Challenges and opportunities in self-organized local food provisioning systems

Investigating Scale, Balance, Energy and Solidarity in Food Communities

Workshop 4

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Self-organized agroecology-based networks

Insights from experiences in Berlin-Brandenburg (Germany)

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Case study: AFN between a food hub and CSA farms

Food hub (*LebensMittelPunkt*) in Berlin

Alternative food network

10 CSA (*Community-Supported Agriculture*) farms

Agroecological characterisation: Agroecology Criteria Tool

Agroecosystem scale
Farms in transition or already transitioned to agroecological

Food system scale
Re-connection eater-grower

Are they agroecological?

What is the role of knowledge?

Diversified regional production through:
- Revival of old practices
- Creation of new practices

Incorporate:
- Eater’s preferences
- Broad range of actors and methods

Knowledge co-creation and sharing
Degree of self-organization

CSA farms

- **Farmer-CSA members (strong):**
  - Financial security (payments in advance)
  - Fosters diversification and innovations (retro-innovations and new farming practices)
  - Re-connection growers-eaters (“prosumers”)

- **Farmer-to-farmer (weak):**
  - Not so much knowledge exchange.
  - Mostly informal
  - Exception: farms working together to increase diversity of products
Degree of self-organization

Food hub

- **Eaters-activists in the food hubs** (**strong**):
  - Through the activities: spaces for picking up the shares from the CSAs, community-dinners, food sharing, workshops, movie screenings…
  - Still a “white” space (not addressing vulnerable people)

- **CSA-food hubs** (**weak**):
  - The food hub is just a “depot” for the CSA farms.
  - A very urban space. So much room for improvement (e.g. using the food hubs as spaces for farmers to meet, for farmers to find new CSA members, for farmers to discuss with actual CSA members…).
  - Strengthening the CSA-food hub network is key for scaling
Scaling agroecology-based food hubs-CSA network

Scaling out food hubs in Berlin in a 15-min. city

Sustainable food hubs in the 15-min. city: the case of Pünkte in Berlin

Nathalie2 and

1 Neuschoen, W., Köhler, M., Germany, "Division of Environmental Economics, Albert-Schweitzer-Stiftung, University of Berlin, Berlin, Germany

weighting with regional food from a promising concept for a sustainable food chain operation and scaling up. A spatial approach that, for the first time, is based on a 15-min walking distance sub-district as underlying spatial unit. We mapped the distance to regional groceries, public squares, and suitable locations. The results of 230. This covering 10% or over 13% of the city's retail areas and almost the entire city within a 15-min. approach to a neighborhood scale to plan from an integrative perspective and to adopt a local approach of such neighborhoods. Based regional hubs in Berlin allows for the join forces to increase the resilience and efficiency. We generally propose a participatory approach to realize this process.
Thank you very much!

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Let’s discuss!

3 breakout groups (30 min):

- Better research to support AFNs (José Luis)
- Farmer-to-farmer networks (Logan)
- Barriers and challenges of agroecology-based initiatives (Matthew)

Wrap-up and discussion: How can we consolidate existing agroecology-based AFNs and scale (up, out, deep) them? (30 min)

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Better research to support AFN: Ideas for discussion

• **Role of scientists in the agroecological transition? (overcoming main barriers in scaling the initiatives (up, out, deep), escape from the „academic system“)**
  – Fostering access to knowledge: agro-etnography, platforms and other systems for knowledge exchange, combination of traditional and new available knowledge…
  – Provide evidence on the positive impacts of agroecology-based AFNs

• **Methods, methodologies and approaches: Collaboration between scientists-farmers and other food system’s actors**
  – Systemic approach
  – Transdisciplinary science
  – Participatory
  – Solution-oriented
  – Inductive
  – Living labs
  – Dialogue of knowledges, etnography, horizontal approach
  – Science(-policy-)society interface