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What does the consumer take up? - A case study
on communication in the rural web around the
dairy in Andeer

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"Age is something that doesn't matter, unless you are a cheese."



Abstract

In recent studies emphasis has been put on the analysis of arguments which can be used for small-scale producers to distribute their products in a very demanding and globalised mass market. Based on those results the goal of this study is to find out which aspects are perceived important by the consumers and which information needs to be added to the communication process.

For this purpose the role of consumers and their understanding of the ideas and values communicated by a local dairy within the rural web of the village Andeer in Grisons, Switzerland, is analysed. The local dairy and its marketing strategy are the central focus; the dairy tries to communicate ethical values which go beyond existing organic standards and their commitment to sustainable and traditional processing methods. The philosophy underlying the production process covers a broad range of ideas, e.g. the achievement of high value added, the creation of additional jobs, the reduction of transport distances, the assurance of high and stable milk prices, and the greater valuation of milk from cows with horns. The milk is delivered daily by five local farmers and processed in the dairy. The cheese is distributed via five different channels: directly at the dairy, in local hotels and restaurants, to specialty stores and organic shops via a German and a Swiss cheese trader, and anonymously via the retail marketer Emmi.

Theoretically, the research is based on the concept of 'rural webs' (Ploeg and Marsden 2008) which makes up a comprehensive theory on rural development. The six dimensions which make up the rural web are endogeneity, novelty production, co-production and sustainability, social capital, new institutional frameworks, and the governance of markets.

The study is related to the EU Core Organic Farmer-Consumer partnership project; in this context information has already been collected on communication arguments for marketing additional ethical values of products applied by small-scale organic businesses and related stakeholders.

Based on these findings the perception of the consumers regarding communication of added value is analysed in more detail by conducting a survey among consumers in the different distribution channels and semi-structured interviews. The study reveals that the message received by the consumer strongly depends on the distribution channel through which it has been passed on, the distance between producer and consumer, and the personal interest and values of the stakeholders within each distribution channel. In the end it is advisable to find out about the information paths preferred by the majority of customers and the type of information they are looking for in order to successfully distribute the product. Furthermore it can be recommended to shorten the communication circuit and to engage in direct and personal contact.

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List of abbreviations

EU = European Union

NRLO = National Council for Agricultural Research (Netherlands)

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

Research Background

Globalisation and the growing anonymity of trade is regarded as problematic by many small-scale producers and increasingly opposed by consumers, because it leads to an anonymous, replaceable and homogenous food provision. To counteract this trend a growing number of producers changes from a strategy based on scale-enlargement and intensification to one based on quality and distinction. In the same context more consumers are interested in the origin and traceability of the products they purchase; this ethical consumerism is described as a growing trend worldwide. If small-scale producers implement higher ethical standards in their production process and successfully communicate them, consumers are willing to pay a surplus for products and their added value; especially for regional or local produce that directly supports producers from disadvantaged regions.

So far, various studies have dealt with the arguments that small-scale producers can use to successfully distribute their products in a very demanding and globalised mass market. Just as the EU Core Organic Farmer Consumer Partnership Project in which information has been collected on communication arguments for marketing additional ethical values of products applied by small-scale organic businesses and related stakeholders.

While related to the EU research project, this study changes the perspective. It looks at the aspects that the consumers perceive as important and on aspects they might miss within the communication process.

Background of the EU Core Organic Project on Farmer Consumer Partnerships

The project was aimed at testing and analysing innovative communication strategies of organic companies. The first two work-packages of the project dealt with the question on how additional ethical values in production and processing could be reflected in the communication with the consumer. Therefore areas of concern and expectations of various stakeholders in relation to the use of ethical standards were investigated. Furthermore 'communication arguments' from 100 organic companies and/or farmer groups were identified and categorised. The first results indicated that there are hardly any comprehensive approaches which relate to a specific ethical framework (e.g. IFOAM principles) or other ethical standards; the reason for that could be the difficult accessibility of these concepts for small companies. Most of the farmers or small company owners implemented higher ethical standards due to their personal beliefs and values which were very important, but did not relate to a specific set of standards; economic or market-related reasoning was only secondary (Padel et al. 2008). In this context it was also important to

look at the different associations consumers had with various aspects of food production and the communication of ethical standards; there eventually was a gap between the perception of consumers and the attitude and belief of producers. Thus some farmers or small-scale companies perceived some ethical standards as self-evident, while consumers did not recognise their implementation and advantages.

Activities were mainly carried out by individuals and not in a participatory approach where all the stakeholders were involved. Nevertheless the focus on ethical activities appeared to improve the relation between stakeholders, i.e. mutual learning processes between farmers and processors were observed within the EU Core Organic Project. Research had shown that most of the consumers had limited knowledge about attributes underlying the products they purchase (Padel et al. 2008). The focus on ethical standards was a possibility to optimise the product quality and thus present a niche market for the differentiation of the product, i.e. it could help to improve the strategic positioning in the market place (Padel et al. 2008). Due to the globalisation of the food market and the growing homogenisation of products, the consumer was not only looking for the price of the product but also for an added value when doing the purchase (Lautermann et al. 2005). In order to make use of the consumer's search for added value, it was important to communicate activities in an open and transparent way. Since the companies usually did not have any official verification for their added value, they had to deliver clear criteria and documentation; especially because the market place was getting more and more confusing to the consumer. Thus it was not only important to reveal the process, but also to show goals, results, advances, but also weaknesses, which will eventually build up trust to the consumer (Lautermann et al. 2005). Large corporations most likely introduced ethical activities into their management to improve public relations and company reputation, whereas for small-scale businesses the product differentiation through additional quality or sustainable practices was of higher importance. For smaller companies the word-of-mouth communication was very decisive. The research within the EU Core Organic Project also suggested that consumers prefer direct communication in order to re-establish the relation between consumption and production (Padel et al. 2008).

The investigation on the most promising communication arguments within the EU Core Organic Project resulted in a list of four sub-dimensions, which they can be related to (Fig.1). They included biodiversity, animal welfare, regional production, fairness in relation to farmers, and also in relation to care farms, social aspects of production, and the preservation of cultural features. This list was used for further research within the Farmer Consumer Partnership Project (Padel et al. 2008).

The Andeer dairy was part of the Farmer Consumer Partnership Project. It was one of the twenty enterprises which were chosen for the case studies due to their innovative

communication concepts. In the case study telephone interviews were carried out and written company material was analysed. The results shown in the categorisation-diagram illustrated the different dimensions and the categories within each dimension. The arguments which were used most frequently related to local and regional supply chains within the cultural dimension (Fig.1).

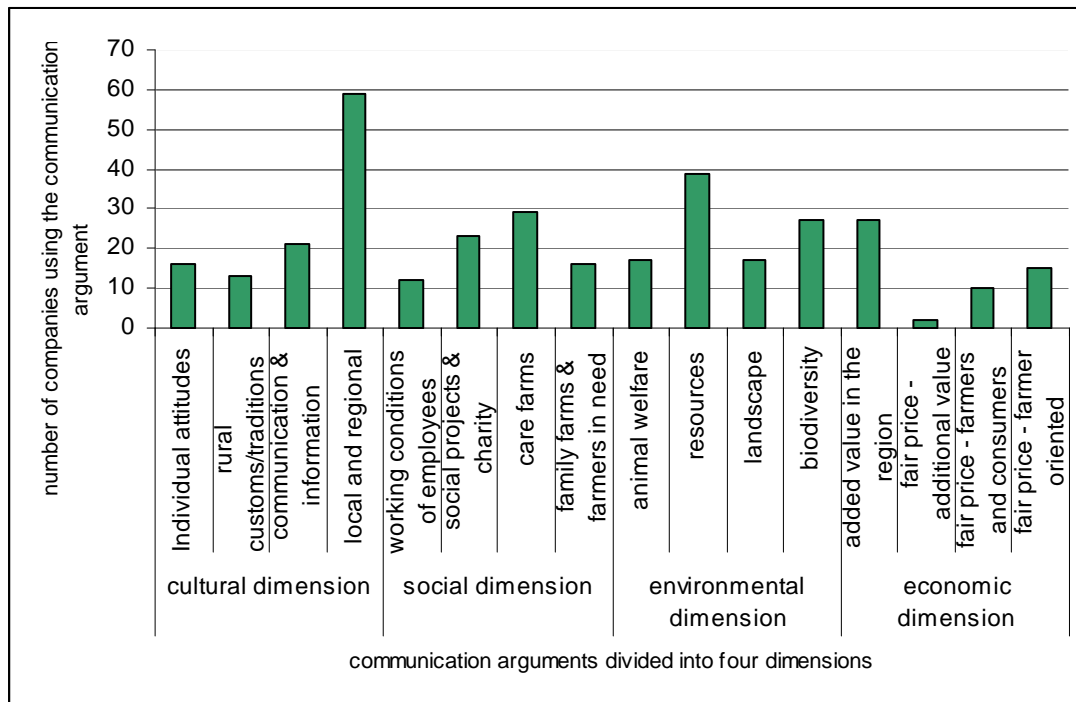


Fig. 1: Categorisation of communication arguments from the companies questioned during the case studies, diagram adapted from Padel & Gössinger, 2008

For analysing the communication of the dairy in Andeer not only the manager but also the farmers and the speciality cheese traders cooperating with the dairy were interviewed in the EU Core Organic Project. The additional activities of the dairy were identified as relating to the following categories: Landscape, resources, family farms and farmers in need, local and regional supply chains, communication and information, rural customs, traditions and originality, as well as living his/her belief. The message the dairy manager wanted to communicate referred to authenticity, traceability and a positive image for organic cheese. He stressed the quality of their cheese and the use of artisan production methods in the marketing. Furthermore he would like to maintain local structures to preserve the village for tourists and inhabitants in a traditional way (Moschitz 2007).

So far in the EU Core Organic Project the main focus was put on communication arguments used by small-scale companies and farmers to communicate their dedication to ethical production standards. Furthermore the concerns and expectations of various stakeholders were revealed. Based on the findings of the EU project, this study deals with the role of consumers in the rural web around the dairy in Andeer which is described in a general way in the next paragraph.

Case Study Andeer

As a case study, the focus is laid on a small dairy in Andeer and the surrounding network. Andeer is a village in the mountainous region of Switzerland in the canton Grisons; the local dairy tries to communicate the linkage between its artisan dairy production, its sustainability, and its contribution to the rural livelihood. Its objective is to maintain the dairy business in this village and to preserve the small-scale structure of the region by selling products with a high value added. Furthermore the dairy manager wants to keep the area attractive for the inhabitants, hotels and restaurants, as well as for tourists. In this context the dairy is looking for a stable group of consumers that understands their underlying philosophy “sustaining instead of growing”. Tourists value the artisanship and locality of the production process. But for maintaining it, its value has to be increased again. “Therefore it is very important to communicate the vision and the underlying principles to the consumers. The clear communication of these values contributes to the survival of the dairy, but also to the development of the rural livelihood in that region” (Sennerei Andeer, website).

The network around the dairy consists of a variety of stakeholders which all influence the development of the region (Fig. 2). Referring to the main goal of the research the emphasis is however put on the linkage between the dairy and the consumers to gain more insight into their role within the network. In this context the different distribution channels from the dairy to the consumer are identified and the perception of the communication, as well as its forwarding through the channel is analysed by surveys and interviews.

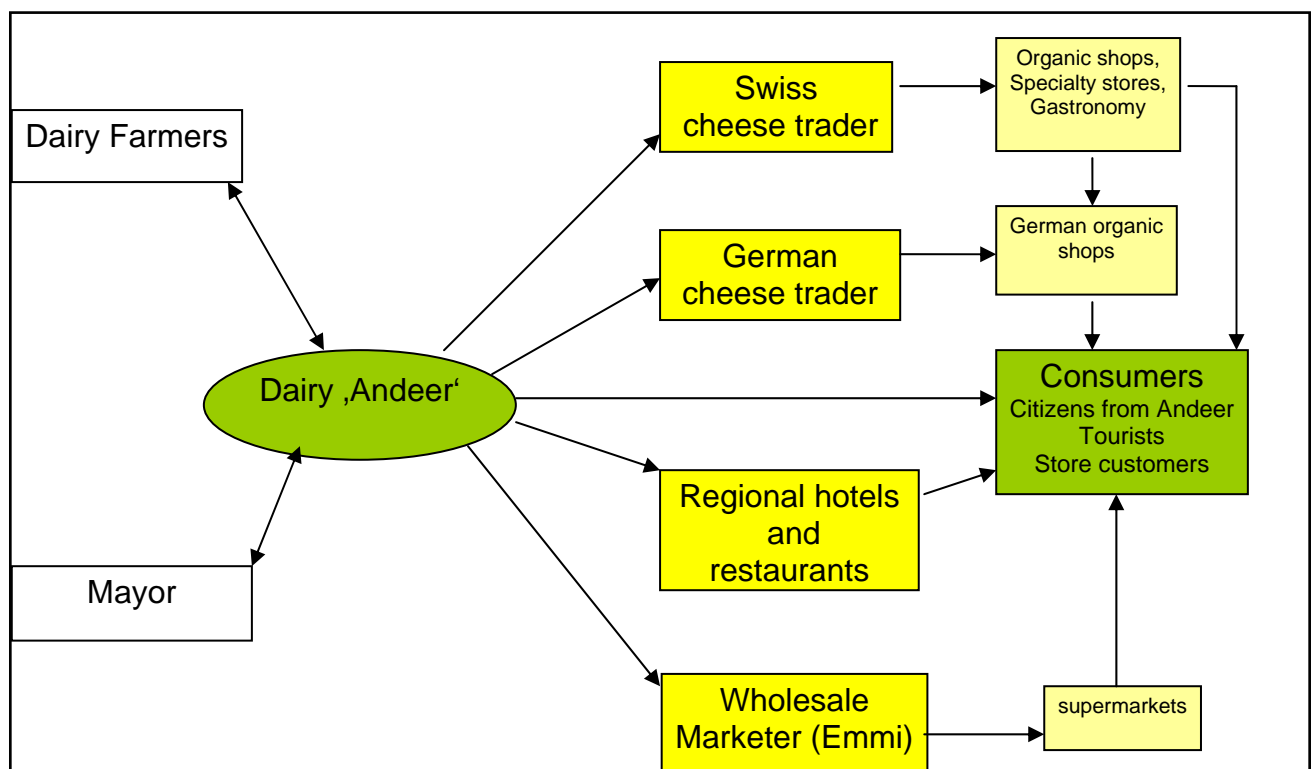


Fig. 2: Overview of the rural web surrounding the dairy, based on the first interview with dairy manager (May, 2009)

1.2. Outline of the thesis

The **first chapter** of the report covers the underlying background with regard to the EU Core Organic Project and gives a short introduction into the case study. In the following part the research objective and the underlying research questions are described and result in the set up of the methodology for this study. In **chapter 2** the theoretical framework of the study is explained and related to current literature on the underlying problem situation. The theory refers to a new framework for the description and analysis of rural development processes based on the idea of 'unfolding rural webs' by Ploeg and Marsden (2008). The 'rural web' links actors, activities, processes, and resources and reveals interactions and mutual influences. Rural development helps to strengthen the web, which is based upon six dimensions, namely endogeneity, novelty production, social capital, co-production & sustainability, new institutional frameworks, and governance of markets. Altogether they reveal multiple functions within the rural web which create a capacity to perform better. The theory on the rural web represents a dynamic way to describe the rural development in a certain region and its specific context. Especially networks based on local resources and personal interaction like the one in Andeer can be presented in a comprehensive way by this theory. The dimensions of the web are embedded into current literature on globalisation, product differentiation, and the changing demands of consumers.

In **chapter 3** the rural web is described in general and discussed in the context of the theoretical concept. The focus is changed in **chapter 4**; the part of the rural web, which covers the relation between the producer and the consumers, is analysed in more detail. Chapters 3 and 4 basically build on the content analysis of the qualitative interviews, while **chapter 5** also takes the results of the survey into account. In chapter 5 the message of the dairy is presented and the perception of this message by the different groups of consumers is discussed. In the concluding **chapter 6** the peculiarities of the rural web are summed up and the theoretical concept of the study is evaluated, i.e. it is assessed whether the underlying theory was appropriate for this research. Finally reflections on current literature are presented and possible recommendations are delivered.

1.3. Research objective

The objective of the practical research is to gain insight into the roles of consumers within the rural web, especially into the aspects which they recognise and regard as important within the communication process. For a better understanding this objective has been established in the context of the rural web around the Sennerei Andeer. The goal is to analyse the web and describe the relation between the dairy and the consumers in a comprehensive way; this

dairy was chosen as it has already been part of the EU Core Organic Project on Farmer Consumer Partnerships and serves as a good example for a business with a successful marketing strategy and a small-scale enterprise with the integration of ethical standards. This part of the research will be empiric, as it is based on the production of insights and knowledge as well as on already existing research related to this dairy and its philosophy.

The theoretical objective of this study is to determine whether the approach of 'unfolding webs' is appropriate for answering the research questions within this study. The research is carried out with the concept of rural webs, which makes up a comprehensive theory on rural development.

1.4. Research questions

1. What does the rural web of the Andeer dairy look like? What are the different stakeholders, their roles and interrelations?
2. What are the characteristics and details of that part of the web displaying the relation between the dairy and its consumers?
 - Which distribution channels can be determined, starting at the dairy and ending with the consumer?
 - To what extent does the way of communication and the content differ in these distribution channels?
3. Which are the aspects of the communication that are perceived as important by the consumer? What are the perceptions of consumers in the different distribution channels?
4. How can the results of this study contribute to the research on communication of ethical values against the background of the 'Organic Plus' idea within the EU Core Organic project? Is it possible to give advice on how to improve the communication with the results revealed in this study?

1.5. Methodology

Development of the research idea and the procedure

As mentioned above the starting point of the study in hand was the EU Core Organic Project on Farmer Consumer Partnerships and therefore the first report of the project served as the background for the development of the research objective. Due to those results and the experience of the researchers from FiBL involved in the project, the dairy of Andeer was chosen as a case study for answering the research questions based on qualitative and

quantitative research methods, i.e. semi-structured interviews and surveys. The research questions were developed in an intense discussion with two FiBL researchers. The working procedure resulted from a first interview with the manager of the dairy in Andeer. Thereby the stakeholders of the network and the different distribution channels were identified; this served as a baseline for the set-up of the research. In addition the movie which was released about the dairy in Andeer provided a first source of background information.

Stakeholders in the network

The network is made up by the local farmers, who deliver milk to the dairy, the mayor of Andeer, local hotel and restaurant managers who offer cheese from the dairy, the Swiss and German cheese trader, as well as the manager of specialty stores selling cheese from Andeer. As a matter of course the consumers of cheese from Andeer also belong to the network and are part of its different channels. Consumers have to be differentiated due to the point of purchase of the cheese. There are consumers buying the cheese directly at the dairy and consumers buying the cheese in specialty stores across Switzerland. In addition guests of the local hotels are regarded as potential consumers and also covered in this study. Consumers purchasing cheese from Andeer outside of Switzerland, however, were not included in this study.

The dairy manager gave support in getting contact with the different actors in the network. For describing the rural web and the stakeholders involved, semi-structured interviews were carried out.

Semi-structured interviews

The interview guideline was developed according to the research questions which had to be answered; the preparation of the qualitative interviews and the interviewing procedure was elaborated with the help of available literature resources (Flick 1995; Ritchie and Lewis 2003). The guidelines were the same for each interviewee in a group of stakeholders, but differed among the groups. Differentiations were only made if necessary, because of the different roles of stakeholders within the network. Big differences were avoided in order to keep the answers comparable. Interviews were recorded and observations as well as important aspects were written down during the interviews. Directly after the interviews they were scanned again and the list of important aspects was completed. The material collected from the interviews was evaluated based on different techniques found in literature resources, mainly following the procedure of a 'qualitative content analysis' (Flick 1995; Ritchie and Lewis 2003). The notes taken during the interview were enhanced by the information recorded on the tapes. The information was scanned and links to the different dimensions of the theoretical concept were drawn. To get a good overview on the results from the interviews, each respondent's answers were enlisted in a table with the dimension

as columns. One additional column covered general information which could not be directly related to one dimension.

Interviewees chosen for the study

As the part of the web related to *the farmers* is less important for meeting the research objective, only two of five local farmers were chosen for interviews. Their answers contributed to the creation of a complete picture of the rural web. They were chosen randomly depending on their schedules and availability during the interviewing period. Both interviews were carried out at the respective farm house and the same set of questions was used. One interview, however, could not be recorded, as it was held while the family was sitting together around the kitchen table. Therefore more detailed notes were taken and additional comments were added right after the interview.

The mayor was interviewed to get a clearer picture of the role of tourism in Andeer and the citizens' attitude towards their dairy. The interview took part in the bar of the local hotel 'Fravi' in Andeer.

The managers of four local hotels using cheese from Andeer were interviewed at their respective hotels. Two hotels, Hotel Piz Vizan and Hotel Bergalaga, are located further away from Andeer and had to be reached by bus, while the hotels 'Weisses Kreuz' and 'Fravi' are located directly in Andeer. The interviews were carried out to get more insight into their reasons for choosing cheese from Andeer and to broaden the picture on the role of tourists as stakeholders in the web. The interviews took part in the respective hotels and were all recorded; additional notes about the progress of the interview were taken as well.

Outside of Andeer interviews were carried out with *two cheese traders*. The German cheese trader who owns the company 'Biokäse-Spezialitäten' and distributes organic cheese from different European countries in Germany was interviewed by phone. The phone call was recorded and additional notes were written down. The Swiss cheese trading company is called 'Chäs & Co'. The interview was arranged with the person in charge of marketing and distribution at 'Chäs & Co' in Zürich.

Additional qualitative questions for customers in Andeer

During one week customers were directly confronted with the survey, because they were asked additional qualitative questions. Hence the completion of the forms was done together with the customers; responses were also tape-recorded and additional notes were taken. 24 customers were surveyed in this way. The reason for that was to receive additional qualitative data and to observe if the survey was comprehensive for the respondents and produced meaningful answers. Thereby it was possible to get a better insight into their ideas

and attitudes, which is very important to deliver comprehensive results in a case study. Moreover 26 surveys were filled in by the dairy customers themselves and sent back to the research institute after an appropriate number was reached.

Survey

In order to receive also quantitative data a survey was created, which was laid out in different places. The development and composition of the survey took place based on a literature study and was repeatedly revised in discussions with FiBL co-workers.

The cheese trading company 'Chäs & Co' provided contact details of specialty store managers who sell cheese from Andeer. Seven store managers agreed to assist with the distribution of surveys to their customers and to be available for an interview. The stores were visited and the interviews were carried out directly with the store manager. Fifteen surveys were left at each store with the request to hand one to each customer after purchasing cheese from Andeer. The response rate was very low, so that ten more surveys were sent to four specialty stores, where returns seemed to be the most promising.

Surveys were also distributed in the dairy in Andeer and in three of the local hotels, namely 'Fravi', 'Piz Vizan', and 'Weisses Kreuz'. The response from the hotel guests was quite low as well; only 15 surveys out of 75 were returned. Due to the small response rate the focus was rather put on the qualitative analysis of the open survey questions in combination with the interviews than on the quantitative analysis. Quantitative results were used to underpin findings from the interviews.

The survey questions were slightly changed depending on the location where they were laid out, but only to a small extent so that the outcome was still comparable.

The answers from the surveys were to a large extent qualitative, as the questions were posed in an open way; the responses therefore were put in a table to create an overview of the respondents' characteristics (i.e. on demographical and personal information) and the responses given most frequently to the open questions. The three quantitative questions of the survey, where several boxes could be marked with a cross, were enumerated and put into an excel-table for further evaluation. Thereby it could be revealed which aspects of the dairy's philosophy are best known by the consumers and which aspects are the most or least important. Further on all answers for each individual respondent were put in SPSS tables; three different tables, one for each survey location (i.e. dairy, hotel, and specialty store), were created. To highlight important relations between variables, crosstabulation was used.

2. Theoretical Framework

This part of the study deals with the underlying theoretical concept and its relation to literature. Literature reveals results from recent research, mainly related to globalisation, alternative food networks, organic production, and consumer behaviour; thus it contributes to a comprehensive and coherent framework for this study. At first the theoretical framework and its composition is described. After that the literature is related to the four dimensions, which are relevant for this study.

2.1. The concept of rural webs

The **theoretical concept** underlying this study is based on a new framework which integrates the nature, the dynamics and the heterogeneity of rural development processes (Ploeg et al. 2008). This framework for rural development is referred to as the concept of rural webs. As explained by Marsden and Ploeg (2008) a rural web is “a complex set of internally and externally generated interrelationships that shape the relative attractiveness of rural spaces, economically, socially, culturally, and environmentally” (preface vii (Ploeg and Marsden 2008)). The concept is an attempt to create a theory which can present and explain the role of agriculture in a more holistic and comprehensive way than earlier approaches. It is thereby supposed to help the understanding of resources, activities, exchanges, and networks involved in the development of rural areas. Moreover it aims at explaining the way in which rural development processes develop and how they perform in the context of competitiveness, innovativeness, and sustainability (Marsden and Ploeg 2008). The rural web consists of all the stakeholders, as well as their activities and interactions; from the point of view of Marsden and Ploeg (2008) relations can only be beneficial, if they are embedded in a strong social network based on trust and reliability. Hence, a well-grounded rural web can positively influence the rural livelihood and local economy. Due to the complexity of rural webs the network is multilayered and consists of various actors; the more relations and combination there are the higher is the density of that web. Furthermore rural webs are dynamic and evolve over time.

From a theoretical point of view the network consists of six dimensions which highlight particular features and make up the “key conceptual building blocks” (Marsden and Ploeg 2008). They are derived from attempts at theorising rural development processes and literature on development. Those theoretical dimensions are *endogeneity, novelty production, co-production & sustainability, social capital, institutional arrangements, and governance of markets*; they contain specific characteristics but cannot be separated from each other as they mutually influence each other (Fig.3). The relevance of certain dimensions for this research and related literature will be explained later in this chapter.

In general it is important to integrate relations, synergies, and external influences in the discussion of the web in order to make it meaningful. It is not only useful for a comprehensive description and understanding of the underlying interaction, but also for the identification of underutilised capacities (Ploeg et al. 2008).

Since the **research objective** of the study is to analyse the role of consumers, as well as the communication within the different distribution channels, this theory has been chosen as its concept. It is expected to reveal particular features of the different relations which influence the outcome of the communication process and the perception of the communicated message. Each dimension of the rural web represents one part of the network in Andeer and relations between the dimensions mirror interaction and cooperation of stakeholders. Communication can be equalised with interaction; figure 3 shows that interaction is a very important feature of the rural web, so that it presents a good basis for the evaluation of the communication process in the rural web; the threads of the web can be regarded as the communication channels. Hence the intertwinement of dimensions in the network reveals the peculiarities of the communication in Andeer.

In this context one can also change the perspective and turn back towards the theoretical objective of this study; thereby the aim of describing communication with the dimensions can mean an opportunity to test the application of the concept of the rural web with the help of communication.

Resulting from the dairy's vision on the maintenance of a sustainable dairy business and the cultural and natural landscape in the mountains, the contents and the way of communication might have an influence on the development of the rural web in Andeer. Meaningful cooperation within the rural web, especially among the stakeholders in the different distribution channels, may result in mutual benefits for all stakeholders involved. These, however, have to be recognised before they can be applied effectively. Unfolding the activities and relations of the dairy in Andeer along the dimensions of the rural web, helps to analyse and evaluate the potential of the dairy and its communication in terms of rural development and viability. It might be revealed how the direction and strength of relations are linked to a successful communication of the dairy and its influence on the consumers. Furthermore the application of the rural web indicates the extent to which rural development is enhanced by the dairy's activities and the potential of the rural web which is not yet fully exploited.

Summing up, the six dimensions represent the resources which are available in a certain region and the ways in which they are combined, interlinked and can influence further development. Processes which unfold along one dimension only become meaningful for rural

development if they link to other dimensions. The unfolding of the dimensions and their interactions are displayed in the introductory diagram of the rural web; the inner circle shows how the connection of individual building blocks contributes to the introduction of diverse and multiple functions and the integration of different sectors in the rural web (Fig.3).

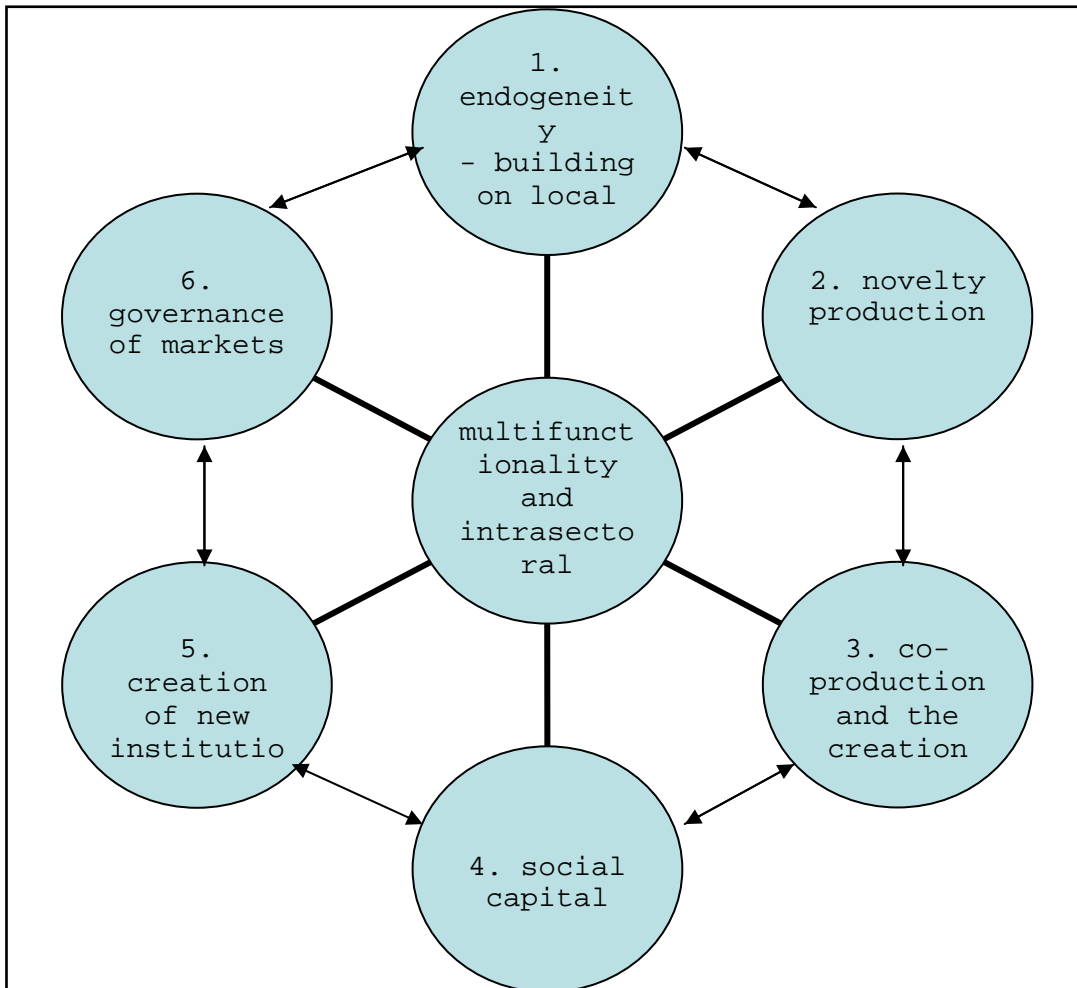


Fig. 3: An introductory outline of the rural web, based on the six dimensions of the rural web explained by Ploeg and Marsden, 2008

In the first research question the focus is put on a general description of all stakeholders and their activities which have an influence on the rural development process and the utilisation of resources. For this part of the study the dimensions 'novelty production' and 'endogeneity' are used, because they seem appropriate for analysing the utilisation of the local resources, their interaction, and the capacity they form for rural development. Furthermore these dimensions describe activities resulting from the skills and the degree of input which is delivered by the individual stakeholder, and help to determine the rough outline of the web's borders. Especially through *novelty production* it is possible to detect new ideas and innovations that result in the recombination of resources and the modification of boundaries. Therefore the application of these two dimensions helps to reveal the basis of the rural web on which the communication process can build upon.

Special attention, however, will be given to the relation between the dairy and the consumers of the dairy's products; this is the core of the second research question. In order to further analyse this relation the focus will be put on the third and the fourth dimension of the rural web, i.e. the role of the consumer will be looked at in terms of '*co-production & sustainability*' and '*social capital*'. They comprise characteristics which facilitate the description and analysis of relations, not only among humans, but also between humans and nature. *Co-production* especially features the re-connection of the producer and the consumers, as well as their reconnection to the environment, while *sustainability* reveals the outcome of this interaction, which at best will benefit the rural livelihood. *Social capital* serves as the prerequisite for any interaction among humans, but also for the emergence of meaningful activities. By the engagement in relations more *social capital* can be build up; in this way *social capital* is a result of interaction. The availability of *social capital* therefore mirrors the capacity which can be utilised for communication in the web. In the case of Andeer the dairy contributes to the viability of the region by using the milk of local dairy farmers and processing it locally and in a traditional way. The dairy products are partly sold in a small shop directly at the dairy. This creates a very strong relation, i.e. strong social capital, between the producer and the consumer and can also have a positive effect on the development of tourism in Andeer. The other way around it is possible to reconnect urban tourists to agriculture and the countryside and to increase their awareness about the importance of regional production patterns.

The dimensions '*institutional arrangements*' and '*market governance*' are not applied in this study, although they belong to the rural web. Looking at the web in Andeer, however, they are only of minor importance. Economic institutions, as well as laws and regulations to solve coordination problems are not apparent in Andeer; there is neither a group of people actively engaging in the stimulation of activities nor an agent who facilitates beneficial links. The aspects of *institutional frameworks* and the *governance of markets* rather relate to rural economy than to the communication process. The communication in Andeer is the focus of the study; it might be influenced by these two dimensions due to their relation with the other dimensions, but only in a marginal way. The influence of institutions, rural policies and regulatory instruments does not exist in Andeer, as the dairy works on a very local and small scale. Therefore it appeared suitable to focus on the four dimensions 'endogeneity', 'novelty production', 'co-production & sustainability', and 'social capital'. They cover the actors, activities, and relations of the rural web in a sufficient way to reach the objective of this research. By including the other two dimensions the web in Andeer would have been over-represented and the complexity of the web would have been increased instead of simplified.

2.2. Endogeneity

Endogeneity is the dimension which refers to the use of regionally available resources, not only natural (e.g. the raw material milk, the animals, the environment), but also social resources (e.g. knowledge and skills of stakeholders). Due to the relation to the place of production the consideration of regions in rural development is an aspect which is growing in importance, because they emerge as the place in which regional specificities are met and strengthened. Regions are described as a counterpoint to a rapidly globalising world in which they generate a specific exchange of material and social resources.

The higher the competitive advantage of a region, the more reliability is usually put on endogeneity. This dimension refers to the local resources, which can add to the uniqueness and distinction of rural economies. The combination and interrelation of material and social resources can produce synergistic effects which are typical for a region. Hence, it is possible to utilise those local characteristics and create a sense-of-place. Further on this leads to a reduction of exchangeability and the utilisation of a high value added within the region. The main exports from the region are highly elaborated products, only few resources are imports. To establish a balance of resources it is necessary that stakeholders cooperate and build their relations on shared norms and trust (Oostindie et al. 2008). Thus, endogeneity is **closely linked to social capital**; social capital is the basis for a well-functioning network that links people together through shared norms and beliefs. Furthermore contextual knowledge is needed for recognising local entities as resources. A lack of local resources, which can include physical, human, social, as well as cultural capital, limits endogenous rural development.

Oostindie et al. (2008) state that many endogenous development processes have been created recently because they emerged as a response to globalisation. While globalisation and modernisation in agriculture and food production advances, locality as one alternative increases in importance and offers more opportunities for distinction (Oostindie et al. 2008).

The local focus in a globalising world

The development of the modernisation features eventually has led to the disconnection from characteristics which were previously related to agriculture. In this context Wiskerke and Ploeg (2004) mention the following parameters: Local eco-systems, local knowledge, local skills, local specialities, local social relations, regional town-countryside relations and the economic relations underlying these parameters. They also observed that the local focus of agriculture has been increasingly replaced by modern development processes. The 'art of farming' has become disconnected from locally available resources, and the eco-system, and from local socio-economic relations (Wiskerke and Ploeg 2004).

Another trend resulting from globalisation is the emergence of mass markets and thereby the anonymisation of products just as in the conventional sector. This development comes especially apparent in the organic food sector, where organic farmers do comply with the regulations but do not follow the principles of organic farming. The conventionalisation progress is widely regarded as problematic, because the organic sector, as one possibility to counteract globalisation, has been valued for its contribution to environmental protection and rural development. If organic farming increasingly adopts conventional characteristics, it will most likely lose its public support (Darnhofer et al. 2009). To counteract this process Tregear et al. (2007) also recommend to valorise local assets and their specific characteristics by connecting them to a region. The extent to which this valorisation will take place depends on the actors involved and their ability to build a strong network in the production and processing of the regional product (Tregear et al. 2007). There is a huge diversity of agricultural systems due to inter-regional differences; focussing on the uniqueness and highlighting the distinct features of regional agricultural systems can be used for adding value to the products (Ploeg et al. 2008).

Moreover, short marketing circuits and the decrease of external resources keep wealth in the region, reducing pollution and 'energy consumption' (Knickel 2001). In this way endogeneity also positively contributes to sustainability, in terms of maintaining the environmental and natural capital (Oostindie et al. 2008).

Adding value through organic production

In the context of value addition, consumption of organic products has proven to be a positive trend. The main reason for purchasing organic products is the perception that they are healthier than conventional products; health is directly connected to the consumer's personal well-being and quality of life (Bähr et al. 2004). Consumers often assume that especially organic products are local and based on endogenous development and therefore link satisfaction and trust with these products. Further attributes which consumers relate to organic products are the following: they are seasonal and tasty and can represent a lifestyle element (Bähr et al. 2004). Hence, the endogeneity of a food network and the creation of a sense-of-place are useful for communication, also in connection with organic production standards. The positive attitude towards organic products often develops due to the increasing distrust in the conventional food sector, which is characterised by long supply chains and an unbalanced use of resources (Midmore et al. 2007; Yiridoe et al. 2005). In general, the purchase of organic foods is, however, motivated by the expected positive consequences for the self and for others, i.e. safety, health, and environmental friendliness. The feeling of contributing to a sustainable environment makes the consumer feel good. Moreover, consumers do not only have a positive attitude towards organic products, which are perceived to be local, but also draw a positive relation between local origin and their

home country. Local origin itself is for some consumers sufficient reason to trust products (Bähr et al. 2004). Therefore origin-labelling and regional imagery, as visualisation of endogeneity, can have a big influence on consumer decision-making. Local origin is associated with something positive, friendly, and small and thus complementing trust aspects which are enhanced by personal knowledge and closer relationships (Hinteregger 2006). This relation reveals the importance of social capital and trust for the emergence of endogeneity. Another feature which leads to the building on endogeneity is that local products are also perceived as better tasting and fresher, as well as more traditional and are therefore favoured by consumers (Ozcaglar-Toulouse et al. 2006).

2.3. Novelty production

Novelty production refers to new insights and practices in rural development that promise to bring about better-functioning constellations in the rural web. These constellations can also be a recombination of already existing resources and traditional practices in a new way. Within a region, novelties are developed to improve processes and cooperation as well as interaction in a network. The overall aim is to make the rural economy work better (Bamert 2003). Novelty production is unique to a region and highly bound into the local context because it strongly refers to the specific knowledge that is available. It is **highly interwoven with the endogeneity** of the rural economy, because locally available resources are reconnected and centred on the specificity of region. Furthermore novelty production builds upon resources which have been underutilised before and thereby lead to new creative and more successful development processes. The emergence of novelty production depends on the presence of knowledgeable agents, a well-developed division of labour, the creation of awareness among stakeholders, demanding clients, artisanal processes of production, and a network that allows for learning. Novelty production occurs in different ways (Oostindie and Broekhuizen 2008). First of all it can be the process of improving resources; thereby it is an outcome of co-production. Secondly, it can occur as fine-tuning, where novelty is highly interwoven with endogeneity and resources can be recombined and adapted to the specific local eco-system. Thirdly, novelty production might appear as a shift of boundaries, as boundaries can be extended or new domains can be included corresponding to changing needs and expectations of society. Finally, novelty production might emerge from the repatterning of resource use. New connections and synergies are created; those related to territory especially strengthen the local setting. Altogether novelty production is relevant for developing capacity to perform better and to mobilise creativity which has been underutilised before. It is strongly intertwined with endogeneity, as local control is the prerequisite for resource valorisation (Oostindie and Broekhuizen 2008). Summing up for creating a

sustainable and viable business it is necessary to create new products and markets or adapt already existing products to the expectations of society. An important aspect of sustainable rural development is the reshaping and recombining of rural resources, which can assist in setting up alternative food networks. These new ideas result in robust economic constellations and new constellations which interlink the rural and the urban. Hence, rural development processes might lead to the re-localisation of production-consumption patterns and the re-evaluation of production processes through the consumer.

Emergence of new alternative food networks

Literature referring to the development of novelties can mainly be found in the field of emerging alternative food networks. As mentioned already in the context of endogeneity the globalisation of the agro-food-chain has increased and food production has become more industrialised. Consequently a diversity of new food networks has emerged which are characterised by the notions of re-localisation, embeddedness and a turn to quality. Hence the development of new alternative food networks can be regarded as a counter-movement to the globalisation process (Roep and Wiskerke 2006; Sonnino and Marsden 2006). Especially organic farmers and small-scale processors fear the trend of industrialisation, because they cannot compete with the lower production costs in global mass markets. In the case of saturated markets in Europe the conventional agricultural sector as well as the organic sector has to look for possibilities to enter market segments with higher added value or respectively for functions that go beyond the sole production of food. Some possibilities include landscape- and wildlife-management, maintenance of biodiversity, exploiting cultural and traditional heritages, and food security and safety, which present domains that can contribute to broadening and redefining of small-scale enterprises (Van Huylenbroeck et al. 2007). In terms of novelty production producers therefore need to apply new creative ideas to meet social demands, as well as market demands; thereby they most likely modify the boundaries of the web as they discover new market opportunities. This puts new challenges on the organisation of agricultural production chains, since they have to be flexible in order to react to highly fluctuating demands of markets and society. Instead of highly integrated vertical chains, stakeholder should opt for more responsive networks and the mobilisation of creativity (Sonnino and Marsden 2006).

Illustration of novelty production by means of two examples

In the same framework of research Knickel (2001) focussed on the rural development in an area in Germany called Rhön, which experienced a lack of product diversity due to its marginal physical conditions for farming. To solve that problem a marketing concept called 'Rhöngold' was established; thereby the area underwent an integrative development by interconnecting various stakeholders and redeveloping more traditional and less intensive forms of agriculture. The initiators made use of the typical landscape which was produced by

interaction of physical aspects of the land and the historical and cultural context of the farmers and people living there. Within this development initiative synergies at farm household, farm, and regional level were actively constructed in order to reach the overall goal of a sustainable balance between conservation of biological diversity, the promotion of economic development and the maintenance of associated cultural value. Moreover, organic agricultural practices were introduced in order to establish a new product-line and to actively promote the high nature value of this area. To ensure a continued existence of agricultural small-holdings, it is very important to focus on the reconfiguration of the production-consumption relationship which demands high-quality production. This example reveals how different possibilities of novelty production and their combination result in new constellations that contribute to a better functioning network and improve the rural economy.

Success factors for the creation of a positive image as in the Rhöngold example are the location, the production process, and the marketing of the final product. The positive image consumers are looking for is basically made up by different emotional qualities. Consumers like to purchase products which tell a story or products that are linked with a pleasant experience; products should not be anonymous, but authentic and from a definite region. Therefore it is very important that creativity is mobilised and that available resources are transformed into region-specific resources within a network. The linkage with a particular lifestyle or prestige can also influence the consumers purchase decision. Shortening of supply chains can improve consumer confidence and allow for the recognition of products and their differentiation from mainstream.

Similar to the 'Rhöngold' idea the case study 'The Birth of New Cheeses in an Old Mountain Environment in Rural Spain' by Remmers (Wiskerke and Ploeg 2004) also reveals the difficulties of aligning the local production and marketing strategies of small-scale artisanal production with large-scale, homogeneous and industrial modes of production. In this case the product innovativeness and the link to a specific local quality transformed a marginal production into a more valuable and solid market destination. The diversity in different types of cheeses is the strength of the 'Queseria Morisca' cheese dairy and also proves the flexibility of their artisanal production. The development of new cheeses has been the result of a continuous process of adaptation and innovation. It has emerged from the combination of empirical knowledge of the regional dairy traditions with formal technical knowledge on cheese elaboration, accidental discoveries and personal interventions. The small scale production allows the dairy to capitalise on products that would not be valued in bigger enterprises. Additionally, the owners have revitalised traditional techniques for cheese ripening and conservation (Wiskerke and Ploeg 2004). Following the type of production their marketing strategy is based on direct sales, mostly through home deliveries. The basis for

their success is the use of additive free, pure milk and their capacity for transformation. Furthermore the link between the outcome of their production and the consumer is re-established and deepened. This example shows particularly the importance of social capital in terms of contextual knowledge in the production of novelties.

The potential of marginal, but newly emerging activities

Activities and developments which were regarded as marginal within the modernisation paradigm have a considerable potential in the setting of rural development. Rural development is therefore not only about the creation of 'new ideas' but about newly emerging activities which are rooted in local history; hence it is about the combination of the 'old' with the 'new'. The most evident example of the reconfiguration of resources is the emergence of new alternative food networks. Based in rural development they are centred on distinctive product qualities such as organic farming or region-specific products. These food networks reveal the trend towards closer producer-consumer relationships, which are more value-loaded and transparent (Ploeg et al. 2000). This development can be regarded in the context of an emerging rural web, as the characteristics strongly relate to the theoretical dimensions the concept is based on. Especially co-production and social capital is needed to bring forward the production of novelties. Agriculture and the countryside need to offer innovations which cover the growing demands of society.

An increase in the value of the products cannot only be generated by extension into new fields of activity, such as agri-tourism or care-farming, but also by constructing linkages with newly emerging markets. Livelihood strategies in which agriculture is combined with additional activities helps rural families to make best use of multiple sets of opportunities offered by agriculture and labour markets. Moreover they counteract the mainstreaming process in organic food networks, which has also led to the issue of small specialty shops losing their importance, because the large revenues of the organic food sector too most part take place in larger shops (Codron et al. 2006; Hinteregger 2006). As soon as powerful retailers get involved in organic supply chains, value-added benefits may shift away from the rural location. Thereby small-scale producers are vulnerable to lose their potential (Darnhofer 2005). In order to keep distinct features of traditional organic production specialised food shops need to adopt different marketing strategies compared to large-scale retail; they need to offer a higher variety of products in the same category, they can demand a higher price, they should put additional focus on a direct relationship with the consumer and the availability of skilled staff. In addition it is unavoidable to adjust strategies to the behaviour of consumers, which is very complex and varies widely (Bähr et al. 2004). Issues which influence consumer buying patterns, i.e. ethical considerations like animal welfare, fair prices, and labour conditions, present a chance to develop a competitive advantage in a new niche-market, as consumers use ethical issues as part of their self-realisation and self-

identity; in other words: ethical consumers search for 'meanings in life'. Hinteregger (2006) revealed that many consumers mention 'doing something for the environment' and 'being in harmony with the world' when they choose organic products.

2.4. Social capital

The social capital is the dimension which represents the way of getting things done collectively, i.e. achieving common goals by employing and using social relations. It depends on the ability of actors within the network to co-operate and strengthen their relations and is **closely related to co-production** as part of the third dimension (Ploeg et al. 2008). It is based on the potential of relations and implies engagement and participation. Social capital thereby enhances trust among stakeholders and enables the achievement of common goals. Due to the availability of material as well as human resources in a local setting, a basic social capital is always present. It depends on the knowledge and the engagement of the actors if the social capital is utilised and its capacity is built up. Furthermore social capital continuously has to be learned, developed, and practised by all social actors in order to maintain its strength (Tisenkops et al. 2008). The other way around the engagement in personal contacts provides the basis for generating additional resources and synergies between different capitals (Ploeg et al. 2008). Social capital therefore is the basis as well as the result of interaction and communication. Hence relations are seen as a core of social capital.

Trust: precondition and outcome of social capital

Ideally social capital enhances cohesion and trust within the rural web. Trust is an important concept in the context of food purchases and the development of alternative food networks. Trusting often means taking risks, as a person is vulnerable to the actions of others but is confident that they will conform according to his expectations. In order to replace the uncertainty about other actors' behaviour reassurance can be gained by trust-enhancing experiences, because they are largely based on norms and social behaviour (De Marchi et al. 2006). Hence, several private organic farmers' organisations and initiatives refer to different, often stricter, ethical values in their mission, objectives, or programmes to enhance trust among the consumers. This proceeding shows that trust can be built through personal relationships as well as through institutions; it exists on two different levels: interpersonal and system trust. The aim is always to reduce the risk of relationships and to enhance moral reliability (Tisenkops et al. 2008). Particularly in regard to food safety trust is a very important issue. According to De Marchi et al. (2006) food safety is a multi-faceted term which is connected to quality, taste, naturalness, nutritional value, freshness, hygiene, geographical origin and preparation. Due to globalisation and the growing distance between producers

and consumers interpersonal trust is difficult to establish in a mass market. If the specificity and underlying ethical standards of local food production are communicated in a reliable and trust enhancing way, it can increase the willingness of consumers to pay a surplus for that product. The willingness to pay a surplus can be referred to the added value of the product and thus depends on the consumer's perception of the product and its communication.

Consumer awareness and ethical food choices

During the last quarter of the 20th century an apparent rise of 'ethical consumption' has taken place due to the rising level of consumer information and the greater availability of alternative products. Ethical consumption is an inevitable consequence of the development of socially conscious consumer behaviour (Newholm and Shaw 2007). The individual purchaser is aware that the well-being of others depends on their action. In this context Arvola et al. (2008) also mention the construct of subjective norm, in which the consumer perceives social pressure to perform certain behaviour according to social norms (Arvola et al. 2008). Positive and self-rewarding feelings are considered in organic food purchases as they reflect the moral attitude. This moral dimension can be used in the marketing of organic foods, it is a measure that reflects the feeling of 'doing the right thing' (Arvola et al. 2008).

Although marketing and distribution of organic foods has been improved by large retail companies, trust is more easily created in short supply chains with direct marketing. Through direct distribution of products it is easier to link sustainability, consumer motivations, and values. Midmore et al. (2007) observe an emergence of 'pro-social' and 'pro-ecological' consumers. Likewise Codron et al. (2006) mention the upcoming adoption of ethical and environmental attributes in the marketing of large retailers and agribusinesses. Several food scandals and other related issues stimulated the growth of the market for environmentally friendly and safe food products (Codron et al. 2006; Yiridoe et al. 2005). Growing numbers of socially and ecologically consumers support those products. Thus, maintaining ethical standards in today's market place can result in mutual benefits for all stakeholders (Ozcaglar-Toulouse et al. 2006). It has to be recognised however that promoters and consumers of ethical food products are both confused by the diversity of signals and strategies which are used in respect to environmental and social standards (Codron et al. 2006). In the same context Honkanen et al. (2006) measured ethical food choice motives in a Norwegian study with a scale that consists of three dimensions: ecological, political, and religious food choice motives, which reveals that ethical values give an important contribution to explaining attitudes (Honkanen et al. 2006). However, ethical consumers have disadvantages, because there is a lack of knowledge and an information asymmetry. Thus, they tend to be uncertain about their decision making (Newholm and Shaw 2007). This indicates the importance to create personal relations and interconnections for a more intensive communication of ethical standards.

Knowledge in the rural web

The development of direct relations to utilise the social capital within the rural web is as important as the building of trust; especially differences in knowledge, skills, and experience greatly influence the success or failure in the use of social capital. The NRLO suggests that much more knowledge needs to be made available for small- and medium-sized agricultural businesses to facilitate the entering of niche markets (Zande 1998). There are several possibilities to differentiate the products from the emerging organic mass market, namely social aspects (fair trade, employment of disabled people, ban of child labour, etc.), environmental aspects (protection of natural resources, biodiversity, climate, animal welfare, conservation of landscapes) and economic issues (long-term contracts for smaller farmers, supporting farmers in disadvantageous regions, guaranteeing fair prices for organic producers) (Zander and Hamm 2009). Furthermore human factors, such as expertise and knowledge, which characterise the actors involved, play a considerable part in the final product quality. Therefore it is very important to utilise the social capital which is available in the rural web by making use of these human resources. Due to the individualistic character of human resources they add to the quality and the local distinction of products. The influence of the human factor on the product-specific regional image on the product preference is higher for products with high added value, as they are often based on more complex procedures and longer traditions than less processed products. Furthermore the knowledge of factors which influence consumers' final product preference facilitates the effective promotion of the product (Ittersum et al. 2003).

As a result mutual benefits can arise for all stakeholders involved, when the available social capital is recognised as such and enhance by the interaction of the main actors. Hence the cooperation and exchange within networks can be seen as a definite opportunity for European agriculture and related small-scale businesses. Nevertheless potential tensions around high quality produce and regional specialities can arise between producers, when they compete for consumers with the same products and the same territorial characteristics.

The importance of direct marketing

The implementation of social capital goes along with the focus on personal relations and direct communication, only then a successful exchange and interaction among stakeholders can be assured. Hunt (2007) revealed that direct relation can be especially found in local markets and on farmers' markets. Direct marketing does not only satisfy consumers' search for quality and trust, but also motivates the farmer to meet these demands and therefore can have a mutual benefit on the environmental quality.

The shortening of supply chains including the personalisation of contacts is not only regarded as a potential to generate environmental but also social benefits for the community. Hence, farmers' markets as one type of direct marketing can be regarded as social places where

consumer decisions are affected by motivations such as helping the local farmers and supporting agricultural open space (Hunt 2007). Likewise Sweeney et al. (2008) highlight the competitive advantage which can be obtained by using word-of-mouth marketing; but they also stress that it can only be successful if the recipient reacts positively to the message. Therefore the source needs to be credible and the information needs to be vivid, emotionally interesting, and imagery provoking. Another important factor for the success of word-of-mouth communication is whether the recipient needed reassurance, i.e. whether he sought for information to make a decision or not. In addition word-of-mouth proved to be more effective, when there was a close relationship between the sender and the receiver, based on trust and mutual respect (Sweeney et al. 2008). Likewise Bähr et al. (2004) revealed that the most effective promotional tool is personal contact, which can include activities such as farm visits and food tastings, but also the telling of a whole story around the product (Bähr et al. 2004).

Therefore social capital is needed as a basis for the strengthening and developing of direct marketing and personal communication in a rural web. Further on it will be enhanced when relations are deepened.

2.5. Co-production

Co-production can be described as the ongoing interaction among humans, animals, and nature; it describes the relation among people, but also between people and the environment. Especially in the context of agricultural food production the link between humans, animals, and nature becomes apparent. On the one hand through co-production nature is used, reproduced and transformed in many ways to reach a satisfying outcome. On the other hand co-production also shapes society, i.e. particular institutions, relations, and identities which characterise the rural (Ploeg et al. 2008), **depending on the utilisation of social capital** and the distance to nature. Hence it also refers to co-evolution and the regeneration of interdependencies among society and nature. Production processes increasingly develop close to nature to keep the cultural values of the landscape, while consumers are re-connected with the traditional processes on the production level. The re-implementation of traditions and the growing interaction of consumers and producers presents the first step towards new combinations of resources and therefore often leads to novelty production (Sonnino et al. 2008).

Reconnecting producers and consumers

The reconnection of production and consumption is a main focus in the development of new and alternative food networks, because it helps to improve the image of the agricultural sector (Marsden and Ploeg 2008). Therefore products require a stronger connection to the

social, cultural, and environmental context (Roep and Wiskerke 2006). This is especially important due to the changing demands in society. Lots of people are increasingly interested in the conditions under which their food has been produced. The challenge which goes along with this development is to defend values, definitions of quality, locality, and benefits of the environment. Chiffolleau (2009) also maintains that co-operation among producers as well as the reconnection of producers and consumers is necessary for the sustainable development of local food systems (Chiffolleau 2009).

Consumers who are increasingly concerned about human health, food safety, animal welfare, and environmental issues related to production and processing conditions can thereby re-establish their trust and relation to food production. Furthermore, these consumer concerns motivate food producers and processors to move away from homogenised global food markets (Winter 2003). The challenge is to create a functional broadening of agricultural businesses in order to improve the quality of rural areas (Directorate-Generale 2008).

As a consequence the countryside and agriculture become more attractive and hence might turn into locations of consumption again. Therefore rural development needs a clear reorganisation of the way in which resources are mobilised, combined, and applied to result in beneficial outcomes (Ploeg 2003). A good example for the reconnection of consumption and production are direct-marketing initiatives, like farmers' markets or on-farm sales. It does not only result in a reconnection of the consumer to the production place, but the producer also feels more involved with the community life. Furthermore the personal nature of the consumer and producer interaction gives public recognition to the producer's labour, satisfying both emotional and psychological needs (Hunt 2007).

2.6. Sustainability

Sustainability is a term which has been used in a variety of ways since its conceptualisation, so that it is difficult to find a clear and appropriate definition. In the context of the rural web it **goes hand in hand with co-production**, as it realigns social, economic, and ecological aspects and tries to balance the relation between humans and nature. The socio-environmental role of agriculture is a key component in sustaining rural economies and cultures. Thereby new sources of income are mobilised in order to strengthen the economic base of the rural region as well as the individual farm enterprise. Besides, sustainability implies the maintenance of social and ecological conditions to ensure a certain level of well-being now and for future generations (Sonnino et al. 2008).

Changes in the agro-food sector resulting in sustainability issues

During the last two decades the agro-food sector in Europe has changed significantly. As stated in the book 'Nourishing networks – Fourteen lessons about creating sustainable food

supply chains' which is the outcome of the EU-funded research project SUS-CHAIN (No. QLK5-CT-2002-01349), the changes have been two-sided. On the one hand the industrialisation of food production has taken place, while on the other hand a variety of new food networks has developed, which are characterised by a turn towards quality. Similarly, Wiskerke and Ploeg (2004) state in the book 'Seeds of Transition' that Europe's agriculture was reshaped in the second half of the 20th century in a so-called great modernisation process, which has directly contributed to various problems concerning sustainability in our days. The features going along with this process are scale-increases at farm-level, industrialisation of production and processing and the increasing dependence on markets. Marsden et al. (2001) even refer to this modernisation process as a deep crisis within the food and agricultural sector. This development results in a broad range of environmental problems and sustainability issues. In addition agricultural employment has been decreasing continuously due to many opportunities for mechanisation (Ploeg 2003). In the same context Chiffolleau (2008) reports that alternative food supply chains have developed to counteract industrialisation appearing as mass production, long supply chains, and numerous intermediaries. Producers' ties in new alternative food networks allow the recognition of an individual's skills, as confidence is created when diverse skills are needed to successfully produce and distribute a new product (Chiffolleau 2009). Consequently, new alternative food networks can help to enhance the well-being of rural regions in a sustainable way. In many cases, however, the main focus, is put on the economic aspect of sustainability, i.e. many producers engage in alternative food networks to increase their returns. The ecological and social aspects often appear to be secondary.

Regional-specific products to increase sustainability

According to Ploeg (2003) the number of regional-specific products, farmhouse products, and new products has increased considerably in the generation of high-quality products. Some might realise the intrinsic quality of a product, namely its taste, smell, or appearance, which can be related to its origin or its specific way of processing, whilst other consumers rather focus on the quality aspects which refer to the product's external effects on the sustainability and the rural livelihood of the region. The challenge of an innovative agricultural sector is to take advantage of product differentiation and make creative use of regional diversity (Darnhofer 2005).

Similarly Ittersum et al. (2003) suggest that small- and medium-sized businesses can realise added value by developing regional variants of their products; together with the specific product qualities the regional image can create a unique identity for the product. Hence the product can be distinguished from both foreign and domestic competitors. This, however, depends on the image which consumers have of a product's region of origin and on the suitability of a region for the production of a specific product. It is, however, important that the

awareness of the people goes beyond the mere interest for the region and is also directed towards the environmental and social consequences of the production.

Especially compared to some other areas in the world Europe is known for its diversity in agriculture and a broad range of food and drink products which have derived from Europe's natural environment, as well as from a long history and an on-going development of production methods and know-how. In this context research has been conducted concerning the contribution of regional food products to the socio-economic well-being of rural areas. Production of quality products and the image established around them can be integrated into the market provided by tourists and enthusiasts of origin products. By focussing on the quality of the product and the value added, quantity and cost-reduction can be replaced as the main criteria for decision-making. The main aim of farm households or small-scale companies which are involved in processing and direct-marketing activities is to add value to the products and to meet the growing consumer demands. In terms of sustainability this strategy of qualitative growth is vital for success. Intrinsic quality aspects as well as aspects related to external effects of the production process might be influenced by specific characteristics of the region and might even be improved where production volume is low (Knickel 2001). Hence, small-scale production can be related to a higher quality which should be communicated through marketing. Recent research revealed that the society is willing to pay for keeping rural communities viable and for preventing farmers from leaving the agricultural sector (Van Huylenbroeck et al. 2007).

3. Results & Discussion: Research question 1 – Description of the rural web

In part 3.1 and 3.2 of this chapter the rural web which is netted around the dairy in Andeer is broadly described. Thereupon two of the dimensions underlying the theory of the rural web, namely endogeneity and novelty production, are applied to reveal relations and interconnections and to explain particular constellations and processes. The findings of this research are then related to the contextual literature to embed the rural web into a wider picture.

The dairy as the starting point of the development of the rural web in Andeer has been operated by Martin Bienerth and Maria Meyer since 2001. The dairy in Andeer is a small-scale business, processing only 400.000l of organic milk per year. Out of that amount of milk the dairy produces 30.000t of cheese and 100.000l of fresh dairy products, such as quark, yoghurt, butter, and milk. Due to the small size the dairy aims at a high margin for increasing the income of their business and keeping a high and stable milk price. Therefore the quality of the products is more important to the manager than the quantity he can sell. The distribution of the products is mainly based on personal relationships and a strong communication, i.e. much of the promotion is word-of-mouth; that holds especially for the direct sale at the dairy shop in Andeer. About 60% of the cheese, however, is still sold to cheese traders in Germany and Switzerland and 10% is sold anonymously to the large retailer Emmi.

Furthermore the manager realised a step by step conversion to a biological production system since he took over the dairy in 2001 (Bienerth 2009b). Only the yoghurt is produced with conventional starter cultures, while all the other products are certified organic by the Swiss label 'Knospe'. Some regional products, such as jam, honey, and cakes which are sold in the shop are also not certified organic.

The relevant stakeholders in the rural web are the local farmers who deliver their milk to the dairy, the hotel managers who use cheese from Andeer in their restaurants, the cheese trader who distribute the cheese outside of Andeer, specialty store managers who buy cheese from Andeer via the cheese traders, and the consumers who are made up of customers living in Andeer, tourists visiting Andeer, and customers of specialty stores outside of Andeer (Fig 2). Tourists who purchased cheese from Andeer directly at the dairy during their vacation, often look for the cheese in specialty stores at home.

3.1. Endogeneity

3.1.1. Description of the rural web in terms of endogeneity

The farmers are the producers of the raw material milk. Their production is based on local resources, as the cows are only fed grass coming from the mountainous area around Andeer. Due to the local raw material production the level of exchangeability of the final product is strongly reduced. The farmers produce the milk organically and manage their farms close to nature, as they deliver the milk at least once a day directly to the dairy and keep their cows with horns. The short distance between the farms and the dairy and the daily contact allow a personal and stable supplier-buyer relation. This is one important characteristic to enhance trust in the rural web. Furthermore it is tradition as well as habit that local farmers take their milk to the dairy in Andeer. As a result of an agreement between the farmers and the dairy manager, the producers have the opportunity to deliver their milk on a stable and regular basis and the buyer daily receives an amount of fresh milk which is necessary to keep the dairy business viable. In addition this agreement helps to keep the added value of the final product within the region. This aspect combined with the increasing importance of locality and the creation of a sense-of-place, is regarded as very important by the mayor of Andeer. In his opinion the dairy is able to establish a link between farming and tourism and further on maintains traditional artisanry which is highly appreciated by tourists. This interconnection is not only valued by the mayor but also by the managers of the regional hotels as they increasingly enjoy the use of local products. At this point the short distance between the dairy as the supplier and the hotels as buyers also facilitates direct and personal contact, which makes the business procedures easier and more flexible. The interaction mutually supports both parties, because the dairy can sell its products directly to a close buyer and the hotels get the chance to offer local products to their guests. Furthermore the hotels also support the local farmers by using products from the dairy and thereby contribute to the maintenance of agriculture and the cultural landscape. This in turn is appreciated by tourists who enjoy the natural setting of Andeer. The linkage between agriculture, local farmers, the dairy and the dairy's promotion of local products is easier to grasp by guests who stay in hotels directly located in Andeer. In the same way citizens from Andeer value the dairy, because it belongs to the traditional image of Andeer and builds on local resources. Through purchasing products they do not only support the dairy, but also the local farmers who contribute to the preservation of cultural landscape. Due to the small size of Andeer and the dairy personal contact between the dairy manager and the local customers emerges easily; hence the customers are able to receive a lot of background information and knowledge on the production process and the dairy's standards. In the same way the movie which was released in 2005 describes the activities around the dairy in Andeer in a

comprehensive way and gives a complete picture of the use of endogenous resources in the web (Verhaag 2005).

Stakeholders that are located outside of Andeer, but nevertheless make up part of the rural web, are the Swiss and German cheese trader, the specialty store managers, consumers buying cheese from Andeer far away from the production place, as well as tourists who get to eat cheese from Andeer in hotels farther away. For those stakeholders it is very difficult to gain a complete picture of the origin and use of resources in Andeer. Furthermore the distribution of the cheese through longer channels reduces the margin of the product for the dairy and retains less value added within the region. In addition local aspects lose their importance as the consumers do not get to know the setting in which the local dairy is embedded. The final consumer has to rely on the information and background stories he receives from the person recommending the cheese to him.

3.1.2. Discussing endogeneity in Andeer

Endogeneity is closely related to the rootedness within a region and the utilisation of endogenous resources within the rural economy. Endogeneity does not only refer to material resources, but also to social resources which add to the distinction and uniqueness of the region. For the utilisation of specific local characteristics it is important that stakeholders can build on trust and shared beliefs within the rural web.

Looking at the material resources in Andeer the utilisation and implementation in the local context is very successful. Local resources are efficiently used in Andeer, while imports of external resources are avoided. The product leaving the village is not an unprocessed raw material, but a highly elaborated product, which can be distinguished from other products due to the local characteristics, namely origin of the raw material, quality of the landscape, and the skills of the producers. This specificity helps to reduce the product's exchangeability and therefore contributes to its value added. The creation of a sense-of-place helps the dairy in Andeer to survive on in an increasingly homogenised global market. In the newspaper article 'Vom Reifekeller auf den Käsemarkt' published in the national newspaper 'Tagblatt Zürich', the traditional production and its influence on the cheese quality is praised. The author states that '*Herkunft verpflichtet*', which means that '*origin obliges*'; the cheese is a mirror of the landscape (Seemann 2009). In the interview the dairy manager, however, maintains that the communication is the aspect which makes the cheese special (Bienerth 2009b). His experiences show that it is easier to communicate the production process directly and on-site to the consumer, because it enhances the understanding of the specific relations and processes within the local setting. The dairies' attempt to sell an increasing amount of cheese direct and on-site reveals their dedication to maintain the local control. Likewise in an interview for a newspaper article he reflects on the way the cheese is sold: '*Wir haben nicht unseren Käse, sondern die Geschichten rund um die Milch, die Bauern, die*

Wiesen, die Gegend und über Andeer verkauft, which means that the dairy has not only sold the cheese, but also the stories about the milk, the farmers, the meadows, the region, and the village of Andeer (Bamert 2006). In another article written by Bamert (2003) the manager of the Swiss cheese trading company Chäs&Co is quoted on the opportunities of small-scale dairies: *'Hinter dem Käse stehen Menschen mit einer Geschichte, Menschen, die mit ihrer Region verwurzelt sind und alte Traditionen weiter entwickelt haben'*; in his opinion there are people with a story behind the cheeses, people who are rooted within their region and further developed old traditions (Bamert 2003). In Andeer it is also very important that the business is built on personal relations combined with the care for the natural landscape and the preservation of culture centred in the local setting.

Looking at the social resources, namely the attitude, skills, and knowledge of the actors, some discrepancies occur in Andeer. Endogeneity, as mentioned above, is strongly based on shared norms and beliefs, as well as a certain rootedness within the region. Many of the stakeholders, e.g. one farmer, the hotel managers, and the dairy manager himself, are not very rooted in Andeer and hence can also not build on the same experiences and histories. Although the dairy in Andeer has got a long tradition the current manager took over the business only eight years ago. The mayor, most of the hotel managers, as well as one of the interviewed farmers do not originally come from Andeer. Contextual knowledge therefore could not evolve over a long time, but had to be developed first. Procedures and activities in the current rural web are not based on common histories, but on the vision and ideas of the dairy manager. One farmer, for example, explains that he took over the farm and continued delivering the milk to the dairy, mainly because his antecessor was doing the same and because he was ensured stable milk prices. Likewise he continued organic farming practises, as this is one prerequisite for milk delivery to the dairy. From this it becomes obvious that the relation between farmers and the dairy is not based on common values and beliefs, but on the ideas of the dairy which the farmers have adapted. Likewise another farmer said that he is very satisfied with the way the dairy manager takes care of the distribution and marketing of the dairy products. He appreciates the dairy's dedication, but does not want to deliver any input himself.

Although the relations among the stakeholders located in Andeer are very personal and stable they do not form a basis for collective action. Altogether the stakeholders value the dedication of the dairy manager but do not actively support their ideas. One farmer mentions that he would like to learn more about the distribution and marketing of the cheeses, but that the communication with the dairy manager lacks some openness on this topic. The other farmer, however, maintained that he would certainly get more information from the dairy manager, if he asked for it. But he thinks that the distribution and marketing does not affect him and trusts on the dairy manager in fulfilling this task. In terms of marketing, the mayor

also regards the dairy manager and his wife as very initiative and notes that 'they are able to make a difference', thereby they contribute to Andeer's viability. Likewise, one hotel manager adds that the dairy makes a difference, as it facilitates the work done by the farmers in the mountainous areas. Nevertheless there is no support given to the dairy in return.

Furthermore some of the farmers would like to increase their milk production and include other farmers from the region to build one large dairy. The dairy manager, however, wants to keep on working with the current amount of milk and rather focus on qualitative aspects of production. In case the demand cannot be made anymore and quantitative growth becomes necessary, he would prefer the establishment of a second dairy to maintain the small-scale of production.

One further discrepancy relating to endogeneity in the rural web is that the main part of the cheese is sold to cheese traders. The product loses some of its regional specificity and long distribution channels contradict the meaning of endogenous development, as marketing circuits are enlarged. The sense-of-place becomes less important, when the product reaches the consumer and the local context loses ground in the purchase decision. Marketing circuits become longer and less traceable, so that consumers might lose trust again. Right now the distribution to the Swiss and the German cheese trader make up 60% of the total sale; in addition another 10% is sold anonymously via the Swiss large-scale dairy Emmi. In the interview the dairy manager mentions that he wants to reduce that portion, while he further wants to enlarge the sale in the dairy shop.

As revealed in the literature study distinction of products due to their local characteristics is one important way for small-scale businesses to survive in the global mass market (Oostindie *et al.* 2008). Local does not only refer to the material resources, like milk in the case of Andeer, but also to local ecosystems, local knowledge, local skills, and local social relations (Wiskerke and Ploeg 2004). In order to create endogeneity and to make the term meaningful it needs to be communicated in a way that the local setting becomes comprehensive for the consumer. Only then the local assets can be valorised and benefit the region. The reduction of external resources and the shortening of marketing circuits are characteristics of endogeneity which have also been mentioned by Knickel (2001) who focussed his research on the utilisation of local characteristics. Since local characteristics and endogenous development are often associated with organic products (Bähr *et al.* 2004), these two aspects can be well combined in the marketing of the dairy. Although the products of the dairy are all certified with the Swiss 'Knospe' label, the dairy does focus more on the communication of the locality. Hinteregger (2006) states that the term local is also related with small and friendly; hence a trustful relation can be developed, especially if it is based on personal and direct contact (Hinteregger 2006). This is the path the dairy in Andeer has

taken so far; the dairy manager even wants to enhance the direct selling and personal contact in the future.

The following part of this chapter will describe and discuss relations and activities within the rural web in terms of novelty production and the related literature.

3.2. Novelty production

3.2.1. Description of the rural web in terms of novelty production

Starting with the raw material production the artisan handling of the milk reintegrates standards in Andeer which had been given up in the past. The dairy cows for example are only fed grass and are allowed to keep their horns. In addition the milk is not cooled down but delivered to the dairy freshly and in a direct way, where it is processed immediately. This natural way of production and the improved use of resources reveal a fine-tuning of processes in the rural web, as it is based on traditional activities (chapter 2.3). To put it in other words the production process in Andeer has been adjusted according to the specificity of the local surrounding. One farmer mentions in the interview that the philosophy of the dairy and the high quality expected motivate him to continue farming according to those standards. He enjoys that his product is very much appreciated by the dairy and supports the dairy's idea of adding value to the product instead of following an economy of scale. Likewise the other farmer interviewed states that he appreciates the valorisation of a high quality raw material and adjusted his production along the step-by-step conversion of the dairy. The innovativeness and implementation of new ideas mainly go along with the revitalisation of artisan production and traditional activities. Due to their innovative activities the dairy engaged in the participation in cheese competitions which contributed to a growing prominence of the dairy. The creativity in cheese-making did not only result in the awarding of prizes and an increasing recognition, but also in an enlargement of the product variety. This is highly appreciated by the managers of close-by hotels and restaurants who increasingly refer to regional products on their menus. The hotels located directly in Andeer appreciate the engagement of the dairy even more as it maintains artisan production in Andeer, which is highly appreciated by tourists. Likewise the cheese traders mention that they are able to sell cheese from Andeer as something outstanding, because of the dairy's famousness and focus on the locality at the same time. While this helps the cheese trading companies to sell the cheese, they also contribute to the dairy's success by distributing the cheese on a larger scale. The dairy manager has realised the creation of a viable business by using available resources in an effective and creative way, but without turning away from naturalness and artisanry. In order to be successful much emphasis was put on the creation of personal relations and new connections in order to strengthen the network. Much of the underlying

ideas and the background stories is described on the webpage of the dairy, so that knowledge can be disseminated more easily and accessed if required.

3.2.2 Discussing novelty production in Andeer

Novelty production is highly bound into the local context and is therefore strongly related to endogenous development. Novelty leads to or regenerates new constellations and activities in the rural web, which promise to result in a better working economy. Based on locality and contextual knowledge, innovative ideas and underutilised resources are combined and re-localised. Novelty production occurs in four different ways, namely as an improvement of resource use, a fine-tuning of activities, a shift in boundaries, and the repatterning of resource use. All three forms are recognisable in the rural web of Andeer. While the use of local resources and the artisan way of milk production and cheese-making can be related to the improvement of resource use on a material as well as social scale, the step-by-step introduction of the dairy's additional standards has led to a fine-tuning of activities and a re-centering of the production around local specificities. The shift in boundaries also includes an extension of boundaries, namely the distribution via cheese trading companies not only in Switzerland but also internationally, as well as the inclusion of new domains, like the release of a movie and the participation in different cheese competitions. Another shift in boundaries, contrary to an extension, is the reduction of cheese distributed via the wholesaler Emmi and the increasing focus on the local market. Due to the growing prominence and the dairy's presence in media new connections and synergies have been created. Especially the Swiss cheese trading company mentions that the engagement of the dairy also supports them in executing a good job; they can easily refer interested customers to the dairy's webpage, as it contains a lot of information and is well updated.

Altogether novelty production in Andeer has created the capacity to improve the dairy's performance during the past years. The mayor for example acknowledges the skills of the dairy manager. In his opinion the dairy in Andeer was 'ordinary' before the take-over. Due to the innovativeness and presence in media, the dairy has achieved more recognition and contributes as a touristic attraction and a part of the town image to Andeer's viability. Referring to skills the cheese-maker recognises the contribution of the dairy farmers. In an interview for a newspaper article she states that 'the cheese can never be better than the milk out of which it is produced' (Bamert 2003). Further characteristics of novelty production are fulfilled in Andeer as well; its development is highly dependent on the skills and knowledge of available agents, the creation of awareness, and the utilisation of new markets. The development of novelty production becomes especially obvious in the context of the new export markets outside Switzerland. In order to achieve a successful distribution social as well as material resources needed to be mobilised and combined with innovativeness.

Moreover new relations had to be established based on trust and synergies among the stakeholders in this distribution channels to create awareness and spread the product. Without effective cooperation and a well-organised division of tasks, the success would have been less likely. Altogether the development of novelties in Andeer has contributed to the present state of the dairy and is related to the great dedication of the manager by a large number of interviewees.

In spite of the successful production of novelties in Andeer, one aspect is conflicting. Due to the high prominence of the dairy, it seems as if it has lost some connection to its roots. Looking at the webpage, where background stories and the dairy's vision are described in a very detailed way (website, dairy Andeer), it can be realised that a presentation of the local farmers is missing. Compared to the webpage of a neighbouring dairy, where all contributing farmers are introduced and pictures are presented (website, dairy Splügen), it seems as if the dairy in Andeer shows less connection to the local basis of the production. According to the dairy manager the website is still under construction and needs another revision, which would also include the farmers.

Altogether, novelty production in Andeer has resulted in an enlargement of the business, the creation of a wider product range, and a successful distribution of a niche product. Since this implies the creation of an alternative food network, novelty production can also serve as countermovement to the globalisation trends similar to endogeneity. Small-scale producers thus start to look for new market segments and functions that go beyond the sole production of food (Van Huylenbroeck *et al.* 2007). Similar to the Rhöngold case described by Knickel (2001) the dairy in Andeer used its capacity developed through the production of novelties to follow new market demands and to create a variety of new product types; the production, however, remained in an artisan way. New connections built within the network resulted in a recombination of ideas and the emergence of mutual benefits, which is necessary to maintain a small-scale business in a globalising market. In the context of the Rhöngold case one success factor mentioned is the marketing of the final product. Consumers increasingly look for products which tell a story and can be linked to an authentic and definite region (Knickel 2001). The dairy in Andeer followed this societal demand and communicates its underlying vision and philosophy mainly via the webpage, media, and personal contact. Hence novelty production is not only about the creation of a new type of product, but also about putting available resources into a new context; i.e. the already existing product is wrapped in a story which appeals to a certain group of consumers which the producer wants to address.

The other case study on 'Queseria Morisca' described in the literature review (2.3) matches the case of Andeer in terms of innovative production (Wiskerke and Ploeg 2004). In both cases the variety of cheeses developed due to the producers' knowledge of regional dairy

traditions and the cheese-making process, as well as accidental discoveries and new ideas. Furthermore the 'Queseria Morisca' dairy builds on direct marketing and the re-connection of consumers with the consumption place.

Novelty production in the rural web does not only focus on the economic viability of the dairy, but also contributes to the viability of the rural economy as a whole. Without the value adding activities of the dairy, the high and stable milk price for farmers could probably not be achieved. The milk is bought from the dairy at a price of CHF 0,80 per litre without any fluctuations; this almost CHF 0,20 more than the average dairy farmer in Switzerland receives. Consequently the farmers would not be able to maintain their production standards in their current form in these mountainous areas, but would have to increase the scale of their business or look for new opportunities to earn a living. This in turn could have a negative impact on the natural and cultural landscape of the region. Moreover, a strong marketing of the additional values, as one type of novelty production creates awareness among people and attract more visitors. This also contributes to the viability of the rural economy.

Darnhofer (2005) states that the involvement of powerful retailers might shift away the benefits from the rural location. Therefore in Andeer the dairy manager aims at increasing the amount of products sold directly at the dairy and to the local gastronomy and becoming independent of the sales to the large-scale dairy Emmi. In order to achieve that goal it is important to adopt marketing strategies that match the purchase location and present the product's characteristics in an attractive way. In Andeer the dairy shop is a small specialty store mainly selling its own produce, of which the benefits can be directly communicated to the customer. In addition further organic food items, as well as a few local products are sold in order to stay competitive, facing an increasing amount of large retailers. Therefore they need to offer a large variety of high-quality cheeses and have to focus on a direct relation to the consumer. Referring to Bähr (2004) they have to be flexible in adjusting their strategies to the changing demands of consumer behaviour.

To sum up, the most developed novelty 'produced' in Andeer is the strong marketing and the high prominence of the dairy which has been enhanced due to innovativeness and the mobilisation of new ideas.

4. Results & Discussion: Research question 2 – Relation between the dairy and the consumers

In chapter 3 relations and activities in the rural web were described and analysed in terms of endogeneity and novelty production. In the following chapter the focus is put on the connection between the dairy and the consumers of cheese from Andeer. The stakeholders taken into consideration are the hotel managers, the cheese traders, the specialty store managers, and the final consumers. While the first three stakeholders primarily buy cheese from Andeer for further distribution, the final consumer purchases the cheese for home consumption. The tourists surveyed in the hotels, however, consume the cheese, but do not necessarily purchase it afterwards.

Based on the discussion on the different dimensions of the rural web in the literature review, social capital, co-production, and sustainability were chosen to describe and analyse this connection within the rural web. At first all aspects of the dimensions are integrated and described in one chapter, because they are very closely related. After that the connection is discussed referring to each dimension individually.

Following that, in chapter 5, the core of this research will be tackled, i.e. the communicated message will be presented and its perception by the consumers will be analysed; chapter 5 mainly deals with the results of the survey.

4.1. Description of the relation between the dairy and the consumers in terms of social capital, co-production, and sustainability

The communication and distribution process from the dairy to the final consumer can take different paths; five distribution channels were identified earlier in this study. The results presented in this chapter are mainly based on the interviews which were carried out with the participants in the cheese distribution. These were combined with some basic information received from the survey among the consumers.

Buyers who have direct and personal contact to the dairy manager are the hotel manager, the cheese traders, and the consumers who purchase the cheese in the shop at the dairy. Specialty store managers do not necessarily meet the dairy manager personally, as they cooperate with the cheese traders. Altogether thirty specialty stores in Switzerland sell cheese from out of which seven store managers were interviewed in this study. Only two store managers are in direct contact with the dairy manager, but buy the cheese via the trading company anyways. In a few cases consumers purchasing the cheese in specialty stores have been direct buyers at the dairy before, because they spent their vacation in

Andeer. The survey revealed that twelve out of 30 consumers who filled in the surveys in the specialty stores have been in Andeer before.

Distance to the dairy

As mentioned already in chapter 3 personal relations and direct contact are very important characteristics for a well-functioning rural web. This directly relates to the length of actual distances and the size of distribution channels. Consumers living close-by have a better chance to meet the dairy manager, as well as the cheese-maker and to get a deeper insight into the dairy production in Andeer. Furthermore a short geographical distance enables more frequent contact, so that interaction and cooperation can be increased. Looking at the hotels which use cheese from Andeer it is obvious that the hotel manager who is located next to the dairy has more frequent contact and buys all cheeses and dairy products from the dairy in Andeer. Thus he can give direct feedback and do his purchases more flexible. Due to the close relation cooperation and interaction are facilitated. One of the hotel manager located farther away, about 20 km from Andeer, describes the relation to the dairy as an ordinary business relation. Due to the long distance the contact is less personal, as purchases are often made by phone and delivered via public transport. Although the distance is quite long compared to the hotels in Andeer the hotel manager uses 80% of the cheese from Andeer, because it is the closest dairy. In his opinion the cheeses from other dairies are of high quality as well, but transportation is much more difficult. Furthermore he believes that consumers in his hotel are too far away to purchase the cheese from Andeer, after they have tried in the hotel. Based on the same context interests and knowledge differ between the varying locations.

Benefits of direct contact

Stakeholders located directly in Andeer, namely the farmers, the mayor, the citizens, the tourists, and the local hotel managers, rather view the dairy as an important business contributing to the village's viability and cultural image. This attitude is very important to get things done in a cooperative way with mutual benefits for all stakeholders. Furthermore direct consumers are rather able to grasp the dairy's background and to see the relation to the farmers as the raw material producers as well. In this case the place of production turns into the place of consumption; hence a re-connection of consumers to the production process takes place. This form of co-production only works out, if remarks and ideas are exchanged and communicated openly.

Varying attitudes of customers

One aspect commonly regarded as very important by many stakeholders of the rural web around the dairy, regardless of their distance to Andeer, is the artisan and local production backed up by the dairy manager's engagement. Depending on the distance, however, some stakeholders, who have not yet visited the dairy rather focus on the production process, while others value the personal contact on location higher. The German cheese trader, who has less frequent and personal contact to the dairy in Andeer, buys the cheese because of its quality and the organic production, since Swiss organic cheese makes up a niche market in Germany. The Swiss cheese trader, however, mentions the importance of the origin and the people behind the cheese; the organic label is secondary. It is regarded as a positive extra, but is not a prerequisite for the purchase. The personal contact to the Swiss cheese trading company is maintained on a more regular basis and characterised by interaction and cooperation. The company appreciates the enthusiasm and engagement of the dairy, since the manager also gives feedback, provides good information material, and helps at fairs and trade shows. Dedicated and interested managers of specialty stores, who are keen on background stories beyond the information which is delivered by the cheese trader, get into personal contact with the dairy manager. Thereby they can give feedback on the quality of the cheese and the consumers' expectations. In turn they receive additional information which they can pass on to the consumer. One store manager revealed that many consumers like to hear a story about the cheese they consume and that even children remember anecdotes he can tell about cheese-making in Andeer. The personal communication is the best way for him to sell the cheese; that's why he passes this information on to the sales personal who are in direct contact with the consumer as well. Nevertheless the store manager admits that quality is still more important; if the quality and taste of a product is not according to the consumer's demands, the story behind the product cannot convince the purchaser.

Since quality and taste are the most important purchase reasons in specialty stores, most of the managers do not pass on a lot of background information. They basically rely on the information they receive from the cheese traders and do not search for additional information by contacting the dairy in Andeer. While the seller has to aim for traceability and deliver all the essential information to the buyer, the buyer has to base his decision on the information passed on by the seller. Consequently, the actors in the different distribution channels have to aim for trust and open interaction.

The marketer of the Swiss cheese trading company describes the synergy between sellers and buyers like that: *'The dairy has its own philosophy which we can rely on. Likewise we have a philosophy that our customers know and agree with. The final consumer believes in the philosophy of the store, which he chooses for the purchase. The consumer therefore*

needs to trust the store manager's knowledge and experience; the philosophy of the dairy becomes secondary' (Trollope 2009).

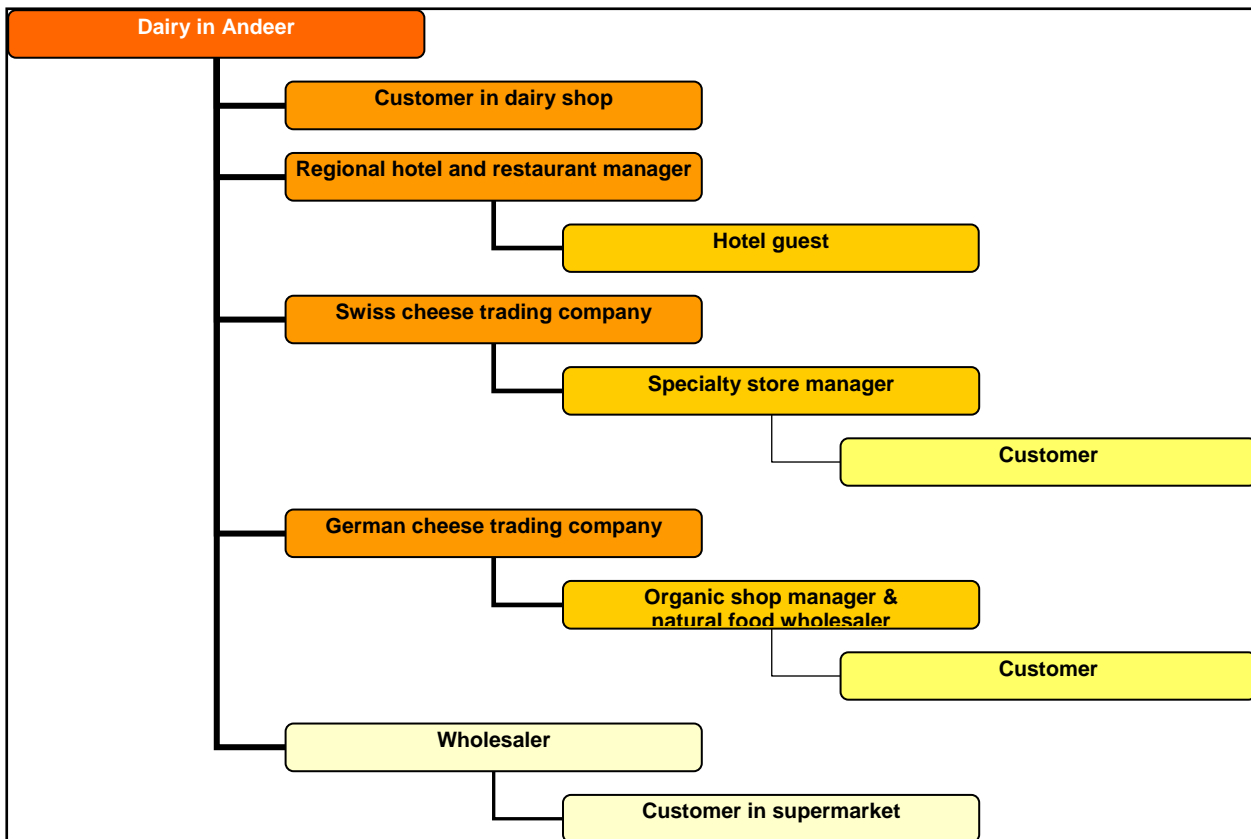


Fig.4: Distribution channels and the flow of information from the dairy to its consumers

In figure 4 the different stakeholders in each distribution channel are presented; the different colours mark the varying degrees of information based on the distance to the dairy and the knowledge of the preceding stakeholder. One exemption is the customer who purchases cheese in a specialty store in Andeer, but had personal contact to the dairy manager before. Due to the personal interests the quality and quantity of information changes after each step of the distribution channel; an information asymmetry occurs (Fig. 4).

Thus within each distribution channel it is important to create stable links based on trust and reliability to fulfil each stakeholder's demands and expectations.

4.2. Discussing social capital, co-production, and sustainability in Andeer

4.2.1. Social capital

Social capital is about getting things done collectively; common goals are achieved by the use of social relations. To a great extent it depends on the ability of the different stakeholders to cooperate and interact in a way that synergies and mutual benefits are created within the web. Trust is therefore a core of social capital; it is precondition as well as outcome.

Looking at the relation between the dairy and the consumers it becomes obvious that direct and personal contact is inevitable for distribution and marketing. Direct communication and the passing on of background stories only works, if common interests and values underlie the relation. The middlemen, including the cheese traders and the store managers, only ask for more information, if they are personally interested and share similar ideas and beliefs or if their customers demand further information. Middlemen who are more interested in the quality of the product and the production process only ask for the basic information, which is on demand passed on to the buyer. Hence the individual attitude and philosophy of each stakeholder influences the quality and quantity of information which is spread. The final consumer who is not in the position to get into direct contact with the dairy manager has to rely on the communication via the middlemen and trust its quality. By requesting further information or more details the final consumer can influence its quantity and quality, but only in case the request is passed backwards to the dairy. Consequently, the communication depends on all the stakeholders in the distribution channel and builds on cohesion and trust among them. For all of the stakeholders it is basically a business relation but depending on the depth of the personal contact the development of trust is facilitated. It is not only important that the middlemen can trust the dairy, but also that the dairy can trust the middlemen and be sure that their cheese is distributed effectively and that background information is passed on correctly

The same counts for the hotel managers, as they can also just pass the information on, which they have received from the dairy manager. This in turn depends on the interest they show and the importance they allocate to additional information. Moreover it depends on the interest of the hotel guests and their request for information. While some hotel manager state that their guests are primarily interested in the information that the cheese is organic and from the region, some mention that a few guests also ask for more detailed information. This especially occurs in hotels that are very close to the dairy, as those guests already have got a picture of the dairy and the locality around it. Hotel managers maintain that those guests most likely also purchase the cheese at the dairy for taking it back home after their holidays. The dairy manager in turn believes that hotel guests, who have tried the cheese during their vacation, will search for it in their home town. Hence, the distribution via hotels has got two advantages: firstly, the product is sold locally, and secondly, the prominence of the cheese is further increased.

The communication and exchange of information is the easiest for people who buy the cheese directly at the dairy. They have the chance to ask for all details they are interested in; information can relate to the quality and production of the cheese as well as to the underlying production standards and the philosophy of the dairy. As many of the customers also live in Andeer and know the farmers, the cheese-maker and the dairy manager, they can more

easily form a picture of the engagement and the integration of the dairy into the village. They especially value the personal contact and the creativity in the dairy in Andeer. The relations as a core of the social capital are stronger among stakeholders who know the locality and benefit from personal contact. The strength of relations is therefore positively related to the development of social capital. Apparently, engaging in networks results in collective gains and synergies among producers and consumers, but also reveals that the inputs and benefits are neither comprehensive nor relevant for all stakeholders equally.

Consequently, the amount and quality of information communicated in the different distribution channels highly depends on the engagement and interests of the stakeholders involved. Social capital is not only about engaging in relations and collective actions, but also about learning and experiencing how to interact and cooperate, which in turn helps to develop trust. The development of strategic contacts often results in the generation of additional resources which link social with economic benefits. One example reinforcing this relation is the linkage between the dairy and the Swiss cheese trader; through regular and direct contact they exchange ideas and thereby improve the distribution of cheese from Andeer. The export of the cheese to specialty stores out of Switzerland can be regarded as one economic benefit resulting from social capital building and the engaging in relations. While the Swiss cheese trader thinks that they have contributed significantly to enhance the famousness of cheese from Andeer among specialty cheese buyers, the dairy manager maintains that his engagement in marketing and the development of media presence is the reason for the success. In his opinion the job done by the cheese trader is the distribution of the cheese, i.e. the hardware of the business. Although he recognises that he has become more independent from the retailer 'Emmi' through the cooperation with cheese traders. Altogether the social capital in Andeer has been established in a comprehensive way and utilised by those who show interest and engagement and recognise the mutual benefits. In an interview for the regional paper 'Südostschweiz am Sonntag' the dairy manager reveals what he appreciates about the production in Andeer: 'Unsere Beziehungen zu den Bauern, aber auch zu den Abnehmern sind von Vertrauen geprägt. Und davon, dass wir alle in etwa das gleiche Ziel haben.' ('Our relations to the farmers, as well as to the buyers, are affected by trust. And they are affected by the pursuit of the same goal.')

(Bamert 2006). Trust is getting increasingly important, especially in the context of food purchases in a globalising market. Corresponding to De Marchi (2006) the findings in the rural web of Andeer show that it is difficult to enhance trust in long distribution channel, while it is easier via direct marketing and personal communication. Furthermore a good and reliable communication increases the consumer's willingness to pay a surplus. Other authors refer to the rise of 'ethical consumption', as more alternative food networks develop and the level of consumer awareness goes up as well (Newholm and Shaw 2007).

In their research Newholm and Shaw (2007) revealed that a lack of knowledge and information among consumers directly relates to uncertainty in the purchase decision. In the case of Andeer, however, this coherence does not become apparent, as most consumers were satisfied with the information they have received; the survey revealed that only eleven out of 81 respondents would have appreciated more information, mostly in the form of guided tours through the dairy. Moreover end consumers in longer distribution channels were more interested in the taste and quality of the product than in the additional values. Differences in knowledge and experience can, however, lead negative consequences of social capital, as the relations lack mutual benefits and learning experiences; in this case social capital tends to become one-sided. Likewise Ittersum (2003) states that the utilisation of knowledge on factors that influence the consumer's purchase decision can improve the marketing of a product. Therefore feedback, which is based on personal contact, is an important possibility to balance knowledge asymmetry.

4.2.2. Co-production

Co-production often appears in relation to the re-connection of the consumer with the producer and the place of production. Re-connecting consumers and producers is only possible if there is a direct relation and a good source of information. The interest in the production place is enhanced if the processing takes place in an artisan way and close to nature. Thereby a reconnection to the environment occurs as well. In Andeer the dairy represents the link between society and nature and facilitates an interaction between consumers and producers. By purchasing cheese from Andeer, the consumer, although often unknowingly, supports the maintenance of cows with horns. Hence it is very important to adjust the communication of the message and to make sure that it is taken up by the consumer. It is beneficial if consumers are reconnected to the production place, but their input needs to be explained to them and their awareness needs to be increased. In order to communicate the activities and relations in the production place, direct and personal contact is very important to gain a comprehensive picture. In Andeer, however, the link between the dairy's activities and agricultural as well as environmental aspects is only taken up by a few cheese buyers. Interviews with the consumers reveal that they do not connect benefits of the dairy's engagement to the natural and cultural landscape. Two of the hotel managers however see advantages of the dairy's engagement for agriculture and the maintenance of the natural landscape in the mountainous area of their region. The linkage is easier to grasp for these two stakeholders as they are directly located in Andeer. A look at the webpage of the dairy offers a good possibility to get informed about their activities as well as their philosophy and aims which they pursue in combination with the dairy business. The results of the survey, however, reveal that the webpage is not used by a number of cheese consumers; only five out of 92 received information through the webpage. Hence, the dairy manager

needs to think about the type of consumer he wants to address, and which information channel is the most suitable for them. The movie 'Andeer ist anders' ('Andeer is different') also mirrors the circumstances in which the ideas and goals of the dairy manager have developed (Verhaag 2005). Hence, the viewer gains an insight into the co-evolution of nature and society and their mutual influences in Andeer; it facilitates to recognise the embeddedness of the dairy business into the natural environment. As the awareness rises, consumers increasingly search for local products.

Local products are more often linked to the social, cultural, and environmental context (Roep and Wiskerke 2006). Hence the reconnection of consumers to the production place has to be incorporated into the development of new alternative food networks. Chiffolleau (2009) mentions that the challenge which goes along with this development is to defend values and ideals related to the products quality and the locality respectively the environment it has been produced in (Chiffolleau 2009). In the philosophy of the dairy in Andeer the relation between ideals, the product, and the environment is an essential part. They see the challenge in the creation of awareness among their customers (Bienerth 2009b). If the ideals and values are effectively communicated, consumers can re-establish a trustful relation to food-production (Winter 2003). Direct marketing resulting in personal contact is the most successful tool to facilitate the communication of values. As Hunt (2007) states direct marketing does not only lead to a connection of the consumer to the production place, but in turn can also result in public recognition of the producer's engagement. This relation is also evident in Andeer, as a number of the direct customers mention the dairy's engagement as a reason for their purchase. They do not specify engagement, but interviews revealed that they rather link it with the dairy's growing prominence than with the implementation of their philosophy. In the context of engagement the dairy also took part in a competition within the project 'Zukunft in den Alpen' ('Futures in the alps') and mentions the relocation of different forms of value creation in agriculture and the dairy business back into the mountainous areas (CIPRA 2006).

4.2.3. Sustainability

Sustainability is based on economic, environmental, and social aspects. As part of the rural development process characteristics of sustainability are the creation of wealth, the strengthening of new institutional patterns (i.e. production, processing, distribution,...), the development of new forms of cooperation, and shifts in power relations. Applying these characteristics to the relation between the dairy and its consumers it becomes obvious that sustainability is an important underlying dimension. The higher prices consumers pay for the value added create wealth in the region, as they result in higher milk prices for the farmers. New institutional patterns have been introduced as the distribution of cheeses is to a large extent done by cheese traders, not only in Switzerland but also across Swiss borders, while

the part of cheese distributed via the wholesaler Emmi has been reduced. New institutional patterns come along with a division of labour, as processing and marketing are partly done by different stakeholders and with new forms of cooperation. Furthermore they can shift power relations, as the dairy increasingly becomes independent from the large dairy, which sold the cheese from Andeer anonymously.

Transformations which take place in the context of sustainable rural development are the following: Re-integration of tasks and activities externalised in the past, supply of multiple products, emergence of new networks, development of economies of scope, and re-localisation of production-consumption patterns. In Andeer transformations have occurred in this context as well. Activities which have been reintegrated are mainly linked to artisan and close-to-nature production; one example is the maintenance of cows' horns and the production of silage-free milk. Furthermore the dairy offers a wider range of products. They do not only provide the customer with a variety of cheeses, but also with other dairy products, e.g. yoghurt and quark, as well as a variety of other foodstuffs. Thus people can also combine their cheese purchase with additional grocery shopping. The emergence of new networks in Andeer arises from the distribution of products via different distribution channels; in Germany the cheese trader for example engages in the niche-market for organic cheese from Switzerland. Another activity in the context of sustainability is the turn towards quality instead of quantity. The dairy's motto is 'sustaining instead of growing'; they do not want to process a higher amount of milk, but create additional value by adding quality. Again this engagement is revealed by the dairy's participation in the competition 'Zukunft in den Alpen'; in the project proposal it is stated that the maintenance of the Andeer dairy on a small-scale is realised by the focus on three core issues: Maintenance of the high milk quality, direct marketing, in which the consumers determine the quality and price, and higher milk prices, so that dairy farmers do not have to aim for high yields (CIPRA 2006). Furthermore the dairy won this year's Binding price, which recognises extraordinary benefits in environment and nature protection. According to the Binding foundation they ideally transform an agricultural production chain in an economic peripheral situation into high added value; they represent a 'lighthouse' for similar attempts to achieve qualities with high value added (Tagblatt Zürich 2009).

The survey results however reveal that this aspect of the dairy's philosophy 'sustaining instead of growing' is only of average importance for customers of cheese from Andeer. Nevertheless one specialty store manager mentioned that it is very important for him to act in accordance to that philosophy and to keep the price of the cheese in a comparably low range, so that customers who support the dairy's vision can also afford to purchase the cheese. The other store managers rather focus on the quality and taste of the cheese and try

to absorb the high value added. The price for cheese from Andeer ranges from CHF 2,80 (€ 1,85) to CHF 3,90 (€ 2,60) in the seven specialty stores.

The store manager, who sells the cheese for a comparably low price, can disseminate the dairy's philosophy and production background in conversations because of regular telephone calls and visits at the dairy. This marks one step to bring the consumer closer to the places of production. One other store manager also shows a lot of interest in the production background of the dairy in Andeer, but instead of passing the information on to the customers in his store, he passes on the dairy's philosophy as one positive example in cheese seminars he carries out for interested cheese buyers. In general the store managers like to communicate basic information to the final consumer word-of-mouth, as this is assimilated more easily than written information. Furthermore they state that consumers in our days are already flooded with too much written promotion material and are mostly not interested in detailed information on the cheese they want to purchase. The survey also underlines this assumption, as 74.5 % of the respondents regarded the information which they have received as adequate. Hence the degree of information provided by the store managers is in balance with the consumers' demand for information.

Consumers gain most knowledge and awareness via personal communication, directly at the place of production. With a growing distance from the producer and the production place the content and amount of information changes, as more people are included into the communication process. Due to the engagement in personal relations and direct marketing, the degree of information passed on directly in Andeer is higher and thus the dairy is able to bring the consumer even closer to the place of production; it can also serve as a link between the raw-material producer - the farmer - and the final consumer, i.e. between agriculture and society at large. The personal communication in hotels is another way to strengthen that link; it also refers back to the dairy's engagement in personal contact, because it marks the source of information of the hotel managers. Hence consumers who have been able to purchase the cheese directly in Andeer gain a deeper insight into the local activities and processes. Other consumers have to rely on information which is passed on by other stakeholders and have to form their own picture of the production and its related aspects in Andeer.

Since sustainable rural development also includes the strengthening of relations between agriculture and society, which might result into new markets and new sources of income, it is closely related to social capital and co-production. All three dimensions have in common that they build on the development of strong relations and vivid interaction. In the context of sustainability it is also important to look at the balance between economic, environmental and social aspects. Taking a look at the balance of aspects in Andeer it is quite even. The additional value of cheese from Andeer is linked to the avoidance of long transportation

distances for customers living in Andeer. Furthermore the majority of all consumers who filled in the survey regard the maintenance of the natural and cultural landscape as the most important aspect. Since recent modernisation processes have resulted in a variety of problems, e.g. loss of small-scale businesses in rural areas, decreasing concern for the environment's well-being, decreasing agricultural employment etc., it is very important to focus on sustainability. New alternative food networks help to solve this problem, as more and more consumers become aware of sustainability issues and contribute to a solution by purchasing local food products (Ploeg 2003).

Summing up the dairy in Andeer shows a strong engagement in sustainability, including its step-by-step conversion to organic agriculture as well as the implementation of the philosophy. Furthermore the close link between sustainability and co-production becomes clear, because a re-connection of consumers to the production places and the improvement of the interaction among humans and nature require sustainable practises. There is also a close link to social capital as the success of sustainable practises always depends on the available knowledge and its dissemination via strong and trustful relations.

An anecdote: How to get cheese from Andeer!

During the research one specific example on how a consumer gets to know and to buy cheese from Andeer has been discovered. It reveals the diversity of possibilities on how customers become aware of a product. In this case a 79 years old lady Elisabeth Kranz (*name changed by the author*) living in the outskirts of Zürich reported that she has been travelling to Andeer for the 18th time. In the hotel 'Weisses Kreuz' which is located next to the dairy in Andeer, she tried cheese from Andeer during breakfast. There Mrs Kranz also learned about the local aspects of production and the accurate implementation of biological standards in the cheese production. She was very impressed by the good taste and bought more cheese from the dairy. Since she also wants to enjoy cheese outside her holiday times in Andeer, Mrs Kranz found a small specialty store in her hometown, which sells one kind of Andeerer cheese. She found out about that store when she personally talked to the dairy manager in Andeer, who also gave her a lot of background information on how the cheese is produced and where the milk comes from. Furthermore Elisabeth Kranz learned more about the cheese production in Andeer by reading newspaper articles and listening to radio programmes. From her personal experience she described the dairy manager as a very happy and enthusiastic couple, who incorporates soul and spirit into the cheese. Moreover she experienced that the dairy sells much more cheese than before the takeover and that it is a very good advertisement for Andeer. She also likes the use of local resources and the strict implementation of biological production standards. Therefore she wants to support the dairy and buys the cheese from Andeer in a specialty store close to her hometown. Not surprisingly, Elisabeth Kranz feels better informed about the cheese than the manager of the specialty store, who has never had the chance to visit Andeer and thus does not have any background information on the production process. This observation complies with the assumption that direct contact to the dairy manager combined with a visit in the region is very important for getting a full picture of the cheese and the production background.

The store manager experienced so far that most of the customers only want to purchase good or special cheeses to enjoy the taste, but usually they are not interested in background stories. Thus he does not search for additional information and only knows the basic characteristics of the cheese. In his opinion people buy cheese from Andeer, who have tried it before and enjoy the taste; those customers usually buy the cheese on a regular basis.

Others buy the cheese for the first time because of his recommendation or because they feel attracted to the region Grison.

This case displays one example on how customers get to know cheese from Andeer and why it can even be successfully sold outside the local dairy of Andeer.

5. Results & Discussion: Research question 3 – Perception of the communicated message

Following the general description of the activities and relations in the rural web and their linkage to the dimensions of the theoretical concept the focus is put on the message communicated by the dairy and how it is perceived by the consumer. Therefore, first of all, the message which is sent out by the dairy is introduced. After that survey results, which describe the survey respondents and which relate to the research question are presented. These results are discussed and summed up at the end of this chapter.

5.1. The message and the way of communication

The most detailed version of the dairy's philosophy can be found on the website where it is elaborated under the title 'sustaining instead of growing' and backed up with information on the milk price discussion, the raw material milk, and the dairy's vision. Under the topic 'sustaining instead of growing' the dairy manager explains the importance of maintaining rural areas with small-scale patterns by assessing products from mountainous areas on a qualitative instead of quantitative basis. That is why in Andeer they try to take a different approach based on three core issues. First of all, the high quality of milk has to be maintained, secondly, direct marketing is enhanced because price and quality are self-determined and independent of market processes, and thirdly a higher price is paid for a smaller amount of milk. Based on those core ideas new ways have been taken since the take-over of the dairy in 2001. Prerequisites for a creation of a high value added is the production of milk without feeding silage, the daily delivery of fresh milk, the personal and regular contact of producer and processor, as well as the higher valuation of milk from cows with horns. Based thereupon a special marketing philosophy has developed. The dairy manager's aim is not to reach as many customers as possible but to reach a group of consumers who understands the interconnection of prices and values. According to the dairy manager *'that is why the dairy's communication skills and the attitude of the customers decide on the continuity of the business in Andeer'* (website, dairy Andeer). Furthermore they have developed an ecological philosophy, which includes the production according to organic agricultural standards, the usage of organic products at home and in the shop, the communication of biological circles and ecological recycling in the close surroundings, as well as the transformation to a self-sufficient energy system based on wood and sun.

In the chapter on the milk price discussion one can find the quote: *'Wer an den Wurzeln der Milchbauern frisst, zerstört langfristig seine eigenen Lebensgrundlagen'* (website, dairy Andeer), which means that people who feed on the roots of dairy farmers, destroy their own livelihood in the long term. Following this statement the changing valuation and recognition of

milk by customers in our days is discussed. The dairy manager stresses that the product milk changed from a highly value good to an easily exchangeable and almost arbitrarily producible good. The low appreciation leads to very low prices, although milk should not only be regarded as a drink but also as foodstuff. Moreover the price has to incorporate the conditions under which the milk has been produced, as they differ a lot for dairy farms in the mountains as compared to dairy farms in the valleys. Hence the price of milk decides upon the existence and continuity of small-scale structures and that's why it needs further discussion and explanation among people who want to support the rural livelihood on a small scale. In the dairy manager's opinion it is important to break through the vicious circle of economic growth to preserve small units as opposed to scale enlargement. For him this can only work out if less milk is produced and higher prices are paid.

The other part on the philosophy explained on the dairy's website takes different perspectives through which one can look at milk. In this context milk is discussed as a foodstuff, as a medicament, as a raw material and as milk coming from the Alps. Basically the dairy manager explains the connection of milk and living nature and the decreasing recognition of milk as part of our daily lives.

In the part on the dairy's visions it is stated that the main aim is to regain the appreciation of milk. Therefore in the short term the dairy wants to increase the price for milk and maintain the dairy business, in the medium term six more jobs are to be created as a viable basis of the small-scale dairy and in the long term the dairy in Andeer should become embedded in a larger amount of small-scale dairies in the valleys of Grisons, so that no milk has to leave the region for processing.

Another possibility to get a good impression on the dairy's philosophy and the contents of their communication is the movie about the dairy in Andeer, which has been released by DENKmal Film GmbH in 2005. The movie is called 'Andeer ist anders', which means that 'Andeer is different'. It is about the dairy manager's connection to the alps and his aim to stop the loss of jobs and economic capital by maintaining the dairy on a small scale. In the movie it is stated that the dairy manager tries to slow down the pulse of the so called technological progress (Verhaag 2005). Due to the movie's setting and scenery the message of the dairy is put into a vivid and meaningful context and thus can be more easily taken up by the viewer.

Due to its prominence based on the participation in competitions and award ceremonies the dairy has become increasingly present in different types of media, namely TV, radio, and newspapers. Especially for people who feel connected to the canton Grisons or directly to the dairy in Andeer, this media presence represents an important source of information and helps to take up the communicated message. Consequently, the awareness of consumers

grows and the prominence of the dairy further increases. The dairy manager could notice that by an increase in the sale of cheeses during the summer after the movie was released (Bienerth 2009a).

The other sources appear to be only of minor importance, as they do not contain a lot of information (Fig. 12). Flyers refer to information material distributed through tourist agencies, in which the dairy is only mentioned as part of Andeer. Although flyers are mentioned more often than the media sources they do not present a lot of information and hence the consumer does not become aware of the dairy's additional activities. Likewise the product label only gives basic information on the product itself, but not on the message the dairy wants to communicate. The different ways of information are further discussed in chapter 5.3.2.

Summing up, the philosophy which underlies this cheese-production has evolved due to the availability and recombination of resources in Andeer. The characteristics of the locality as well as the knowledge and skills of the local actors resulted in the set-up of the production standards. Due to regular interaction of the local stakeholders and the personal contact the philosophy can be implemented and adapted. This presents a good way to integrate social and environmental aspects in the production process. To use this philosophy for value addition it also needs to be communicated to the consumer in a comprehensive way. Only if the awareness of the consumer is created the philosophy will develop its full potential. In the next part of this chapter it is revealed, which aspects the different consumers regard as important and through which ways they receive that information.

5.2. Consumers' perceptions - Survey evaluation

5.2.1. Overview of survey respondents

The results from the surveys serve as the basis for answering the main research question of this study, which is about the aspects of communication perceived as important by the consumers of cheese from Andeer. These results are upgraded by information from the interviews carried out with different stakeholders from the rural web. The questionnaires were laid out in three different locations. The response rate was very low; the average response rate for all the locations was about 25 %. The highest portion was returned in the dairy shop in Andeer, where 49 questionnaires were filled in. In three local hotels 15 questionnaires were returned, and in the specialty stores 30 questionnaires were handed back (Fig. 5). Altogether the number of questionnaires is quite small for a full quantitative analysis. In Andeer, due to its small size, the questionnaire was filled in by a large part of the regular

customers, while the other respondents only represent a small number of customers in specialty stores buying cheese from Andeer; therefore conclusions have to be handled carefully. Furthermore only a few relations identified through crosstabs in SPSS were significant (i.e. chi-square smaller 0.05). Thus the evaluation of results was carried out in a rather qualitative way.

Customers buying the cheese directly at the dairy were made up by 29 citizens from Andeer and 20 tourists.

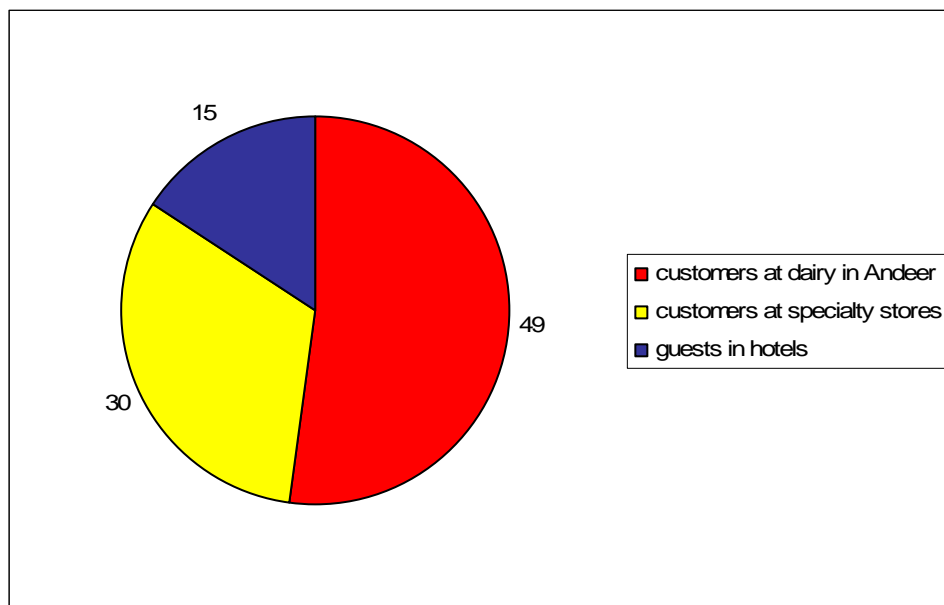


Fig. 5: The number of respondents who filled in the survey in the different locations

Out of these 29 citizens 26 state that they buy cheese from Andeer often; out of the 20 tourists ten claim to purchase cheese at the dairy regularly during their vacations, while five bought the cheese for the first time (Fig. 6). From the local hotels in and around Andeer four out of 15 tourists bought cheese at the dairy after they had tried it in the hotel's restaurant.

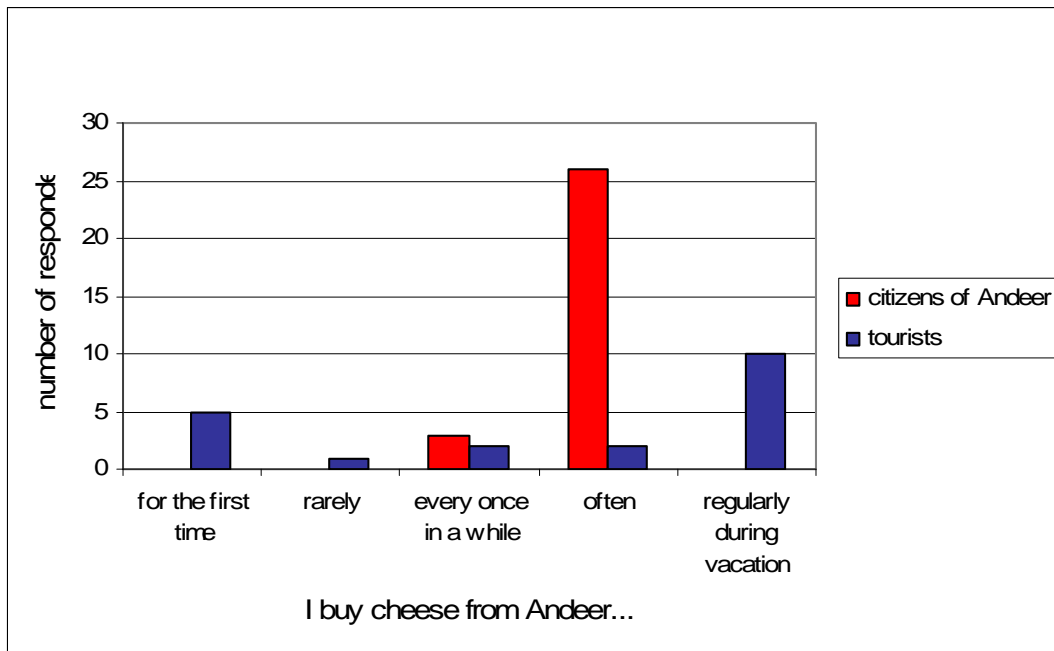


Fig. 6: Frequency of purchase directly at the dairy in Andeer

In specialty stores 13 out of 26 customers claim to buy cheese from Andeer occasionally, while 12 bought it for the first time and five customers buy the cheese often. As figure 7 shows the people who have been in Andeer before buy the cheese more frequently than people who do not know Andeer.

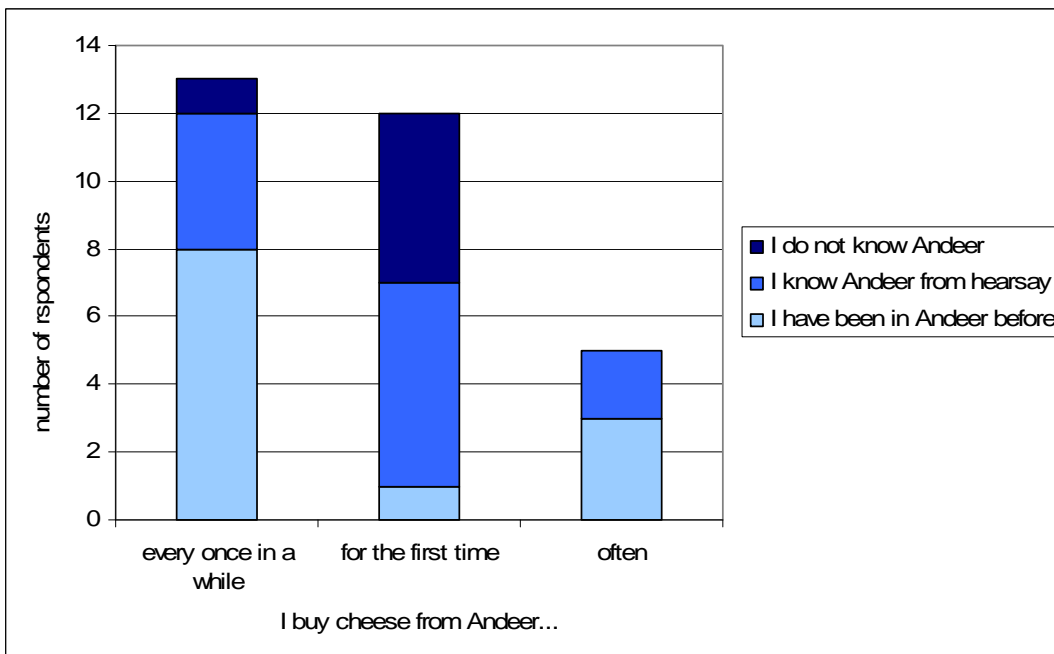


Fig. 7: Frequency of purchase in specialty stores related to the customers awareness of Andeer

Altogether 94 surveys were analysed for this study. For further analysis the surveys were divided into three different groups, not according to the survey location. The respondents who filled in the survey at the dairy were distinguished between citizens of Andeer and

tourists. The group of tourists then was combined with the people who filled in the surveys in the hotels, as they can be regarded as tourists as well. As shown in figure 8 the number of respondents was distributed quite equally across these three groups.

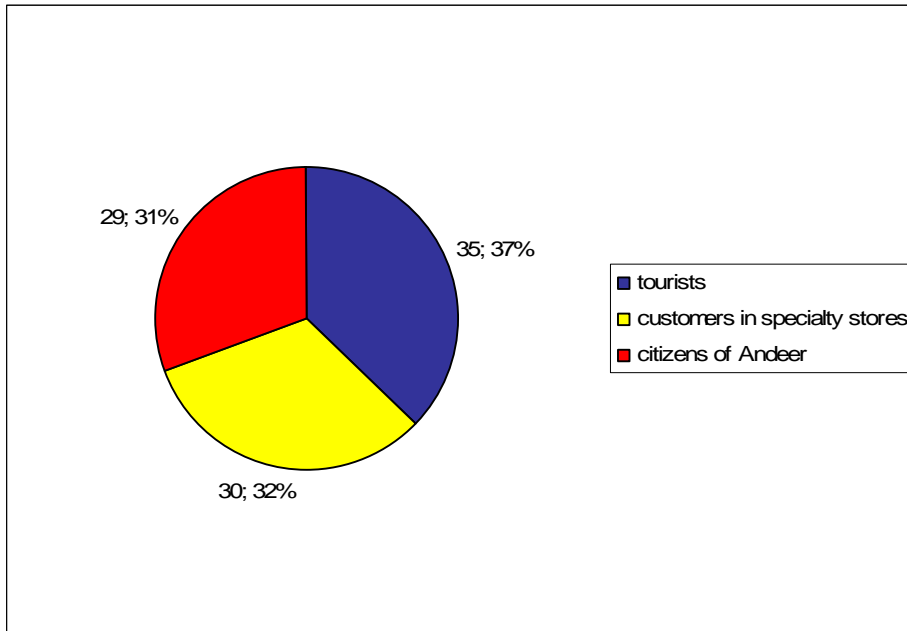


Fig. 8: The number and origin of respondents who took part in the survey

5.2.2. What is taken up by the consumers? - Results related to research question 3

The results presented in this part of the chapter relate to the questions which were asked in the survey. Thereby it is important to mention that one of the questions of the survey, the one on which aspects of dairy's philosophy the consumers recognise, was not included in the analysis. Surprisingly, the majority of all respondents maintained that they had heard about almost all of these aspects in context with the dairy. Therefore it is assumed that consumers rather looked at the aspects in a more general way and did not link them directly to the philosophy of the dairy. Hence the question emerged as unsuitable to reveal that relation as it did not produce meaningful results.

The question on how important the different aspects of the dairy's philosophy are perceived showed that most aspects are regarded higher by the citizens of Andeer compared to the customers of specialty stores and tourists; this is not true for the biological production process, which is viewed as more important by tourists. Moreover, in most cases tourists perceive the aspects as more important than the customers of specialty stores. Only the aspects 'Milk from cows with horns is preferred' and 'Sustaining is more important than growing' are seen as more important by customers of specialty stores than by tourists. The aspects which are perceived as most important by the citizens of Andeer all exceed a value of 4.9 on a scale from 1 to 5; 1 meaning that the aspect is valued as rather unimportant and 5 meaning that the aspect is valued as very important. These aspects are: 'Long

distances are avoided', 'Products bearing a relation to the region', 'Maintaining regional jobs', and 'Maintaining the dairy business in mountainous areas'. The only aspect valued with less than 4.6 by the citizens is 'Biological production process'. It is striking that there is only a very small variation in the evaluation by the citizens of Andeer.

Aspects which are perceived the most important by tourists pass a value of 4.7; these are: 'Maintaining the natural and cultural landscape', 'Biological production process', and 'Products bearing a relation to the region'. The aspect which is perceived the least important is 'Milk from cows with horns is preferred', which falls below a value of 3.8.

Customers of specialty stores regard the aspect 'Maintaining the natural and cultural landscape' as very important, as this is the only aspect with a value above 4.5 (Fig. 10). The aspect which they perceive as comparably unimportant is 'Personal communication with a value below 3.8 (Fig. 9).

Looking at all the respondents together the aspect of the dairy's philosophy which is valued as the most important is 'Maintaining the natural and cultural landscape', while the least important is 'Personal communication' (Fig.11).

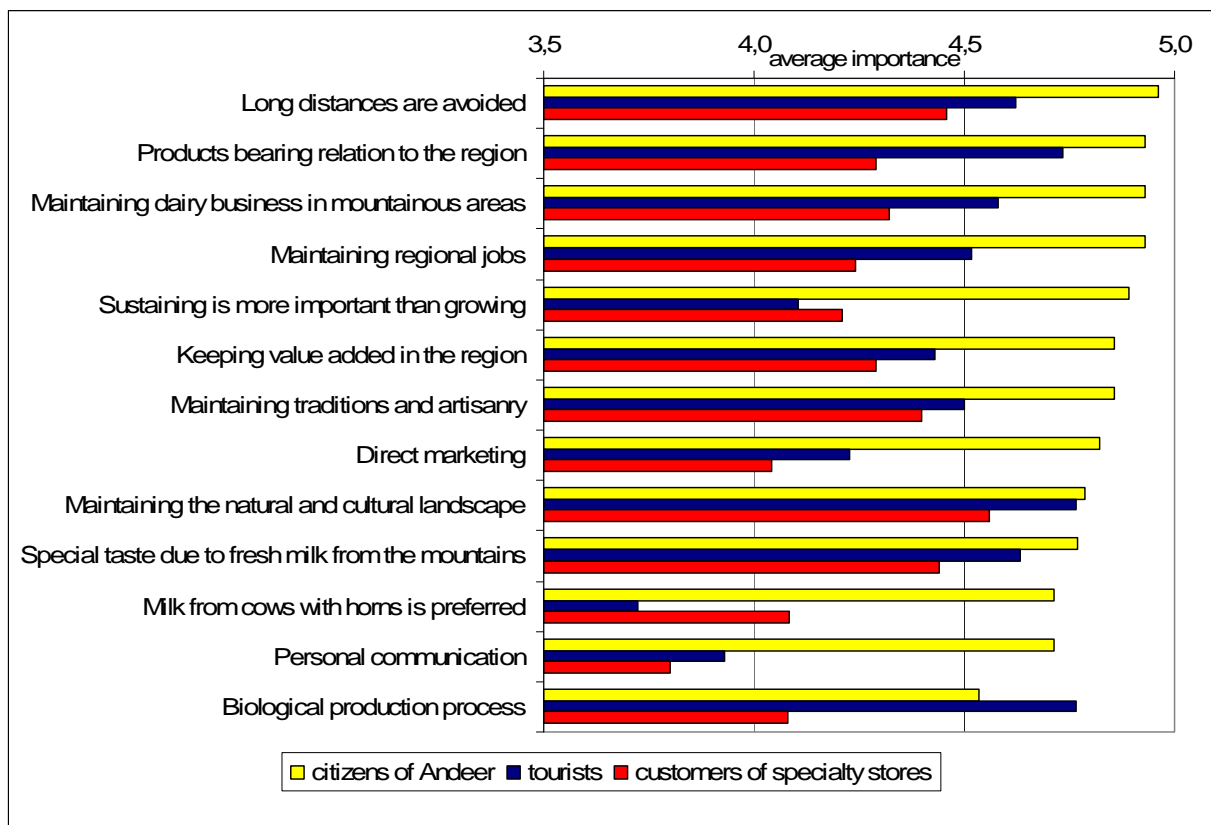


Fig. 9: The average perception of importance of each aspect of the dairy's philosophy valued by the three different groups of survey respondents.¹

¹ The average importance was calculated by adding up all the values given in each category and dividing the sum by number of responses given in each category.

	citizens of Andeer	tourists	customers of specialty stores
1.	long distances are avoided	biological production process	maintaining the natural and cultural landscape
2.	maintaining regional jobs	maintaining the natural and cultural landscape	
3.	maintaining dairy business in mountainous region	products bearing a relation to the region	
4.	products bearing a relation to the region		

Fig. 10: Table revealing the most important aspects given by the different groups of consumers (at least < 4.5)

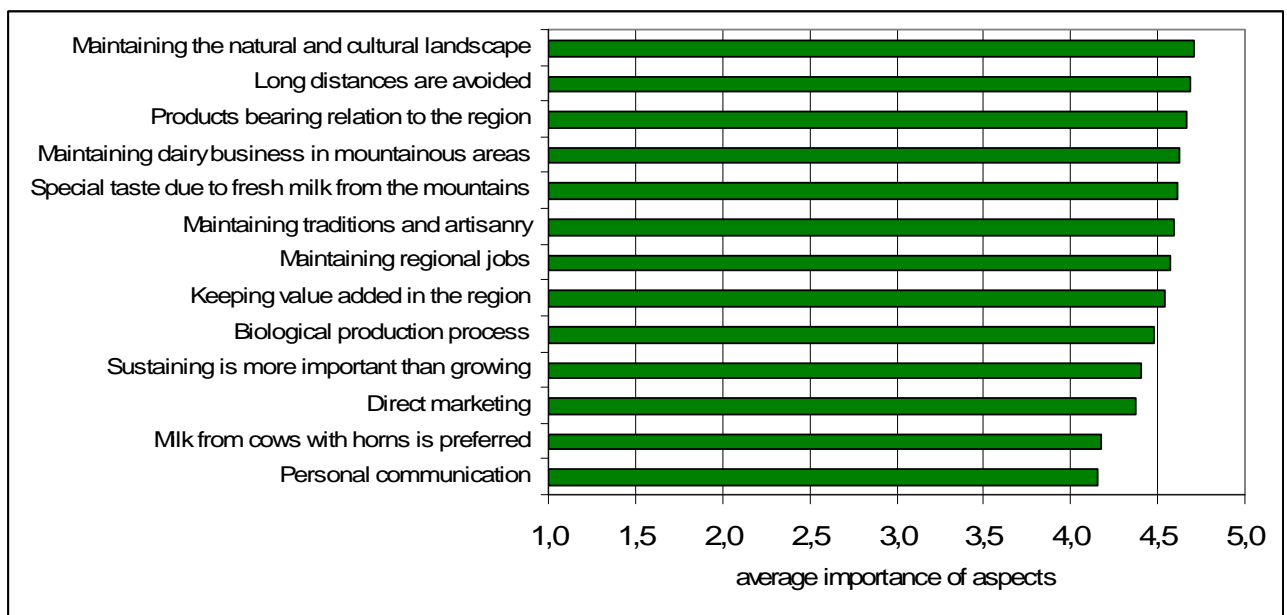


Fig. 11: The average perception of importance of each aspect of the dairy's philosophy valued by all survey respondents.¹

Regarding the ways through which the information was passed on to the consumer it is obvious that the dairy manager is the main source of information closely followed by the sales personal (Fig.12). Furthermore crosstabs only revealed significant results for the relations between citizens of Andeer and the way of information via the dairy manager, and customers in specialty stores and the way of information via the sales personal (Fig 13). Except for newspaper articles the other ways through which information is passed on are not mentioned by many survey respondents (Fig.12 & Fig. 13).

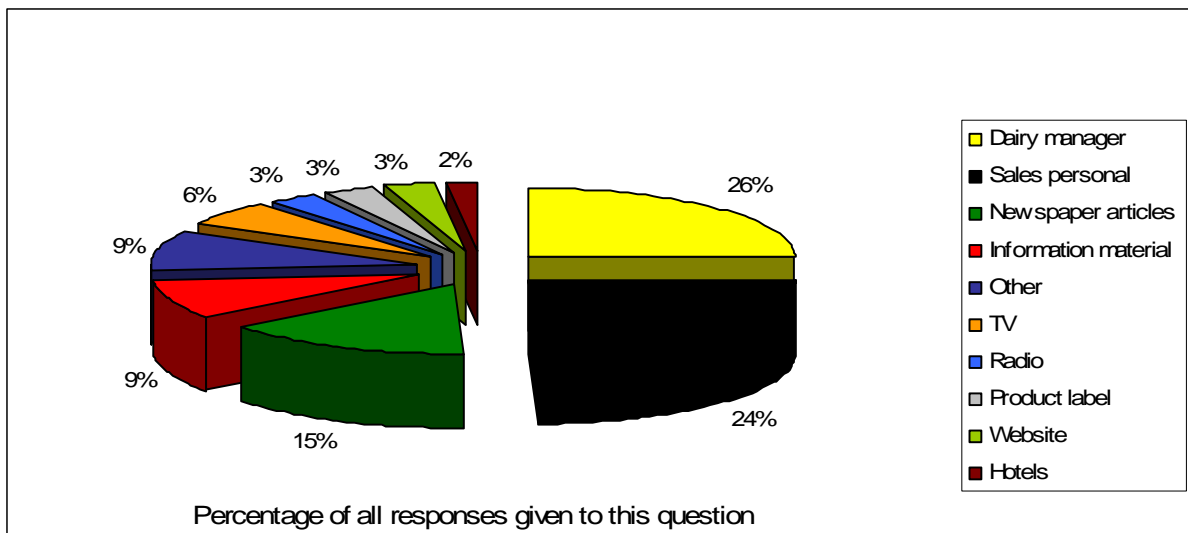


Fig. 12: Different ways through which consumers have received the information

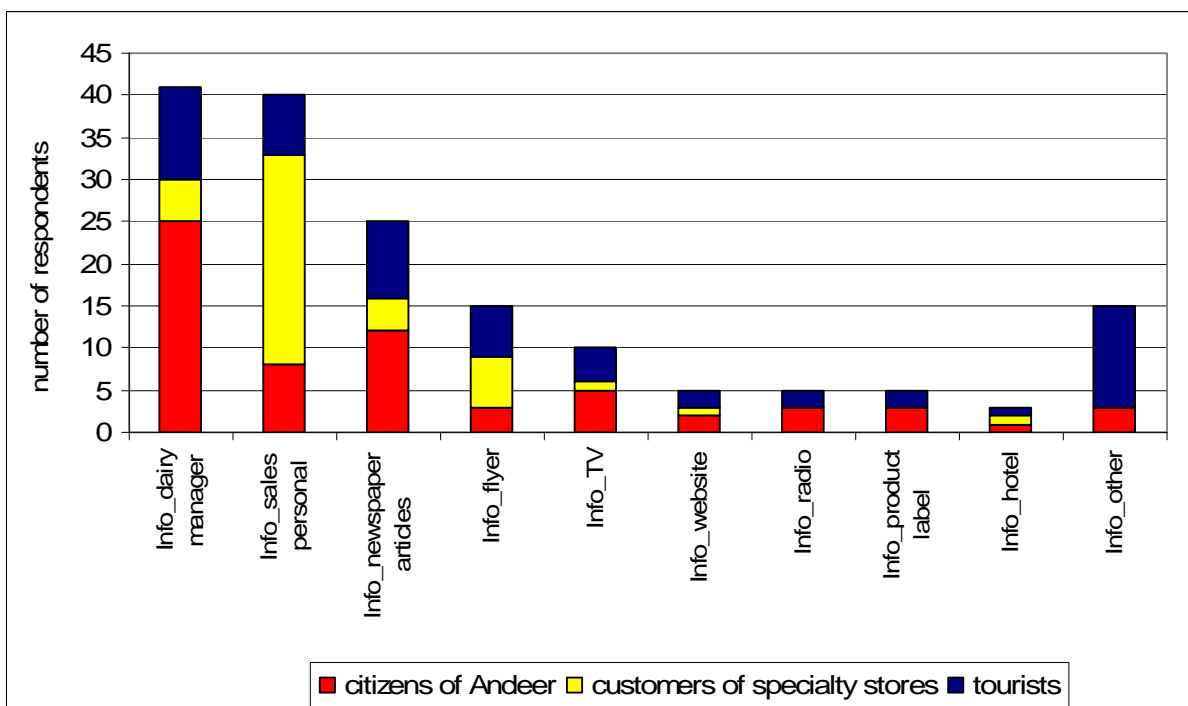


Fig. 13: Comparison of the frequency with which the different consumers mentioned the ways of information

In the surveys two open questions were posed to the respondents. The answers were evaluated and categorised in different groups of responses (Appendix 3); after that they were also analysed in SPSS and excel.

Firstly, it was asked for what reason the person bought cheese from Andeer (Appendix 1.1 & 1.3); this question, however, did not occur in the survey for the hotel guests, as they have not necessarily bought cheese from Andeer. The responses were grouped in five categories: product quality, maintaining traditional patterns and regionality, engagement, production process, and quality of the business. The evaluation of the purchase reasons shows that product quality is the category where most of the reasons given by respondents belong to. This category includes responses like 'because it is good', 'fresh milk', 'good dairy product', 'taste', 'top quality'. This is equally true for citizens from Andeer, as well as for customers of specialty stores. Tourists, however, purchase the cheese rather because of the maintenance traditional patterns and the regionality of the production; the responses covered in this category are 'tradition', 'regionality', 'maintaining agriculture', 'local milk', 'support local businesses', 'preserving traditional landscape' amongst others. For tourists the cheese also presents a souvenir which reminds them of their vacation when they get home. While citizens from Andeer mention purchase reasons related to the quality of the business the second most frequent, customers of specialty stores and tourists rather purchase cheese because of reasons which belong to the category 'engagement'. Quality of the business, however, is the least relevant category of purchase reasons for the customers of specialty stores and also not very often mentioned by tourists (Fig. 14). The category quality of the business contains responses like 'specialty store', 'service', 'assortment', 'friendly consultation', and 'prominence'. In the category engagement responses like 'fantasy', 'philosophy', 'creativity', 'recommendation' are summarised.

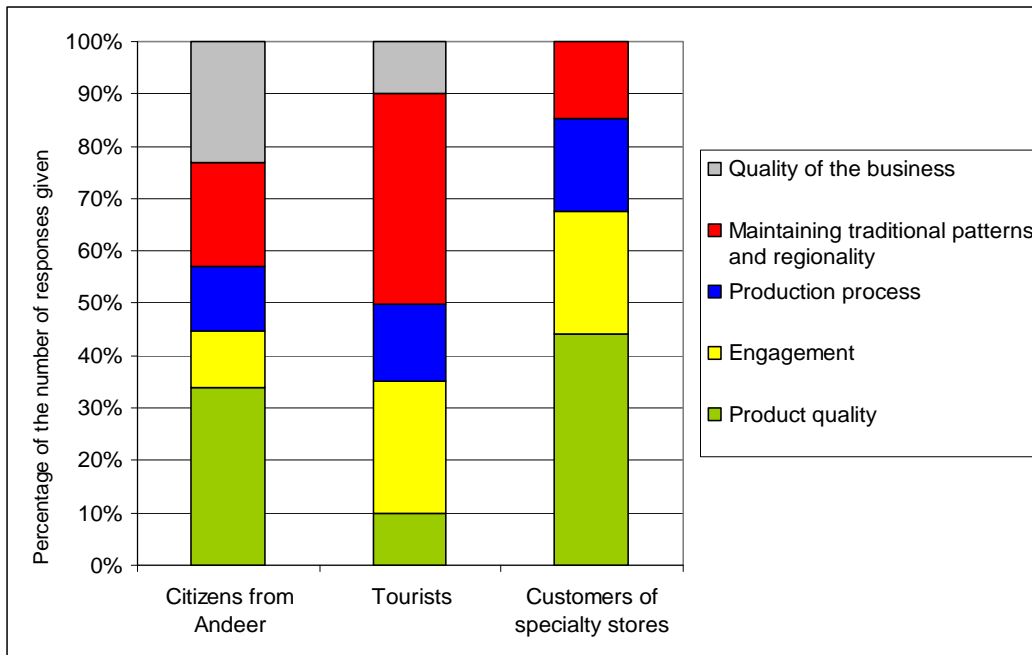


Fig. 14: Purchase reasons given by all respondents

The second open question was about the aspects each respondent associated especially with the cheese from Andeer (Appendix 1.1 & 1.3).

Concerning the connotations respondents have with the dairy in Andeer, it is quite clear that most of the citizens from Andeer relate personal contact and engagement with the dairy; more than 50% of the connotations given, fall into this category. This category is based on responses like 'personal contact', 'sympathy', 'good cheese-maker', 'the couple', and 'devotion'. Comments referring to the other categories are mentioned rarely (Fig. 14). For customers of specialty stores and tourists associations with the dairy most often belong to the dairy's production procedure; for customers of specialty stores more than 40% of connotations fall in this category, while for tourists it is only about 23.5% (Fig. 14). Belonging to the category production procedure are 'organic', 'sustainable production', and 'naturalness' among other responses. With around 15% of connotations the categories maintaining traditional patterns, personal contact and engagement, regionality, and vacation are also mentioned quite often by tourists (Fig.14). The category maintaining traditional patterns includes responses like 'maintaining local businesses', 'maintaining agriculture', 'responsibility towards agriculture', and 'local production', while regionality is based on responses like 'coming from the region', 'advertisement for the village', 'knowing farmers and processors', and 'feelings of home and rootedness'. The category vacation is made up by the following responses: 'memory of vacation', 'breakfast', 'hiking in the Grisons', 'hospitality in the hotel', and breakfast buffet'.

The categories traditional patterns and personal contact and engagement do not play a major role for customers of specialty stores. Regionality and the quality of the production

process are more frequently linked to the dairy; only 7% of the responses however fall into the category vacation (Fig. 15).

Altogether it is noticeable that the responses for both open questions are covered by a smaller number of categories, i.e. the responses are less diverse than those given by the citizens of Andeer and tourists (Fig. 14 & 15).

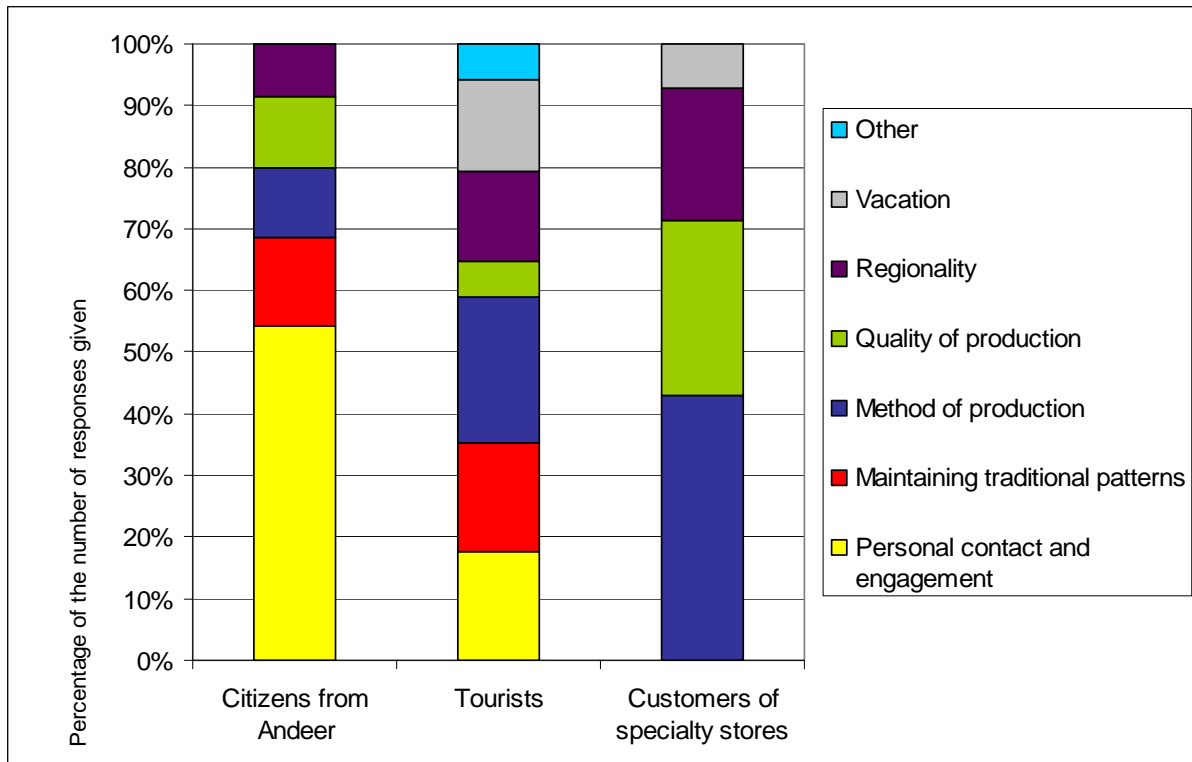


Fig. 15: Diagram showing the categories which distinguish the different connotations with the dairy given by all respondents

5.3 Discussion

5.3.1. Importance of the philosophy

Confronting the consumers of cheese from Andeer with the question on how important they regard the different aspects of the philosophy produces very high results, especially in the group 'citizens of Andeer' where all aspects of the philosophy were rated between 4.5 and 5 on average. Citizens of Andeer value the local production and the direct selling in Andeer. In their opinion the dairy is one important part of the village and contributes to the cultural image of Andeer in combination with other small specialty stores. Furthermore citizens of Andeer appreciate the philosophy of the dairy through which the cheese and thereby the village of Andeer has increased its famousness and gained more attractiveness. The avoidance of long transportation distances is regarded as very important and can also be related to the close distance of raw material producers, processors and customers. Due to those direct and often very personal relations in the village many customers experience the

reconnection to the production place and process. Thereby trust is enhanced and people buying the cheese directly at the dairy feel that they can support local producers; consequently citizens of Andeer also rated the importance of maintaining regional jobs and maintaining the dairy business in the region comparably high. This attitude is related to sustainability and co-production as the viability of the region is stabilised and the local origin of the product is appreciated. The citizens realise that they can contribute to the region's well-being in economic, environmental, and social terms by purchasing the cheese from Andeer. This became apparent when the customers of the dairy in Andeer were asked additional qualitative questions on how they perceive the region and the influence the dairy has on its viability. Likewise most of the citizens from Andeer indicate that they purchase cheese from Andeer often and on a regular basis. Since the citizens of Andeer know all the stakeholders in the production chain and trust in their skills and commitment a biological certification of the production process is appreciated, but does not seem as important for them as for the other two groups of consumers.

For tourists the biological production process appears to be quite important as they most likely do not know yet know the producers personally and hence look for a system they can rely on. Hence it presents an aspect which can be communicated more strongly to the tourists. Furthermore they regard the maintenance of the natural and cultural landscape as important, probably because the beauty of the landscape is one major reason for people to visit the region around Andeer. In addition the purchase of the cheese from Andeer can provide them with a feeling of doing something good for the environment in which they spend their vacation. Likewise it seems important that the cheese bears a relation to the region. When consuming it at home, tourists can link the cheese with memories of their vacation. They consume a product from which they know the setting of the production process; hence the tourists have the chance to feel re-connected to the product and its origin.

The aspect 'milk from cows with horns is preferred' as well as the aspect 'personal communication' is viewed as less important by tourists compared to the other aspects. These two aspects do not directly relate to the region as the origin of the product, but appear to be more abstract and more difficult to connect with possible benefits of the cheese purchase. The reason for that might be led back to the shortness of their stay so that tourists often get a less deep insight into practises and relations. Citizens, however, have received more insights over a longer period of time. They more likely pick up details and benefit from the knowledge and values which are shared in the rural web via personal communication and direct contact.

Looking at the customers of specialty stores who purchase cheese from Andeer it is shown that they also regard the aspect 'personal communication' as less important in comparison to

the other aspects of the philosophy, which all exceed a value of 4. As more than half of the customers questioned in specialty stores have not yet been to Andeer, they are not aware of the local circumstances. Furthermore they are not able to benefit from personal contacts in Andeer, but only from information which is passed on through a longer distribution channel. Hence a large part of this group of consumers has not had the chance to receive detailed information and therefore might not regard some of the aspects as important as citizens of Andeer.

5.3.2. Ways of information

Turning to the way through which the consumers of cheese from Andeer received information about the dairy and its background it is quite obvious that most of the people who purchased cheese in Andeer received information from the dairy manager and via sales personal. This relation reveals that personal communication is an important prerequisite for the dissemination of information in direct marketing. Information through newspaper articles mainly reaches citizens of Andeer and tourists during their vacation in Andeer. Due to their awareness of the dairy's engagement and the accessibility of local and regional newspapers it is easier for them to take up that information than for customers of specialty stores. Customers of specialty stores less likely receive information through media presence, but rather via sales personal, because this presents their source of personal communication and accordingly the link between the cheese and its production process as well as its origin. Altogether it is shown that almost half of the information is based on personal and direct communication, revealing that this means a great opportunity for the dissemination of the philosophy's contents. Personal communication, however, also contains a risk, as it always depends on the attitude and knowledge of the people who are responsible for the passing on of information. This does not only imply a risk, but also a limitation as some of the information might get lost on the way from the sender to the receiver (Fig. 16).

Referring to the interviews with the middlemen in the distribution channel between the dairy and the consumers of the cheese, it becomes obvious that the passing on of information highly depends on the individual's interest and access to satisfactory information. As a matter of co-production the quantity and type of information changes in each step on the way through the distribution channel. Each actor has a personal attitude towards the information perceived as necessary. Depending on the extent and depth of interaction among actors the information flow is reduced or pushed forward. Especially the middlemen only pass on the information complying with the philosophy of their business which again is influenced by their personality. In this way it does not necessarily have to be a change of information occurring within the distribution channel, but a selection of certain pieces of information, which are regarded as beneficial or sufficient for their business. As each actor has the opportunity to ask backwards, i.e. to demand more information from the person distributing the cheese and

the information, the information reaching the end consumer is a result of co-production. For a fruitful communication among the actors social capital plays an important role as well.

Without knowledge and the engagement in personal relations a beneficial exchange is almost impossible. Turning to the distribution of cheese from Andeer the selection of pieces of information along the channel leads to a reduction of information disseminated among the consumers, which has been presented in figure 4 of chapter 4.1. Within each step in the distribution channel the communicated message is either changed or only passed on to a small extent, depending on the interests and engagement of the stakeholder.

Nevertheless the consumer has the possibility to shorten the circuit and get into direct contact with the dairy manager or search for information from other sources. This appears to be easier the closer the distance between the dairy and the consumer is.

The dairy manager recommends the website as a precise source of information on the dairy's background and philosophy. In his opinion this presents one of the main ways of information used by the consumers. The survey, however, reveals that the website is not of major importance. The reason for that is most likely the lack of awareness, because the website's address has not yet been distributed to a large extent. The strong building on the website also implies a contradiction within the communication process. While the dairy emphasises the personal and direct communication, the website is a very technical way to distribute information and contradicts the dairy's philosophy and the customers' search for products with a personal story. Furthermore the website is not easily accessible for tourists who spend their vacation in Andeer. In addition many consumers of cheese from Andeer might not want to access the internet, because they belong to a generation in which the internet is not very widespread.

5.3.3. Purchase reasons

The importance of the category 'product quality' reveals that this is a decisive reason for choosing cheese from Andeer. Taking a closer look at the customers buying the cheese at the dairy in Andeer, one has to distinguish between citizens and tourists. While citizens choose the cheese because of the quality, tourists more often mention purchase reasons which belong to the category 'Traditional patterns and regionality'. This obvious difference might be related to the image of the region around Andeer which the tourists have gained during their vacation. Hence it appears to be important for them to purchase a locally produced cheese which maintains the viability of the region, in which they like to spend their vacation. With their purchase they have the chance to do something good for the sustainability of the region. Furthermore it can mean a special product for them, as it is directly related to a region and not a homogenised product from the mass market. This goes hand in hand with the responses belonging to the category 'engagement' which were chosen the second most often by tourists buying the cheese in Andeer. Purchase reasons like

'creativity' and 'fantasy' imply that the tourists strive for products with a specific background and a personal input. The reasons cannot be satisfied on the mass market, as the specificity of the purchase situation and location play an important role. Likewise the customers in specialty stores mention purchase reasons belonging to the category 'engagement' with the second highest frequency. For them as well it seems to be appealing to purchase a special product which can be distinguished from other products due to its background. It possibly reconnects them to the producer and the place of production and might give them the feeling of positively contributing to the well-being of that region. In this context the consumers can recognise themselves as co-producers of the cheese. For some consumers this can also be regarded from a more selfish point of view, as they just want to do something good for themselves by purchasing this high-quality cheese.

Store quality also appears to be an important purchase reason for customers at the dairy in Andeer. Short interviews with citizens of Andeer also revealed that they are very pleased with the local specialty stores and the friendly consultation offered in Andeer. These consumers can benefit from the endogeneity of the rural web in Andeer in terms of material and human resources. The local origin of the product combined with the knowledge and skills of the cheese-maker as well as the engagement of the dairy manager add more significance to the purchase. In combination with trust and reliability which is based on a strong social capital, citizens of Andeer seem to feel connected to their dairy and the underlying personality. Consequently, the category which was also mentioned quite a lot by citizens is 'traditional patterns and regionality'. It seems as if they purchase the cheese from Andeer, because they want to maintain the local production and support the local businesses of their region. These purchase reasons are less relevant for customers of specialty stores, as they do not primarily want to contribute to the sustainability and maintenance of regional aspects. For tourists the importance of this purchase reason might vary due to the length and frequency of their vacations in Andeer.

5.3.4. Connotations linked to the dairy in Andeer

Looking at the connotations made with the dairy by citizens from Andeer it is obvious that more than fifty percent fall into the category personal contact and engagement. This category is comparable to the category 'engagement' for the first open question. Due to the different context it contains more personal characteristics of the people operating the dairy. It shows that 'personal contact', 'sympathy', 'good cheese-maker', 'the couple', and 'devotion' are aspects which seem to be easily associated with the dairy. It appears as if there is a feeling of connectedness with the dairy and the persons operating the business. People living in Andeer have the chance to build a personal relationship and learn more about the people and their backgrounds. As one of the aspects of the dairy's philosophy deals with direct-marketing and the importance of personal contact, the dairy manager is quite outgoing and

communicates a lot of information directly to the customers. Hence the dairy makes use of personal relationships to successfully disseminate knowledge and enhance trust among the local customers. For customers of the specialty stores, however, the link between the dairy and 'personal contact and engagement' is not made, probably because they often do not know the persons operating the dairy and have more direct contact to the staff of the specialty store. Hence, they rather connect the dairy in Andeer with the method of production, which contains responses like 'organic', 'sustainable production', and 'naturalness'. These characteristics of production are easily to communicate in the store and also comprehensive for customers who have not yet been able to visit the place of production. In accordance to that customers of specialty stores regard the maintenance of the natural and cultural landscape as a very important aspect of the dairy's philosophy (chapter 5.3.1). Due to the small scale of the dairy and the organic certification connotations like naturalness and sustainability seem to be established quite easily. Likewise many of their connotations belong to the category 'product quality', which includes responses like 'quality', 'taste', and 'variety'. These aspects appear to be easily associated, even if the dairy and the location of the production are unknown. Especially, since customers in specialty stores might expect a certain quality of products for which they have chosen this purchase location. Referring back to the two diagrams visualising the results of the open questions (Fig. 14 & Fig. 15) the responses given by customers of specialty stores belong to less categories than the responses of the other two groups of respondents. It seems to be possible to relate this finding to the larger distance between the customers of the specialty stores and the dairy, as they most likely have not gained a full picture of the relations, activities, and interactions around the dairy in Andeer (Fig.16).

Turning to the connotations made by the tourists there is not one category which has been mentioned considerably more often than other categories. Hence, the connotations developed by tourists are more widespread and belong to various categories. This response pattern can be traced back to the different degrees of information, since some tourists have already been in Andeer for many times, while others have been in Andeer for the first time. Tourists coming to Andeer repeatedly have had more chances to meet the dairy manager personally and to gain more insights into the method of production and the dairy's engagement. Less regular tourists, however, have fewer insights and therefore link the dairy with more obvious aspects, like the maintenance of traditions or respond that they are not able to make any connotation.

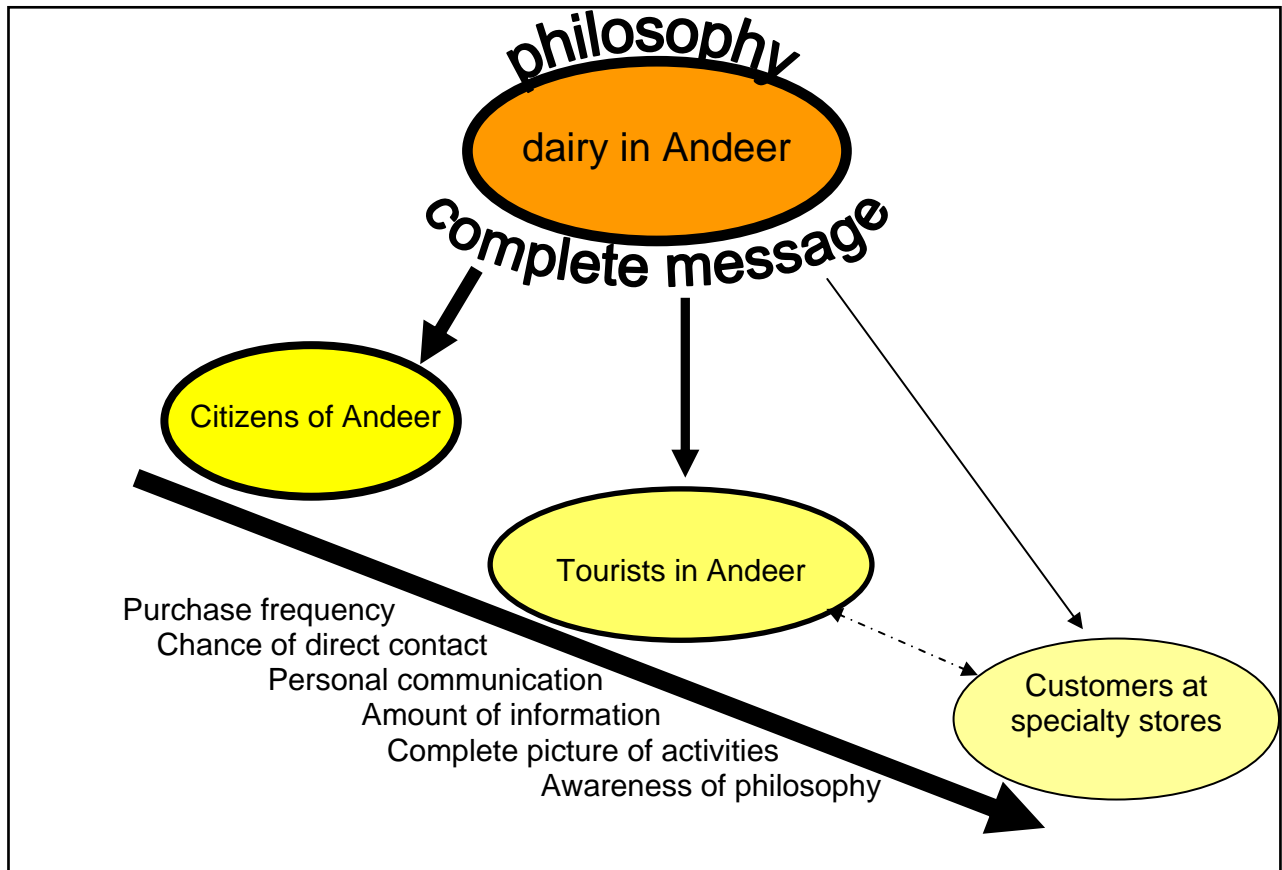


Fig. 16: Information asymmetry between sender and receivers

To sum up, it depends on a variety of aspects to what extent the philosophy behind the cheese of Andeer is taken up by the consumer. The preceding distribution channel and its stakeholders, the purchase location, and the personal interests play an important role. To reach the consumer it is necessary to find out through which way of information the message is sent out most successfully. Furthermore it needs to be revealed how specific interests of customers influence the demand for specific aspects of information as well as its acceptance and transformation. Similar to other studies the research revealed that the communication through word-of-mouth is more effective than written material or media publicity. The responses from both open questions often belonged to the categories 'engagement' and 'personal contact and engagement' which both imply the importance of the personalities who represent the local production chain. The direct contact between producer and customer puts it into a more personal setting; the appreciation of the product increases because it can be linked to the engagement of local people.

But if the quality of the cheese does not meet the expectations of the customer, the story behind the cheese itself does not lead to a higher sale. Only the combination of high quality and a good philosophy results in benefits for the maintenance of a sustainable business on a small scale. In the eyes of the dairy manager the cheese is just the carrier of the message he wants to communicate. The message, i.e. the philosophy behind his business is to increase

the awareness among interested consumers and thereby maintain traditions and small-scale production in the mountainous regions of Switzerland. These additional activities are often not realised, when customers purchase the cheese. Nevertheless they state that they regard the aspects of the dairy's philosophy as rather important, but they do not link their benefits directly to the cheese in an everyday purchase situation; especially if the purchase does not take place in the local setting of Andeer.

In the case of Andeer most customers state that they are very satisfied with the quality of the product and do not miss anymore information about it.

6. Conclusions

In chapter 6 the mayor findings of this study are highlighted and the achievement of the theoretical objective is discussed. Therefore questions emerging from the application of the theory are revealed, referring to each dimension used in this study. Finally, as the concluding chapter of this study, the potential for further research is presented.

6.1. Peculiarities and contradictions in the rural web of Andeer

The rural web around the dairy in Andeer consists of only few stakeholders due to its small size and the small scale of production. The dairy only processes 400 000 litres of milk per year, but it is able to create a high value added and thereby sustain a viable business.

Furthermore they can guarantee stable milk prices of CHF 0.80 to the dairy farmers.

Although the dairy operates on a small scale and builds on direct-marketing, the extent of their business is far-ranging and intensive marketing resulted in growing publicity. To sell all of their cheese they have integrated two cheese trading companies into the distribution process. Cheese from Andeer is sold mainly in Switzerland and Germany but also in France, England, and the USA. Thereby the borders of the rural web are changed or rather extended in a qualitative way in order to maintain a successful business in Andeer and to become more independent of the wholesaler Emmi. Nevertheless the goal is the production of cheese only for the local market. Thereby the dairy aims at keeping the value added within the region and at maintaining the local control. In terms of endogeneity the dairy successfully utilises local resources, avoids the import of goods, while it engages in the export of highly elaborated goods. As a consequence the value added helps to strengthen the local economy in Andeer, and is especially beneficial for the farmers, who receive a high and stable milk price. The focus on the local market also facilitates the marketing strategy as the dairy mainly focuses on direct and personal contact.

The extension of boundaries leads to the question on how far a web can extend and at what distance the web ends. Furthermore it needs to be considered if the distance is regarded on a spatial or on personal basis. It can be possible that a person far away of the dairy has created a very personal and stable relation and should be rather regarded as part of the web than a person who is close by but not engaged in any activities connected to the dairy.

Therefore it is rather a matter of attitude and common values than a matter of geographical distance. Hence, boundaries have to be created individually and need to be regarded more flexible.

The integration of creativity, knowledge, and skills helped to create a sense-of-place in Andeer and bring forward a business which is appreciated by all stakeholders; especially the personal engagement is valued by those who have had the chance to get in direct contact with the persons operating the dairy. Obviously, not only material resources contribute to the success of the business, but rather the combination of human and natural resources. Hence the interaction of society and nature, but also the interaction among different actors can

influence the development of the rural web. In the context of the dairy in Andeer the concern of the manager leads to the implementation of an extensive philosophy concentrating on the well-being of nature and animals affected by human influence. Co-production is accorded a lot of importance as it reconnects the consumer with the production process and nature. Co-production, however, also occurs among the stakeholders of the rural web, as their interaction and exchange of information influences the dissemination of the dairy's philosophy and its contents, which is not perceived equally by all stakeholders. The basis for that is a well-functioning social capital as it facilitates personal relations and the enhancement of trust.

The study revealed that a closer distance between the dairy manager and the receiver of information reduces the superficiality of the communication. Moreover the intensity of the communication depends on the values and ideals of each stakeholder and how they go in accordance with the message passed on. Hence there is an information asymmetry in the rural web, as not all stakeholders receive the same message. This asymmetry could be reduced by asking for feedback from stakeholders engaged in the distribution channel. Thereby the dairy manager should learn more about the interests of consumers and the information paths through which they are reached most effectively. The dairy manager for example regards the dairy's website as a very good source of information and believes that it is a successful way to spread the philosophy. Cheese consumers however hardly know about it, since it is not made very public and contradicts the dairy's engagement in personal contact. Likewise the presence in media does not increase the awareness of consumers as much as expected by the dairy manager. The presence in media is mainly recognised by citizens of Andeer and those who have already purchased the cheese. It is not the prominence which customers link with the dairy but rather the traditional and local production as well as the dedication and innovativeness of the people operating it. This, however, can also be linked to their strong relation to the locality and the reasoning that the people living in that locality must engage in something good. Furthermore especially customers of specialty stores purchase the cheese, because of its special quality and good taste, but not, as perceived by the dairy manager, because of the story which has developed around the cheese.

From his point of view the cheese is only the carrier of the philosophy he wants to spread; the philosophy appears to be of higher importance to him than the sale of cheese.

While the content of the message communicated through the distribution channel is a result of co-production of all stakeholders involved, the dissemination is rather dependent on the ability of stakeholders to cooperate and to engage in relations. In the channels which link the dairy in Andeer and the consumers of its cheese the aspects which reach the end consumer

depend on the knowledge and interest, as well as on the engagement of the individual stakeholder to receive more information via direct communication.

In this context however co-production in the rural web needs to be improved and more awareness needs to be created, because the message sent out by the dairy is not taken up by all costumers in the same way. In general the customer of cheese from Andeer is more interested in the relation it bears with the region than in the story netted around the production process. The meaning of region depends on each individual customer and on the strength of his/her connection with the production place. The connection is build upon varying connotations like vacation memories, personal relationships, landscape features, or traditions. These associations with the dairy can be changed or strengthened depending on the additional information the customer receives during the cheese purchase.

Reflection in the context of current literature

Regarding the current developments in agriculture and food production more and more small-scale businesses have to face globalisation processes. In order to stay competitive in a homogenised mass market those businesses need to find a niche-market by distinguishing their product. In recent literature this is referred to the development of alternative food networks which are also a result of the changing demands of today's society. Many producers create a link between the product and its origin and net a story around it. Local and regional aspects therefore become increasingly important in the marketing of niche products. In this context local peculiarities, as well as traditions and personalities help to create a sense-of-place and reduce the products exchangeability. In the rural web around the dairy in Andeer these ideas have been implemented in a very successful way. Starting with the raw material production and ending with the direct-marketing a lot of effort is put on the maintenance of the local control and the integration of material and social resources. The skills of the cheese-maker combined with the dedication of the dairy manager and the good quality of the raw material production create a specific food network related to the village of Andeer. Mainly via direct-marketing and word-of-mouth communication the prominence of the dairy is increased.

Recent literature also revealed that many small-scale businesses engage in organic production in order to add value to the product and create economic benefits, as well as social and environmental advantages for a sustainable livelihood. If the social, as well as the geographic distance between the producer and the consumer increases, the consumer likes to rely on the biological certification, because it serves as a guarantee for a trustworthy production process. Some studies, however, also showed that the increasing conventionalisation of organic agriculture resulted in unsatisfied consumers. A number of consumers experience an adaptation of conventional characteristics in the organic production process; their trust can be regained by direct and personal dissemination of

information. In addition many producers add more value to their products by applying standards which go beyond the baseline regulations for organic agriculture. The engagement in so-called organic+ activities is not only pursued because of economic reasons, but also because of beliefs and ideals of the individual producer. These activities might not be recognised or appreciated by the consumer and therefore have to be communicated in a clear and understandable way. Otherwise it is not possible to create an advantage for the business. It is, however, apparent that many customers do not search for additional information; in other words they do not ask for it, but the background story has to be offered to them to raise their interest.

The study in hand revealed that many consumers view the local origin of a product as more important than the biological production standards. Hence it is recommendable to introduce the consumers to the places of production, so that they can identify with the product's origin and trust in the methods of production. Results from other studies on this topic suggest general arguments which promise to be successful for the communication of additional activities, like the specificity of the product's origin, the locality of the production process, and traditional and artisan practices to name just a few. The findings of this study, however, reveal that it is also important to look at the special context of the business instead of generalising the application of these arguments. Depending on its customers, their interests and attitudes, and the associations they link to the product, the communication arguments need to be adapted. In each distribution channel the awareness of consumers differs due to the changing flow of information. It can be recommended to enhance direct and personal exchange with as many consumers as possible to integrate their opinions and demands into the communication process, i.e. to receive feedback from the consumers on their preferences. Furthermore it is also helpful to gain insight into the ways through which consumers receive information most easily. This varies depending on the product and the way it is distributed and should therefore be reassessed regularly. Some instruments do not function properly to pass on the information all the way to the consumer; much of the information can be lost through the communication process or the meaning of it changes. In the case of Andeer for example the website is not used as a source of information although it contains a lot of detailed information. If the website's content would be communicated in another way, it would probably be taken up by more consumers.

6.2. Achievement of the theoretical objective

The theory on the rural web developed by Ploeg and Marsden (2008) was used as the concept for this research. Studying the theory and learning more about the peculiarities of the dairy in Andeer created an understanding of the underlying dimensions and their application for the research carried out. Activities, relations, and processes were revealed step by step and regarded through the concept of the rural web. Due to the dynamic and

integrative approach it was possible to relate the findings to certain dimensions which were perceived as most suitable in that context. Thereby a more comprehensive description and overview of the rural web could be created. Looking at the activities and processes in the context of the theoretical framework, their meaning, development and outcome became clear. Building on that the capacity of the rural web can be evaluated. Furthermore the strengths and weaknesses of relations and interactions can be revealed and thereby present the basis for improvements in the web as well as recommendations for other small-scale operations. In this context the application of the theoretical concept, however, delivered some difficulties. The capacity of the rural web is hard to evaluate, i.e. measure, especially if one does not have any experience in this fields or results from other comparable studies. Moreover the capacity of the rural web strongly depends on locally available resources and their utilisation and interaction; due to these specific characteristics of the rural web, it is not possible to reach concrete recommendations for other businesses. Each rural web needs to be analysed individually. Thereby more experience would be gained and comparisons of the webs' capacities could be made more easily.

Looking at the dimensions of the rural web it is obvious that they are very closely related and often over-lapping in a few characteristics, so that a clear distinction was difficult. Hence many processes in the rural web can be related to more than one dimension. This makes a clear description of the web's characteristics more difficult. Especially because of this complexity it is reasonable to reduce the number of dimensions for the explanation of each research question. For larger and more interwoven webs, however, the application of this theory might be too complex to create a comprehensive picture and show the capacity of the web in terms of sustaining rural livelihoods. Furthermore it is difficult to define clear boundaries, since it is a matter of interpretation at what distance stakeholders and their activities still belong to the rural web. Depending on the size and the complexity of the web the definition of boundaries presents an increasingly difficult task, when applying the theory of the rural web.

Looking at each dimension individually a number of advantages and disadvantages became apparent as well as a few questions remained unanswered.

Endogeneity

Endogeneity is basically about the utilisation of local resources, the maintenance of the local control and the realisation of the value added in the region. These characteristics are easy to link to the rural development process and help to form a comprehensive picture.

Nevertheless they mainly refer to material resources, so that human resources are hardly represented and remain disconnected when applying this dimension. Especially when talking

about the maintenance of the local control, it is difficult to include people. In the case of Andeer the locality mainly refers to the raw material milk which is produced in the region, and the highly elaborated good cheese that leaves the region. The people engaged in the production do not add to the local specificity as their knowledge and skills are not derived from within the region; i.e. the human resources in this rural web are independent from the region and could be equally successful in any other surrounding. Furthermore it is disputable on how much local control is necessary and at what level local control might even become barrier for further development. If producers do not incorporate ideas and thoughts from outside the region, but only build on local knowledge they might not be able to successfully carry on their business. The engagement in interaction with all stakeholders in the web appeared of high importance for an effective communication in the case of Andeer. Moreover the question arises on when a human resource even should be regarded as local. Does a person have to be grown up in that region or can a person be a local human resource because it has absorbed enough contextual knowledge related to that region? This directly leads to the question: What is the definition of local? Can a person be local if it grew up in a totally different place or is local rather a matter of shared values and beliefs? In Andeer many of the web's stakeholders did not grow up in Andeer, namely the dairy manager and the cheese-maker, one farmer, the mayor, and two of the hotel managers. To what extent is it possible for them to become rooted within the region and build up local knowledge on traditions and historical developments? Is it possible to develop common values and ideas with diverse backgrounds? In this context the definition of local lacks some precise information.

Novelty production

Novelty production includes the realisation of new approaches which emerge from innovations or the revitalisation of traditional activities. Thereby the boundaries of the rural web can be changed, as some domains might be excluded and new areas of interest might be included. Out of that, however, the question emerges on how to determine the boundaries. When applying the theory of the rural web it was not clear how far the rural web can expand and which stakeholders and activities have to be included. It needs to be clarified if the boundaries are defined on a geographical basis or rather based on the personal distance between the different stakeholders. In the case of Andeer this problem became especially apparent, when looking at the customers of specialty stores. The cheese is not only sold in Switzerland but also abroad. The question arises if these customers can also be regarded as part of the web. To find an answer the customers and their relation to the dairy need to be analysed in more detail and compared among each other.

The question is also relevant in the context of external influences. It appears as if the definition of the boundaries is a matter of interpretation and varies depending on an individual estimation.

Furthermore it is difficult to determine whether a new activity is a novelty or not. If an activity was already carried out in the past, is it appropriate to call it a novelty? Should a novelty not include some kind of innovation? Is it already innovative to recombine available resources in a different way? In other words: What makes a novelty a novelty? To illustrate this problem one can take a look at the philosophy of the dairy in Andeer. One aspect of the philosophy deals with the idea that milk from cows with horns is preferred. Is the utilisation of milk from cows with horns a novelty? Or is it rather the fact that a higher price is paid for that milk what makes this aspect to a novelty? To deliver a good analysis of novelties a lot of knowledge on traditional practises and their development in the rural web is needed.

Co-production & sustainability

This dimension is useful for the description of interactions, because it does not only include humans but also the environment. Thus it is also about the reconnection of the people with nature and the relocalisation of production and consumption patterns.

Nevertheless, it seems as if co-production occurs unconsciously and is not initiated by the stakeholders. In this context it cannot be regarded as an active contribution to the emergence of the rural web. In many cases it needs to be viewed as a side-effect. To what extent can it therefore be regarded as an influence on the development of the rural web and its sustainability? One example can be found in the communication process between the dairy and the customers of cheese from Andeer at specialty stores: They often unknowingly support the dairy's engagement; they pay a higher price for the cheese through which they support the dairy's additional activities but they actually do not know about them.

Moreover sustainability is a very broadly used term and needs a clearer definition in this study. In this theoretical concept it often appears as if it is very closely related to the rural economy in the web. But is it not supposed to cover social and environmental aspects as well?

Furthermore the relation between co-production and sustainability and the reason for their belonging to one dimension is not obvious and needs more explanation. Consequently the application of this dimension would be easier.

Social Capital

The application of social capital facilitates the description of the relations and their specific characteristics. It describes the building of trust and displays the linkage of resources in the web. When applying this dimension, it was however difficult to say if social capital always

exists or if it needs to be developed first. Also in this case the definition depends on the individual interpretation of the researcher. In Andeer it was not clear if social capital was already available before the dairy was taken over by the current operators, but was not used to its full potential. Or did social capital develop due to the operators' initiative and engagement in new ideas? Furthermore the question emerges whether social capital is already a prerequisite for the development of relations or if social capital is a result of relations. In addition an individual assessment is needed to determine if the social capital is low or very extensive; an indication for how to evaluate social capital would be helpful.

Summing up, the assessment of the dimensions applied in this study revealed that a lot of open questions remain after using this theoretical framework. That is mainly due to the lack of clear definitions and the availability of comparable studies. Since rural development is a very complex and dynamic process and highly depends on available resources in the regional setting, it is difficult to reach any conclusions. Looking at one specific web the theory might help to display interrelations and processes, but due to many peculiarities it is difficult to evaluate the outcome i.e. the quality/the degree of rural development. Therefore it cannot be assessed to what extent the communication of the dairy's message has an influence on the development of the rural web. Hence, the theoretical concept was supportive for the description of the rural web and the communication process in Andeer, but the consequence for rural development i.e. its underlying capacity cannot be clearly determined. Referring to the theoretical objective of this study communication presents a good basis for testing the rural web, which revealed a few problems concerning the application of the theoretical concept which ask for reconsideration.

6.3. Further Research

While the EU Core Organic Project mainly focussed on the arguments applied by small- and medium-sized businesses to communicate their organic+ activities, this contribution looks at one particular case and thereby presents a more differentiated picture. It is more concrete as it only deals with one producer and the stakeholders involved in the distribution of the product. Since this study only reveals the peculiarities of one case, it is difficult to relate the findings to other small-scale businesses and to give recommendations. Therefore it would be necessary to carry out numerous case studies or to find a different way on how to get a wider picture on the consumers' perception of communication arguments.

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Appendix 1: Surveys

Appendix 1.1. Survey for the dairy in Andeer



Käse aus Andeer

Was steckt dahinter?

Vielen Dank, dass Sie an dieser Umfrage teilnehmen. Hierbei geht es um die Philosophie der Sennerei Andeer und wie diese von den Kunden wahrgenommen wird. Die Informationen werden vertraulich behandelt. Sie dienen ausschließlich der Fertigstellung meiner Masterarbeit und tragen damit zu einem erfolgreichen Gelingen bei.

Die Beantwortung der Fragen wird nicht mehr als 5-10 Minuten Ihrer Zeit in Anspruch nehmen.

Freundliche Grüße,

Corinna Feldmann

1. Sind Sie zu Besuch in Andeer, bzw. in der Region Hinterrhein?

- nein, ich wohne in der Region Hinterrhein
- ja, ich bin zu Besuch und zwar zum ____ Mal

2. Wie häufig kaufen Sie in diesem Geschäft ein?

- zum ersten Mal
- selten
- ab und zu
- häufig (mindestens einmal pro Woche)
- Ich kaufe hier regelmäßig während meiner Urlaube ein.

3. Warum haben Sie sich für einen Käse aus Andeer entschieden?

4. Gibt es etwas, das Sie speziell mit dem Käse aus Andeer verbinden?

- ja, nämlich:

- nein, da fällt mir nichts ein

5. Die Sennerei Andeer verfolgt eine besondere Philosophie.

Auf welche Inhalte der Philosophie der Sennerei Andeer sind Sie aufmerksam geworden?

	Davon habe ich noch nicht gehört.	Davon habe ich schon gehört.	Da bin ich mir nicht sicher.	Wie wichtig sind Ihnen die Aspekte dieser Philosophie?					
				←—————→					
				eher unwichtig				besonders wichtig	
				1	2	3	4	5	
Milchwirtschaft in Berggebieten erhalten	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Regionale Arbeitsplätze schaffen	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Persönliche Kommunikation und Beziehungen pflegen	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Produkte werden direkt vermarktet	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mehrwert der Produktion in der Region halten	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
„Erhalten“ ist wichtiger als „Wachsen“	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Milch von Kühen mit Hörnern wird bevorzugt	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lange Transportstrecken werden vermieden	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Natürliche Kulturlandschaft erhalten	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Besonderer Geschmack des Käses durch frische Alpmilch	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Produkte mit Bezug zur Region	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tradition pflegen und Handwerk erhalten	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Produkte werden biologisch erzeugt	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

6. Auf welche Weise haben Sie diese Informationen erhalten? (Mehrfaches Antworten möglich)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> die Betreiber der Sennerei | <input type="checkbox"/> Verkaufspersonal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> die Web-Seite | <input type="checkbox"/> Fernsehen |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Infoblätter, Broschüren | <input type="checkbox"/> Radio |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Zeitungsartikel | <input type="checkbox"/> den Produkt-Aufdruck (z.B. Werbespruch) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Informationen im Hotel/Restaurant | <input type="checkbox"/> Sonstiges: _____ |

7. Hätten Sie sich weitere Informationen zur Sennerei Andeer und Ihrer Philosophie gewünscht?

ja, und zwar über folgende Aspekte:

nein, die Informationen waren ausreichend

Würden Sie abschließend noch einige Angaben zu Ihrer Person machen?

- 8. Geschlecht** weiblich **9. Alter:** ___ Jahre **10. Wohnort:** _____
 männlich

Noch einmal vielen Dank für Ihr Interesse und Ihre Mithilfe. Sollten Sie noch Fragen oder Anmerkungen zu dieser Umfrage haben, können Sie sich auch gerne an Frau Dr. Heidrun Moschitz am Forschungsinstitut für biologischen Landbau (FiBL) in Frick wenden.

Adresse: Ackerstrasse, Postfach, CH-5070 Frick, Telefon:+41(0)628657214
e-mail: heidrun.moschitz@fibl.org, corinna.feldmann@fibl.org

Appendix 1.2. Survey for the hotels using cheese from Andeer



Käse aus Andeer

Was steckt dahinter?

Vielen Dank, dass Sie an dieser Umfrage teilnehmen. Hierbei geht es um die Philosophie der Sennerei Andeer und wie diese von den Kunden wahrgenommen wird. Die Informationen werden vertraulich behandelt. Sie dienen ausschließlich der Fertigstellung meiner Masterarbeit und tragen damit zu einem erfolgreichen Gelingen bei.

Die Beantwortung der Fragen wird nicht mehr als 5-10 Minuten Ihrer Zeit in Anspruch nehmen.

Freundliche Grüße,

Corinna Feldmann

1. Waren Sie schon mehrmals zu Besuch in Andeer, bzw. in der Region Hinterrhein?

- nein, ich bin zum ersten Mal hier
- ja, das ist bereits mein _____ Mal

2. Wurden Sie darauf aufmerksam gemacht, dass das Hotel regionale Produkte verwendet?

- nein, bisher noch nicht
- ja, und zwar auf folgende Weise: _____

3. Haben Sie bereits den Andeerer Käse probiert?

- ja, hier im Hotel
- ja, aber nicht im Hotel sondern _____
- nein, bisher noch nicht

4. Welche Informationen haben Sie im Hotel über den Andeerer Käse erhalten?

5. Haben Sie diese Informationen zum Kauf des Andeerer Käse angeregt?

- ja, besonders die folgenden Informationen: _____

nein

6. Gibt es etwas, das Sie speziell mit dem Andeerer Käse verbinden?

ja, nämlich:

nein, da fällt mir nichts ein

7. Die Sennerei Andeer verfolgt eine besondere Philosophie.

Auf welche Inhalte der Philosophie der Sennerei Andeer sind Sie aufmerksam geworden?

	Davon habe ich noch nicht gehört.	Davon habe ich schon gehört.	Da bin ich mir nicht sicher.	Wie wichtig sind Ihnen die Aspekte dieser Philosophie?				
				eher unwichtig				besonders wichtig
				1	2	3	4	5
Milchwirtschaft in Berggebieten erhalten	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Regionale Arbeitsplätze schaffen	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Persönliche Kommunikation und Beziehungen pflegen	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Produkte werden direkt vermarktet	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mehrwert der Produktion in der Region halten	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
„Erhalten“ ist wichtiger als „Wachsen“	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Milch von Kühen mit Hörnern wird bevorzugt	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lange Transportstrecken werden vermieden	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Natürliche Kulturlandschaft erhalten	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Besonderer Geschmack des Käses durch frische Alpmilch	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Produkte mit Bezug zur Region	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tradition pflegen und Handwerk erhalten	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Produkte werden biologisch erzeugt	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

8. Haben Sie auf einen der unten genannten Wege zusätzliche Informationen bezüglich der Käseproduktion in Andeer erhalten? (Mehrfaches Antworten möglich)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> die Betreiber der Sennerei | <input type="checkbox"/> Verkaufspersonal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> die Web-Seite | <input type="checkbox"/> Fernsehen |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Infoblätter, Broschüren | <input type="checkbox"/> Radio |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Zeitungsartikel | <input type="checkbox"/> den Produkt-Aufdruck (z.B. Werbespruch) |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Sonstiges: _____ |

9. Hätten Sie sich weitere Informationen zur Sennerei Andeer und Ihrer Philosophie gewünscht?

ja, und zwar über folgende Aspekte: _____

nein, die Informationen waren ausreichend

Würden Sie abschließend noch einige Angaben zu Ihrer Person machen?

10. Geschlecht weiblich **11. Alter:** ___ Jahre **12.**

Wohnort: _____

männlich

Noch einmal vielen Dank für Ihr Interesse und Ihre Mithilfe. Sollten Sie noch Fragen oder Anmerkungen zu dieser Umfrage haben, können Sie sich auch gerne an Frau Dr. Heidrun Moschitz am Forschungsinstitut für biologischen Landbau (FiBL) in Frick wenden.

Adresse: Ackerstrasse, Postfach, CH-5070, Telefon:+41(0)628657214

e-mail: heidrun.moschitz@fibl.org, corinna.feldmann@fibl.org

Appendix 1.3. Survey for the specialty stores selling cheese from Andeer



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Käse aus Andeer

Was steckt dahinter?

Vielen Dank, dass Sie an dieser Umfrage teilnehmen. Hierbei geht es um die Philosophie der Sennerei Andeer und wie diese von den Kunden wahrgenommen wird. Die Informationen werden vertraulich behandelt. Sie dienen ausschließlich der Fertigstellung meiner Masterarbeit und tragen damit zu einem erfolgreichen Gelingen bei.

Die Beantwortung der Fragen wird nicht mehr als 5-10 Minuten Ihrer Zeit in Anspruch nehmen.

Freundliche Grüße,

Corinna Feldmann

1. Warum haben Sie sich für einen Käse aus Andeer entschieden?

2. Wie häufig kaufen Sie den Käse aus Andeer?

zum ersten Mal

gelegentlich

häufig

immer

3. Kennen Sie Andeer und die Region?

- ja, ich war schon mal dort
- ja, aber nur vom Hörensagen
- nein, diese Region ist mir unbekannt

4. Gibt es etwas, das Sie speziell mit dem Käse aus Andeer verbinden? Gibt es in Ihren Augen etwas Besonderes an diesem Käse?

- ja, nämlich:

- nein, da fällt mir nichts ein



5. Die Sennerei Andeer verfolgt eine besondere Philosophie.

Auf welche Inhalte der Philosophie der Sennerei Andeer sind Sie aufmerksam geworden?

Bitte beziehen Sie diese Aspekte direkt auf die Käseproduktion in Andeer.

Davon habe ich noch nicht gehört. Davon habe ich schon gehört. Da bin ich mir nicht sicher.	Wie wichtig sind Ihnen persönlich die die Aspekte dieser Philosophie?				
	eher unwichtig	←————→			besonders wichtig
	1	2	3	4	5

6. Auf welche Weise haben Sie diese Informationen erhalten? *(Mehrfaches Antworten möglich)*

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> die Betreiber der Sennerei | <input type="checkbox"/> Verkaufspersonal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> die Web-Seite | <input type="checkbox"/> Fernsehen |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Infoblätter, Broschüren | <input type="checkbox"/> Radio |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Zeitungsartikel | <input type="checkbox"/> den Produkt-Aufdruck (z.B. Werbespruch) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Informationen im Hotel/Restaurant | <input type="checkbox"/> Sonstiges: _____ |

7. Hätten Sie sich weitere Informationen zur Sennerei Andeer und Ihrer Philosophie gewünscht?

- ja, und zwar über folgende Aspekte:

- nein, die Informationen waren ausreichend

Würden Sie abschließend noch einige Angaben zu Ihrer Person machen?

- 8. Geschlecht** weiblich
 männlich

9. Alter: ___ Jahre

Noch einmal vielen Dank für Ihr Interesse und Ihre Mithilfe. Sollten Sie noch Fragen oder Anmerkungen zu dieser Umfrage haben, können Sie sich auch gerne an Frau Dr. Heidrun Moschitz am Forschungsinstitut für biologischen Landbau (FibL) in Frick wenden.

Zusätzlich zu diesem Fragebogen möchte ich gerne einigen Teilnehmern telefonisch ein paar tiefer gehende Fragen stellen. Sollten Sie sich dafür bereit erklären, hinterlassen Sie doch bitte Ihre Telefonnummer oder e-mail-Adresse damit ich Sie kontaktieren kann (Dauer: max. 15 Min.)

Appendix 2: Interview guidelines

Appendix 2.1. Interview 'Dairy Manager'

Interview ,Sennerei-Betreiber', Martin Bienerth, 22.05.2009, Andeer

1. Seit wann betreiben Sie die Sennerei? Wie kam es dazu?
2. Welche Vermarktungskanäle gibt es?
3. Welche Label werden genutzt?
4. Wie ist die Vermarktung organisiert? Was sind die jüngsten Entwicklungen?
5. Wie läuft die Zusammenarbeit mit regionalen Geschäften, Restaurants, Hotels,...?
6. Welche Produkte werden zusätzlich im Laden verkauft? Woher kommen diese?
7. Hat sich die Einstellung der Kunden seit Ihrer Übernahme geändert? Hat sich mehr ökologisches Bewusstsein entwickelt? Wurden neue Kunden gewonnen? Welche?
8. Wie sieht die Beziehung zu den Landwirten aus?
 - a. Schätzen diese das Engagement?
 - b. Geben sie Unterstützung?
 - c. Beteiligen Sie sich am Marketing?
 - d. Wie sieht das Input der Landwirte aus?
9. Für wen ist der Film gedacht, der von der Sennerei Andeer gemacht wurde? Wo ist er erhältlich?
10. Wo liegt der Mehrwert Ihrer Produkte? Was macht sie zu etwas Besonderem?
11. In welchem Bereich liegen die Preise für Ihren Käse?

Abschließendes Interview ,Sennerei-Betreiber', Martin Bienerth, 12.11.2009, Andeer

1. Oft wird mit der Sennerei ein kultureller Wert für das Dorf Andeer verbunden. Siehst du das als Teil eurer Aufgabe den kulturellen Wert zu erhalten und zu vermitteln?
2. Wie wichtig ist dir der Distributionskanal ,regionale Gastronomie'? Warum? Werden deiner Meinung nach die Touristen dazu angeregt eure Käse zu kaufen? Machen die Touristen einen großen Anteil deines Gewinns aus?
3. Touristen bekommen oft nicht viel mit von der Philosophie. Geschieht das bewusst? Was hältst du von der Idee Führungen anzubieten? Wie stehst zu der Idee Visitenkarten auszugeben?
4. Direkter Kundenkontakt ist besonders wichtig in der Kommunikation. Inwiefern kann dein Verkaufspersonal Auskunft über eure Produktionsweise und eure Vision geben?
5. Aus welchen Gründen kaufen deiner Meinung nach die Kunden in deinem Laden den Käse? Warum zahlen sie den hohen Preis? Was ist für sie der Mehrwert?

6. Wie unterscheiden sich die Kaufgründe zwischen den Kunden in Andeer und den Kunden in den Fachgeschäften ausserhalb Andeers?
7. Die Webseite ist sehr ausführlich und beschreibt detailliert die Philosophie und eure Vision. Sie wird jedoch nicht von vielen Kunden beachtet. Sollte noch mehr darauf aufmerksam gemacht werden? Durch Visitenkarten oder Produktaufdruck?
8. An wen richtet sich die Webseite?
9. Aus welchen Gründen werden die Landwirte nicht mit aufgeführt? Welche Rolle spielen sie als Produzenten des Rohstoffs?
10. Die Distribution des Käses außerhalb Andeers läuft zu einem großen Teil über Chäs & Co. Inwiefern hat Chäs & Co als Zwischenhändler zu eurem Erfolg und eurer Prominenz beigetragen?
11. Hat sich euer Marketing im Verlauf der Zeit geändert? Wie? Warum?
12. Aus welchen Gründen wurde der Film gedreht? Warum Untertitel: Biokäse in Graubünden? Titel: Was ist anders?
13. Kannst du die Präsenz in den Medien deutlich in den Verkaufszahlen spüren? Wird Andeerer Käse nach einem Medienauftritt stärker verlangt?
14. Was bekommst du für ein feedback nach Medienauftritten?
15. Was wünschst du dir für die Entwicklung der Sennerei in der Zukunft?

Appendix 2.2. Interview 'Farmers'

Interview ‚Landwirte‘

1. Seit wann führen Sie diesen Betrieb? In wievielter Generation sind Sie hier in Andeer? Sind Sie hier aufgewachsen?
2. Haben Sie neben der Milchviehwirtschaft auch noch andere Betriebszweige oder Einkommensquellen?
3. Liefern Sie Ihre gesamte Milch zur Sennerei Andeer? Warum?
4. Wie hat sich die Übernahme der Sennerei 2001 auf Ihren Betrieb ausgewirkt? Wie würden Sie Ihre Beziehung zur Sennerei beschreiben?
5. Kennen Sie die Verkaufswege der Sennerei? Welche sind Ihnen besonders wichtig? Sind Informationen über den Verkauf des Käses für Sie von Interesse?
6. Was ist Ihrer Meinung nach der Hauptgrund für Konsumenten den Käse aus Andeer zu kaufen?
7. Ist die Sennerei in Ihren Augen etwas Besonderes? Was macht sie zu etwas Besonderem? Welche Aspekte der Philosophie sind Ihnen bekannt und welche sind Ihnen besonders wichtig? Versuchen Sie diese auch in Ihrer Produktion umzusetzen? Unterstützen Sie die Sennerei bei der Ihrem Engagement, das über die reine Käseproduktion hinausgeht?

8. Was gelangt Ihrer Meinung nach von dieser Philosophie zu den Konsumenten des Andeerer Käses? Was sollte noch deutlicher kommuniziert werden? Verstehen die Konsumenten die Zusammenhänge? Versuchen auch Sie etwas von dieser Philosophie weiterzugeben?
9. Ergeben sich Vorteile für Sie durch die erfolgreiche Vermarktung der Sennerei? Und für Ihre Berufskollegen? Wenn ja, welche? Sehen Sie auch Schwierigkeiten?
10. Welche Vorteile ergeben sich für die Gemeinde Andeer? Warum?
11. Gibt es ähnliche Ideen/Konzepte hier in der Gegend? Wo liegen die Unterschiede? Warum verfolgen Ihrer Meinung nach andere Betriebe nicht solch eine Philosophie?
12. Gibt es etwas, dass Sie in der Zukunft gerne ändern würden? Was kann man an der Beziehung zur Sennerei noch verbessern?
13. Ein Gedankenspiel: Was hätte die Schließung der Sennerei für eine Auswirkung auf Ihre Gemeinde?

Appendix 2.3. Interview 'Hotel managers'

Interview „Hotelmanager“

1. Seit wann leiten Sie dieses Hotel? Seit wann besteht dieses Hotel?
2. Was ist Ihrer Meinung nach der Hauptgrund für Touristen in diese Region zu reisen? Was macht die Region Andeer besonders attraktiv?
3. Seit wann verwenden Sie Andeerer Käse in Ihrem Betrieb? Warum verwenden Sie Andeerer Käse? Verwenden Sie auch andere regionale Produkte?
4. Verwenden Sie zusätzlich auch anderen Käse? Wenn ja, wie viel in etwa?
5. Nehmen die Gäste die Verwendung regionaler Produkte in Ihrem Hotel wahr? Wie werden die Gäste darauf aufmerksam gemacht? Zeigen die Gäste Interesse?
6. Was macht den Käse zu etwas Besonderem?
7. Was ist Ihnen über die zugrundeliegende Philosophie der Sennerei bekannt? Was nehmen die Gäste davon wahr? Welche Aspekte erreichen die Gäste eher nicht?
8. Was geben Sie von dieser Philosophie an Ihre Gäste weiter? Sind das die Aspekte, die Ihnen persönlich besonders wichtig sind?
9. Denken Sie, dass die Verwendung des Käses in Ihrem Betrieb die Gäste auch zum Einkauf in der Sennerei anregt? Aus welchen Gründen? Was ist das ausschlaggebende Verkaufsargument?
10. Wird - allgemein betrachtet - die Philosophie der Sennerei ausreichend kommuniziert? Wie könnte die Kommunikation noch verbessert werden? Warum?

11. Wie würden Sie Ihre Beziehung zu der Sennerei beschreiben? Gab es eine Beziehung zu der Sennerei vor der Übernahme 2001? Wie könnte die heutige Beziehung noch verbessert werden?
12. Was wünschen Sie sich für die zukünftige Entwicklung ihrer Zusammenarbeit?
13. Ein Gedankenspiel: Was hätte die Schließung der Sennerei für eine Auswirkung auf die Gemeinde Andeer?

Appendix 2.4. Interview 'Mayor of Andeer'

Interview Gemeindepräsident in Andeer, 18. August 2009, Hotel Fravi

1. Seit wann sind Sie im Gemeinderat der Gemeinde Andeer?
2. Was macht für Sie die Gemeinde Andeer aus? Wo liegen ihre Stärken bzw. Schwächen?
3. Seit wann kennen Sie Martin und Maria? Was hat sich seit deren Übernahme der Sennerei verändert? In der Sennerei selbst und in Beziehung zu den Landwirten, Hotels, Restaurants,... Welche Rolle hat die Gemeinde damals bei der Übernahme gespielt?
4. Welche Rolle spielt die Sennerei in der Gemeinde Andeer?
5. Was betrachten Sie an der Sennerei als besonders? Was macht die Philosophie der Sennerei aus? Was ist Ihnen davon bekannt?
6. Hat die Gemeinde ein spezielles Interesse an der Sennerei Andeer? Welches? Warum?
7. Welche Aspekte der Philosophie werden am deutlichsten kommuniziert? Welche sind den Kunden Ihrer Meinung nach besonders wichtig?
8. Auf welchem Wege erreicht die Sennerei am besten Ihre Kunden? Auf welche Art und Weise könnte die Sennerei noch kommunizieren? Leisten Sie auch einen Beitrag zur Kommunikation?
9. Wie schätzen Sie die Einstellung der Andeerer Einwohner?
10. Können Sie die Beziehung zwischen der Sennerei und den Landwirten, als Produzenten des Rohstoffes, beschreiben?
11. Sehen Sie Vorteile durch den Verkauf des Andeerer Käses für Ihre Region? Und wenn ja, welche? (Auch im Bezug zum Tourismus?)
12. Ist Ihnen eine Region bekannt, in der ein ähnliches Konzept, wie das der Sennerei Andeer durchgeführt wird? Wo? Warum nicht?
13. Welche Zukunftsperspektiven sehen Sie für Ihre Gemeinde? Was denken Sie über die Philosophie der Sennerei ‚Erhalten statt Wachsen‘? Stimmen Sie damit überein?
14. Ein Gedankenspiel: Was hätte die Schließung der Sennerei für eine Auswirkung auf Ihre Gemeinde?

Appendix 2.5. Interview ‘Store managers/sales personal’

Interview ‚Verkaufspersonal’

1. Seit wann sind Sie als VerkäuferIn/GeschäftsführerIn in diesem Geschäft tätig? Verkaufen Sie hauptsächlich Käse?
2. Welchen Anteil macht Andeerer Käse an Ihrem Sortiment aus?
3. Wie häufig verkaufen Sie den Käse?
4. Gibt es Kunde, die speziell diesen Käse aus Andeer verlangen? Aus welchen Gründen?
5. Was zeichnet Ihrer Meinung nach diesen Käse aus? Welche Informationen haben Sie selbst über den Käse erhalten? Sind diese Informationen für Sie ausreichend?
6. Was können Sie den Kunden über die Produktionsweise und die Herkunft des Käses erzählen? Welche Art von Informationen möchte der Kunde haben? Besteht großes Interesse an Hintergründen zu dem Käse?
7. Würden Sie gerne noch mehr Infos an den Kunden weitergeben?
8. Wie kommunizieren Sie die Hintergründe anderer Käse? Erhalten Sie von einigen Käseproduzenten mehr Informationen?
9. Bezüglich der Kaufgründe, gibt es Ihrer Meinung nach Unterschiede zwischen dem Einkauf in Ihrem Geschäft und dem Einkauf vor Ort in Andeer?

Appendix 2.6. Interview ‘Cheese traders’

Interview ‚Zwischenhändler’

1. Seit wann sind Sie im Käsehandel tätig?
2. Vermarkten Sie ausschließlich Biokäse? Warum vermarkten Sie Biokäse?
3. Unterscheidet sich das Marketing für den Biokäse von dem Marketing für den konventionellen Käse? Auf welchen Aspekten basiert Ihr Marketing hauptsächlich? Was wollen Sie über die Produkte vermitteln?
4. Woher kommt der von Ihnen gehandelte Käse hauptsächlich? Welche Kriterien muss der Käse erfüllen?
5. Welche Art von Abnehmern beliefern Sie? In welchen Ländern?
6. Was sind wichtige Verkaufsargumente für Ihre Kunden? Was wollen Ihre Kunden über die Käseproduzenten erfahren? Gibt es dazu Erhebungen/Untersuchungen?
7. Was geben Ihre Abnehmer wiederum an die Konsumenten des Käses weiter? Wie wird der Käse vermarktet?

8. Seit wann führen Sie auch Käse aus der Sennerei Andeer? Welche Käsesorten führen Sie? Warum?
9. Aus welchem Grund haben Sie Andeerer Käse in Ihr Sortiment aufgenommen? Aus welchem Grund wird Ihrer Meinung nach Andeerer Käse von den Kunden gekauft?
10. Wie hoch ist der Anteil an Andeerer Käse an Ihrem gesamten Käse-Verkauf?
11. Wohin verkaufen Sie den meisten Andeerer Käse?
12. Ist Ihnen die Philosophie der Sennerei Andeer bekannt? Wird die auch Ihren Abnehmern deutlich? In wieweit wird diese Philosophie in den Geschäften direkt an den Kunden weitergegeben? Ist den Kunden die zugrunde liegende Philosophie bekannt und wichtig?
13. Wie sieht die Beziehung zwischen Ihnen und den Betreibern aus? Wie funktioniert die Kommunikation?
14. Waren Sie schon einmal persönlich bei der Sennerei in Andeer?

Appendix 2.7. Qualitative questions in addition to survey for the dairy in Andeer

Qualitative Fragen, als Zusatz zum Fragebogen in Andeer

1. Was macht für Sie diese Region besonders attraktiv?
4. Ist die Sennerei Ihrer Meinung nach etwas Besonderes?
Was macht sie zu etwas Besonderem? Was macht den Käse zu etwas Besonderem?
Hätten Sie auch jeden anderen Käse aus denselben Gründen gekauft?
Findet sich dieser Aspekt auch in der Philosophie wieder? →Überleitung
5. Vermissen Sie Inhalte der Philosophie der Sennerei in dieser Liste?
Von welchen Aspekten hören Sie heute zum ersten Mal?
Kommen diese Aspekte auch deutlich rüber?
Sind Sie direkt auf diese Aspekte aufmerksam gemacht worden?
6. Können Sie sich noch weitere Möglichkeiten vorstellen, wie die Sennerei ihre Kommunikation ausbauen könnte?
Welcher Kommunikationsweg fehlt Ihnen?
Welche Art der Kommunikation sollte noch einbezogen werden?
Wie könnte man die Kunden noch besser ansprechen?

Was macht diesen Aspekt besonders wichtig?

Zum Abschluss: Anfangs nannten Sie Aspekte, die die Region für Sie besonders attraktiv machen. Trägt die Sennerei Ihrer Meinung nach zu dieser Attraktivität ein? Hat die Sennerei bzw. der Käse einen Einfluss auf die regionale Entwicklung? Gibt es in dieser Hinsicht noch mehr Potenzial? In welchen Bereichen sehen Sie noch Raum für Veränderungen/Verbesserungen?
In wie weit könnte/sollte dieses Potenzial noch weiter ausgeschöpft werden?

Allgemein: Immer Nachhaken - auch bei ‚Nein‘-Antworten
Was bedeutet das für Sie?
Was meinen Sie damit?
Beschreiben Sie das doch bitte aus Ihrer Sicht?
Was ist Ihre persönliche Meinung dazu?

Appendix 3: Categorisation of answers for open questions

Appendix 3.1: Categorisation of purchase reasons

Engagement	production process	Maintaining traditional patterns and regional production
fantasy	artisanry	tradition
philosophy	original production	maintaining local stores in small villages
creativity	naturalness	maintaining agriculture
appreciation of the producers' work	nativeness	integration of the dairy in the village
recommendation	nature	preservation of the landscape
intuition	sustainability	supporting the dairy
Product quality	Quality of the business	supporting local work
quality	good quality	processing locally
fresh milk	specialty store	region
good dairy products	service	local production
because it is good	product assortment	regionality
top quality	friendly consultation	local milk
expectation of an extra-ordinary quality	reliable quality	home, feeling of rootedness
taste	nice store	support local businesses
trying	publicity, prominence	preference of local products
enjoys eating the cheese	producers live consciously	cooperation: hotels-dairy-agriculture

Appendix 3.2: Categorisation of connotations

maintaining traditional patterns	personal contact and engagement
remembering one summer in the alps	cheese maker
maintaining local businesses	politeness
maintaining agriculture	sympathy and friendship
responsibility towards agriculture	processors
local production	personal contact
the village, the mountains,...	good communication and consultancy
daughter's farm enterprise	friendliness of the sales personal
sales opportunity for local milk	cheese makers and their dedication
mountains, nature	cheese makers and their colleagues
vacation	personal contact to processors and farmers
memory of vacation	qualification of the cheese makers
breakfast	Floh&Maria with lifeblood, dedication, and belief
hiking in grisons	engagement and devotion
hospitality in the hotel	professional cheese maker
breakfast buffett	good cheese maker
others	the couple
post cards	explanations by Floh
flyer	familial
survey	not anonymous
	philosophy

method of production
preservation of the natural and cultural landscape
natural business
more money for milk from cows with horns
organic
supporting cows with horns
excellent for environment and nature
sustainable production
sustainability
naturalness
real cows

regionality
from the region
local products are preferred
come from the region
advertisement for the village
knowing farmers and processors
feelings of home and rootedness
local milk
canton grisons
famousness of the region

quality of production
quality
cleaniness
assortment
taste
variety
very nice and neat
variety of cheeses
purchasing open milk