Finnish Food Strategy

Sverige och Maten – Vad ingår i en svensk livsmedelsstrategi?
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Food in numbers

- Food sector employs about 300,000 people in Finland
  - Primary production
  - Food industry
  - Trade
  - HoReCa

- Finns prefer domestic food: 80% of the food consumed is produced in Finland

- Food exports and imports
  - Exports €1,590 million
  - Imports €4,825 million

Source: National Board of Customs, ULJAS database
Structure of Finland’s food **exports** in 2013 (%)

- Dairy products and eggs: 33%
- Meat products: 12%
- Beverages: 11%
- Sugar products, coffee, tea and spices: 12%
- Cereal products: 16%
- Vegetables, fruit and nuts: 4%
- Other: 12%

Source: National Board of Customs, ULJAS database.
Structure of Finland’s food imports in 2013 (%)

- Meat products: 15%
- Dairy products and eggs: 7%
- Vegetables, fruits and nuts: 20%
- Cereal products: 11%
- Oils and oil seeds: 9%
- Sugar products, coffee, tea and spices: 12%
- Beverages: 9%
- Tobacco: 3%
- Other: 14%

Source: National Board of Customs, ULJAS database.

MTT Economic Research, Publications 115a
Food policy development

- **Food policy**: comprises the fields of food production, food and nutrition security and food safety
  - Experts from all fields are needed
  - Collaboration at all levels from local to international

→ **Food policy is part of national health policy in addition to production and market policy**

New demands for developing agriculture
- cost-efficient, consumer-driven
- quality standards for agricultural products
→ Quality Strategy 1999 and 2004

Government report on food safety
- National goals for food safety: current and near future
- 2006, 2010 and 2013
Food policy development

2008 – 2011 Promotional program for Finnish food culture
(Programmet för främjande av finländsk matkultur) to increase appreciation of food
- Additional activities to increase local and organic food consumption, quality development, guide food consumption and increase international collaboration.

In 2009 Prime Minister’s Office appointed a preparatory body to work on a National Food Strategy

➔ 2010 “Food for Tomorrow”, the National Food Strategy
  – Government Report on Food Policy (2010); activities to meet the food strategy objectives

➔ 2011 Food in the Government Programme: opportunities for growth in the food sector as part of health and nutrition policy
2011 Food in the Government Programme

• Growth opportunities in the food sector
  – Food safety is our strength
  – Focus on organic products and local foods

• National Food Strategy (2010) and Food policy actions (2010) provide the guidelines
  – In addition to organic and local products, more focus on improving the competitiveness of the food sector
  – Consumers have the right to know the origin of the food → transparency and traceability needed in the food chain
    ▪ Package labels
    ▪ Traceability systems → producers/trade
‘The making of’ **National Food Strategy**

- Steering Group appointed by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry
  - Representatives to cover the production, safety and health aspects
  - Innovative approach, expertise in trends and brands also included

- Seminar
  - Broad participation of different areas
  - UK Food Strategy presented

- Web consultation
  - Public consultation
  - Strategy report with two parts:
    I) Background material, knowledge base
    II) Framework for action, suggestions how to proceed
**Actions** under the Food Policy Report 1/2

- Securing profitability and competitiveness of the food chain in the changing operating environment (global competition and climate change)
- Creating traceability and responsibility systems for the food chain
- Supporting consumer-driven research, development and innovation and practical application of the results
- Promoting food research development by encouraging networking
**Actions** under the Food Policy Report 2/2

- Supporting collaboration with special focus on SMEs
- Securing public sector food procurement skills and resources
- Supporting food education, healthy dietary habits and organic and local food
- Improving horizontal collaboration of ministries in food policy
  - The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry Coordinates the food sector together with the other ministries.

➔ Large entities, time and support required for all this to come true!
Progress: Where are we now? 1/3

- In 2012 Report on local food
  - Proposal for a programme on local food
  - Guidelines on how to proceed 2013 - 2020
    - Strengths of local products: contribute to rural viability, close to consumer, flexibility in production, possibility to influence, ecological aspects of food production, added value for trade and HoReCa selection

- In 2012 Professor of Food Culture at the University of Helsinki
  - Prof Johanna Mäkelä
  - To increase understanding and awareness of food as a cultural and social phenomena
Progress: Where are we now? 2/3

• In 2013 More Organic - development programme
  – In 2013 9% of arable lands under organic production; by 2020 20%
  – Wider range of organic products for consumers and public catering
  – Procurement expertise in public catering and increased use of organic products
Progress: Where are we now? 3/3

• In 2013 Food Policy Committee established: seven ministries as well as industry, trade and NGO representatives
  – Brings together food policy issues, promotes and intensifies food and nutrition related political actions for the common good
  – Follows the progress of activities
  – Improves
    ▪ coordination of food and nutrition related policies
    ▪ collaboration within the food chain and between authorities

• Work proceeds with traceability systems

• First national quality program established: ‘Sikava’ for pork meat
  – Quality program for vegetables to be completed next
The way forward

• In the near future we need more effective collaboration within the food chain: production - processing /industry – retail
  – Call for further **responsibility** of the food chain

• School meals since 1943
  – Sustainability, value and appreciation of food
  – Food waste management! (Household food waste 23 kg/person/year, total food chain 400 milj. kg ie. 10 – 15 % of food produced)

• Challenges: fewer people in the countryside, maintaining profitability of the food chain requires continuous efforts

• Future opportunities in bioeconomy, novel approaches to combat environmental challenges and climate change, production closely coupled with consumer choices - hopefully towards pure, local products!
The way forward

‘In 2030 the Finnish consumers eat tasty, wholesome, sustainably produced and safe food. Consumers have the ability to make informed choices. A transparent, highly skilled, flexible and internationally competitive food and service system responds to the demand. The growth and advancement of the sector find support in well-coordinated, high-level research and development.’

(Vision of the National Food Strategy “Food for Tomorrow”)