due to be able to find the most relevant sources of information. According to Neuman (2009), the snowball technique could also be known as network, chain-referral or reputational sampling, and he describes snowball sampling as a multistage technique; used to obtain the participation of already existing networks.

In the snowball sampling process, the researchers received several names of potential interviewees, and purposefully selected their sample from the relevance to answer the research questions. The interviewees were chosen based on the quality they brought to the study.

Professor Reidar Mykletun, expert in the field and supervisor of the research, provided the first respondent to the research. The other interviewees were either chosen on information from other respondents or as a result of the secondary research. Altogether, eight respondents

were interviewed in the period from January till June 2011. All the interviewees are professionals within the field of the food and tourism industries, as well as interviewees from both the Stavanger and Ryfylke regions are represented. To obtain an overall picture of the phenomena, professionals from different positions and sectors within the food and tourism industry were chosen. Below, the eight interviewees will be listed.

- Eivind Hålien – former manager of NCE Culinology and Fagforum For Mat og Drikke.
- Tor Øyvind Skeiseid – general manager of Ryfylke Livsgnist and manager of the Tomato Festival in Finnøy.
- Tone Gustafsson – opportunity manager in Greater Stavanger and the food network Délice’s contact person in Stavanger.
- Arne Hatløy – chef and manager of the adventure company Matsafari.
- Gunhild Vevik – temporary appointed general manager in the destination company Region Stavanger.
- Sigve Skretting – former manager of the Gladmat food festival.
- Vidar Skjæraberg – chef in Jæren Hotel.
- Frode Selvaag – chef and establisher of Ryfylkekokken AS

4.3 Data Collection

The research has utilized both primary and secondary data collection. The researchers themselves collect the primary data, and secondary data is data collected by others, often for other purposes. In this study it was appropriate to use interviews to collect the primary data, based on that interviews are most suitable for small samples, and that it was interesting to know what opinion the individuals hold, as well as how these individuals interpret and consider a phenomenon (Jacobsen, 2005).

An interview might be structured in four approaches, from unstructured, to structured

with set answers. Semi-structured interviews were found to be most appropriate for the research, in the light of not having a clear problem statement in the start of the research process. The researchers had only prepared topics of interest in advance of the interviews as it was interesting to have an open conversation and get to know as much as possible of the interviewee's experiences and thoughts of the different topics. The researchers did not write down the exact questions, but based the interviews on the main topics that they wanted to know more about. This way, the researchers did not influence the interviewees' answers, something that might occur when having a more structured interview, which also might lead to limited information and that the researchers find out only what they want to find out. A semi-structured interview is open to new topics of interest and unexpected information (Jacobsen, 2005).

In-depth interviews are time-consuming, but useful for exploring different experiences, and offer a partial understanding of what people do and think. These interviews are verbal, and often tend to be informal, face-to-face conversations (Longhurst, 2009). The in-depth interviews were chosen to give the interviewees the opportunity to express themselves with their own words, without being influenced in any way.

Six of the interviews were conducted in the interviewees' offices, one was conducted in the University building and the last one was carried out in a local eating establishment. Both the researchers were present throughout all the interviews. The interviews were fully recorded with a digital audio recorder and lasted between 30 minutes to 1 hour, 15 minutes.

The interviews were based on four main topics; networking, marketing, attractions and the link between food and tourism. The sub-topics and follow-up questions were adjusted to the respective interviews, regarding the interviewees' professional background and whether they were connected to the Stavanger or Ryfylke region.

4.4 Data Analysis

According to Wolcott (1994) qualitative data analysis is done through three phases; description, analyze and interpretation. The first phase was mainly about giving a detailed and thorough description of the collected data. The researchers heard through the digital recorded interviews, and transcribed only the relevant information given by the respondents. The irrelevant information given in the interviews were left out. This was a time-consuming process, but the researchers did already in this phase see similarities between the interviewees' responses. In the second phase, the researchers went through and analyzed the transcribed interviews, and put the material into relevant categories. Since the interviewees have different backgrounds, some of their opinions were hard to categorize, and the researchers have spent a lot of time finding appropriate and logical terms for the categories. In the third and final phase, the findings have been bound together. The researchers have interpreted the material, and localized similarities and dissimilarities between the interviewees' opinions and experiences.

4.5 Validity and Reliability

According to Reve (1985) validity indicates if the researcher is measuring what he had the intention to measure. To increase the validity of the research, the entire research paper will be e-mailed to all the interviewees when completed. The researchers have documented their interpretation of the material by using quotes from the respondents in the results. In addition, the validity is strengthened due to the fact that two persons have conducted the research and interpretation. They have spent numerous hours of reading background material, to get a better understanding of the idea of food tourism.

A research's reliability is depending on how trustworthy the collected data is, and if this information agrees with the actual conditions (Jacobsen, 2005). To increase the reliability of the research both primary and secondary data have been utilized, by self-collecting data, as

well as using statistics and interpretation of other's previously collected material. According to Jacobsen (2005) comparing these two might be used to control and strengthen the research.

All the interviews have been conducted by two researchers, who also have aimed not to influence the interviewees in any way, and the interviews have been digitally recorded. These three factors are contributing to increase the reliability of the research. In addition, the researchers have only had eight interviews to conduct and analyze, and have therefore been able to make in-depth interpretations of them, and thereby reveal the proper information to answer the research questions.

4.6 Limitations

As all other research projects, this study has had some limitations. The sample was purposefully chosen aiming to enlighten the different angles of the phenomena, and the result of the research might therefore have been different if other interviewees had been chosen.

The sample size of eight respondents is too small to generalize, but this was not the intention of the research. The interview process was time-consuming, as with the transcribing, interpretation and analyzing of the collected data. A larger sample size might have led to insuperable amount of material to analyze.

All the interviews were conducted in Norwegian, and then transcribed, interpreted and translated into English. As English is none of the researchers' first language it might be that explanations or interpretations have been translated wrongly and thereby given a different meaning.

5. Food Tourism in the Food County

First, an introduction of *Matfylket Rogaland* (The Food County Rogaland) will be given, before the food aspect in the two destinations Stavanger and Ryfylke will be clarified.

In a Norwegian context, Rogaland is a large provider/producer of food, and is considered the leading food county in Norway (Rogaland Landbrukssekskap et al., 2002). There are about 20,000 working places in the food industrial sector in Rogaland (Fagforum for Mat og Drikke, 2011d). The County Governor, the Agricultural Department, the Farmers' Wife's Union, several museums, food festivals and restaurateurs have worked together to create and develop what now is known as the Food County Rogaland.

According to Eivind Hålien, former manager of NCE Culinology, the term Food County Rogaland was originally used in a newspaper article, but has become a term the whole county is utilizing (E. Hålien, personal communication, January 21, 2011). He says that it has never been branded, but it is a term that everyone uses. Both the farmer and the tourist host can identify with being a part of Rogaland and a part of the food focus, and Hålien points at the importance of this. Hålien claims that tourism in the Food County Rogaland is a wide term, and defining it is extremely hard. From food festivals to restaurants, research and food at a gastronomical level, to small-scale local food producers that are depending on tourism to survive financially (E. Hålien, personal communication, January 21, 2011).

The Food County Rogaland project was established to take care of the strategic regulations regarding profiling, tourism and culture in the larger project; *MåltidsARENA*. Their vision was to offer Norway's best food experiences, through profiling and development, as well as increasing the consciousness and knowledge of the Food County Rogaland. The target group was covering everyone from international tourists to the local inhabitants, and from eating establishments to local industry (Fylkesmannen i Rogaland, 2006).

The web page *www.opplevmatfylket.no* has been the only attempt to gather the different actors, but according to Hålien this is a dismantled project. When you visit the web page now, you are being redirected to *www.visitrogaland.no/Opplev-Matfylket-Rogaland/* where you still can find some information of the *Rogaland Cuisine*. Hålien adds that the selection of projects and areas to be emphasized are depending on the leaders and project managers in the tourism industry. He concludes that a leadership change may contribute to slow down or obstruct commenced projects (E. Hålien, personal communication, January 21, 2011).

The involvement and interest in food and its quality is huge in the region (Rogaland Landbrukssekselskap et al., 2002). Rogaland has a well established environment of expertise within gastronomy, research, agriculture and industry which has resulted in the large focus on food that exists today. In addition, the climatic environment in the county contributes to the good growing conditions (Fagforum for Mat og Drikke, 2011d).

The Rogaland County Municipality expects Rogaland to be the leading food county in Norway, and that the general food production should lead to a sustainable development of the society (Rogaland Fylkeskommune, 2010). In their regional plan, Rogaland County Municipality has emphasized the importance of a sustainable development of the area, especially regarding the rural area tourism and farm tourism. They have not explained in detail what and how they want to develop the link between local food and tourism, just arguing that locally produced food is an important element regarding authenticity (Rogaland Fylkeskommune, 2010). To summarize, they are saying that they want the total food production in Rogaland to increase, and that they want to encourage to an increased focus on environmentally issues and organic food production in the region, preferably combined with tourism.

Sigve Skretting, former manager of the Gladmat Food Festival, says that the Gladmat Food Festival has been important regarding the development of the Food County Rogaland: *“I might be incompetent saying this, but we have conducted several measurements which indicates that the Gladmat Food Festival has had a large impact on the Food County Rogaland; people feel like owners and are proud to live here”* (S. Skretting, personal communication, May 27, 2011). He further argues that the Food County Rogaland has several challenges, but claims that the Gladmat Food Festival has contributed to improve the conditions. Skretting believes that Rogaland has contributed to improve Norway as a food destination, especially because of the Gladmat Food Festival, the Culinary Institute, the former Professional Forum for Food and Drink (Fagforum for Mat og Drikke) and Måltidets Hus.

Skretting argues that the strength of the region is the capability to cooperate at a professional level. He claims that especially the public sector (such as the municipalities, the county governor and companies like Greater Stavanger) has a unique ability to cooperate in all directions: *“I hear about projects in other regions of Norway that are facing major bureaucratic problems. But in this region, we do not talk to Innovation Norway as an institution; we have personal relations with their employees at a professional level”* (S. Skretting, personal communication, May 27, 2011).

The famous Norwegian chef, Eyvind Hellstrøm, holds the opinion that Rogaland is Norway's food county, oriented of their regional specialties. Hellstrøm says that it is the climatic condition, together with enthusiasm and pride, which makes Rogaland this good. He compares it to the Swedish region Skåne, where local food production and gastronomy goes hand in hand (Aftenposten, 2009).

Several actors in the food industry have the recent year tried to find a food expression for the Food County Rogaland to be used in profiling and communication to more easily sell

the Food County Rogaland. Harald Osa argues that other counties envy Rogaland would like to learn how to do it. He believes that Rogaland is the leading food county in Norway, but admits that they not able to communicate it properly. Osa mentions that the Gladmat Food Festival is the only actor that has succeeded with their profiling, and that Rogaland need to promote Måltidets Hus, the Norwegian School of Hotel Management, the Culinary Institute, as well as the best restaurant city in Norway (Rosenkilden, 2010).

5.1 Food Tourism in the Stavanger Region

Below, the reader will be taken through Stavanger as a food destination, and given an explanation of what the destination is offering of local food produce, what characterizes the food tourist in the region, as well as given an overview of the region's eating establishments and food attractions. Finally, it will be explained how the different food networks and the marketing in the region is organized.

Stavanger has long been known for its food industry, which was the first major industry in the city. In the beginning of the 1900s Stavanger's industry was mainly fishery and shipping, and the city was also known for its canned food in the start of this century. In the 50s there were more than 50 canneries in the city, and Stavanger was called the capital of cannery food in Norway. The last of the cannery factories was dismantled in 2002. Arne Hatløy in Matsafari says that Stavanger has been international for a long time, and would not have been a city if it were not for the food, or for the herring: *"Before the herring period, the number of inhabitants in Stavanger was barely 2000, and that is not longer than 200 years ago"* (personal communication, May 5, 2011). Matsafari's guests from the oil industry often talk about the *oil city* Stavanger, but Hatløy points out *"Food made it from a village to a town, you came later on and made it into a city"* (personal communication, May 5, 2011).

According to the travel journalist Yngve Ekern in Aftenposten (2008), the chairman of the conglomerate *Herlige Restauranter*, Arne Joakimsen, expressed that the oil industry has

resulted in great numbers of American and French business people that make demands to the food they are served in Stavanger. Hålien support this by mentioning that the oil industry has brought these high demanding customers to Stavanger, but as they are willing to pay, it makes the providers able to increase the price (E. Hålien, personal communication, January 21, 2011). The herring and the cannery industries have resulted in a city with a lot of international impulses, and the big variety of cafés and restaurants in Stavanger reflects this. Hatløy (personal communication, May 5, 2011) wants to encourage producers to use this international melting pot, take advantage of the local raw materials, and be creative.

Sigve Skretting argues that when Harald Osa returned to Stavanger after his education abroad, things started to happen. He says that: "*We got our first high quality restaurant, and Harald and Lauritz Hansen participated in the National Team of Chefs*". After this, the Professional Forum for Food and Drink was established, with 130 members, where the aim of the organization was to see if they could benefit from such a network (S. Skretting, personal communication, May 27, 2011).

Eivind Hålien (personal communication, January 21, 2011) claims that: "*Every city with respect for itself has a clear focus on food, and every city needs to find its own identity*", and explains that the restaurants in Stavanger are much better at collaborating than the restaurants in Oslo. He believes this is due to the good professional environment and the Norwegian Hotel School of Management, which both attract competent people. Stavanger has taken the position as a food city, but according to Hålien they still have a lot to improve.

Arne Hatløy in Matsafari (personal communication, May 5, 2011) argues that many hotels in the Stavanger region must acknowledge that they are not the only actor in the tourism industry: "*I have talked to several hotels, and they say that if they are able to make the guests stay in the hotel during their stay in Stavanger, they have done their job*". By saying this, Hatløy claims that the guests are not able to experience Stavanger with all its

attractions, which might harm the city as a tourism destination in the long run. Showing business travelers or others what the region has to offer, might contribute to revisits, often with their family or friends. On the other hand, Hatløy claims that some hotels are more focused on this than ever, and are slowly integrating activities into their business concept. According to Hatløy (personal communication, May 5, 2011), food related activities such as a guided trip to *Miljøgartneriet* might increase the tourists' experience, which again might benefit the Stavanger region as a food destination.

Eivind Hålien (personal communication, January 21, 2011) believes that Stavanger has elements that are important for a food city, for instance the Norwegian School of Hotel Management, the available competent workforce within the restaurant industry, as well as the Culinary Institute's unique professional milieu.

According to Arne Hatløy, the Stavanger region has food traditions, but no concrete specialty associated with the city compared to what other destinations have (A. Hatløy, personal communication, May 5, 2011). On the other hand, Sigve Skretting is of the opinion that Stavanger does not need specific food products to develop and strengthen their identity as a food destination: *"I believe that Stavanger's food identity is the Gladmat Food Festival. That is what Stavanger is known for, and especially in the summer season the festival is mentioned every week in national media"* (S. Skretting, personal communication, May 27, 2011).

Tone Gustafsson in Greater Stavanger says that there is a large potential in utilizing the link between food and tourism in the Stavanger region. Gustafsson believes that the County Municipality and Stavanger Municipality have seen the importance of marketing Stavanger through international networks in order to improve. She claims that Stavanger has something to learn from other food destinations, but also that Stavanger has something to teach others (T. Gustafsson, personal communication, April 12, 2011).

5.1.1 Food Produce in the Stavanger Region

Stavanger is seen as the most important food producing region in Norway, and this is where one of the world's largest fish farming cluster has its base (Délice, 2011b). The area of Jæren is Norway's most important producer of meat products, dairy produce and vegetables (iRogaland, 2011). Further, the Stavanger region is regarded as Norway's largest *open air pantry* (Délice, 2011b).

The Stavanger region is producing several meat products, such as pork, lamb, beef and calf. In addition, there is production of chicken in the region. Further you will find several farms with cellar door outlets, offering locally produced food such as egg, fruits (e.g. tomatoes, apples, pears, cherries and plums), vegetables (e.g. potato, carrots, broccoli, cauliflower, cucumber and cabbage), berries (e.g. strawberries and raspberries), jam, honey and pumpkin (Finn God Mat, 2008). A certified organic farm is located in Ullandhaug in Stavanger, where they grow different kinds of grain, potato and beet. In addition, they have a farm outlet where they sell local and ecological food products (Ullandhaug Økologiske Gård, 2011a, 2011b). Arne Hatløy (personal communication, May 5, 2011) argues: *"The region is characterized by the degree of innovation, something that is much stronger here compared to other regions"*. He further claims that Stavanger has many good small-scale producers that might benefit from taking part of the tourism industry.

Gunhild Vevik, the temporary appointed general manager of Region Stavanger, argues that it is a challenge to get the small-scale producers to join the organization, as there is a cost involved with it. If the actors are in a bad financial situation, they will not prioritize such expenses. On the other hand, Vevik claims that some of the small producers have seen the advantage of joining the network. They want to be visible in the MICE market and benefit from the networking, both internally and externally among the member businesses. A challenge for the destination company have been that the farmers and small-scale producers

have been involved in other networks like Hanen, and do not have resources to join them (G. Vevik, personal communication, May 19, 2011).

Vevik also raises the question on how to connect the tourism industry with the food industry. Region Stavanger also has a challenge to make the small-scale actors see the advantages of joining the organization, as many of the actors do not see that Region Stavanger's activities may impact the number of visitors. Vevik adds that the members are engaged to a different extent, but those who are a bit involved in the destination company's activities get enough information and a good opportunity to strengthen their message. According to Vevik the small-scale producers are not being sufficiently promoted, as no one has accepted the responsibility for this. A way to improve this could, according to Vevik, be to open an outlet in Stavanger where the small producers can show and sell their products, like they have done in *Ryfylkebutikken* in Årdal (G. Vevik, personal communication, May 19, 2011).

Eivind Hålien (personal communication, January 21, 2011) believes that the available raw materials, both from aquaculture and agriculture in the region are very good, local and fresh. He claims that this has not been utilized to its full potential in the marketing, but they are working on it through the term *Dine your way through Rogaland* (Opplev Matfylket). A long-term and intentional focus is essential; though a lot of it is politically determined it requires decent communication between the tourism industry and the food providers. Hålien argues that this link has not been properly emphasized and promoted. The Minister of Agriculture and Food Lars Peder Brekk's supported this in his opening speech at the exhibition *Grüne Woche* in Berlin in January 2011, as he was saying that profitability is what creates stability and development in the tourism industry: "*This way the tourism industry might become the ideal district industry combined with agriculture, a district industry that puts the whole country to use*" (Regjeringen, 2011a).

Eivind Hålien (personal communication, January 21, 2011) claims that the food and agriculture organizations, as well as the tourism and destination companies are differently organized and promote themselves in different channels, which make it complex. The Norwegian government will work harder to coordinate their effort towards a strengthened Norwegian food and tourism industry. As mentioned earlier, Minister Brekk says that Norway has the best raw materials and chefs in the world, as well as the world's most beautiful landscape. Together with Minister of Trade and Industry, Trond Giske, Brekk concludes that Norwegian tourism would have benefitted from coordination between the two industries (Regjeringen 2011b).

According to Hålien one can find good examples of combining tourism and food in Norway, and he mentions The Norwegian Trekking Association's focus on serving local food in their staffed cabins, the Rica hotels' local food focus, as well as the introduction of ecological food in the Choice Hotels. Hålien adds that the Stavanger region is not especially good at this combination, with a few exceptions (E. Hålien, personal communication, January 21, 2011).

Sigve Skretting claims that if small-scale producers come up with good ideas, it is possible to get some financial contribution from public institutions, such as Innovation Norway: *"From my point of view, the quality of the advices given to the producers is sometimes good, but sometimes not so good. From the financing institutions' point of view, I think there is a lack of long-term thinking"* (S. Skretting, personal communication, May 27, 2011).

5.1.2 The Food Tourist in the Stavanger Region

As mentioned above, Norwegians constituted to 900,000 overnight stays in the Stavanger region in 2010, and has consequently the largest market share in the region.

Looking at international travelers, British, German, Americans and Dutch have the largest shares of overnight stays in the region (Region Stavanger, 2011f).

According to Region Stavanger's annual report for 2010, studies show that a congress participant spends an average of NOK 3383 per day (Region Stavanger, 2011f).

Vidar Skjæraberg, Jæren Hotel's chef, sees that more and more of his guests are bothered with food allergies of several kinds. He believes that the consumers are more conscious of this, as well as it has been more "approved" to have allergies and more people are familiar with it. Skjæraberg says that he has seen a progress the last years, as the allergic now go out to eat, something they did not do a few years ago. His opinion is that the restaurants and eating establishments are also more familiar with the issue, and wants to adapt to it. In Jæren Hotel they are very flexible regarding this, as they wish to be able to adapt the meal to their guests' wants and demands. If the allergic guest is a part of a bigger event, the hotel prefers if the guest hands in a list of their allergies or intolerances in advance. This way the chefs will be able to go through it in detail and plan the meal properly (V. Skjæraberg, personal communication, May 30, 2011).

According to Skjæraberg, gluten allergic (celiac disease) guests are the most frequently occurring of all allergies. This has resulted in Jæren Hotel offering a Sunday buffet where gluten free potato dumplings are offered. In addition, gluten free bread is always present. The hotel does not mark the allergens in the menu, as Skjæraberg believes this would have been too comprehensive to include in the menu. The hotel's chefs are therefore depending on the guests to communicate with the waiters, to get the information they need to be able to please their guests. When asked about the hotel's focus on serving healthy food, Skjæraberg says that they do not have this approach, as their focus is rather to serve tasty food (V. Skjæraberg, personal communication, May 30, 2011).

5.1.3 Food Attractions in the Stavanger region

In this part, a description of the different food related attractions in the region of Stavanger will be given, including the different food festivals, as well as the future food events to be arranged.

5.1.3.1 Eating Establishments.

Greater Stavanger (2011a) argues that Stavanger is often compared to the French food region of Lyon, and new restaurants and other eating establishments are frequently popping up in the region. Travel journalist, Yngve Ekern, in *Aftenposten* (2008) wrote that the quality level of the middle class restaurants is very high, but there is no restaurant that aspires to reach a star in the Michelin guide yet. He thinks this is a good thing, as well-being is the focus in Stavanger, not snobbery. According to Ekern (*Aftenposten*, 2008), the restaurant Tango Bar & Kjøkken's hosts say that Stavanger has ambition to be Norway's best restaurant city. Tango's chef, Kjartan Skjelde, further says that Stavanger has excellent raw materials in the local environment, and that they work close with the farmers in the area (*Aftenposten*, 2008). Further, it is mentioned that Tango's restaurant manager Aslak Dalehaug says that many of the Norwegian chefs have a relationship to Stavanger, which is considered a popular city to work in. Despite this, Frode Selvaag (personal communication, June 7, 2011) argues that the recruitment of young Norwegians to the chef profession is lower than ever before. The development of the food academy in Kviamarka in Hå municipality, which among other things will focus on enhancing the competence of young chefs in education, foreign work force and established chefs, as well as other employed in the food industry (Matfatet Jæren, 2011c), will be a positive contribution to the attempt of making the chef profession more attractive.

Gunhild Vevik argues that the food quality of the restaurant members in Region Stavanger is high and that they are creating an experience around the meal, either the classic

way in a restaurant location or for instance by creating a meal experience in the nature. In addition to this, Vevik claims that the hosts of small or bigger events in the MICE market has a major focus on serving nutritious food to their guests and participants. Region Stavanger is very focused on lifting the good raw materials and do often bring this up when they are presenting the region to foreign press. Vevik says that they take the visitors to different eating establishments and food producers as well as trying to emphasize that it is not necessarily the gourmet part that is popular, but the use of high quality locally produced raw materials. According to Vevik the foreign visitors are surprised of how clean the raw materials are (G. Vevik, personal communication, May 19, 2011).

Chef Eyvind Hellstrøm praises Stavanger as a food city and a culinary city, and further names it the best Norwegian restaurant city outside Oslo (Aftenposten, 2009). Ann-Lill Gundersen, the project manager in the foundation *Norges Vel* (The Norwegian Royal Society for Development) is assigned to connect the restaurants in Oslo to the local producers in the counties Akershus and Østfold. According to Aftenposten (2009) she admires the actors in the Stavanger region for what they have accomplished, and admits that the Oslo region has a long way to go to achieve the same.

The Stavanger region is known for its eating establishments, with high quality restaurants such as Renaa, Bølgen & Moi, Tango Bar & Kjøkken, N.B. Sørensen and Charles & De. The list of other good eating establishments is long, and smaller actors such as Ostehuset, Food Story and Sjokoladepiken are worth to be mentioned.

Hålien believes that Stavanger's disadvantage as a food destination is the places where you can find cheaper food: *"If people had eaten in nicer places and paid NOK 10-15 more, they would have gotten more value for their money. There are way too many expensive middle class restaurants in Stavanger"* (E. Hålien, personal communication, January 21, 2011).

The level of the top restaurants in Stavanger is good, but none of them has reached a

Michelin star yet. According to chef Hellstrøm, interviewed in the Norwegian newspaper VG, Michelin is not prioritizing Scandinavia and are only assessing restaurants in the big cities. In Norway this means only the capital Oslo (VG, 2011). Eivind Hålien believes the best Norwegian restaurants are located in Oslo, but adds that there are many extremely good restaurants in Stavanger as well. Hålien claims that the restaurants in Oslo are not defeating Stavanger's professional milieu, the collaboration, or the way they make it visible. In Oslo, a lot of the arrangements are disappearing in the crowd, due to the size of the city. In Stavanger, the Gladmat Food Festival fills the whole city, and the visibility and engagement is on a totally different level. Hålien says: *"The regions will not benefit from copying each other, but rather from finding the unique in every region"* (E. Hålien, personal communication, January 21, 2011).

5.1.3.2 Norsk Hermetikkmuseum.



The canning industry was Stavanger's most important trade between the 1890s and the 1960s. The idea to realize a canning museum in Stavanger actually came up around the beginning of the 1900th century, and especially the local newspaper, the Stavanger Aftenblad, raised the question. The canning museum was finally established in 1982 and is now located in an old, authentic canning factory. Today, it is actual possible to see the production of canned brisling and fish balls. The machinery is still working, and twice a week during the summer season, as well as the first Sunday of every month, the smoking ovens are lit (Stavanger Museum, 2011a; Stavanger Museum 2011b).

5.1.3.3 Matsafari



Matsafari AS and GuideCompaniet in Stavanger are offering a two-hour guided walk in the city of Stavanger, which they call *The Taste of Stavanger*. According to Matsafari (2011), participants will take part of 200 years of food history, and be given tasty food experiences during the trip. The guided walk will increase the participants' knowledge about the history of food in Stavanger, and let them see that Stavanger is more than "the city of oil". Attractions and pit stops during the trip are for instance the canning museum, the fish market in Vågen, and a visit at the local butcher Idsøe (Matsafari, 2011).

In addition to the guided walk, Matsafari offers food courses and other food experiences. Matsafari organizes tailor-made events, teambuilding trips and firm trips based on the wishes and demands of the respective companies (Matsafari, 2011).

Matsafari has very little focus towards the tourism industry, as Hatløy mostly works towards the business market and is depending on the larger businesses. Hatløy (personal communication, May 5, 2011) finds it easier to market and maintain a relationship to a business than towards a large European market for individual travelers.

Hatløy believes that it is positive that the hotels in Stavanger now have started to work together with smaller businesses as Matsafari. When he started the business in 2006, Hatløy perceived all other actors as competitors, but have later started to cooperate with some of them, and has now an official cooperation with GuideCompaniet. Their guides improve the quality of Matsafari's products for international businesses with being well versed in languages (A. Hatløy, personal communication, May 5, 2011).

5.1.3.4 Det Jærske Kjøkken



The concept *Det Jærske Kjøkken* (Jæren's Kitchen) was developed by Jæren Hotel and is based on raw materials and traditions from Jæren, as well as the creativeness of their chefs (Jæren Hotell, 2011a). In addition to this, they are seeking to meet the high quality demands of their customers (Jæren Hotell, 2011b) According to Vidar Skjæraberg, Jæren Hotel's chef, the idea behind the concept is using local raw materials to the greatest extent in their food production. He also says that some of the food they make is based on local food traditions, as they want to keep the traditions alive, but a lot of the food is just regular food made with fresh, local raw materials. Skjæraberg says that it is abounding with local raw materials in the summer season, while it is naturally harder to find local products during the winter. He adds that there actually is one kind of tomatoes that have production through the whole year, and that Jæren Hotel is trying to take advantage of this (V. Skjæraberg, personal communication, May 30, 2011).

Further, Skjæraberg talks about their collaboration with Wiig Gartneri, Jærstut, Hå Kylling and other local producers. He says they are free to use what producer or provider they want, and are not committed to use the local ones, though they want to use the local as much as possible. The problem is often an economical factor, as the local food products, especially meat, is more expensive than other products: *"It can sometimes be a challenge to make people understand that they need to pay more if they want local produce"* (V. Skjæraberg, personal communication, May 30, 2011).

Skjæraberg believes that it is harder to get conference organizers to choose locally based food because of the higher expense. It is more often when they have events like weddings, confirmations, baptism and birthday parties that the guests ask for local, or more specific; traditional food from the Jæren area. Jæren Hotel does also have a *à la Carte menu*,

where they have a four-course recommendation in addition to a cheaper course. In this menu they focus on using seasonal and local raw materials and it is not the intention to make it cheap (V. Skjæraberg, personal communication, May 30, 2011).

According to Skjæraberg, the amount of guests with a local food focus is increasing. More people want to know where the food originates from, and the chef believes that it is nice to be able to tell the guests this. Skjæraberg has noticed that his guests want more than just the meal nowadays, and that more of them really would like to know the story behind the meal. He believes that most of the local raw materials are easy to obtain, but that it sometimes is hard when the small producers are getting too popular and sell out all their products: “*Good for them but not so good for us*” Skjæraberg concludes. According to Skjæraberg, seeing others using local produce influences cafés and restaurants. As more customers ask for this, they are forced to do the same. The use of local produce is becoming a trend and a demand from the customers, which results in an increase in the quality of the food (personal communication, May 30, 2011).

5.1.3.5 Food Festivals in the Stavanger Region.

Below, the largest food related festivals in the region will be discussed, and history, the aim of the festival, content, visitor number and budget will be mentioned.

Gladmatfestivalen



Gladmatfestivalen (The Gladmat Food Festival) was established in 1999, and is today the leading food festival in Norway, as well as in Scandinavia. About 250,000 people are visiting the food festival through a period of four days in July every year (Gladmat, 2011),

and their budget is about NOK 7 million (Nationen, 2009). In 2010 there were expected about 130 exhibitors and stands participating in the Gladmat Food Festival; offering a wide diversity of food (Gladmat, 2010).

The food festival is a venue where consumers and food producers meet, and their goal is to strengthen people's interest in food and culture. The festival aims to show what to offer regarding niche products, raw materials and the latest trends, but on the other hand also representing local and national quality products. From being mainly a local food festival, the event now has a local, national and international focus (Gladmat, 2011).

According to Region Stavanger (2011d), the food festival was developed in the network of *The Food County Rogaland* to promote what the region can offer within the food and culture sector. In the late 1990s, the Culinary Institute, the Local Chefs Union (Kokkenes Mesterlaug), the Professional Forum for Food and Drink, the University of Stavanger and others planned the Gladmat Food Festival. The Professional Forum for Food and Drink planned the festival in detail, and when the organization Gladmat AS was established in 1998, they had been through one and a half year of foundation processes with potential partners such as Innovation Norway and the county municipality (S. Skretting, personal communication, May 27, 2011). Sigve Skretting was in the board of the organization and was later engaged as a project manager. He argues that when the organization was established they could finance the administration for the following three years: *"The story of the Gladmat Food Festival is two-pieced; on the one side it is a huge success, but on the other hand it is hard to run it from a financial point of view"*. Concerning the success of the festival, Skretting argues: *"I think that one of the reasons why we succeeded was because we did not want the festival just to be for the industry or the gastronomy; neither only for posh people or for those who just eat hot dogs. It is for everyone. That is the key to our success"* (S. Skretting, personal communication, May 27, 2011).

When the Gladmat Food Festival was established, the festival organization wanted to include all the regions in Rogaland. They traveled around in the region and asked people to join them, but many people were skeptical about the food festival in the start, because they claimed it to only have the aim to promote Stavanger. The festival organization was clear that they wanted to include the whole county, and the organization therefore introduced a concept named the *Foundation of the Gladmat Food Festival* (Gladmat's grunnmur), and divided the county in four regions; Ryfylke, Dalane, Jæren/Sandnes and Haugalandet (S. Skretting, personal communication, May 27, 2011).

Skretting further explains that the small-scale producers have developed rapidly since the Gladmat Food Festival was established, and around year 2000 Norwegian agriculture faced some major changes. It was decided that the number of farms had to decrease, and the remaining farms had to specialize in a greater degree. According to Skretting this has resulted in many of the small-scale producers who produce high quality products that are available today, which has positively contributed to improve the Gladmat Food Festival. Sigve Skretting argues that the Gladmat Food Festival has contributed to establish several other food related festivals in the region, such as the Tomato Festival and the Norwegian Fruit and Salmon Festival in Ryfylke. In addition, the *Mersmak Food Festival* in Skien, where Sigve Skretting has played a part, is a direct model of the Gladmat Food Festival (S. Skretting, personal communication, May 27, 2011).

Stavanger Vinfest

Stavanger Vinfest (Stavanger Wine Festival) has been running since 1999, and in 2011, 14 of the restaurants in Stavanger participate in arranging the festival. According to a press release from the organizers, more than twenty wine producers, professional chefs and suppliers were expected to participate at the festival in 2011 (Horecanytt, 2011d).

The importance of food during the festival is growing, and because of the festival's location close to the large food producing region of Jæren, this is utilized to its full potential. As the organizers of the festival expresses in a press release: "*You do not find any city with as rich food culture as Stavanger in whole Scandinavia*" (Horecanytt, 2011d).

During the festival there are several arrangements, and perhaps the most popular one is the wine parade, where the participants are visiting several restaurants and bars to eat and drink. The first year of the festival, the limit of participants was 150, but in 2011 this has been expanded to 580 participants (Stavanger Vinfest, 2011).

Hvitløksuken

In the year of 1983, Terje Vallestad, the manager of Café Sting in Stavanger, established *Hvitløksuken* (The Garlic Festival). The history behind the festival is quite odd; Vallestad got the idea of it in the toilet because of his stomach troubles. He was told that garlic might help him regarding his stomach problems, and afterwards he decided to establish a garlic festival; regardless of the skepticism he witnessed from his colleagues. The festival was a success from the start, mainly because of good PR both in local and national media. In 2010 they estimated that about 100 kilos of garlic would be used during the festival week (Rogalands Avis, 2010). All food being served during the festival week is spiced up with garlic, even the dessert and the beer (Rogalands Avis, 2009, 2011).

Potetfestivalen

Potetfestivalen (The Potato Festival) was established in the area of Jæren in 1997, and was originally focusing on the use of potatoes and what the potato may be related to. Today the potato festival has enhanced the focus on food and drink in general, which has given a wide variety of local specialties at the festival. Also, the festival offers entertainment and

activities for both children and adults (Fagforum for Mat og Drikke, 2011e; Region Stavanger, 2011e; Stavanger Aftenblad, 2008). In a long-term perspective, The Potato Festival has a goal to be Jæren's own food festival; to become a regional *show window* that will benefit the whole food production sector in the area (Fagforum for Mat og Drikke, 2011e).

According to Kari Kverneland Kastmann, The Potato Festival's budget is approximately NOK 170,000, and it is estimated to gather 25,000 visitors (K.K. Kastmann, personal communication, May 30, 2011).

5.1.3.6 Future Food Attractions in the Stavanger Region.

Below, some suggestions from the interviewees are explained, in addition to two large and important future events that are planned to be arranged in the region.

Arne Hatløy in Matsafari mention Den Gyldne Omvei in Inderøy as a well developed project, and he expresses a desire to establish something similar in the Jæren area. He believes that tourists arriving to the Stavanger region may experience less tasty food because they visit eating establishments that offers cheap processed food instead of using fresh raw materials (A. Hatløy, personal communication, May 5, 2011).

In a large context, Eivind Hålien (personal communication, January 21, 2011) believes that the small-scale producers are insignificant, and that the tourists will not be interested in visiting a local vegetable producer in Jæren. Stavanger's local butcher Idsøe, on the other hand, might be worth a visit. According to Hålien, festivals and well known restaurants with famous chefs will always be attracting tourists, but he does not believe that jam jars will.

Det Norske Måltid - Food Gala 2011

Det Norske Måltid is a Norwegian contest focusing on raw materials and products in the different regions of Norway. The awards *Raw Material Land and Sea of the Year*, as well as *Product of the Year*, were given out for the first time in 2008 (Horecanytt, 2010).

In December of 2011 it is planned to develop and continue *Det Norske Måltid* as a television show at a national television broadcasting channel, live from Stavanger. According to Harald Osa, the manager of the foundation *Stiftelsen Matkultur*, the aim of the television show is to unite culinary Norway and promote the Norwegian food and food culture. Osa (as cited in Norges Bondelag, 2011) says: “*We want to pass on the enjoyment of food and knowledge of the Norwegian food to a large part of the population*”. According to *Tvareposten* (as cited in Norges Bondelag, 2011), the food gala will be an annual event if it turns out to be a success.

The recent years the focus on the food county Rogaland and the food city of Stavanger has stagnated, according to Lauritz Hansen, the manager of Skagen Brygge Hotell (Rosenkilden, 2010). He believes that the Food Gala that is planned to be arranged in Stavanger in December 2011 can contribute to accelerate the focus on food in the region, and consequently result in someone taking initiative to lead on. Sigve Skretting (personal communication, May 27, 2011) believes that the food gala will enhance the identity of Stavanger as a food destination, and in addition it will contribute to strengthen the Gladmat Food Festival.

WACS World Congress 2014

Stavanger has been chosen to arrange the World Association of Chefs' Societies (WACS) World Congress from July 2nd to July 7th 2014, and the temporary title for the congress is *Taste of Norway* (Norges Kokkemesteres Landsforening, 2011a).

WACS was established in 1928, and consists of 92 membership countries; representing more than ten million professional chefs worldwide. The WACS World Congress is arranged every second year, and the congress contains meetings, seminars, exhibitions, and competitions such as the Global Chefs' Challenge. The aim of WACS is to ensure that the professional standards among the worlds' chefs are taken care of, as well as improving the global cuisine (Horecanytt, 2011c; Norges Kokkemesteres Landsforening, 2011b).

This will be the second time Stavanger arranges this congress; the last time was in the year of 1994. According to the president of WACS, Gissur Gudmundsson, the World Congress in Stavanger in 1994 was probably the best and largest WACS arrangement ever (Horecanytt, 2011c, Norges Kokkemesteres Landsforening, 2011a).

The mayor of Stavanger, Leif Johan Sevland, was delighted when Stavanger was chosen to host the WACS World Congress in 2014. He argued that the selection of Stavanger to host the congress indicates that the food culture in the county of Rogaland is strong and acknowledged (Stavanger Kommune, 2010). Further, Gissur Gudmundsson, says that WACS 2014 will be a good opportunity to demonstrate not only the local cuisine, but also the Nordic cuisine from its best side (Horecanytt, 2011c).

When the Stavanger committee applied for financial contribution to arrange the World Congress in 2014, the government requested the committee to use the event to strengthen Norway's food reputation (S. Skretting, personal communication, May 27, 2011). Skretting argues that the congress might contribute to make the food destinations Stavanger and Norway more visible internationally. He also highlights the importance of utilizing the Gladmat Food Festival's network, in order to make it as good as possible. Sigve Skretting believes that the congress might contribute to increase the focus on food and tourism in the Stavanger region. In addition, Skretting adds that when events like these are arranged, the focus on taking advantage of the whole region is important. Social gatherings are never at a hotel in the city or in a congress hall. Smaller arrangements throughout the whole region are preferred, such as a visit to *Byrkjedalstunet* or *Hå Gamle Prestegard* (S. Skretting, personal communication, May 27, 2011).

5.1.4 Food Networks in the Stavanger Region

A description and explanation of how the different food networks in the Stavanger region is organized will be mentioned in this part of the study, as well as proposing potential future networks at the suggestion of some of the interviewees.

5.1.4.1 Måltidets Hus.

Måltidets Hus was established in 2009 and is located in Stavanger. It is a national center for industrial gastronomy, with an aim to be a pioneer regarding *the good meal*, as well as contributing to a larger variety and differentiated quality of Norwegian food products (iPark, 2011). According to Sigve Skretting (personal communication, May 27, 2011), the former network organization *Fagforum for Mat og Drikke* (Professional Forum for Food and Drink), which consisted of enterprises and institutions within the food sector in Rogaland, is now merged with Måltidets Hus.

Måltidets Hus is a meeting place of food and the food industry where the leading professional milieus in Norway, within research, analyzing, product development and networking are represented. The eight most important areas of competence in Måltidets Hus are consumer knowledge, molecular gastronomy, process optimization, open innovation, product development, meal solutions, general culinary expertise, as well as development, testing and research on packaging and package deals (iPark, 2011).

In Måltidets Hus one can find the largest gastronomy milieu in Norway, the country's largest food research group, as well as different network organizations. The establishment of Måltidets Hus has created an arena where actors related to the meal industry can get together and develop new commercial products, both nationally and internationally (iPark, 2011).

Sigve Skretting (personal communication, May 27, 2011) claims that the success of the Gladmat Food Festival has influenced the realization of Måltidets Hus: *“People have been encouraged and motivated through this birthday celebration once a year”*. Måltidets Hus is further influencing the image of the food city of Stavanger by its professional reputation. The house itself is not a tourism product, but according to Eivind Hålien (personal communication, January 21, 2011) it is adjusted for technical visits. He also adds that the actors in Måltidets Hus is indirectly contributing to the tourism industry as some of the actors in Måltidets Hus e.g. are developing food products that restaurants will offer the tourists in the region.

Norwegian Center of Expertise Culinology



Måltidets Hus is running the administrative work regarding NCE Culinology (S. Skretting, personal communication, May 27, 2011). More than hundred businesses are engaged in the cluster, which is creating a foundation for the international focus on

Norwegian food. The county of Rogaland has long traditions of taking advantage of the fertile soil, mild climate and the rich ocean for food production. This will continue for a long period after the last oil has been extracted in the area (NCE Culinology, 2007).

The center is based on the common professional interest in the industry of exclusive culinary food products that has been developed in the Stavanger region between leading participants within the seafood industry, the agricultural industry, industrial participants and the professional chefs' competence. The cluster has a total workforce of 20,000 employees (NCE Culinology, 2007).

NCE Culinology was established in 2007 and will be active until 2017. The partnership is a further development of the Professional Forum for Food and Drink and *MåltidsARENA* (NCE Culinology, 2007). The purpose of the cluster is to strengthen the knowledge platform and the innovation within the industrial gastronomy, as well as the culinary differentiation to benefit the Norwegian food production. Their vision is to raise Norway's food production to a top level within the European quality markets in the following years (Fagforum for Mat og Drikke, 2011c).

According to Arne Hatløy (personal communication, May 5, 2011), professional chefs in Norway will have to promote and present the local food to enhance the attractiveness of it, and makes the assertion:

Norwegian chefs have delivered fantastic results in large competitions such as the Bocuse d'Or, but the industry is facing recruitment problems. Today we are importing workforce from Poland, and that will not improve the Norwegian food culture. I think we have to give the chefs a bit more freedom, and reorganize their rotation shifts. Giving them rotation shifts like the oil employees have in the North Sea, might improve their willingness to give an extra effort.

5.1.4.2 *Délice*.



Stavanger was designated to be the European Culture Capital of 2008, which among other things led to the city being host for Bocuse d'Or Europa the same year. Stavanger is the first city that has arranged the championship besides Lyon in France. After the chef championship, Stavanger has been considered to be a gourmet city, and became a member of the international gourmet network Délice in 2008. Délice is working towards stimulating exchange in gastronomy tourism, education, and food production focusing on regional raw materials and produce (Greater Stavanger, 2011b).

According to NTB (as cited in NRK, 2008) the president of Délice, Jean-Michel Daclin, said that he was proud to admit Lyon's "little sister" Stavanger into the network. The organization Greater Stavanger is Délice's secretariat in Stavanger, and work together with Stavanger municipality and the county municipality towards attracting big gastronomic events like conferences or competitions (T. Gustafsson, personal communication, April 12, 2011).

The member cities of Délice are known for a strong gastronomic tradition, expert professionals, excellent local food produce and an outstanding culinary development (Délice, 2011a). Tone Gustafsson in Greater Stavanger explains that they are working towards financing more exchange of professionals from the other member cities as they see this as an important part of developing Stavanger as a food city. Gustafsson says that the membership in Délice will contribute to the focus on gourmet food and the food culture that already is implemented in the region. One of Greater Stavanger's responsibilities is to attract new companies to the region, and in order to do so, they utilize the fact that Stavanger is a food city: *"We have short traveled food of high quality in the region, and the chefs have access to the raw materials and know how to process them"*, Gustafsson (personal communication,

April 12, 2011) argues, and emphasizes the importance of the presence of food in the region, and that Måltidets Hus is located in Stavanger.

Greater Stavanger is also working towards improving the product development in the region, and Gustafsson believes that product packaging is something that could have been done more. She further claims that many products are unavailable, even for the local inhabitants. Introducing an overview of available products, activities and competence, would contribute to improve both traveling and living in the region (T. Gustafsson, personal communication, April 12, 2011).

5.1.4.3 *Matfatet Jæren.*



Matfatet Jæren is a food network consisting of 31 businesses and individuals, and the aim of the organization is to strengthen the food industry in the Jæren area. Further, the organization will work to provide and strengthen the market position of the food producers, breeders and the tourism industry. This will be done through marketing, quality development, information, and coordination of common interests (Matfatet Jæren, 2011a).

Arne Hatløy in *Matsafari* considers becoming a member of *Matfatet Jæren*, because of the opportunities in such a network, and that actors on different levels are included. *Matsafari* has high food quality standards, and Arne Hatløy says that local food is preferred (A. Hatløy, personal communication, May 5, 2011).

An attempt *Matfatet Jæren* have done in order to enhance the focus on local produced food, is through the fair *Jærdagen* that is arranged in Bryne. In 2011, local food producers were given an area in the town to sell their products, which they named *Madgadå* (The Food Lane). This was a result of the foreign food providers that came to the fair in 2010, which

made the local producers see that they had to do something. Skjæraberg believes that it is not right if tourists or other visitors only can find foreign food providers in a fair like Jærdagen, in the largest food producing area of Norway: *"Our food is just as exotic as the foreign"* (V. Skjæraberg, personal communication, May 30, 2011).

Heine Grov in Matfatet Jæren hopes that this event will get the local inhabitants to seek for local raw materials in the grocery stores (Jærbladet, 2011). According to Per Kristian Djuvsland in the same organization, the largest food destinations are good at promoting their own products, which is something this region also has to become (Jærbladet, 2011).

5.1.4.4 Future Food Networks in the Stavanger Region.

Eivind Hålien finds it pointless to initiate a new network or organization to gather local food producers and tourism industry. He argues that it is better to base it in the already established professional organizations. The destination company (Region Stavanger) needs to market the region and be in the lead of the other actors. Hålien adds that some actors do not have the power to implement, and that is why the different actors need to work closer together (E. Hålien, personal communication, January 21, 2011).

Eivind Hålien sees a great challenge in tourism where many of the actors are idealists in a bad financial situation, not capable of seeing that they are a part of a larger organization, and are therefore becoming freeloaders in the industry. Hålien suggests that the government might give destination companies the responsibility of coordinating this in the county, or maybe in larger regions. He also believes that food could have been used more active as a selling point towards the MICE market (E. Hålien, personal communication, January 21, 2011).

Sigve Skretting argues that other regions are better than Stavanger in making the small-scale producers more visible. He emphasizes the northern part of Trøndelag, especially *The Golden Route* as a good example of a network consisting of small-scale producers.

Skretting admits that Stavanger has a potential to improve and develop a network consisting of both tourism companies and food providers in the region: *“There is a big potential, but there is much work to do”* (S. Skretting, personal communication, May 27, 2011).

Skretting emphasize the importance of Region Stavanger’s work: *“We are depending on a destination company that are able to see the big picture; that have the capability to stimulate the food producers so they actually have something to offer the tourists”* (S. Skretting, personal communication, May 27, 2011). On the question of how Region Stavanger could include more small-scale members, Skretting replies that he understands that Region Stavanger is a commercial company, but he feels that there is more focus on the membership fee than improving the small-scale producers’ business. He argues that Region Stavanger should focus more on promoting how they can help small-scale producers to improve their business, rather than the focus they seem to have today: *“If you become a member, we will see what we can do for you”* (S. Skretting, personal communication, May 27, 2011).

Skretting further argues that effort have been done in order create a network of tourism companies and food producers, but as initiatives like this is often project oriented, they start at one point and are finished at another point, and nothing more happens (S. Skretting, personal communication, May 27, 2011).

5.1.5 Food Destination Marketing

Fjord Norway is the umbrella organization in the western part of Norway, and according to Eivind Hålien (personal communication, January 21, 2011) the general manager do not believe that the food products in the region is good enough to be promoted. Hålien does not agree with him: *“If we are waiting for every restaurant and roadside café in the western part of Norway to reach a certain level of quality before we promote it, it will never happen”*. He suggests that we need to start working with improving the food in central eating establishments, and gives the ferries as an example of a good place to start. Hålien mentions

the fact that the ferries in Rogaland once had a good food concept, which unfortunately disappeared with a leadership change. Hålien adds another example from ski resorts in the Alps where the food standard is of a totally different quality compared to the Norwegian resorts (E. Hålien, personal communication, January 21, 2011).

Sigve Skretting argues that some of the roadside restaurants in Norway are good, but the challenge is that there are too many low quality roadside restaurants. He also argues that there are too many restaurants that try to copy other's concepts, but that is not the key to success (S. Skretting, personal communication, May 27, 2011).

5.1.5.1 Region Stavanger.



Region Stavanger is the destination company for Sandnes, Stavanger and Jæren. It is a common sale- and marketing body for organizations, institutions, businesses and municipalities that are connected to the tourism industry in the Stavanger region. The organization will through gathering and coordination of interests work towards growth and profitability for their members and for the region (Region Stavanger, 2008).

According to Gunhild Vevik, the organization has eight municipality members, in addition to 175 actors from the tourism industry in the region. The municipality members contribute to one third of Region Stavanger's income, one third comes from the actors in the tourism industry, and the last third from their own projects. Region Stavanger's annual turnover is estimated to be about NOK 14-18 million. Their priority areas within the tourism market are leisure, MICE and event tourism (G. Vevik, personal communication, May 19, 2011).

When it comes to the area of food tourism, Region Stavanger is not marketing the food aspect alone, only in combination with the congress and conference market. A good example

of that is the WACS World Congress that will be arranged in Stavanger in 2014. Vevik explains that: *“We do not have any marketing activities directly towards the food tourism segment yet, but we try to promote the local cuisine through international press trips in the region”* (G.Vevik, personal communication, May 19, 2011).

Region Stavanger’s web page, www.regionstavanger.com, is accessible in two languages: Norwegian and English. The researchers investigated what information that was available at the web page regarding food and food tourism, to figure out how Region Stavanger is promoting the Stavanger region as a food destination. The study did not come up with much relevant information from the web pages, neither in the Norwegian nor the English language. The only information regarding food is listed under *Food and Nightlife*, where only a few sentences are written. In addition, Region Stavanger’s members; bars, catering, cafeterias, restaurants and other eating establishments are listed, with small pictures and the only written information is what the member businesses write about themselves.

Gunhild Vevik (personal communication, May 19, 2011) argues that the lacking information regarding food on their web page is because they do not have a common message to highlight, and that they have to go good for it. She also raises the question if the different actors are capable of satisfying the tourists. Regarding the business market she points out: *“We could improve our congress part of the web page by focusing more on thematizing of products; for instance by making more visible that the food that is served is food with a long tradition”* (G. Vevik, personal communication, May 19, 2011). She also argues that Region Stavanger’s forthcoming collaboration with Måltidets Hus might make it possible to emphasize the qualities in the different products.

According to Region Stavanger (2011f), Google is among the most frequent source of web traffic. The most frequent visitors to the web page are from Norway, Germany, and Great Britain. A quick search in Google.com using the Norwegian phrase *“Mat Stavanger”* returns

a search result where the web page of the Gladmat festival is in the leading place, followed by other local web pages, and with Region Stavanger's web page in 5th place. The similar phrase in English, "*Food Stavanger*", returns a result with Region Stavanger in 10th place. The search phrase "*Restaurant Stavanger*" does not return any result from Region Stavanger at the four first pages (link no. 35) of search results. "*Lokal Mat Stavanger*" returns Region Stavanger as the 7th link, and by typing the similar phrase in English "*Local Food Stavanger*" the study found Region Stavanger's link presented as number ten.

5.2 Food Tourism in the Ryfylke Region

This section will include a discussion of the Ryfylke region as a food destination, and give an overview of what the destination is offering of food produce. In addition it will give a description of today's food tourist, available eating establishments, as well as food attractions and food networks. Finally, the study will explain how the marketing of the food region Ryfylke is performed.

According to Frode Selvaag, a professional chef in Ryfylke, food producers from this region have throughout the history traveled to Stavanger to sell their products. In addition, Ryfylke has had several ways of harvesting, such as agriculture, fisheries and hunting. Selvaag also says that sheep, lamb and fruit have been important raw materials for Ryfylke (F. Selvaag, personal communication, June 7, 2011).

Tor Øyvind Skeiseid, general manager of Ryfylke Livsgnist hopes that a tourism focus will be politically initiated in the municipality, and is excited to see what will happen after the local election in the fall of 2011 (T.Ø. Skeiseid, personal communication, March 17, 2011). According to a newspaper article in Stavanger Aftenblad (Jøssang & Wigestrang, 2011) the new county council of the political party *Høyre* hopes to come into power and seize the tourism in Ryfylke after the local election. The top candidate of the political party, Janne Johansen, is convinced that the tourism in the Ryfylke region has a large potential, for

instance the combination of tourism and food. Johansen says that more attractions that will make the tourists stop are needed, and mentions the potential of the 4444 wooden stairs of Flørli that she believes could become as large as the main attraction The Pulpit Rock. In the same article, Helene Barkved, *Høyre*'s mayor candidate, requests more accommodation facilities in the Ryfylke region. She also wants to see the destination companies in Ryfylke, Stavanger and Haugesund strengthen their collaboration (Jøssang & Wigestrang, 2011).

Regarding promoting Finnøy as a food destination, Tor Øyvind Skeiseid (personal communication, March 17, 2011) believes that the Tomato Festival is the most important happening during the year. The produce of the healthy tomatoes without the use of chemicals is an essential selling point.

5.2.1 Food Produce in the Ryfylke Region

The Ryfylke region offers a wide selection of local food produce that might contribute to enhance tourists' experience of the region and the Norwegian food culture. The region is a large contributor to the production of tomatoes in Norway; about 33% of the total tomato production in the country originates from Finnøy Municipality in Ryfylke. The growth of tomatoes in greenhouse in Ryfylke has a long tradition, back to the 1930s (Ryfylke Tomat, 2011; Tomatfestivalen, 2011b).



Fish and seafood of high quality is also produced in Ryfylke, such as trout, halibut and salmon from the Hjelmeland area. In addition, fresh seafood such as shrimp, crab and blue mussel is easily available. Producers in the Ryfylke region provide game from the forest and moorlands, in addition to beef, pork and poultry. The well known *Suldalskinka* (cured ham) is

made ripe in a drying-loft at Mostøl in Suldal, 650 meters above sea level. Production of egg is also taking part in Ryfylke. Further the Ryfylke region is producing berries and fruit, such as apples and pears from Helgøy, strawberries from Fister and Hetlandsbygd, and blackberries from Halsnøy. In addition one can also find production of potatoes and other vegetables (Visit Norway, 2011b, 2011c). Other food produce from Ryfylke are smoked salmon from Skiftun, lamb from Vormedalen, unfermented apple juice from Tou, and honey from Forsand (Selvaag & Skeiseid, 2010). The newest food product from Finnøy is the local and exclusive tomato sauce (Ryfylke Smak, 2011).

Tor Øyvind Skeiseid (personal communication, March 17, 2011) believes that no matter what product or raw materials the small-scale producers are offering, they need to be convinced to believe that they can manage to create their own brand and stand out in the crowd. He argues that they are paid a lot less than the quality indicates. The city people who are complaining of the high food pricing is annoying Skeiseid (personal communication March 17, 2011), as the wage level in the agriculture does not keep up with other industry, despite the quality of the products.

Skeiseid talks about how they tried to gather the small-scale producers in Finnøy Municipality some years ago, but it was hard as most of them are small and there were no *lighthouse* or primary attraction. Many of the farmers are happy with the way life treats them, and they know that the Czech and the Germans come in the main season. Skeiseid believes that this is why they do not stress with renting out. Skeiseid (personal communication, March 17, 2011) adds: "*There is no doubt in the potential of expanding the season*". The industrial development company, *Finnøy Næringshage* and others, is now working to gather all the small-scale producers in the newly established network *Smaken av Ryfylke* (The Taste of Ryfylke), which will be described later in the chapter.

According to Skeiseid many of the small-scale producers desist from joining marketing organizations because of the costs related to it. He believes that they do not see the long-term consequences or impacts this might have for their future: *“If they are in the middle of a production, I understand that it is expensive for them. But instead of thinking about tomorrow, they need to look five years ahead”* (T.Ø. Skeiseid, personal communication, March 17, 2011).

5.2.2 The Food Tourist in the Ryfylke Region

Tor Øyvind Skeiseid (personal communication, March 17, 2011), argues that most of the visitors in Ryfylke are groups, boat tourists and cabin owners. According to Statistikknett (2011a), the Norwegians constitute to the largest market share in 2010, in addition to mainly German, Dutch and eastern Europeans visiting the Ryfylke region. Skeiseid (personal communication, March 17, 2011) mentions that most of the Germans and Czechs coming to Finnøy rent boats and fish in the sea, and bring their own food to the country. Those who are spending money in the region are mainly cabin owners and boat tourists. Frode Selvaag (personal communication, June 7, 2011) supports Skeiseid, by saying that a lot of the cabin owners in Ryfylke contributes to the local economy by eating out.

When it comes to people with food allergies, Selvaag (personal communication, June 7, 2011) argues that it is a disease that has come to stay: *“It is a disease we as chefs must take into consideration when preparing the food”*. Selvaag would prefer to be informed in advance of guests with any food allergies. If he is arranging a dinner party, he always asks if any of the guests have food allergies, and he always has other raw materials and ingredients available just in case. Selvaag argues that this is challenging in a positive way, and that the issue will contribute to enhance the focus on the genuine and simple food: *“More people are aware of what they eat, and the chefs need to be creative, and know what ingredients they include in the meal”* (F. Selvaag, personal communication, June 7, 2011).

Frode Selvaag claims that the number of people with food allergies who eat out has increased, and supports by this Jæren Hotel's chef, Vidar Skjæraberg. Selvaag believes that the restaurants might put focus on food allergies in their menus by listing the ingredients of every meal, and in addition make the guest aware that they should tell the waiter if they want to change some of the ingredients. Selvaag also says that he gets annoyed when restaurants are using other ingredients in a dish than mentioned in the menu: *"For instance, if the restaurant adds nuts into the chocolate mousse, they should inform the guests of it in advance in the menu"* (F. Selvaag, personal communication, June 7, 2011).

Selvaag claims that he does not have focus on the health aspect of the food he make, but rather on using pure ingredients: *"I do not use additives that I do not know what contains when preparing my food. I need to know what I put in the food"* (F. Selvaag, personal communication, June 7, 2011).

5.2.3 Food Attractions in the Ryfylke Region

A description of some of the food attractions in the Ryfylke region, including the activities of commercial businesses and food festivals, will be given in this section.

5.2.3.1 Eating Establishments.

When it comes to eating establishments that offers local specialties in the Ryfylke region, tourists and visitors have a few options. The different eating establishments in the Ryfylke region have a good opportunity to utilize the raw materials produced in the region, and by taking advantage of this, they can be able to offer travelers high quality meals.

In the Ryfylke region, different eating establishments are available, from small cafeterias to high quality restaurants. For instance, Sauda Fjord Hotel, Mo Laksegard, Energihotellet, Fargeriet Kafé, SPA-Hotell Velvære, Flor & Fjære, Rosehagen, Preikestolen Fjellstove and Lysefjordsenteret are all offering food with locally based produce, which gives tourists the opportunity to try the local cuisine (Visit Norway, 2011b). Frode Selvaag

(personal communication, June 7, 2011) claims that many eating establishments in the Ryfylke region are good at utilizing local raw materials, but that others might benefit of utilizing more of it, even though it demands more effort. Selvaag tells that when he was chef at SPA-Hotell Velvære, he had to be active and use his phone constantly in order to get in contact and maintain the relationship with the local producers, but he claims that it was worth it.

According to Tor Øyvind Skeiseid (personal communication, March 17, 2011) it might for instance be hard for the tourists to find a place to eat: *“If you come to Finnøy on a Saturday night you cannot expect that the three-course dinners are waiting for you”*. He explains that there is one café with certain opening hours that also serves some local bakery produce. People talk about the fact that it is not possible to buy a meal in Finnøy, and Skeiseid believes this is a disadvantage for the destination. Further, he claims that Finnøy could benefit from having a decent eating establishment (T.Ø. Skeiseid, personal communication, March 17, 2011).

Frode Selvaag (personal communication, June 7, 2011) claims that there are many genuine eating establishments in the Ryfylke region. He highlights Krambulemmen in Randøy as the best eating establishment in Ryfylke, due to its focus on local traditions and raw materials. Selvaag thinks it is a pity that Krambulemmen is only open during the summer season, but understands that it would not be able to operate it through the whole year due to absence of visitors in the region. Selvaag further claims that the Ryfylke region is lacking a farm restaurant or cafeteria. He adds that this, in addition to a farm outlet, is something that might strengthen Ryfylke as a food destination: *“But it has to be a farm that produces their own local raw materials, not that they gather products from all the other farmers. I think that people want such a product”*. Selvaag mention Hanasand Gårdsutsalg (farm outlet) in Rennesøy as an establishment that has succeeded, and praises the entrepreneur Monica

Hanasand: *“She has the ability and has managed to gather products from the entire Ryfylke region in one place”* (F. Selvaag, personal communication, June 7, 2011).

Because of Ryfylke’s large involvement in the fishery industry, Selvaag sees a potential in establishing a unique and pure fish restaurant close to the fish farms, maybe with a sushi chef in the kitchen. *“You have to be crazy when developing new products and that is an ability the people in Ryfylke are lacking”* (F. Selvaag, personal communication, June 7, 2011).

5.2.3.2 Ryfylkekokken.



The company *Ryfylkekokken* (The Ryfylke Chef) was established in 2010 by the well known Norwegian chef, Frode Selvaag, and is located in the Ryfylke region. The aim of the company is to strengthen Ryfylke as a food destination, and take advantage of the local produce. Ryfylkekokken offers food courses, special arrangements for the business market, and consultant services regarding food and beverage (F. Selvaag, personal communication, June 7, 2011; Rosenkilden, 2011). Frode Selvaag says that his guests want the complete food experience, often with a story to complement the meal.

5.2.3.3 Ryfylke Livsgnist.



Ryfylke Livsgnist is a commercial company located in Ryfylke that offer for food courses and food shows in cooperation with Ryfylkekokken. Regarding the business market, Ryfylke Livsgnist arranges conferences and team building trips. They also offer tours for

groups, for instance for companies, the senior citizen's union or birthday celebrations.

Skeiseid (personal communication, March 17, 2011) tells the story of how it all started with a guided tour to a chapel, where they also visited a garden nursery, which the guests found exotic. Further, they expanded with visiting an outlet where the participants could buy smoked salmon.

If the group is interested in having a meal served, Ryfylke Livsgnist is capable of arranging this too. The served food is locally based and often a meat casserole rich in traditions where they use local raw materials and black berries from Halsnøy is served as dessert. Even though the meal is simple, the guests praise it and rank it higher than the meal they get at hotels in the area (T.Ø. Skeiseid, personal communication, March 17, 2011).

Skeiseid says that Ryfylke Livsgnist tries to combine local historical events with local food produce. He further claims that the most important customer group today is the business market, as this group understands that local products in combination with the best chefs are costly, but worth it. According to Tor Øyvind Skeiseid (personal communication, March 17, 2011) a challenge or disadvantage is that people come to Ryfylke Livsgnist and ask them to do all kinds of stuff as they think they work in the Municipality Administration or in the Agricultural Department. As Ryfylke Livsgnist is a 100% commercial company, they are not able to do services for free.

5.2.3.4 Ryfylkebutikken.



In Årdal in Ryfylke, one can find *Ryfylkebutikken* (The Ryfylke Shop), which was established in the year of 2006. In the beginning it was a small farm outlet selling local produce, but two years later it was combined with the local petrol station and cafeteria. In the cafeteria it is also possible to taste dishes made of local raw materials (Ryfylkebutikken, 2011a). Local food products offered in Ryfylkebutikken are for instance fruit, berries, juice, and jam, in addition to bakery products such as potato pancakes. Further, the shop offers fresh seafood and a range of meat products. Ryfylkebutikken has also accepted homemade ceramics, art and drapery in addition to all the food products (Ryfylkebutikken, 2011b).

Generally speaking, Tor Øyvind Skeiseid (personal communication, March 17, 2011) has the opinion that it could benefit small places to gather the products of their local producers for instance in a market where one could gather vegetable, fruit, berries and meat. But Skeiseid believes that someone has to dare to take the initiative, as the farmers do not have the capacity to do this in addition to all their other tasks.

5.2.3.5 Guided trip to Mostøl.



As mentioned above, the Suldalskinka is produced in Mostøl in Suldal Municipality, and used by professional chefs in Norway. It is seen as “*a piece of Norwegian history and nature*” (Spekehuset, 2011).

Energihotellet in Nesflaten offers groups of six or more persons guided trips to the drying-loft where the Suldalskinka is dried and matured, to show them how the ham is produced. An outdoor meal is also included in the tour (Energihotellet, 2011).

5.2.3.6 Food Festivals in Ryfylke.

Below, the two most known food festivals in Ryfylke, the Tomato Festival in Finnøy, and The Norwegian Fruit and Salmon Festival in Hjelmeland will be described more in detail. These festivals are attracting both local inhabitants as well as tourists, and contribute to a greater focus on food in the region.

The Tomato Festival



Tomatfestivalen (The Tomato Festival) was established in 2003, and is arranged in Finnøy annually every August. The festival was established in order to renew the former *Finnøydagane* (The Finnøy Days); a concept that was lacking innovation and experienced a decrease in the number of visitors. Another reason for the development of the tomato theme is due to Finnøy being the largest tomato manufacturer in Norway; their tomato producers deliver more than four million kilos of tomatoes every year (Tomatfestivalen, 2011a).

According to the Tomato Festival organization, the festival should focus mainly on tomatoes and food in general. It should contribute to improve the value creation in Finnøy as well as promoting the municipality and the best from Ryfylke. Further, the organization has pronounced that the Tomato Festival should be an important food festival in Rogaland County (Tomatfestivalen, 2011).

The festival attracted mainly local inhabitants in the start, but according to Skeiseid the number of visitors from outside the region is increasing every year. In 2008, the Tomato Festival organizers conducted a research together with the University of Stavanger, where the results showed that half of the festivals' visitors were arriving from outside the municipality (T.Ø. Skeiseid, personal communication, March 17, 2011).

According to Eivind Hålien (personal communication, January 21, 2011), the Tomato Festival is based on local identity and has become a large success. The festival has the last years become more professional, and the number of visitors is increasing rapidly, from 2,000 in the year of 2002 to 7,000 visitors in 2010, and the festival has a budget of NOK 595,000 in the year of 2011 (Tomatfestivalen, 2011, T.Ø. Skeiseid, personal communication, June 06, 2011).

The Norwegian Fruit and Salmon Festival



Norsk Fukt- og laksefest (The Norwegian Fruit and Salmon Festival) in Hjelmeland in Ryfylke was established in 1995 (Aftenbladet, 2006), and has a goal to offer families a nice day at the festival, where the enjoyment of food is prioritized and in focus. Several important and traditional Ryfylke industries have gotten the opportunity to represent themselves and sell their products, such as fruit producers, and handicraft, aquaculture, agriculture businesses. The festival also offers a cultural element – with both local and national artists (Frukt og Laks, 2011a).

According to Kolbjørn Pedersen, the festival attracted approximately 7,000 visitors during the festival weekend in 2010, and their budget for 2011 is NOK 1.2 million (K. Pedersen, personal communication, May 29, 2011).

5.2.3.7 Future Food Attractions in the Ryfylke Region.

Frode Selvaag (personal communication, June 7, 2011) believes that a potential food attraction in the Ryfylke region could include the fish farm industry. He argues that visitors in Ryfylke might have been interested in knowing more about all the fish farms they see in the region, and how they are operated. He suggests establishing a visitor center, like the

Akvasenter in Hardanger. Selvaag is participating in an academy on behalf of Marine Harvest, named *Kveiteakademiet* (The Halibut Academy) where he educates groups from all over the world in the life-cycle of the halibut. Selvaag believes that more people would be interested in seeing how the fish farms are being operated, and that such a visitor center might improve Ryfylke as a food destination, and he adds: *“Is this something that might be combined with the tourism industry? Such actions do not necessary need to be too costly”* (F. Selvaag, personal communication, June 7, 2011). Selvaag then points out that Marine Harvest, because of their strong financial situation, might be able to take the initiative to finance such a project, which might benefit the whole region.

According to Selvaag, a possible obstacle for development of new food attractions in the Ryfylke region is that the inhabitants are modest and a bit naïve. Even though a farmer in Ryfylke might be producing the best raw materials in the world, he will not admit it. Selvaag emphasizes the importance of being proud of Ryfylke’s own products in order to enhance their self-esteem as well as making it available for a larger market (F. Selvaag, personal communication, June 7, 2011).

5.2.4 Food Networks in the Ryfylke Region

Below, the study will introduce the reader to the present food network in Ryfylke, named Smaken av Ryfylke.

5.2.4.1 Smaken av Ryfylke.

Finnøy Næringsshage and Ryfylke Livsgnist are participating in a project named Smaken av Ryfylke (The Taste of Ryfylke). The project’s goal is to mobilize for a common network and an arena for small-scale producers in the Ryfylke region, where common understanding of identity and quality is linked to the brand name Ryfylke. The network will cooperate towards an improved market access, distribution, sale and promotion of specialties from the region (Finnøy Næringsshage, 2011).

As mentioned above, The Taste of Ryfylke is a project that wants to gather the small-scale producers in Ryfylke. Sigve Skretting is a member of the board that is working with this project, and according to him the organization wants to find out how they can manage to introduce the food producers to a larger arena in order to sell more: *“I think that the commercial benefits are important; that the network can benefit each individual actor. The tourism part of this is crucial”* (S. Skretting, personal communication, May 27, 2011).

Skretting (personal communication, May 27, 2011) further argues that Ryfylke might be too small to have an efficient network, and raises the question of whether the rest of the county should be included:

It might be right that Ryfylke is the initiator, but I think Rogaland must be a part of it. There is a large potential, but there is a lot of work to be done. It is crucial that already established partners within the tourism industry must be the leading actor, or at least be active when commercializing such a project.

Frode Selvaag raises the question of if the Taste of Ryfylke project will succeed. He argues that it will be difficult to gather all the actors, and highlights the absence of commercial activities in the network as a reason to why businesses in the Ryfylke region might not want to join in. Selvaag believes that the chefs are not interested in paying NOK 20 more per kilo of locally produced meat through this organization, when they can buy it directly from the farmers to a lower price: *“You have Rørosmat and Gudbrandsdalsmat that have done this before; they have made the products more expensive”* (F. Selvaag, personal communication, June 7, 2011).

5.2.4.2 Future Food Networks in the Ryfylke Region.

In the future, Selvaag argues that it could be beneficial to gather the different actors in the food and tourism industries in one union, in order to strengthen the team spirit; that they collaborate and pull the wagon together: *“It will be important to motivate them and enhance*

the feeling of how good the raw materials we are possessing is. We need to be more proud of our products, and then we will be able to improve” (F. Selvaag, personal communication, June 7, 2011). Selvaag also argues that a problem in Ryfylke is that no one grudges others’ success, and then it is hard to develop products or businesses.

5.2.5 Food Destination Marketing

5.2.5.1 Reisemål Ryfylke.

The destination company, *Reisemål Ryfylke* (Destination Ryfylke), has the overall marketing responsibility for the five membership municipalities; Sauda, Suldal, Hjelmeland, Strand and Forsand. Finnøy Municipality is not a member of the destination company, even though it is highlighted in their web page that tourism is one of three important industries in the municipality (Finnøy Kommune, 2011). According to Tor Øyvind Skeiseid this absence is due to Finnøy Municipality’s bad financial situation, and consequently they have had to give tourism a lower priority (T.Ø. Skeiseid, personal communication, March 17, 2011).

Frode Selvaag says that *Reisemål Ryfylke* is the most active initiator in Ryfylke, and highlights the importance of having a destination company that is proud of the resources in the region. He adds that collaboration between the municipalities, the public, and the destination companies, is important for development. Selvaag believes in not trying to copy others when developing products. Even though *Reisemål Ryfylke* is doing a good job, Selvaag argues that they have some challenges. As they are not directly involved in selling their members’ products, Selvaag claims that the members do not obtain the wanted outcome of the membership in the destination company (F. Selvaag, personal communication, June 7, 2011).

The study has previously highlighted the importance of marketing a destination and the use of the Internet as a marketing channel. It was investigated what information regarding food and food tourism that was available in *Reisemål Ryfylke*’s web page; www.ryfylke.com.

Shortly, there was not much information to find regarding food or food tourism in any of the four available languages: Norwegian, English, German and Dutch. The only information in the web page regarding food was written under the heading *Accommodation*. Only a few sentences are written about the local food on the respective pages, and a list of restaurants and other eating establishments is illustrated (Ryfylke, 2001d).

A Google.com search on “*Mat Ryfylke*”, found Reismål Ryfylke’s web page listed as number ten. “*Food Ryfylke*” returns a positive search result, as their web page holds three out of the five top listings. The search phrase “*Restaurant Ryfylke*” returns a result where Reismål Ryfylke’s web page is represented in three of the top six listings. The results of the search phrase “*Lokal Mat Ryfylke*” is uplifting, as the web page holds the two top listings, and when typing the similar English phrase “*Local Food Ryfylke*”, their web page holds two of four of the top listings.

6. Discussion and Recommendations

This study aimed towards investigating the potential of the Stavanger and Ryfylke regions as food destination, suggest alternative ways of improving, and how to fully exploit the potential of the regions. During the interview process, the study has found a full agreement among the interviewees concerning Stavanger and Ryfylke's potential to grow as food destinations. It is clear that the food tourism initiatives in the regions are lacking organizing and structure, and needs new initiatives and concrete strategies to achieve growth and exploitation of the potential.

The study will emphasize some of the areas that have a large potential in being developed. Further, specific suggestions to improvements within these fields of marketing will be discussed, in addition to network and attraction development, as well as a proposition for recommendations.

The Food County Rogaland has excellent raw materials and resources available, and has built a strong reputation of being the leading food county in Norway. The Stavanger and Ryfylke regions have a lot to offer food wise, with high quality produce as well as professional tourism related businesses providing the food product to the consumer in different ways. Both the regions have the resources they need to develop a food and tourism product they can make good money on. The question is if today's labor market in the region can put a stop to this development.

Hall (2003, 2011) argues that every destination is individual and must focus on their own strengths. The Stavanger and Ryfylke regions are in many ways similar due to their large food produce, but also very different. The city of Stavanger is a natural meeting point in the food county, and the Stavanger region's largest advantage is the amount of eating establishments, as well as the professional culinary milieu. The strengths of the Ryfylke region in terms of food tourism are the genuine producers, the natural and cultural landscape,

as well as large cornerstone companies that keep the rural areas alive. Food tourism is also seen as a way for rural destinations to develop as it increases their revenue, and contributes to the employment (Barcelona Field Studies Centre, 2011).

6.1 Food Destination Marketing

du Rand, Heath and Alberts (as cited in Hall, 2003) believe that food tourism should not be underestimated in terms of destination marketing. In the regions of Stavanger and Ryfylke, the food aspect has to some degree been utilized in destination marketing, but the study show more potential in branding both regions as food destinations. According to Kairos Future travel trend survey (as cited in Innovation Norway, 2010), globalization increases the global competition, and tourists tend to choose experience before destination. Hjalager and Richards (2002) claims that food products with regional identity can help a destination differentiate from other destinations.

6.1.1 Online Marketing

According to tourism trends, Internet will increase in popularity as a helpful tool for businesses to provide information about available food, offers, as well as reviews and solutions for reservation and discounts, in restaurants all over the world (Hotel & Resort Insider, 2011b). A website with high quality functionality and design is important, as one trend is that food tourists are more likely than other tourists to plan and research their future destinations online (Yfactor, 2010). The study shows that both Region Stavanger and Reisemål Ryfylke need to enhance their food focus on their web pages. Comparing them to the web pages of the previously mentioned food destinations; Scotland, Sweden, Canada and South Africa, Region Stavanger and Reisemål Ryfylke have some work to do before they reach the same level. These destinations are actively utilizing tempting pictures, engaging texts and map solutions. In addition, restaurants reviews, interviews with chefs, food routes, movies, as well as information about the country's and the local cuisine are mentioned.

The study shows that both Region Stavanger and Reismål Ryfylke have a great potential in updating their web pages with a larger focus on food, and insert more inspiring pictures and text, which will tempt the traveler. Selvaag (personal communication, June 7, 2011) emphasizes the importance of that the Ryfylke inhabitants show that they are proud of the regions' possession. It is also important to be visible in the online search engines, such as Google. The study has shown that Region Stavanger might be able to do a much better job at being among the top search results and make their web page more visible in the different search engines by for instance utilizing Search Engine Optimization (SEO). The Ryfylke search results indicate that the destination marketing organization Reismål Ryfylke has had more success with their online marketing compared to Region Stavanger; regardless of what they have achieved is done on purpose or not.

It might benefit the regions to create a map solution where the travelers can plot in their travelling route, as well as interests (history, religion, hiking etc), wants (local food, ecological food, gourmet food etc) or demands (e.g. food allergies/intolerances), and get suggestions to routes or places to visit or eat, based on their preferences. Kairos Future trend survey (as cited in Innovation Norway, 2010) shows that the new travelers are becoming more professional and travel both self-made tours, and package tours. An idea might be that the tourists themselves are able to choose between elements of a package tour, and make a combination of accommodation, food experiences and other activities as they wish.

In addition, it would be beneficial for the travelers if it was possible to find information on local food producers and where to find them. It might be interesting for the tourist to know more about what the local eating establishments has to offer, from international cuisine to the local cuisine. The tourists might also be encouraged to change their eating habits and bring some of their new impulses back home, and it would gain the tourist if recipes were available online, or if movies of celebrity chefs cooking traditional

dished are available. Another possibility is to link the web pages to social media, as Facebook or Twitter, where people could share experiences and pictures from their visits in the region.

The study found that the German tourists are the third most frequent visitors to the Stavanger region, and is listed second in the Ryfylke region. As mentioned in Region Stavanger's annual report for 2010, the Germans are the second most frequent visitor to the destination company's webpage (Region Stavanger, 2011f), and it is therefore remarkable that Region Stavanger's web page only is translated to English. Reismål Ryfylke's web page is on the other hand translated into English, German and Dutch, satisfying most frequent visitors in the region. By comparison, Gothenburg in Sweden has 15 available languages in their web page.

As Internet is today's greatest source of information, one should believe that the destination marketing companies would realize its importance and be interested in being among the top listings of every search that concerns food and Stavanger, or food and Ryfylke. As the study has found food to be less promoted in Region Stavanger's material, it is remarkable that the destination marketing organization claims to have food as one of their three main focus areas. Gunhild Vevik (personal communication, May 19, 2011) argues that the lacking information on food in their web page is due to the absence of a common message to highlight.

6.1.2 New Target Group

As Region Stavanger is not marketing the food aspect alone, only in combination with the MICE market, this is an area with great potential for the organization to increase their marketing activities, and achieve a greater market willing to spend and leave money in the region. Hall (2011) argues that food tourism initiatives in a destination may contribute to increase the visitors' expenditure on local products, and make them stay longer in the region. According to Telfer and Wall (as cited in Kim, Eves & Scarles, 2009), one-third of all tourist

holiday expenditures are related to eating out. The study has shown that the Stavanger region is not the only destination lacking food tourism promoting, as Handszuh (as cited in Hall, 2003) argues that this is a global issue. Region Stavanger should see the importance of enhancing the marketing of the food aspect in their product.

The value of marketing the regions' healthy raw materials is something Region Stavanger and Reismål Ryfylke can take advantage of when planning marketing activities towards their German target groups, as the Germans are more than average interested in healthy food and wellness (Agriculture and Agri-food Canada, 2010). According to Kairos Future (Innovation Norway, 2010), another target group to highlight is the fairly elderly with a lot of spare time, bulging wallets, and a focus on being and eating healthy. From a financial point of view, they see a large potential in developing healthy products to suit them. The elderly prioritize using money on experiences, which often includes food. This group also includes the *empty nesters* between 45 and 55, well educated with a high income, and where the children are no longer a part of the household (Barcelona Field Studies Centre, 2011).

6.2 Food and Tourism Network Development

Hall et al. (2003) mention one way of creating a local network in order to enhance the link between the producer and consumer. Improving the relationships between the actors regarding branding, promotion, sharing of knowledge and increasing competence etc, will benefit the participating actors, as well as making it easier for consumers to get hold of their desired products both from the farm outlet as well as or served in their favorite restaurant.

Lifting the small-scale producers is one of the reasons for wanting to create a food and tourism network, as it has been highlighted by many different how important it is to for the farmers to have many strings to their bows. In the Niagara region in Canada, they have noticed benefits of the collaboration, for instance that the members communicate better, it reduces economic leakages, as well as stimulating to new produce in the area. According to

Hjalager and Richards (2002), the local food enhances a destination's tourism products while the tourists increase the producers market. For the Stavanger and Ryfylke regions collaboration like this might make it easier for the tourist to find the different activities and producers, which again might influence the visitors to stay longer in the area and leave a larger proportion of money. In addition this could consequently stimulate production of new or several kinds of raw materials in the regions.

Eivind Hålien (personal communication January 21, 2011) sees a great challenge in tourism, where small actors with a bad financial situation become freeloaders and take advantage of others' activities and effort. Being a part of a larger network organization might get them to see what advantages they will gain, and how strong they will get when partnering with other actors. Hålien also believes that small actors will have more power to implement together with other actors. Together with others they will also be stronger marketing wise as it will be easier to finance and get out information to their target groups. It is interesting to take a look at the Scottish example from the Isle of Arran Taste Trail, where a commercial business has initiated collaboration between all the links in the food chain, from producers to restaurants and others who use the raw materials or sell the food. As a result of this network, a guidebook was made, and this initiative led to visitors being more interested in local food, as well as spending more money out eating and buying local produce, as well as it contributed to the visitors wanting to re-visit (Boyne, Hall & Williams, as cited in Hall, 2003). The researchers do not believe in copying, but by being inspired. Hall (2003, 2011) argues that destination should focus on their uniqueness. Using the network to create some kind of guidebook to promote the different food and tourism actors in the Stavanger region, could be an interesting angle of approach. This would also be a product that the Ryfylke region would have benefitted from developing.

In the Stavanger region the only existing food network is Matfatet Jæren, which contains 31 members, and their goal is to strengthen the food industry in the Jæren region (Matfatet Jæren, 2011a). In their web page, Matfatet Jæren claims that they are focusing towards the tourism industry, but the study have not found any implemented activities that show this. The food network needs to improve its tourism focus by increasing the group of members and attaching more tourism related businesses from the whole Jæren area, such as restaurants, hotels, museums and adventure businesses. By including more actors the network might be strengthened, and more easily being able to communicate a common and trustworthy message to the public.

Smaken av Ryfylke is a food network with an aim to establish a regional cooperation and an arena for the small-scale producers in the Ryfylke region. It will be important to combine tourism related businesses with food businesses in the network to be able to commercialize their activities and make money. As mentioned by Boyne, Hall and Williams (as cited in Hall, 2003), the fields tourism and food are being drawn together by policy makers at a strategic level, and being implemented by developing organizations. The Minister of Agriculture and Food, Lars Peder Brekk once said that the agricultural businesses have been best at producing, and the tourism industries have been best at selling (Regjeringen, 2009). A combination of these two might be the way to make a profit. Frode Selvaag (personal communication, June 7, 2011) says that he cannot understand the reason for building a network without commercial interests, and claims that some businesses might neglect to join the network due to this. Sigve Skretting (personal communication, May 27, 2011) believes that the commercial part of the network is important, that it needs to benefit each individual actor. The actors must see clearly what they can gain from joining the network, and this way it will be more interesting to be a part of it. A network that does not pay back will not be interesting for anyone.

Sigve Skretting (personal communication, May 27, 2011) holds the opinion that Ryfylke might be too small to have an efficient network, and the similarities can be drawn to the food network Matfatet Jæren. Skretting suggests including the whole county of Rogaland, as Hålien (personal communication, January 21, 2011) also has mentioned. An example to be followed is the previously mentioned network Regional Matkultur in the eastern part of Norway, where 90 participants from different levels in the food sector have taken advantage of local food and specialties, as well as focusing on enhancing the competence of the members. This network has succeeded with collaboration across the county borders, and has been able to evolve from a project to a solid organization. This is a network model that might be modified and adjusted to suit the municipalities of Rogaland. Eivind Hålien (personal communication, January 21, 2011) believes that a coordination of all the food and tourism actors in Rogaland or in the whole Fjord Norway region would benefit one and all. On the other hand he argues that it will not be beneficial to establish a new network, but rather base it in already established professional organizations. Skretting (personal communication, May 27, 2011) also agrees that larger tourism industry actors must be leading or at least participating in the commercializing of such a network.

The study shows that the issue of a food and tourism network might benefit from being brought up at a higher level, for instance initiated by the county municipality, and implemented by the destination companies in the county. As there have been some unsuccessful attempts on network building in different parts of Rogaland, the study shows the importance of having a strong foundation in the development and implementation process of such a network. Sigve Skretting (personal communication, May 27, 2011) claims that the network building must be a long-term process, and not a project oriented initiative starting at one point and finishing at another, without any continuation. The study has also found that long-term investment and financial support is essential, due to the fact that food tourism

destinations need time to development and eventually become a success (Yfactor, 2010). A food and tourism network might strengthen the actors, contribute to competence enhancement, as well as value creation within the food county.

A functioning network might contribute to make more actors see the effect of the network, and want to be a part of it. Collaboration between the municipalities in the region and the county will be important in the start of a development process. Høyre's mayor candidate in Ryfylke, Helene Barkved wants to see the destination companies in Ryfylke, Stavanger and Haugesund to strengthen their collaboration if the political party comes into power after the election in 2011 (Jøssang & Wigestrang, 2011). This might be a great opportunity and maybe the first step on the way to a possible food and tourism network in the county.

The study has earlier mentioned that especially small-scale producers might not join network organizations due to the costs involved with it. Skeiseid (personal communication, March 17, 2011) highlights the importance of long-term thinking, rather than focusing only on today's situation. It is important that a future network is attractive for all actors regardless of size and financial situation, as the different actors might enhance the quality of the network in different ways. The organizers must focus on what a large network might achieve, as well as their members' possible development and growth, instead of spending time collecting membership fees.

Realizing a county network of food and tourism where a professional established organization (e.g. the destination companies) will be in charge is a highlighted proposition in the study. This is based on the fact that a few attempts have been done the last years, but no one has really managed to succeed in combining food and tourism in a network. This might have been due to the networks being small and inefficient. A larger network might increase the market penetration as a larger organization will have more power and ability to get issues

approved. Together they will be financially stronger, able to improve the marketing activities, as well as share information and knowledge of best practice. Hålien (personal communication, January 21, 2011) is not alien to the idea of including the whole Fjord Norway region in a food tourism network, though the county is large enough to run an efficient network if the proper organization is leading it. Further, it might be an idea to continue utilizing the term *Matfylket Rogaland* to name the network, due to its strong associations attached to it.

6.3 Food Attraction Development

Because people are different and attractions are being viewed in different ways (Botti, Peypoch and Solonandrasana, 2008), the Stavanger and Ryfylke regions need to develop attractions to suit several interests.

Eivind Hålien (personal communication January 21, 2011) points out the complexity of the collaboration between food and tourism as they are organized and marketed in different channels. It is nevertheless interesting to see other destinations' food and tourism products as a source to inspiration, and thereby try to develop the already existing attractions in the Stavanger and Ryfylke region, as well as introducing a few new suggestions, as food routes, local food outlet, fish farm visitor center and eating establishments.

6.3.1 Food Route

Canada is a well developed food nation that started introducing food experiences in their already established tourism products, to improve and strengthen their growing cultural tourism market (Telfer & Hasimoto, as cited in Hall et al., 2003). Several food routes has been developed in different Canadian regions, as for instance the successful La Route des Saveurs which contains 25 producers as well as 15 restaurants. A similar food route, named Den Gyldne Omvei, has been developed in the region of Trøndelag in the middle part of Norway. The number of participants in the network is increasing and the participating businesses have experienced positive effects from taking part of it. By common marketing

activities they enhance their position as a tourism destination, and have learned that coordination is better than competition (Eva Wold, 2008). Developing a food route in the Stavanger and the Ryfylke regions consisting of food producers, farm outlets, restaurants/cafés, museums, and other food attractions, could increase the consciousness of the food production in the area. It could also promote and enhance the reputation of the participating businesses. Consequently this food route may stimulate to more visitors, economical growth, larger food production, more work places, migration, and further regional development. According to Hall et al. (2003), food tourism plays an important role when it comes to the issues of economy, policy and identity, markets, consumers and lifestyles in a community.

Arne Hatløy (personal communication, May 5, 2011) in Matsafari suggests establishing a food route in the area of Jæren, and the study has shown that this is realizable due to the amount of producers and food providers, as well as eating establishments with a focus on local food and raw materials. Several businesses have resources available that would fit into such a food route. Jærmuseet with its focus on the modern agriculture; Charles & De's gourmet menu; the great producer Prima Jæren; Jæren Hotel with its local food menu; and Køhlerpaviljongen's produce and serving, should all be considered as satisfactory members, in addition to several others.

Another possibility is to use The National Tourist Route of Jæren as a starting point of a food route. It is remarkable that Jæren is not a part of the project Food along the National Tourist Routes yet, even though Nasjonale Turistveger (2011) has described the area of Jæren as *Norway's food basket* in their web pages. Another product with much potential in the region is the National Tourist Route in Ryfylke, which will be opened in mid-June 2011. Both the Jæren and the Ryfylke National Tourist Routes have a great potential if being part of the food project, which has become a success in Sognefjellet mountain pass where it first was

tested. They have in addition developed an informative and useful leaflet to describe the food route (see Appendix Matbrosjyra for Sognefjellet).

6.3.2 Local Food Outlet

In Årdal in Ryfylke they have established an outlet for local food and other products. Gunhild Vevik (personal communication, May 19, 2011) has an idea of establishing something similar in the city of Stavanger to increase the availability of the local produce. Hall et al. (2003) claims that food tourism could include visiting a built attraction, as this kind of tourism demands that the tourist visits a location and consume, but now it is also possible to bring the food experience back home. This is an initiative that environmentally conscious food tourists also would appreciate, due to emphasizing the support of local businesses to avoid food and products that have been transported longer distances (Hall, 2003). Such a food outlet might benefit the tourist as well as the local inhabitants. A future food outlet in the city of Stavanger should mainly focus on food products, and not accept all kinds of local handicrafts, to avoid becoming “just another souvenir shop”.

Tor Øyvind Skeiseid (personal communication, March 17, 2011) sees an opportunity in establishing a market where the local producers could gather their vegetable, fruit, berries and meat. Such an establishment in the Ryfylke region might complement Ryfylkebutikken and be beneficial when promoting the local food.

6.3.3 Fish Farm Visitor Center

Another food attraction of interest to be developed in the Ryfylke region is according to Frode Selvaag (personal communication, June 7, 2011) a fish farm visitor center. Due to the Ryfylke region’s large fish farm industry, the potential of increasing knowledge and acceptance of this industry to local inhabitants and tourists is present. Such a visitor center might include a guided walk in the fish farm facilities, information exhibition and/or movie that educate the visitor of the life cycle of the fish. In addition it could be interesting to

establish a pure fish restaurant where the visitors can taste meals made of the local farmed fish. Selvaag believes in being creative, and suggests that it would be great having a sushi chef in a restaurant like this. This local food initiative might contribute to bringing the tourist closer to authentic and unique experiences in the host culture, which is discussed by Plummer et al. (2005).

6.3.4 Eating Establishments

According to Wagner (as cited in Hall, 2003) a growing trend is that tourists want to enjoy local food and learn more about the local cuisine. The restaurants and other eating establishments will have a possibility to become tourist attractions, in addition to developing and promoting the local cuisine (Cohen & Avieli, 2004). Eivind Hålien (personal communication, January 21, 2011) argues that Stavanger has many good restaurants, and Eyvind Hellstrøm, which claims that Stavanger is the culinary city in Norway, argues that the best restaurants outside Oslo are located in Stavanger (Aftenposten, 2009). Frode Selvaag (personal communication, June 7, 2011) believes that also the Ryfylke region has many quality eating establishments.

There is a large potential in the Stavanger region becoming a well known food destination in Europe, and in order to get there, the improvements of the eating establishments plays a crucial part. The Stavanger region must be careful when using food establishments as tourism attractions, as this might involve losing elements of the destination's authenticity if food traditions are changed (du Rand, Heath & Alberts, as cited in Hall, 2003). The importance of the high quality eating establishments cannot be neglected if the Stavanger and Ryfylke regions want to improve their positions as food destinations, and it is important that the restaurants in the regions are seen and treated like food attractions.

6.3.4.1 Raw Materials

Several eating establishments in the Stavanger region, as well as in the Ryfylke region, might benefit from improving their quality, especially regarding utilization of local raw materials in their menus. As Hålien (personal communication, January 21, 2011) mentions, many of the middle-class restaurants in the Stavanger region is too expensive in proportion to the quality of the food served, and this is also highlighted by Frode Selvaag (personal communication, June 7, 2011). Today's experienced tourists want high-quality food experiences, and a cuisine that reflects the authenticity of a destination (Hall, 2003). The fact that tourists' food experiences may influence their overall satisfaction of Stavanger and Ryfylke as destinations and harm the destination's identity is important to mention.

The study has shown that strengthening the quality of the restaurants, might contribute to increased food experiences for the tourists and the local inhabitants in both regions. Nield et al. (as cited in Lin, Pearson & Cai, 2011) claims that good food experiences can contribute to re-visit and positive promotion of destinations, in terms of word of mouth.

The study has found that the eating establishments must take advantage of the local raw materials to a larger degree, as the availability and quality of the produce in the region is very good. Utilizing local food might also contribute to strengthen the sustainability of a destination (Handszuh, as cited in Hall, 2003). As Rogaland is seen as the leading food county in Norway, it is crucial that the eating establishments in the region are encouraged and motivated to improve their cuisine and enhance the competence of the restaurant employees.

6.3.4.2 Chef Competence.

As the eating establishments need to improve their quality, this might give the chefs a challenge as well. The food city Stavanger is attracting some of the best Norwegian chefs, but Frode Selvaag (personal communication, June 7, 2011) is worried as the recruitment of young Norwegians to the chef profession has stagnated the last years. On the other hand, he believes

that the increased focus on local food in the eating establishments will push ahead a change in this trend. Selvaag argues that the eating establishments need qualified professional chefs that have the capability to prepare the traditional Norwegian food. The importation of foreign chefs might harm the Norwegian food culture and the eating establishments' ability to serve traditional and local food. According to Fields (as cited in Kim, Eves & Scarles, 2009), the tourist is experiencing a new culture when tasting the local cuisine, which might be harmed if he is served bad food that do not reflect the local cuisine.

The study therefore highlights the importance of having talented chefs in the regions. The Stavanger and Ryfylke regions' positive development and utilization of local raw materials might result in a demand for educated and talented chefs in the future. If the regions want to develop and be highly recognized food destinations on the level with the best in the world, they also need the best chefs. The study has shown that the development of the food academy in Kviamarka in Hå municipality is a long desired initiative that might enhance the quality of the restaurants and the competence of the chefs, as well as increase the recruitment to the profession.

6.3.4.3 Food Award System.

The study has found how to contribute to increase the quality of the restaurants in the Stavanger and Ryfylke regions, based on examples from Västsvensk Mersmak in Sweden and the food award system in Scotland. The idea is to develop and implement an award system of the eating establishments in the two regions. Tourists coming to the area of Stavanger and Ryfylke often want to taste the local cuisine and have a good food experience, but find it hard to locate them. Classifying the eating establishments and giving them awards or rankings in order of their quality, might improve them. A list of the awarded establishments can help the tourist to more easily finding an eating establishment that matches their desires and expectations, also regarding price. An award classification scheme can also be utilized in

order to mark the restaurants to what degree they put local raw materials on their menu. By doing this, the eating establishments might become more aware of using local raw materials in order to get awarded, and the quality of their meals will improve. Making the eating establishments more aware of utilizing local raw materials might also contribute to producers being able to produce new or more products, as well as improving their production facilities. The possible increased demand for local raw materials in the future might stimulate to more work places as the local producers see the opportunity to increase their production. This might again contribute to migration as well as rural and regional development.

If an award classification scheme is introduced in the Stavanger region, such as the Scottish concept of Bronze, Silver and Gold awards to the best eating establishments, there is every indication that the restaurants will do their best to achieve these awards. The evaluated criteria should include service, hygiene, food quality and price, and should be controlled periodically. In this way, the eating establishments have to ensure that the food they serve is of high quality, made of local raw materials, which also might force the local producers to improve the quality of their products. In this way the food destinations of Stavanger and Ryfylke might be strengthened, as the tourists can buy a meal at any awarded restaurant in the region and know that the food is of high quality. It is crucial that such a system is organized properly from the start, that criteria are discussed, and that the concept is considered carefully before introducing it.

Another criteria to include in the food award scheme, is the environmental element. Tourists are increasingly engaged in environmental issues and want to ease their conscience. Kairos Future (as cited in Innovation Norway, 2010) suggests environmental certification to please these travelers, and including it in the award scheme is one way of doing it. Further, studies show that tourists are traveling to Norway due to the country's high environmental standards (OECD, 2010).

According to Kairos Future (as cited in Innovation Norway, 2010), the trends tend towards traveling been decided by the tourists' needs and not by demography as before. Knowing your customers and adapt products to suit their needs, is more important than ever. The number of food allergic tourists is increasing, and will continue to increase in the future. Both Frode Selvaag (personal communication, June 7, 2011) and Vidar Skjæraberg (personal communication, May 30, 2011) experience that more people with food intolerances or allergies than before are eating out, and say that they need to consider what they prepare to their guests. The level of how serious the restaurants perceive the area of food allergies varies. The study has found a good initiative from Massachusetts, USA, where a new regulation forces at least one of the managers in every restaurant to complete a food allergy training course, as well as education of the other employees. In addition the restaurants are controlled several times a year (ABC News, 2010). There is a potential in including a criteria regarding food allergy kitchen hygiene in the award system mentioned above, which might contribute to a safer environment in the eating establishments for the food allergic. Such a project must be systematically controlled by professionals, for instance by the Food Safety Authority in Norway.

There is a less exploited market in the food allergic population, and the study reveals a potential in meeting the demands of these travelers. Showing the food allergic people that the industry takes this seriously, and that the Stavanger and Ryfylke regions are safe to travel in, constitutes a potential for the regions.

6.3.4.4 Farm Restaurant.

In the region of Ryfylke, Frode Selvaag (personal communication, June 7, 2011) misses a good farm restaurant that offers meals with raw materials from their own produce. Hall et al. (2003) sees food as an important component of cultural and heritage tourism and a farm restaurant might be a product that will fit in to both these categories.

The farm restaurant should focus on offering traditional food experiences made with local produce. A farm outlet selling the ingredients used in the farm restaurant's meals in addition to other produce from the farm might increase the tourists' total experience. The study has found that such an initiative might gain the Ryfylke region, if the right primus motor is in charge. As this is an initiative that requires engagement and determination from the farm hosts, such an establishment is not realizable for anybody. In addition, the study has shown that a successful farm restaurant in the Ryfylke region might increase the tourist's total tourism experience, strengthen the smaller attraction and give the region a lift.

6.4 Implications

The study is based on food tourism theory which has been compared to the conditions of the two regions of Stavanger and Ryfylke. It has found areas with development potential, which the recommendations for improvement have been based on. The research has enlightened areas of importance for destinations to succeed in their food tourism development.

This is the first time a research is combining collected data from the food and tourism industries in the regions of Stavanger and Ryfylke, and investigates the potential of exploiting food in tourism development in the regions. This is some of the research value of this study, in addition to the fact that the research has illuminated a little investigated area in tourism theory, namely the food allergic tourist, and attempted to illustrate its potential as a future market.

The research must not be considered as a solution to all problems, but rather as a tool for understanding the phenomena and its position in the regions, as well as a source of creative ideas for growth. The study can be utilized as a starting point for further research on food tourism in the Stavanger and Ryfylke regions, and a resource for food tourism development for actors in several sectors in the industry. The recommendations can be used

as they are, or as a source of inspiration for the destination marketing organizations or other (food) tourism developers in the regions.

The interviewees in the research are well-informed and experienced within their field, but they might only see the big picture and have other opinions than small producers or actors regarding the impact the big decisions would have made on their businesses. The interviewees, influential and important persons in the tourism industry in the regions, will be provided with the results from the study. The researchers see the potential that the results might be evaluated and taken into consideration for further development of the link between food and tourism in the region. In addition, the results will be presented in an open presentation at the University of Stavanger, to students, professors, and professional people from the tourism and hospitality industry. The supervisor of the research, Reidar Mykletun, has also taken initiative to writing an article based on results from this study.

A future research might benefit from including opinions from a larger sample by using mixed methods, and involving the farmers and food producers in the regions, as well as get hold of the opinions of the Stavanger and Ryfylke Municipality Administrations and the Rogaland County Council. Starting off the research with a qualitative approach to map out important issues and topics to obtain an understanding of the food tourism phenomena, and then further developing a survey based on this information. This way the research could have included a larger sample, without the use of the time-consuming interviews, and been able to generalize and get the picture from several angles.

Future research could highlight the areas of the following areas more in-depth.

- Who is the food allergic tourist in the Stavanger and Ryfylke regions, and what does he want?
- What are the Ryfylke region's food producers' thoughts of linking their business to tourism?

- What is the development potential of including food experiences into the MICE market?
- What role does food play in the leisure market in the Stavanger region?

7. Conclusion

The aim of the research was to find out how the Stavanger and Ryfylke regions can exploit their potentials as food tourism destinations. The research was conducted through qualitative interviews that served to explore the field of food tourism in the two regions. The researchers also conducted a secondary research to find out what other growing food destination have done, and what the theory emphasizes in order for a destination to succeed with their food tourism development.

The study revealed a great consensus on the food tourism potential of the two regions, from all the interviewees. Throughout the research it became clear that the two regions are lacking organization and structure, and are in the need for new initiatives and concrete strategies to grow and exploit their potential. The researchers therefore found it appropriate to come up with recommendations for development.

The first research question aimed to reveal the position and today's condition of the Stavanger and Ryfylke regions as food tourism destinations. The study found that the Stavanger region has a strong position food wise, with the culinary city Stavanger, professional milieu, and acknowledged producers in the Jæren area. The study has shown that the development of the region as a food destination has stagnated, and that they need to rethink their strategies towards food tourism. The Stavanger region has the opportunity to arise and develop to be an adequate food tourism destination if they put a little effort into it. The research has also shown that Ryfylke has a weaker position as a food destination than the Stavanger region, naturally due to the fact that the region is rural, less inhabited and consequently less establishments of industries. On the other hand, the food producers in the region are many, and their products are of high quality. The development potential of Ryfylke as a food destination is large, as they have a lot of resources in terms of food producers, natural and cultural resources, and professionals in the fields of food and tourism.

The second research question aimed to find out what elements the regions are lacking to be able to develop satisfactory food tourism destinations. The study found that the Stavanger and Ryfylke regions are missing a network to gather the actors within the food and tourism industries to be able to strengthen each other and exchange competence, and for the food actors to become more visible in the tourism market. The results did also show that the destinations' marketing activities regarding food tourism were lacking or absent, and that there is a large potential in increasing the effort.

The third research question had an aim to investigate what the regions can do to develop and improve as food tourism destinations. The researchers have identified three areas with potential to improve within marketing, network development and attraction development. Most of the recommendations are addressed to both regions, if not specified. The suggested recommendations are as follows:

Marketing

- Online marketing
 - Improve the web pages' functionality and design regarding food tourism
 - Create map solutions with food tourism alternatives
 - Increase available languages, at least German (Region Stavanger)
- New target group
 - Healthy and food conscious travelers

Network development

- Food and tourism network
 - Establish a network in the county of Rogaland
 - Guidebook of food and tourism establishments/activities

Attraction development

- Food route
 - Establish new food routes or take advantage of already established routes
- Local food outlet
 - Establish an outlet of local food in the city of Stavanger
- Fish farm visitor center
 - Develop a fish farm visitor center in Ryfylke
 - Establish a fish restaurant connected to the visitor center
- Eating establishments
 - Increase quality
 - Include more raw materials in menus
 - Increase chef competence
 - Develop a food award system
 - Develop farm restaurant in Ryfylke
 - Satisfy the food allergic tourist's needs and demands

To conclude, the researchers will emphasize the large development potential in both the regions, and see this study as a starting point for the food and tourism industry in the Stavanger and Ryfylke regions to continue the good work that they have started. As mentioned above, it might seem like the food tourism development has stagnated, and need to be started again. If the Stavanger and Ryfylke regions want to develop and grow, they have all the resources they need to start making good money, if today's labor market does not put a stop to it.

Located in the leading food county of Norway the opportunity to succeed is at least more than present. Is it that hard to see the gold mine?

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Appendix

Matbrosjyra for Sognefjellet

Lustramat



Lustramat BA vart stifta sommaren 2006 og har høljande levereik:

- å driva marknadføring, organisering av søl og distribusjon av produkt frå andelsagarane, hovudsaking gjennom "Lustramat-torg i butikken"
- langskuldig merkevarerbygging av "Lustramat", og jelles medverka til positiv profilering av landbruk, reiseliv og matkultur i Luster

Lustramat BA tilbyr mat av høg kvalitet frå 11 produsentar. Våre produkt har lokal forankring, og utvikla på gamle tradisjonar. Vi tilbyr ost, spekepølse, fiskeprodukt, honning, eplemost, nektar, søt og syltetøy i ulike variantar. Ulke typar tefse, tefsefeling, fultbred, pøsekarer og myka.

Lustramat gjer det enklare for deg å få tak i lokale matprodukt.

Våre produkt er også fine gaver når du treng noko til eit spesielt høve, om det er ei bedriftsgåve eller ei privat gåve. Det fell garantert i smak!

Kvalitetskrav:

- produkt er produsert innanfor Luster kommune.
- produkt har forankring i lokalt natur- og kulturgrunnlag.
- produkt er i hovudsak basert på råvarer produsert i det geografiske området nemnt over.
- alle produsentane har godkjenning frå Mattilsynet, og skal oppfylle Krava til ikkemat (internkontroll mat).

Gudbrandsdalsmat

Andelslaget Gudbrandsdalsmat BA har 20 andelsagarar. Målet med Gudbrandsdalsmat er å samle lokale matproducentar til eit samarbeid om marknadsføring, søl og distribusjon av mat frå Gudbrandsdalen. Laget vil arbeide for større mangfald, volum og slagkraft for lokale matproducentar i matkvalden...

For bestilling gå inn på www.gudbrandsdalsmat.no eller ring 975 68 835.



Du kan då bestille produkt frå desse produsentane:

Avdenn Gardsysteri - stort unval av ost og rømme (gardsbutikk)

Aukrust gerd og urteri - ferske eller tørka budyremisak dyrka urter, urte-ostlik, spekepølse, søt og grønnsaker (gardsbutikk)

Bakeriet i Lom - ferske bakervarer (bakeri med kafe)

Brimi Sæter - ost og spekepølse (esterasbas summerstid)

Den grønne dør - sammat bygging og helle bygging

Evind Øveid - ekologisk potet og grønnsaker

Fjellet BA - kvitmeiost og salatost av geitmjølk

Godsmalen BA - ferske ekologiske grønnsaker og urter

Holen Gardsysteri - stort unval av ostprodukt og rømme (gardsbutikk)

Jontunheimen fisk - røykt sik

Kjartveivanna - stort unval av kjøtprodukt (eige utsal)

Lillehammer Stabbursmat - ferske kjøtvarer og spekepølse

Lillehammer Bryggeri - øl (særingsstøtad)

Mogard AS - stort unval av kjøtprodukt og spekepølse (eige utsal)

Skjåkmat AS - stort unval av kjøtprodukt og spekepølse (eige utsal)

Stensgard - spekepølse og tørkt kjøt

Sve Gard - mandelpølse

Syggjed Førborg - poteter, gulrot og kålot

Valbjør - fersalt, spekepølse av gett og billingspølse (gardsbutikk)

Sognefjellet

- over Norge sitt tak

Høgt til fjells langs Nilsen, i majestetisk landskap med spisse tindar og smaragdgrønt vatn. Sognefjellsvegen svingar seg mellom verdens lengste fjord, Sognefjorden, og Gudbrandsdalen. Regionen fekk i 1997 status som den ferske turistvegen i Norge, og stod ferdig opprusta som nasjonal turistveg i 2003.

Frå gammalt av var Sognefjellsvegen ferdselsveg. Fisk og salt frå vest og smic, skinn, jern og fjære frå aust vart frakta på egen rygg eller kløvhest. Vindene fekk ferdeføtoke frøgt over fjellet i all slags vær. På Sognefjellet levte både villrein og lammer, og nedover mot bygdene elg, hjort og ødyr. I høgfjellet trivst om og fjellvåk, i austlege strøk streifer fjørn, øv, geape og jerv, men desse er sjeldne og svært sky.

- Den beste og flottaste turistvegen i Norge
- Europas mest utvokne turiststi (i ei grøntgrønning i 2021)
- Sognefjellet er blitt kåta til beste sykkelruta
- Sognefjellet er eit eldorado for fuluføttinteresserte

(The Goodies, januar 2017)

Fakta om RV 55 Nasjonal Turistveg, Sognefjellet er Nasjonal Turistveg på grunn av:

- den spektakulære naturen i området
- nord - Europas høgaste fjellovengang (1.434 m.o.h.)
- passerer Jontunheimen Nasjonalpark, med Nord-Europas høgaste fjelltoppar (Galdhøppigen 2.469 m.o.h.)
- passerer Postelsbreen Nasjonalpark Nord-Europas største isbre med sine 485 km²
- passerer den ferske delen av Sognefjorden, verdens lengste fjord.



type turismo

Nasjonalparkene

Spillere Food Winery

