Traditional foods and denominations of origin: between consumer interests and agricultural policy – a general perspective with focus on Norway and Northern/Southern Europe

SIFO - National Institute for consumption Research - Oslo, Norway

Virginie Amilien
Traditional foods and denominations of origin in Norway
A perspective extended to Northern/ Southern Europe

- A short overview of context for Norwegian food culture and market
- A taxonomy for local, traditional and denominations of origin food products
- Quality food products in a nature-culture-market triangle in Northern and Southern Europe

What do designation of origin, local food or traditional food mean in the Norwegian case? Are those concepts known to the Norwegian consumers? How did they come into the Norwegian market?
Are they adapted to the Norwegian food mentality – which food mentality?
Contrast Southern/ Northern Europe or experts/ consumers – everyday life eaters?
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Ca. 385 000 km²

4, 8 mill. Inh.

Around 10% of households budget dedicated to food

Market share
4 chains cover 99%
Reine - Lofoten
Norwegian salmon has been a raw ingredient in the very first Bocuse d’Or European Championships, to be held in Stavanger in July 2008.

We can be proud of our little country, who once again, is one of the best. […] From the beginning of the Bocuse d’or, Norway has been six times on the podium and is the second best country. […]

The best fish is coming from the wild Norway.

Eyvind Hellstrøm, President of Bocuse d’Or Europe

Quotation from the official discourse for Bocuse d’Or Europe 2008
Interest for traditional Norwegian food and for regional food products

Source MMI spisefakta 2008
How important is the fact that the food products you eat and use are Norwegian? Answer: Very important

Source: MMI spisefakta 2008
Local food creates identity and tells our story. Artistic climate, pure nature and light summers provide good conditions for production, planting and further cultivation of local quality food; health animals in pastures, beautiful yellow eye potatoes and the world’s sweetest strawberries. Unique raw goods and special food traditions provide undreamed of possibilities for local products. [...] We will contribute to increased value-adding, greater product variety and character, increased availability and new markets, as well as increased consciousness of, and pride in, the value of local food production.

County Governor for Troms 2005.
two ways to interpret quality-
-a south-European interpretation linking quality with culture,
-origin,
-taste
-and typicity
-a north-European interpretation linking quality with technique,
-health,
-animal welfare,
-nutrition
-and hygiene.

Dry cod sold to Italy
Dry cod from Lofoten
Protected Geographical Indication (PGI)
Norwegian nature

Local food products

Niche production

Traditional food products

Short distance

Authentic food

Food culture

Organic food

specialities

Culinary heritage

Terroir

Denominations of origin

Farmers products

VS standardised and conventionnal products

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A disciplinary system...with some safety aspects

Terroir and localised products have been regulated by the law of 5th July 2002 on Protected Designations.
Overview of approved certification per 1. September 2011:

- Økologisk Tjukkmjølk from Røros (ecological cultured milk)
- Ringerikserter (peas)
- Eplejuice from Hardanger (apple juice)
- Skjenning (thin wafer crispbread)
- Fjellmandel from Oppdal (potatoes)
- Hardangerepler (apples)
- Hardangerpærer (pears)
- Hardangerplommer (plums)
- Hardangermoreller (cherries)
- Rakfisk from Valdres (fermented trout)
- Gamalost from Vik (cheese)
- Ishavsøye Vesterålen (arctic charr)
- Ringerikspotet from Ringerike (potatoes)
- Gulløye from Northern Norway (potatoes)
- Tørrfisk from Lofoten (stockfish)
- Sider from Hardanger (cider)
- Badsturokt kjøtt på namdalsk vis (smoked meat)
- Villsau from Norskekysten (mutton)
- Kurv from Valdres (sausage)

REG 2007 – 07 – 05 no 698: Regulation on the protection of designations of origin, geographical indications and designations of specific traditional character on foodstuffs
Du er her: Hjem > Om beskyttede betegnelser > Utenlandske betegnelser beskyttet i Norge

Her følger en oversikt over utenlandske produktbetegnelser som er beskyttet i Norge etter forskrift om beskyttede betegnelser:

**Prosciutto di Parma:**

Forskrift om beskyttelse av Prosciutto di Parma som opprinnelsesbetegnelse

**Parmigiano Reggiano:**

Forskrift om beskyttelse av Parmigiano Reggiano som opprinnelsesbetegnelse
Protected designations and public stakeholders
- Top down initiatives
- Quality labelling system imported from EU/France
- Disciplining by educational courses/seminars organised by the Ministry of Agriculture and Food.
- Official marketing campaigns

Protected designations and the manufacturers
- Strict requirements (common charter)
- Quality control by experts AND internal regulation and self-regulation
- Added value

Protected designations and distribution chains
Products with protected designation automatically get a place on the shelves in the stores of the 4 distribution chains (99% of the food market) from 2007-2008
Percentage chart showing most common consumer responses when asked to give examples of geographic origin-labelled products already purchased. N = 1,065 responses.
## Attributes linked to local food

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attribute</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard deviation</th>
<th>No. of &quot;do not know&quot;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Geographical area</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>1.27</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tradition</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A particular producer</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A particular taste</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On original recipe from a particular place</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A special know-how about production</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>1.14</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special soil and nature</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short transport distance</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental friendly</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animal friendly</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>1.26</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- The most important attributes associated with local food are tradition, taste and recipe.
- Many respondents say they do not know what we mean by “special soil and nature”, and this factor is seen as least important ⇒ Terroir is not well-known among Norwegians.
Norwegian White Halibut has a special history that stretches back a very long time. Myths and legends reflect the extraordinary status and importance the inhabitants on the Norwegian coast attributed to the white halibut through the ages. Rock carvings older than 10 000 years found in ancient stone age settlements, tell us of the extent to which our ancestors appreciated the white halibut. It was seen as a holy fish, the fish of the gods, related to the wise and kind god Balder, the Norse “white god”. [...] Traditionally, white halibut is cooked and served. The mild, but delicate taste will justify and bring to life the old legends of Norwegian White Halibut as a gift from the Norse gods.
A typology: at least 3 different conceptions of local food

Local food products:
Short distance, local area, small scale

"Localised" food products:
Local area, small scale, traditional food, local identity and reputation

Terroir products:
Combination between local techniques and collective practices (human factors) and local specificity of soil, natural elements, agricultural production through a long time period
Four main dimensions for traditional food products

- **Time**
  - Past
  - Future

- **Place**
  - Local
  - Global-generic

- **Savoir-faire**
  - Traditional know-how
  - Formal/formalised know-how

- **Meaning**
  - Deep cultural meaning
  - Superficial cultural meaning

Virginie Amilien
Traditional foods and / within denominations of origin

• An official construction based on history and promoting a collective identity (with a common economic interest – added value).

• This construction is imported from EU/Southern Europe and translated/adapted to the Norwegian market and consumer

+ An individual reminiscence based on family memories and local practices
Concluding remarks

On the one hand, traditional foods and denominations of origin in Norway are characterised by traditions and cultural knowledge, and on the other hand are associated with proximity, purity and quality.

Strong contrast between political discourse and everyday life