

Rural Foodies

Investigating Swedish Female Foodie Practices in Rural Areas

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The early summer of 2012 treated Sweden with a brilliant sun, warm days and beautiful flowers. People could finally take off their heavy coats and warm boots, replacing them with light shorts and sunglasses, strolling around in the city, window shopping and eating ice cream. People could finally sit on cafes drinking coffee with their friends, gossiping about the upcoming party and holiday trips. Barbeques were made in the parks, people were drinking wine in the green grass, amongst gorgeous flowers that just had begun to blossom, just soaking in the sun and gaining a perfect tan. People could do all of these activities, that one dreams of doing during the long and dark winter months, out in the lovely summery weather that blessed Sweden in the early summer months. However, we have not been like all these other people during this period of thesis writing. Instead we have been studying articles, interviewing inspiring people, discussing alternative viewpoints and writing, writing and writing even more. In your hand you now have the thesis that we spent hours and hours to produce, and in truth; what is a quickly fading tan in comparison to all the knowledge we now possess?

We would like to take the opportunity to thank the respondents participating in this thesis for their time and engagement. Meeting you gave us a lot of inspiration and made the process much more enjoyable and kept us going when time seemed to stand still. Through your stories and reflections we have got an understanding in how it is to be a female rural foodie. Without all of you, this thesis would not have been as successful as it is today!

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ABSTRACT

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Five key words: Rural consumption, CCT, Female food practice, Foodie, Food culture

Purpose: The purpose of this thesis is to investigate how Swedish female foodies practice their food hobby while living in rural areas.

Methodology: A qualitative study was conducted with an inductive approach, using food diaries and semi-structured in depth interviews. This study is part of a larger Foodie research study conducted by Sofia Ulver.

Theoretical perspectives: Our theoretical perspective has its starting point in Consumer Culture Theory (CCT). From this perspective we have looked at food culture, female foodie practice and rural living.

Empirical foundation: Food diaries have been collected from six female respondents, followed by in-depth interviews, one of them by telephone. This empirical material has later been analysed with theoretical knowledge gained in this research process

Conclusions: The main conclusion from this thesis is that a rural foodie values the higher life quality that they feel they get on the countryside. The narrow selection of special food product does not hinder our respondents to cook fine and good food. Instead they cultivate and purchase food products from local farmers. In addition, they do not experience a lack of inspirational sources, due to their rural location. Rather, they get inspired by, for example, travels, eating at restaurants and TV-chefs.

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1 INTRODUCTION

Today more and more people are getting interested in food and cooking. This can clearly be seen in media where food programs like “Sveriges mästarkock” (Masterchef, Sweden) dominate the TV schedule and a massive 46 hours of cooking programs is aired during an average week on TV in Sweden (www.svd.se). In addition, there is a large amount of magazines about food and cooking, the Swedish website Tidningskungen alone has 33 magazines registered about food and wine (www.tidningskungen.se). Not everyone has cooking as their main interest, but everyone needs to consume food to survive, hence some people just eat because they have to, whereas others place a large amount of time and effort into their consumption of food. The latter consumer is the focus of this thesis. It is people who spend a lot of resources into food and cooking, are knowledgeable about the subject and see it as their hobby and a source of inspiration and joy. These people are called foodies and are in short defined by Cairns, Johnston and Baumann (2010: 593) as:

“...people with a long-standing passion for eating and learning about food but who are not food professionals”

Foodies are often associated with men because men gain high status by being skillful at cooking and knowledgeable about food. Women however, have more difficulty gaining the same high status because cooking is often seen as a domestic duty (Hollows 2003a: 232). Moreover, women are often connected to negative aspects when it comes to food, such as dieting and eating disorders. Men, on the other hand, are often associated with gourmet food (Belasco 2008: 3) and the term gastrosexuality is a popular word, which by the English news site MailOnline (www.dailymail.co.uk), is described as:

“Gastrosexuals are a new generation of men who consider cooking more a hobby than a household chore and use their kitchen prowess to seduce women.”

Due to the lack of focus on women as foodies, we want to investigate female foodies practice to broaden the picture of women and cooking. This will be done by investigating women, who actually like to cook, are knowledgeable and skillful with food and further, see it as a leisure activity and a source of joy. Due to time constraints we will not compare women and men, however we want to contribute to the lacking knowledge about female foodies.

The high interest in food can be connected to the fact that many people today are looking for a longer happier life. The health trend, which is part of that search, has taken a major role in the food consumption area. The health aspect is also a factor behind the rising consumer interest for quality of

food commodities, rather than price, which have been the main focus for many years when it comes to food (Höjer, Gullberg and Pettersson 2011: 41). However, it is important to point out that expensive food does not have to be the best; it is also, amongst other reasons, about the raw material and the care in which it has been treated previous to consumption (Cairns et. al. 2010: 592). We believe that these aspects can be important for foodies who care a lot about food and are knowledgeable about food and cooking.

Another part of the search for a longer and happier life is the longing for a calmer lifestyle, away from the hectic city, a contra trend to the on-going urbanization. This trend can also be seen in the media where “Bonde söker fru” (Farmer looking for wife) is a popular returning TV program in Sweden (www.tv4.se). Further, there are as many magazines about gardening and life on the countryside, as there are on food, wine and cooking (www.tidningskungen.se). This trend is not as prominent as the urbanization, but it is nevertheless there. We believe that it could be only a matter of time before people stop dreaming about the country life they idealize and actually move to a rural area to reach that long and happy lifestyle.

The urbanization is an important aspect to consider for this thesis because we believe that it can affect different aspects of the rural lifestyle. For example, it can affect the range and variety of food supply in terms of supermarkets’ and restaurants, which can affect people’s cooking and food habits. Moreover, it can affect the ability and desire to socialize with others and enjoy food with likeminded people and their access to inspiration and food activities. According to Eurostat; Sweden had the highest population growth in urban areas with +17,3 per 1000 inhabitants, which is three times the EU average. The intermediate regions grown with 7,1‰ and the rural regions with 1,2‰. Sweden was also the country which, within the EU, held most of its population in intermediate regions, 56%. Interestingly, the urban areas and the rural areas in Sweden both hold the same percentage of the population, 22% (Allen & Corselli-Nordblad 2011). Because Sweden has the highest urbanization in Europe the research about urban areas is extensive. Therefore we find it interesting to look at the foodie phenomenon in rural areas of Sweden, to contribute to the knowledge of rural areas although the time constraints hinder us from comparing our rural findings with urban culture.

1.1 Topics in previous research about rural female foodies

Essentially this thesis focuses on two areas: female foodie practice and rural living. We argue that these are interesting to investigate because they are contra trends to two larger trends: urbanisation and male

gastronomy. Therefore, there is little to none previous research in the areas focused on for this thesis which, we believe, makes it an interesting and important topic. We have therefore looked at research surrounding these topics, such as food consumption, gender aspects concerning cooking and food consumption, rural development, urbanisation, food culture in rural areas, et cetera. From these we gained and developed an understanding for the subject of interest.

A sample of the research we have looked at is: McEntee (2010) who did a research among Danish and Norwegian dual career couples with children and their food habits. Aarseth and Olsen (2007) also looked at dual career couples but with a gender perspective. Hollow (2003b) also looked at a gender perspective and focused on post feminism and cooking. Howard (2005) investigated the health aspects of food and what consumers know about their intake of food products. Höjer, Gullberg and Pettersson (2011) looked at future sustainable development. Renkow (2005) studied at rural population trends and Broadbridge and Calderwood (2002) at food consumption in rural areas.

1.2 Problem discussion

Previous research shows that a lot of foodies are practising in urban areas. In addition, a lot of research has been made about male foodies. We find it interesting to look at an unexplored area and therefore we want to investigate how Swedish female foodies practice their hobby while living in rural areas. We believe that people living in rural areas do not have the same resources when it comes to food range and supply, as urban areas. Therefore, we believe that it might be difficult for them to satisfy and practice their food interest. For example, the supply of restaurants on the countryside is not as wide as in large cities, and special products and foreign food can be difficult to come by in small local stores. As stated in the previous section, the subject of rural foodies have not previously been looked at, and female foodie practice only in relationship to male foodie practice. Therefore, we believe that this is an interesting topic to look at and an opportunity to narrow the gap in knowledge in these areas we will contribute to the field of Consumer Culture Theory, CCT, by adding information about consumption in rural areas in general and rural female foodie culture in particular.

1.3 Purpose

The purpose of this thesis is to investigate how Swedish female foodies practice their food hobby while living in rural areas.

2 METHODOLOGY

This chapter will describe the methodological process for conducting this thesis. Motivations will be stated for the choices that have been made and also critique and limitations in terms of both choice and procedure will be discussed.

2.1 Context

It is important to take into consideration the context of the thesis process to understand why certain choices have been made over others. Hence we find it important to state some of the ground rules that have framed this thesis before we discuss our choices. Regarding the time frame, this thesis has been conducted full time during an eight weeks period (March 19 – May 30 2012) further limiting the methods achievable. Moreover, it has been conducted within a limited student budget, limiting the executing options available. Due to these restrictions methods were chosen in relation to their appropriateness towards the research question, but also in regards to execution speed and cost.

2.2 Research philosophy

To conduct research one first has to come to terms with how one will look at different aspects of the procedure. In this section we clarify what views have been taken to different characteristics which have guided our choices in terms of orientation and disciplines.

2.2.1 Epistemological orientations

Bryman and Bell (2011: 15-16) discuss two epistemological orientations which have different views about what is regarded as acceptable knowledge. Firstly, positivism, which generates hypothesis by the use of theory that is gathered to be studied and creates a foundation for the research. Moreover, the positivistic orientation believes that the study of social science have to be able to be studied with the methods of natural science, and also recognized by the senses. Secondly, interpretivism contradicts positivism and aims at exploring how people understand the world and the deeper meaning of their behaviour. Furthermore, it believes that there is a difference when studying people and natural science and hence demands a subjective perspective to social behaviour (Bryman & Bell 2011: 16-20). Due to the investigative aim of this thesis an inspective approach is called for, which is offered in interpretivism. Furthermore our focus lies on the consumers' perspective which also makes interpretivism the most suitable orientation for this thesis.

2.2.2 Ontological disciplines

Other orientations that need to be taken into consideration are two ontological disciplines; objectivism and constructionism. These orientations have two different views of what reality really is and discuss whether social entities are objective or subjective. Objectivism argues that social phenomena cannot be affected by people and are hence seen as external. An organization is, for example, seen as a tangible object and its reality is external to the people who work within it. Contradictory constructionism sees reality as something that is constructed, and constantly reconstructed, through social phenomena. An organization for example, to compare with objectivism, is constructed and reconstructed by its members and hence not external to the social world (Bryman & Bell 2011: 20-23). This thesis will undertake a constructionism approach because of its aim to examine how female foodies practice their hobby and passion for food in rural areas. Hence, we argue that social construction is needed to be seen as something that can be constructed and revised through interaction with, in this case, other people with similar hobbies, which fit well with the constructionists approach.

2.3 Research strategy

After stating what we in this thesis accept as knowledge and our view on reality it is time to explain how the strategies for this thesis have been selected. This section therefore describes different strategies for conducting research and which ones that have been chosen as most appropriate for this thesis.

2.3.1 Qualitative approach

Bryman and Bell (2011: 410) argue that there are two main approaches for conducting research: quantitative and qualitative. The quantitative approach is usually concerned with measuring hypothesis with numbers and the researcher takes command of the process to be steered towards a desired direction. It starts with secondary data before conducting empirical studies to be able to test theories and hypotheses. Furthermore, it is highly structured, often practiced in an artificial environment and aims at generalizing the result to a population of interest. The qualitative approach, on the other hand, is focused around the meaning of, for example, why people act as they do and hence around words rather than numbers. It also concentrates on what the object of study thinks is important and the researcher often engages in close participation to be able to understand a deeper meaning of the respondents' thoughts, attitudes or behaviour (Bryman & Bell 2011: 410-413). Kozinets (2002: 62) agrees that "qualitative methods are particularly useful for revealing the rich symbolic world that underlines needs, desires, meanings and choice". In addition, it is usually conducted in a natural environment because it aims at understanding the contextual surrounding and is not as structured as the quantitative

approach (Bryman & Bell 2011: 410-413). The research for this thesis has a qualitative approach due to the focus on the context regarding female foodies and their practice of their food hobby, performed in rural areas. Furthermore, it centres on the consumers perspective and aims at understanding them and their food hobby and hence, not concerned with theory testing or generalization, as in the quantitative approach.

2.3.2 Inductive approach

According to Bryman and Bell (2011: 11) there are two main approaches to the relationship between previous theory and research made for the current project deductive and inductive. The deductive approach follows a rather linear procedure and gathers theory that already exists about the subject firstly, and secondly formulates hypotheses to be tested with the use of theory. Contradictory, the inductive approach has an opposite process. It starts by conducting empirical studies and gathering primary data before using secondary data (Bryman & Bell 2011: 11-13). According to Easterby-Smith, Thrope and Jackson (2008: 11) primary data is used when the aim is to generate new insights by collecting data specifically for the current study, whereas secondary data is used when the aim is to discover new patterns and relationships within existing theory and data. In this thesis, secondary data have only been used to further understand the findings of the empirical material and to gain a holistic view and knowledge about the subject. According to Bryman and Bell (2011: 27) an inductive approach is usually used when the aim is to generate theory, rather than testing it. Because the area of research for this thesis is unexploited there is no theory to test. Hence we will with this thesis generate theory and therefore, we argue, an inductive approach is suitable. Furthermore, because the aim was to investigate from an individual's perspective and gain new insight about how female foodies practice their food hobby in rural areas, we argue that it was most suitable to start with their perspective before looking into previous theory.

2.4 Empirical data collection

As mentioned above, this thesis has an inductive approach and hence has a focus on empirical findings. These findings have, as also stated above, been gathered with qualitative methods and the following section will explain more in detail how the research process was executed in terms of data collection. Lastly reliability and validity issues discussed.

All the theses written for the larger research project about foodies, that this thesis is part of, use the same method in terms of data collection. In short, we have all engaged six foodies as our respondents which have kept a food diary for five individual days and lastly in depth interviews were conducted with

these participants to gain a deeper understanding of their interest in food. The following section will in more detail explain the participants participating in this thesis, how the method process, specifically for this thesis, has been executed, analysed and critiqued.

2.4.1 Sampling method and participant selection criteria

The people aimed for in this thesis are foodies which means, as stated in the introduction, people who are passionate about food and cooking and spend much time and resources on their hobby. Moreover, we have also niched our scope in terms of demographics and have chosen to focus on women who live in rural areas. With rural areas we in this thesis mean areas on the countryside or small villages. Four of our respondents live outside areas with less than 5000 inhabitants, one respondent lives outside an area of 32 000 inhabitants and lastly one respondent live outside an area with 63 000 inhabitants.

Name	Gender	Age	Occupation	Highest education
Elisabeth	Female	38	Nurse	Bachelor
Laura	Female	46	Trend analytic	Master
Hannah	Female	30	Market coordinator	Master
Angelica	Female	56	Social worker	Bachelor
Molly	Female	38	Saleswoman	Upper-secondary
Christina	Female	28	Teacher	Bachelor

Table 2:1 Respondents participating in the food diary and in depth interview, conducted for this thesis

Name	Individual salary	Household salary	People in household	Food expense, in household	Food expense, eating out per person
Elisabeth	29 000	63 000	4	6 000	500
Laura	20-70 000*	70 000-120 000*	4	10 000	Varies**
Hannah	31 000	56 000	2	4 000	500
Angelica	37 000	65 000	4	8 000	500
Molly	25 000	67 000	5	5 000	1 000
Christina	24 000	50 000	3	2 500	0

Table 2: 2 The gross salary in SEK for each person and household per month, how many people they are in the household and how much they spend on food per month.

* Laura 's salary varies much due to the fact that she works as a consultant.

** The food expenses for eating out varies much due to unstable income

To be able to find the respondents for this thesis we chose to use the Internet because of its ability to reach a large amount of people and hence provided a possibility to find as many people appropriate for this thesis as possible. Another reason why the Internet was chosen was because of the speed in which action can take place, (Bryman & Bell 2011: 651) and because we were restricted in regards of timeframe and needed to choose a medium that quickly gathered the information desired.

These respondents were found by searching on three different search engines, Google, Yahoo! and Bing, and using the words: food, foodie, blog, community, rural living, rural life, countryside, and similar synonyms. In addition, if we found a woman who met the criteria and held a blog or website, we looked at what blogs she followed, and what websites she recommended, in order to gain additional sources. We contacted several women and ended up finding seven potential respondents who met the criteria for this thesis. All of these women run food blogs where they write about their cooking, food and their rural lifestyle. However, two of them did not have the time to participate in our thesis and another had to cancel her participation due to unexpected events. Nevertheless, we found four of our six respondents using the Internet.

The Internet has limitations that affects the outcome of this thesis and needs to be taken into consideration. First, when using the Internet, we only gained access to people who also have access to the Internet, and moreover, know how to use it (Bryman & Bell 2011: 651). This is particularly important to consider due to our geographical scope, because one can suspect that rural areas might not have the same opportunity of range when it comes to Internet accessibility as urban areas. However, although the people aimed for in this thesis are located in rural areas, we believe that the Internet today are well developed in most areas of Sweden and hence not a matter of location, but instead a matter of the people's interest and whether or not they like using it that limits which people that choose to have Internet access. When it comes to the skill of knowing how to use the Internet we find that these four respondents know well how to use the Internet because they all run successful blogs. However, this might bias our sample because we only reached people who are active on the Internet and not people who do not know how to use the Internet or are not interested in using it. Secondly, the Internet holds a vast amount of information and to be able to find the sources that where relevant we chose to use three search engines. By using several search engines we were able to get a wider selection of sources. However, according to Bryman and Bell (2011: 648) we still only got access to a portion of the sources available on the Internet. Moreover, these sources could also been a biased sample because the top results might, for example, have greater resources to involve in development and enhancement on their

Internet accessibility, and hence have a greater opportunity to be displayed early in the results. We believe that there are many females active on the Internet that are foodies and live in rural areas that we have not found and hence considered for our thesis. However, due to the restricted time frame we had to act quickly and choose the people that fit the criteria for this thesis. Thirdly, new websites are entering the Internet every day and others are changed, moved or even removed. This constant change makes it hard to document and follow up information gathered in a previous time (Bryman & Bell 2011: 648), and hence, information gathered for this thesis might not be available on time of publication, and new websites by rural female foodies might have been created during the time of this thesis writing and hence have not been considered for participation.

Besides the four participants found on the Internet, we also engaged two other respondents that one of us already is familiar with. McCracken (1988: 37) recommends that the participants should be previously unknown to both the researcher and the other respondents. However, in this case we thought that they would fit so well into the criteria and because only one of us knew them from before, we argue that it is safe to include them without risking biasing the result in a negative way.

Furthermore, the only thing one of us knew about these two women was that they had a great interest for food and cooking, and that they live on the countryside, but nothing else about their food behaviour. We did not have any deeper knowledge in how they exerted their food hobby. This background about the two respondents, a huge interest for food and to live on the countryside, is something we also have from the respondents found on the Internet.

This type of sampling that we used to gather our respondents is called purposive sampling. The specific sampling strategy is called a homogeneous sampling and is characterized by the fact that the respondents are similar to each other and gathered with a particular focus on a subgroup, in this case: all have an interest in food and live in rural areas. This sampling method was chosen because we needed people with this particular interest and this sampling enables us to focus in depth on one specific group. (Sanders, Lewis & Thornhill 2007: 230)

2.4.2 Designing and conducting the food diaries

All six respondents have kept a food diary for five individual days containing different food activities:

1. A day that represents an ordinary day in the respondent's everyday life
2. A relaxed day where the respondent might not have much energy or inspiration to place on cooking

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3. A day with food in the focus where the respondent cooks something that takes time and skill
 4. A day where the respondent invites people over for dinner
 5. A day where the respondent does not consume food in their own home, but where the dinner is still an important feature of that day, for example, going out for dinner or eating at a friend's house.

The respondents kept this food diary for two weeks (March 26 – April 9) so that they had plenty of time to experience all the five days desired for this thesis. We took advantage of the time period and used the fact that the second week of this period was Easter, which meant that many people invite friends and family over for dinner and hence could experience day four and five, which might otherwise not occur in a person's everyday life every two weeks. The food diaries were distributed through email and continuous contact was kept with the respondents to ensure that there were no misunderstandings during the time of the diary writing. During these days the respondents took photos and answered some question about food, cooking and their lives, for example: a food product that you cannot live without, a product that you are embarrassed of having, something that has negative impact on your cooking, the main feelings and activities of the day. See appendix 1 for the entire food diary and all its questions (in Swedish).

2.4.3 Designing and conducting the interviews

After receiving the food diaries and reading them, we conducted in depth interviews with all the participants. The food diaries were used as a base during the interviews. Two of the respondents did not hand in the food diary on time, and due to time constraints we had to do the interviews before we got the food diary. We do not see this to have affected the research negatively, because we had a very comprehensive interview with these respondents. Since these respondents had started to fill in every day of the food diary, but did not feel quite finished with it to send to us, we could still ask about the different days during the interview.

We meet five of the participants in person and held one interview by telephone. According to McCracken (1988: 9) the in depth interview "gives us the opportunity to step into the mind of another person, to see and experience the world as they do themselves". With this in mind, our aim was to get a deeper understanding of the participants' relationship with food and their food interest and rural lifestyle. Furthermore McCracken (1988: 11) argues that an in depth interview is an effective method to gain qualitative data in a short time frame, which suits the aim of this thesis and its limited resources.

We chose to conduct one interview by telephone because we were not able to travel to the participant's home town. Bryman and Bell (2011: 206-207) state that telephone interviews is a fast and cheap way to conduct interviews, if the respondents are scattered across a large distance, as is the case in this thesis. Furthermore, it can decrease eventual bias effects due to the fact that the respondent cannot see the person conducting the interview and be affected by his/her presence. However, telephone interviews have several disadvantages that need to be taken into consideration. Bryman and Bell (2011:207-209) means that the telephone interview cannot be as long as face to face interviews and should be no longer than 20-25 minutes. In addition, the interviewer cannot see the participant's reactions and hence any form of body language is excluded from the analysis during the interview. Lastly, visual aid is not possible to use over the telephone, making the types of questions limited or at least difficult to express. (Bryman & Bell 2011: 207-209) These are all aspects that we have considered when conducting the interview. That interview was therefore only held for 20 minutes, in contrast to the face to face interviews, that was at least 45 minutes, up to about two hours. As the respondent had sent us the diary in advance, we were able to use and talk about the food diary. The respondent also had access to that material at home and was able to look at the things we talked about and asked questions of. However, we did notice a disadvantage with the lack of body expression and the more relaxed and informal feeling that a personal interview brings. We experienced the telephone interview as more rigid and a bit stressed which led to less small talk and elaborate answers, as in the face to face interviews. However, because we were aware that this might be the case in advance, we choose to conduct the interview by telephone last so that we would have gained some practice from the previous personal interviews, and were able to get as much from the telephone interview as possible, regardless of the shorter time frame.

According to McCracken (1988: 29) there are four steps when conducting personal in depth interviews. The first step is the review of analytic categories and centres around an analysis of literature about the subject at hand. He argues that the interviewer has to be knowledgeable about the subject to be able to observe any aspect of the respondents' answers that might be out of the ordinary and provide new insights. Furthermore, it also helps the interviewer to prepare questions for the interview (McCracken, 1988: 29-31). We chose to prepare us for the interviews by learning more about what defines a foodie, rural lifestyle and also studied the respondents' food diaries. In addition we studied the book "The long interview" written by Grant McCracken to conduct the interviews with as high quality as possible. We prepared some questions in advance and conducted a semi-structured interview and hence only used a few open questions and some guiding points. Bryman and Bell (2011: 467) explains that when the researcher conducts semi-structured interviews the researcher states open questions within specific

topics in advance but also asks questions based on the respondents answers and do not have a specific order in which to ask the questions. These questions are hence more like a guide and often referred to as an interview guide. Our interview guide is placed in Appendix 2 (in Swedish). We chose a semi-structured interview to be able to keep the interview natural and free from judgments and also to be able to let the respondents explain the world in her own words and hence get a clearer understanding of her interpretation of the interest in food, which is the aim for this thesis.

The second step is a review of cultural categories and the aim is for the researcher to use his/her own experience to separate the occasional and cultural from the personal. This step also helps with the construction of the questions, categorization and provide a critical eye to the analysis of the answers (McCracken, 1988: 32-33).

The third step is a discovery of cultural categories and is concerned with the structure of the interview. Firstly, the researcher should start by asking demographical questions, such as where the respondent lives and what he/she works with. Secondly, during the questions the respondent should be able to talk as freely as possible which means that open questions are the most suitable to use. Lastly the selection of the respondents has to be carefully considered. McCracken (1988: 34-36) argues that the respondents should be as few as possible and strangers to the researcher, but also to other respondents. Furthermore they should not be experts within the field of study and the researcher has to be able to distance him/herself from the group to not risking biasing the results with previous gained perceptions.

We followed these advices closely by using open questions and participants who only had a strong interest in food, and were not professionals within the food business. However, as previously mentioned we did include two participants that one of us already was familiar with, therefore we placed extra thought in not treating them differently or letting any previous knowledge about these people affect our interpretation of their answers.

The fourth and last step is the discovery of analytic categories and includes the transcription of the recorded interviews to written text. The aim is to realize and define categories, relationships and assumptions that the researcher is able to sort out from the information provided by the respondents in the interviews. The analysis process first focuses on a narrow perspective and later gets more and more general (McCracken 1988: 41-44). This step has also been closely followed where we transcribed all the interviews, analysed every interview separately, and then compare them with each other to be able to see patterns. We also compared them with the diaries and lastly with the theory gathered for this thesis.

2.4.4 Empirical reliability and validity

According to Bryman and Bell (2011: 395) reliability focus on whether or not the study, here the food diaries and the in depth interviews, can be replicated or not. We argue that it would be possible to conduct similar studies in the future because it would be possible to find respondents similar to the ones used in this thesis. If the respondents are willing to participate by keeping a food diary and participating in an in depth interview, this study could be carried out several times in the future.

In regards to validity the focus is on whether or not the outcome can be generalized and applied across different social settings (Bryman & Bell 2011: 395). We argue that the sample of our research is too small to be generalized to a general population or applied to any other social settings. However, it would be interesting to look at this in a wider perspective and with several respondents to gain higher validity. Nevertheless, this is a subject for further research.

To strengthen the truthfulness in our respondents' answers and to raise the validity of our research, we conducted challenging and deep research in specific topics (Esterby-Smith et al. 2008: 145). Part of this was made by using the food diaries and another by asking specific questions during the interview to see if they corresponded with each other. To acquire skilfulness in our research and to get information from respondents, we were well prepared for the interviews and made all of them in company of each other (Bryman & Bell 2011: 395). By conducting in depth interviews we got great insight in our respondents' world (McCracken 1988: 9).

2.5 Collection of secondary sources

Since this thesis has an inductive approach the main focus is on the primary sources described in the previous section. This section will describe the secondary sources which were gathered and studied to be able to understand the foodie culture and also analyse our empirical findings.

Summon, a service that search through all Lund University's libraries resources, was used to find articles and books relevant to this study to provide us with information about the topic at hand. Key search words included: food, foodie, food culture, rural, ruralisation et cetera.

In addition the Internet was used to be able to find more resources. Google.se was used as the main search engine and the key words used for searching in Summon were applied here as well.

2.5.1 Theoretical limitations

According to Bryman and Bell (2011: 320-322) there are four limitations to secondary data that needs to be taken into consideration. Firstly, the researcher has to get acquainted with the material to be able to understand how it has been conducted and the process behind it. Secondly, the researcher needs to observe in what perspective the data has been collected and also presented to be able to understand if the data is from, for example, an organizational perspective or an individual perspective. Thirdly, the researcher needs to be observant of the quality of the data so that it would not affect the quality of the current research. The researcher also has to take into consideration whether or not all the variables that are aimed for in the current research are represented in the data or if only some aspects can be used.

For this thesis we have taken into great consideration only the use of reliable sources to be able to keep a high standard of trustworthiness. Although the limited places in which we searched for our sources can affect the validity. However, Summon holds 108 million objects (www.lub.lu.se) and complemented with the search on Google.se we find that we have used the best method for finding sources available for this thesis.

3 THEORY

To investigate how female foodies practice their food interest on the countryside, we require an understanding of theories within food culture, consumer culture and geographical theory. This chapter will examine previous knowledge in these areas and create a foundation for our understanding of the subject and analyze of our empirical findings.

This thesis takes on a Consumer Culture Theory (CCT) approach. CCT focuses on the consumers' perspective and different aspects that influence consumers' identity, especially cultural meanings, sociohistorical influences and different social dynamics. A fundamental idea within CCT is that a consumer has multiple identities, which together construct the consumer's life where consumption plays an important role in the identity process (Arnould & Thompson 2005: 875).

Arnould and Thompson (2005: 871) discuss four research programs within CCT. The first is consumer identity projects which is concerned with the consumers identity seeking and creation. The second is marketplace cultures which see the consumer as culture constructors. The third is the sociohistoric patterning of consumption and is concerned with demographical aspects of the individual consumer, such as gender, ethnicity, age and class, and its influence on consumption. Lastly the fourth aspect is mass-mediated marketplace ideologies and consumers' interpretive strategies, which focus on the society's influence upon consumers' values, attitudes and behavior (Arnould & Thompson 2005: 871-875). We believe that all of these aspects are relevant to this thesis, which is why our choice of CCT as our theory approach feels relevant and reasonable. We will further explain our choice of CCT below.

The first program feels relevant because foodies constantly creates and recreates their identities through their cooking and interest in food. The second program builds upon the first one, when these foodies together creates a movement and pushes questions that they feel is important (such as healthy food, locally produced food, organic et cetera) out to the society and with that creates culture. The third program is relevant because we in this thesis has chosen to only look at a narrow selection of respondents (females, age 28-58, who live in rural areas) and lastly the fourth program feels relevant because we believe that the environmental focus society has promoted, and also all the food programs on TV has influenced more and more people to wanting to engage more in food, and some even become foodies.

3.1 Food history

To be able to understand foodies we need to understand the present food culture, but also the underlying historic that has led to this culture. This section will therefore discuss different aspects of food consumption and its development to the present foodscape and consumption pattern.

Since the nineteenth century, as Corrigan (2010: 115) argues, there have been two distinct patterns in food history. Firstly, food, particularly meat, has been served less and less in its original form, displaying a piece that could be from any animal, or even any part of an animal. Secondly, food has been divided into categories, where some food is considered as formal/informal, high class/ low class, special/ordinary et cetera. Moreover, when food started to come in more regular and stable flows, due to better distribution, transportation and knowledge, the aim for quantity was neglected in favor of quality. This led to a division in class where the upper class saw an opportunity to separate themselves from the lower class and knowledge about food became a sign of high social status. With this development grew a desire to try new things and some people drew away from the mechanical solidarity, where everyone consumed the same food products, and aimed for a more organic solidarity, where individuality and personalization were in focus (Corrigan 2010: 119-120).

With the new knowledge about food, several food avoidances started to develop. Corrigan (2010: 121) states Manells' four main reasons for food avoidance: "the trained incapacity to enjoy food, fear of the after-effects of eating certain foods, fear of social derogation and moral reasons of revulsion". The first is concerned with what we are brought up to like and not like, for example, children's food, which is learnt that it is not supposed to be fine and advanced enough for adults. The second is concerned with the effects of certain food intake, such as bad breath after eating garlic. The third reason is concerned with the social derogation that might occur if one eats or serves food that is seen as low class, or not proper for the specific occasion, age or gender. The fourth, and last, reason focuses on moral issues and is concerned with the fact that all food is not valued in the same way. Some meat for example is not acceptable to eat because we attach deep emotions to the animal, such as cats and dogs, which are often held as pets and given names and a place in the family. Other examples are monkeys, which some people are not comfortable eating because they are seen as closely related to the human species, also carnivores are not appreciated because of their own food intake which is uncomfortable to many people. All of these food avoidances are constructed and developed by culture and are therefore different in different groups of people, countries and parts of the world (Corrigan 2010: 121-126).

The kitchen also has an important impact on how people view and consume food. Before the 20th century, the kitchen was seen as a working place and was hidden together with potential staff that worked there and the place for socializing and entertaining was the drawing room. However, during the 20th century this shifted, and focus was upon health and physical welfare and the kitchen turned in to a place of greater meaning (Corrigan 2010: 99). In the kitchen, the consumer could show how efficient and skilled she (it was often the woman in the house that did the cooking) was at cooking and be appreciated and something to be proud off, this gained women some status for a task that before was seen only as a mandatory chore. The kitchen also acquired a more central location in the home and become a place for entertainment and was more and more integrated with other rooms in the house to create a space where people can gather and socialize (Corrigan 2010: 109-110). Today food works as a social connector that brings people together and provides a mutual interest and/or activity (Brownlie, Hewer & Horne 2005: 20). Hence, a dinner can be seen not only as a way to consume food but also as a means of constructing a family, a home and a gathering point for friends (Bugge & Almas 2006: 204).

The interest in food and cooking are growing, the Swedish newspaper Svenska dagbladet states that in Sweden, during 2011, 19 different food programs was aired on TV during an average week, which is over 46 hours of food and cooking. Moreover, 1 million viewers watched "Sveriges mästarkock" (Masterchef, Sweden) and the program "Halv åtta hos mig" (Half past seven at my place) gained a new record with 1 080 000 viewers during one episode, on a Monday in 2011. The day with most cooking programs are Wednesday and an average of 6,5 hours of food programs can be watched everyday on Swedish television. This is an interesting amount due to the fact that an average person in Sweden spends approximately 50 minutes of cooking themselves. According to Eurostat, this time is proportionate to the average time spent on cooking in Europe, which for women is 57 minutes and for men 39 minutes (www.eurostat.eu). This indicates that consumers are more and more interested in food today and hence also more engaged in food related topics such as health and nutrition. However, it is not enough with only watching people cook on TV, there are too many programs related to food and if one seeks inspiration there are recipes almost everywhere just waiting to be tried. More programs have therefore aimed for a higher cause, such as Jamie Oliver's tour around England's school where he tries to get the schools to serve healthier food. This strengthens the deeper connection that people associate with food. Food is not only something that tastes good if cooked right; it is also a source of nutrition, health and life itself. In the Swedish newspaper Svenska Dagbladet (www.svd.se) the famous chef Lisa Förare Winblad argues that:

“I wish for less entertainment and more education. I think that the TV-producers are underestimating the audience thirst for knowledge”

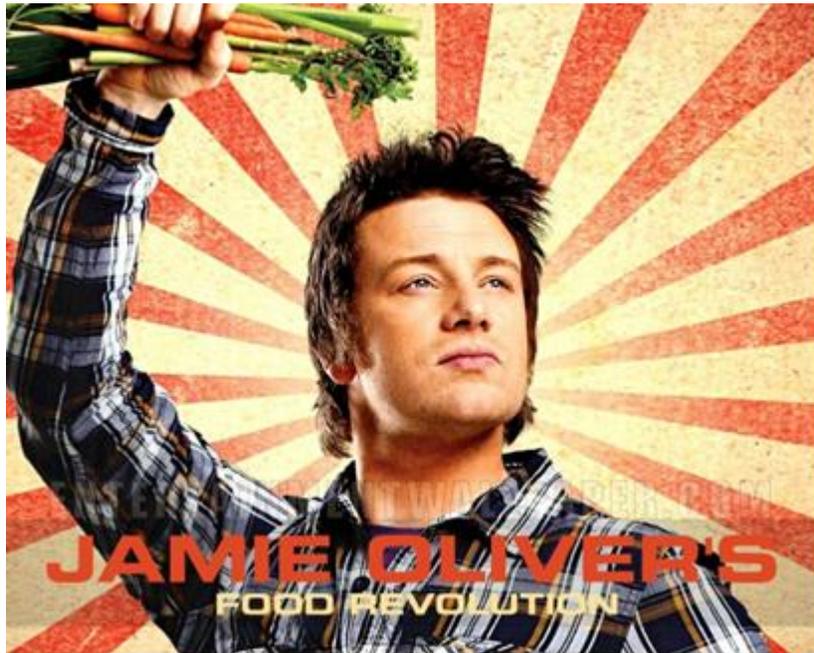


Image 1 - Jamie Oliver's food revolution in English schools

3.2 Food individualism and foodie creation

A person's individual taste has a huge impact on the food that individual chooses to consume. Bourdieu argues that these preferences are tied to a person's habitus, which is that person's combination of cultural, economic and social capital, that directs the person's thoughts, feelings and actions (Ekström 2011: 327). Connected to the habitus, Belasco (2008: 8) specifies that there are three competing factors in the choice of food: identity, convenience and responsibility. The consumer mostly makes its decision in a negotiation between identity and convenience, with small considerations of responsibility.

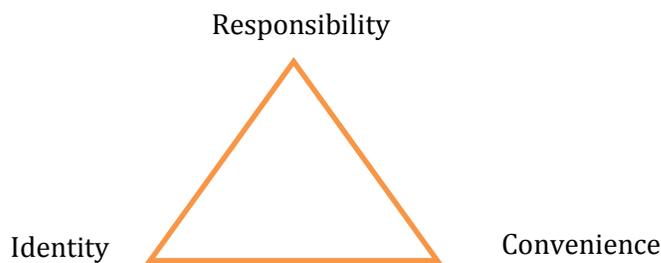


Figure 1- Food: The key concepts (Belasco 2008: 7)

Identity is based on an individual's preferences, creativity and a notion of whom, but also where the person is in terms of life cycle. Aspects that affect identity can therefore be taste, family, ethnicity and also positive and negative memories. Culture also affects identity by establishing preferences and common values in the society. Further, culture affects identity by promoting certain products and activities as manly and feminine. These values are hard to change because they are so deeply rooted within the person's sense of who he or she is (Belasco 2008: 8). Secondly, Belasco (2008: 9) states that "convenience encompasses variables such as price, availability, and ease of preparation which are all related to the requirements of energy, time, labor and skill." In addition, the degree of convenience varies across the nation and some cities have access to all food products imaginable, whereas others supply range are restricted due to the environment, economical aspects or the social structure itself (Belasco 2008: 8). The last factor is responsibility, both long term and short term. It centers around the individuals knowledge of his/her impact on the environment, animals and also other humans when, for example, buying a certain product or supporting a specific brand. As mentioned earlier, it is not the strongest factor in the choice of food products, but Belasco (2008: 9) argues that maybe it should be and people should pay more attention to the consequences of their actions.

Moreover, Belasco (2008: 6) argues that knowledge and awareness about the origin of food is an important step towards taking responsibility. Different groups have different opinions on where the food should come from and what is considered as good and bad food products (Belasco 2008: 16). However, Howard (2005: 3) argues that consumers think it is important to know where the food they eat originates from and the most important aspect is that the animals have been treated in a humane way and the second most important aspect was the issues of locally produced food.

People who have an interest in food, and see it as their hobby, are knowledgeable about the products they buy and choose to consume. These people spend a lot of resources into their food hobby and are called foodies. There are different definitions of a foodie but we choose to use Cairns et al's definition (2010: 593):

"We characterize foodies as people with a long-standing passion for eating and learning about food but who are not food professionals"

Foodies find that food gives them pleasure in their life and that it is not only a means to an end; it's a source of joy (Cairns 2010: 598). Moreover, foodies use their knowledge about food and their constant desire to learn more as a way of constructing and maintaining cultural capital and distinguish themselves

from other food consumers, hence to create and build their own identity (Cairns 2010: 606).

Furthermore, a foodie's memories involving food are often located early in the person's childhood but they still act as an important source in the identification process (Cairns 2010: 602). The memories about cooking in the family often revolves around the mother and their care taking, whereas memories of cooking men, is less emphasized and in those cases often around the fact that the men were, or are, food professionals (Cairns 2010: 601).



Image 2 - Memories about cooking often refers to the mother in the family

There is a lot of standardization and homogeneity on the food market today and although humans are omnivores, more and more people are customizing their food to suit their needs and desires (Belasco 2008: 34). Discourse is a constantly articulated and reshaped system of knowledge which can be shaped through institutional structures such as mass media, markets or other knowledge producers. The foodie discourse is something that is often formed and structured in institutions and by actors in gourmet foodscape; for example chefs and TV programs about food, but is expressed in the daily life (Cairns et. al. 2010: 597). Cairns (2010: 595) argues that a foodie often has certain privileges due to the fact that it is a hobby that requires both certain cultural and economic capital: cultural capital because of the interest and knowledge that is needed to become a skilled cook and foodie; and economical capital because cooking is an expensive hobby and something that not everyone can spend enough money on to gain the skill and knowledge required to become a foodie. A consumer cannot always buy whatever he or she

desires, but are restricted to a budget. Moreover, when the consumer gains access to higher disposable income he or she will consume more. However, to be able to raise income one has to work more and hence it creates a trade-off between leisure and consumption. (Ekström 2011: 117-124) According to Statistics Sweden, the amount of money spent on food in Swedish households have increased with 10% from the period 2005-2007 to the newest measured period 2007-2009, making the average amount of money spent on food per year, per household, 33 220 SEK. Of the four largest resources that households spend money on (living, leisure and culture, transportation and food) food was the category that increased the most, also indicating that peoples interest for food are increasing and that they are paying more attention to food and making it a more of a priority (www.scb.se).

3.3 Gender aspects of food consumption and practice

Knowledge about, and skill with, food have often gain men status, but women tend to have more difficulty attracting the same status, even though they are as knowledgeable and skillful as the men. The empirical study conducted for this thesis focuses on females and a gender perspective is therefore interesting and relevant to investigate. This section will therefore contain theory about gender aspects to food and cooking.

Belasco (2008: 3) states that women are the dominating food producers in the world. However, they are often connected to negative aspects of food, such as the history of enslaving women by the stove or todays dieting and eating disorders. The history of connecting women as the main food provider in the family effects the connection women has with food today. For example, it is common that women create their food identities through the desire to cook for others, whereas men, in contrast, see food as a hobby or pursuit it as an estimable occupation (Cairns 2010: 593). Further, women also take an active role in providing healthy food for their families and expresses concern about the entire family's health when discussing food, whereas men discussed the topic of food more in terms of leisure and hobby than an obligation (Cairns 2010: 603-604). Hollows (2003a: 232) also recognizes cooking as a way for women to construct their personality because domesticity often is seen as feminine, which is another reason why men separate themselves from domestic duties, because they don't want to be perceived as feminine. Moreover, feeding time does not only provide food and nutrition it also provides love and care for the family by creating quality time, and hence women are often given the role as care taker and provider of warmth feelings and love (Hollows 2003a: 239). All of the above implies that women cook because they have to, because they are supposed to provide health and love for their family and because it is expected from a woman, and not for the soul purpose of enjoying cooking and taking an interest in food. Today

the home is no longer seen as a the place where women work, but when women conduct chores that before was seen as “woman’s work”, it can contradicts and undermine the modern feminine view of the women as strong and independent individual and hence cooking does not provide women with high status because it has been seen as a “woman’s duty” for so long. However, for men, who cook for fun and leisure, cooking is a choice and if executed skillfully, provides high status (Hollows 2003a: 240). Some chefs are doing their best to change this view, and as Burnside (2000) states: “Nigella Lawson earns a living out of making domestic duties for women seem natural and important”. Hollows (2003b: 179) agrees that the chef Nigella Lawson contributes to a new way of looking at women’s relationship to food, which is not only to please others and provide a healthy foundation for their families, but rather for the simple pleasure of cooking and eating, hence it is more centered around the women’s choice rather than a domestic duty.



Image 3 - Nigella Lawson "The Domestic Goddess"

Perceptions about food are not only connected to gender but also to class, which Cairns (2010: 596) states is something that is constantly under construction. The development of class, when it comes to food, is not only tied to the particular individual and its immediate social surrounding, it is also shaped by media, markets and other external influences (Cairns 2010: 597). The media, for example, has further distance women from food practices and pleasure by idealizing a slim body and connecting femininity to dieting, whereas men are often connected to meat and gourmet food (Cairns 2010: 593). This contributes to the negative focus that surrounds women and food, and undermines a woman’s acceptance to practice and enjoy food. Further it prevents women from gaining the same high status and class as men when it comes to food.

Aarseth and Olsen (2007: 277) argue that a new pattern in food consumption is emerging where the preparation of food and dinner times in a family is growing into a project that often the whole family is participating in. The authors conducted a study with Danish and Norwegian dual-career couples who has children and identified three main patterns: the first is centered around the woman who has the main responsibility of the family's wellbeing, the second focuses on the man's interest in practicing cooking or a practical division of food preparation in the home, and finally the third centers around cooking as something the family does together and socialize through.

In the first pattern, both the man and the woman helps with the food preparation and cooking. However, it is pointed out that the women is in charge and has the main responsibility. The woman also feels responsible for the health and nutrition aspect of food and develops a bad conscience if she does not participate in the cooking (Aarseth & Olsen 2007: 280). In the second pattern the man participates in the cooking more to be able to connect with his kids, a connection that develops naturally between the mother and the children, but that the father has to build up himself. In addition the man can also participate in cooking because he finds it interesting and fun, a hobby that he enjoys. The man has an opportunity to construct his own relationship to food, for example as in the form of a loving father, or as a passionate experimental cook. Whereas the woman is automatically connected to the health and wellbeing focus that women today are connected to (Aarseth & Olsen 2007: 281-283). In the third and final pattern, the gender roles are very vague and cooking is a family activity, a project that both the man and the women participate in due to the mutual interest of food. The couple often cooks together with their children and have friends over for dinner, it is a place to socialize. An important aspect of the cooking is the meal itself, it brings the whole family together and everyone sits and talks about their day and socializes (Aarseth & Olsen 2007: 280).

If the above patterns are typical for Nordic countries the study does not reveal. However, Aarseth and Olsen argue that the Nordic countries have a high equal division between women and men in terms of domestic work but also in terms of labor. A key to this can be that women in these countries have high incomes, both men and women take long parental leave and also that the time spent on domestic work has even out between men and women in these countries, making the Nordic countries more equal in terms of gender than the other European countries (Aarseth & Olsen 2007: 283-284).

3.4 Urban and rural development in Sweden

Due to the fact that this thesis aims at investigating a rural aspect of food consumption and practice we need to understand the difference between urban and rural living. This section will therefore provide theoretical knowledge about rural life, focusing on Sweden because of the empirical material that has been gathered in Sweden.

There are 27 members in the European Union (EU) and in 2011, according to Eurostats analysis, 41% of the inhabitants lived in urban areas, 35% in intermediate regions and 23% in rural areas. Sweden had the highest population growth in urban areas with 17,3 per 1000 inhabitants, which is three times the EU average. The intermediate regions grew with 7,1‰ and the rural regions with 1,2‰. Sweden was also the country which held most of its population in intermediate regions, 56%. Interestingly, the urban areas and the rural areas in Sweden both hold the same percentage of the population, 22% (Allen & Corselli-Nordblad 2011).

Boström (2012) argues that the urbanization in Sweden doesn't have to mean that the rural or intermediate regions are losing inhabitants, because one third of the growth in larger cities comes from immigrants who choose to establish themselves in urban areas. However, Magnusson (2012) states that according to Statistics Sweden, the number of inhabitants decreased in 139 Swedish counties, most of them small towns or villages located in the countryside. On the other hand, there are statistics that claim that more inhabitants in Stockholm, Malmö and Gothenburg choose to move from the city to smaller towns within the same county, than from smaller towns to the city center. However, this is overshadowed by the dominating trend of moving from other small counties to the larger cities. (Magnusson 2012) Nevertheless, we still find it interesting to look at the ruralization and one reason for that is because we believe that media tries to provide an idyllic picture of the countryside by, for example, showing TV programs like "Bonde söker fru" (Farmer looking for wife). Another reason is the previously discussed lack of research about rural foodie lifestyle.

In Sweden, the growing interest in the countryside is also noticeable in the media with many magazines and TV shows featuring the calm and healthy lifestyle offered by the countryside. TV-programs such as "Bonde söker fru" (Farmer looking for wife) are on its sixth season and there are many more programs featuring the calm life on the countryside (www.tv4.se), indicating a curiosity and desire to live in a more relaxed and rural place.

When it comes to rural food culture, McEntee (2010: 786) talks about two different concepts: contemporary local and traditional local. The contemporary local is concerned with the ideology aspect of the rural life, and wants to for example, support farmers and preserve the rural charm. Whereas the traditional local is mostly focused with the offer of fresh and affordable food products (McEntee 2010: 790). See Figure 2 for a table borrowed from McEntee's (2010: 790) article: Contemporary and traditional localism: a conceptualization of rural local food.

Table 1. Intent and manifestations of contemporary and traditional localisms.

	Contemporary local	Traditional local
Intent Why?	Food procurement activity informed by explicit desire to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be environmentally sustainable • support local economy • obtain healthier/fresher products • support farmers • maintain rural character 	Food procurement activity informed by desire to obtain affordable and easily accessible food
Probable manifestation How?	Farmers market, community supported agriculture, cooperatives, natural food stores	Garden/property, surrounding land/water, reciprocal exchanges (Morton <i>et al.</i> 2008) with friends, relatives, neighbours

Figure 2 - Contemporary local and Traditional local food culture

As we can see in the figure above, the contemporary localism is concerned with environmental and/or community-based issues, and the price is not as much in focus as quality and health. The traditional localism, on the other hand, is more focused on price, access and tradition. For example if the local food was perceived as too expensive at the given point of purchase, the person would rather buy from larger stores even though the local food was seen as healthier. There are of course some mixes of these cultures, the division is not black and white, but these two are the far ends of the scale. Moreover, there is a pattern that suggests that the traditional localism is applied more by low-income individuals, whereas the contemporary localism is applied more by middle-to-upper income individuals (McEntee 2010: 794-797).

McEntee (2010: 791) states that rural areas obtain more obstacles than urban areas when it comes to access and delivery of food products, for example the transportation costs are high and due to the small number of residents a vast variety of food selections is often not profitable leaving the local food stores with a small selection of standardized, unattractive, food supply.

Broadbridge et.al (2002: 395-396) argues that local stores do not have the same resources as those in urban cities, and might therefore have to rely on basic products in a narrow range. Moreover, due to the limited resources many stores have a hard time keeping up with food trends and meeting the customers' ever changing desires and demands. Many customers therefore choose to drive to a larger city where the variety is larger and the price often cheaper. However, many people do not have that opportunity, some are for example too old to drive and others cannot afford longer trips (Broadbridge et.al 2002: 403). In addition, many local stores are more than just food shops; they also provide other services such as mail, bank and pharmacy. In addition, the store becomes a mutual gathering point for people in the area, a place to socialize and share news. It is important that the customers choose to purchase their food from the local store, otherwise it will not be profitable and have to shut down, which is common today. Therefore people have to be active to preserve their local shop and also have more of a dialogue with the owner, so that they can improve their supply and attract more customers. (www.ica-handlarna.se)

In Sweden the wholesale sector is dominated by ICA, COOP and Axfood, together they possess over 90% of the market. Many large supermarkets are being established in suburban areas, these are threatening the stores in the city because they can often provide cheaper prices, but also the local stores by being located relatively close to rural areas. Marjut Svensson (email 2012) at ICA states that about 20 ICA stores close down every year in Sweden. However, only five of them are located on the countryside. In addition, the close rate has decreased significantly since before 2005 when 100-125 stores shut down every year. This shows that even if many food stores close down, the majority of them are not located on the countryside, which indicates that the people on the countryside, to some extent, support their local food shop.

4 ANALYSIS

We will in this chapter analyze the empirical material we have collected with the gained theoretical knowledge outlined in the previous section. This chapter hence aims at investigating how women with an interest in food practice their hobby while living in rural areas.

4.1 Foodie practices and family food engagement

This section will present the six women participating in this thesis. A description of how their interest for food started, food role models and how they view their food hobby is presented. Moreover, a description of their families and their engagement in food and cooking is also outlined.

Laura

Laura's interest for food started when she was a little girl and food has always been important for her. Very early she started to write menu's and composed dinners for her family. As she explains it herself:

"The interest for food is something that has been within me from the very beginning. I am food!"

When we ask Laura who her food role model is, she answers:

"My mum of course! She did not really accept the trend with fast food and that 'independent women are not supposed to cook' trend during that time period. She was a housewife and that is where I get my inspiration. I develop from that and now I cook a lot more gourmet food than my mother."

Laura tells us that she is very creative and tries things that no one else does, and that the passion comes from inside her. She reads a lot of cook books to get inspiration, but she never follows recipes strictly except when she makes deserts or bake. She says that, in recent years, when she has got more engaged in food, there is one person that she really adore, and that is Karin Fransson, who is a chef at Borgholm on Öland. Laura likes her because she stands by her food, which has a different touch, and she produces a lot of vegetables herself, just like Laura does.

Laura is 46 years old and lives by the water one hour outside of Stockholm together with her husband and their two children, a 7 year old daughter and a son that is 4 years. Their kids are not interested in cooking, but Laura tells us that her husband is very excited when it comes to food, not always the cooking itself, but at least the eating. However, he is Finish and grew up in a labour family, where they did not taste different flavours very often, because Finish food is very plain. According to Laura, she has

taught him to experience new flavours and there are a lot of things he appreciates now, that he did not like before. Laura also lets us know that her husband is better to prepare meat than she is. She claims that this is because she was a vegetarian during a long period and hence not has as much experience preparing meat as he.

Laura tells us that she wants her children to taste everything and states that fine food is not only for adults. Laura says that she and her family like to eat at fine, expensive restaurants. However she explains that it varies a lot because she works as a consult and some months when she know that she will not get paid as much, they do not go out and eat at all because they need to save money. Laura tells us that ever since their kids were born they have been on a lot of luxury restaurants even with them. The children has for example been on Michelin guide restaurants and eaten pea purée from a silver bowl, just so that they also can have that experience. Laura thinks that even kids should have access to fine food culture. Good food must not always be expensive, but for her it is the quality that is important.

“My husband thinks it is a discomforting when our kids disturb, but I think that if you pay thousands of Swedish crowns then they should bear to take care of my children as well! I mean they should serve them mashed potatoes if that is what they want.”

Molly

Molly's food interest has been with her since she was a little girl. She explains that her mother is really good at cooking, and also her food role model. When she was a kid, Molly was very picky when it came to food, but when she started to help her mother in the kitchen she got used to different products that she had not tried before.

“When I started to use the products myself I discovered that they were not as scary as I first thought and dared to try new things”

Molly is 36 years old and lives on the countryside in the county of Västergötland together with her husband and their children. Due to previous relationships they are five people in the household on one week, and on the other they are two. They have three children, a girl aged 13 years, and two boys aged 13 and 9 years. Molly's family members also have an interest for food and they often cook together.

Hannah

Hannah says that she have always liked food, she has always been hungry and involved in what food should be served in the family. According to Hannah, she was quite bad at cooking before she started

junior high school. At that time she started a summer course called “The Food Studio” where she claims that she was the worst person at cooking in the entire class.

“When it was time for cook test I always had to share kitchen with another boy that also had difficulties with cooking so that none of the others in our class would have to be with us during the test because we were so bad at cooking”

However, after the course, her interest for cooking began to grow and she started to cook more at home. She began to experiment and subsequently became better. Hannah explains that her father was really good at cooking and that inspired her a lot. He worked on the sea and hence was not at home that much. However, when he returned he was at home full time and cooked a lot.

“He did serious dishes like beefs and other good things. When I got home from school I sat in the kitchen and watched him cooking and it was a great source of inspiration!”

When her father went back to his work on the sea, Hannah’s grandmother took care of her quite a lot, as her mother worked. According to Hannah, her grandmother was good at cooking as well, and today Hannah tries to replicate and preserve her grandmother’s recipes by cook them herself. Another person that inspires Hannah is the TV-chef Jamie Oliver. Hannah means that he is passionate about what he does and he engages a lot in youths, for them to eat better and to introduce better food in the schools.

“Then there are a lot of other chefs on TV that are standing and smiling behind their little bowls and who feels a little more false. I wonder if they are like that in real life as well. But I can tell that Jamie Oliver is really passionate about what he does.”

Today Hannah is 30 years old and lives on Öland together with her husband. Hannah’s husband share her great interest for food and cooking which Hannah think is fun, and they like to go to local farmers and buy local cultivated food and cook a nice dinner together at home. They enjoy having friends and family over for dinner in their garden, and when they eat meat, and especially if they have barbeques, it is almost always her husband that cooks the meat.

“...guys likes to cook meat and make barbeques, I do not know if it is something genetic, that they want to hunt for food or something like that...”

Christina

Christina remembers that her interest for food started with her mother and her grandmother because they both cooked a lot. Christina was always there to help them, especially when they baked. When

Christina's little brother was born, Christina was at home a lot with her mother and little brother and every time their mother asked her what she wanted to do, the answer was the same: *Bake!* Christina also had a playhouse as a little girl, where she did a lot of cooking:

"... not for real, but I took what I had. I remember once when we were shopping and I drove one of those small shopping trolleys for kids, and then I got to choose whatever I wanted! I chose radishes, flour and so on and then I had that in my little playhouse and cooked with it"

During that time, Christina and her family lived on the countryside with fields around their house where it grew peas and different seeds. Christina also had currant and other berries in their own garden and she remembers that she used to be in the fields and bushes picking all these tasty things and bringing them to her playhouse where she cooked with it.

Besides her mother and grandmother, Christina's greatest source of inspiration is the chef Leila Lindholm and also the TV-program "Halv åtta hos mig" (Half past seven at my place) which is a cooking program where four individuals meet for the first time and cook for each other.

Christina is 28 years old and lives on the countryside about half-an-hour outside Malmö together with her boyfriend and their eight months baby boy. She explains that it is she that cooks in their household. Her boyfriend is not really interested in food or cooking. Before they met, he lived alone, so he knows how to cook, but he is just not interested in it. If they invite friends over for dinner and Christina asks him to help her, then they cook together, but the everyday food is cooked by Christina. She also says that when he comes home from work, she wants him to socialize with their son and unburden her. Christina thinks that it is nice to do and think about something else after a day focused completely on their baby. She cooks together with their son as well sometimes; he sits in his baby chair in front of the kitchen-sink when she cooks. She points out that she cannot cook things that take too long, but meals such as spaghetti bolognese works fine if she engages him in the process.

"Sometimes I talk to him and tell him what I do if he starts to lose interest. There was one time I was supposed to scald and chop almonds and then I did a whole trailer of what to do so that he wouldn't lose interest, he did after a while anyway because it was a bit too lengthy"

Some of Christina friends are also interested in food and they often eat at each other's places, even during the weekdays, and Christina likes to invite each other over for dinner often. Christina is keen on

making the dinner time a central event in the family, even though she and her boyfriend have different eating patterns than their son, because he is still so young.

“If I and my boyfriend eat dinner later than our son, we always sit down when he eats anyway and later let him sit with us and give him some fruit or biscuits so that he can feel a part of the gathering. It’s also important for the future so that he knows that everyone sits at the table during dinner and no one runs around, but that everyone talks and associates with each other.”

Elisabeth

Elisabeth’s food interest started with an interest in baking, which is something that she hardly ever does today. Sometimes, she bakes bread, but focus is always on food nowadays. However, when she was little it was popular to invite people over for cakes and coffee and Elisabeth started to bake for her mother’s friends and got paid for her cookies. When she started junior high school her interest for food grew during the housecraft lessons. According to Elisabeth, they did not have an enthusiastic teacher, but she thought it was fun to cook, and discovered a lot of new dishes that she had not eaten before. At the same time her father, who also had not cooked much before, started to get an interest for food. Father and daughter began to experiment with food together and since then the food has become a big part of her life.

Elisabeth gets inspiration for her cooking everywhere. She says that she does not read a lot of food magazines, but on her work they do have a lot of weekly magazines and women’s magazines which contains some recipes. In addition she watches a lot of cooking and food shows on TV. She also has friends who like to experiment with food, and she likes to invite them over for dinner often and gets inspired from their cooking as well.

“I am so interested in food and because of that I see food everywhere.”

Elisabeth is 38 years old and lives outside a town on the east coast in Småland. Together with her husband and their two kids, a son aged 7 and a daughter aged 3. Her husband is not interested in cooking; however he can enjoy barbequing sometimes during the summer. Both Elisabeth and her husband exercises and do sports quite a lot and that is one reason why they think a lot about food. However the most important reason for them to eat healthy food is so that their kids get all the nutrition and vitamins they need.

“Before our kids were born we could eat everywhere and in general at any time, but now we want our kids to eat real food and good food. Our view on food has changed. I am more conscious about food and nutrition today than I was 10 years ago.”

Elisabeth tells us that their son often wants to know what is healthy to eat and what can be dangerous. He does not really like to cook, his interest lies in baking. Their daughter, on the other hand, wants to be part of cooking every day.

“She likes to chop and stir. She is in that age when you want to help with everything, it does not matter what you do.”

Elisabeth says that both their kids are very happy with food and that they might not eat much, but they do eat everything. Elisabeth tells us that her kids always are in the kitchen while she is cooking. Although they are not always actively involved in the cooking, they often sit on the kitchen bench to watch what happens. According to Elisabeth, she can see the difference when the kids have been helping her with the food.

“It is so much more interesting for the kids to eat the food when they have been part of cooking, and it is much harder for them to refuse or dislike it as well.”

Angelica

Angelica grew up on the countryside and her interest for food started when she was young. Ever since she was little the food has always been in focus. Her grandmother was very interested in food and did always cook a lot, which started Angelica’s curiosity and interest for food. Today she has a husband who also has a huge interest for cooking and they live together on a farm where her husband works with chicken farming. Because he is involved within the food business in his job, he attends many conferences and courses about food.

“...he has got a great interested for food and that inspires me a lot.”

Angelica further explains that when it comes to desserts and cookies it is Leila Lindholm that inspires the most, and her recipes and cakes always tastes delicious, according to Angelica. Tina Nordström is another inspirational chef. Angelica thinks that she cooks very good food and she has a lot of books and recipes from her. In addition Angelica also cooks a lot of Leif Mannerströms recipes. She says that Leif Mannerström thinks it is so important with the right spices, and according to Angelica it makes a huge difference depending on what spices one use.

“One time, me and my husband tried two different recipes of carrot soup, one was from Leif Mannerström, and one we found on the Internet, and even if it was just carrot soup and carrot soup, it was a huge difference!”

When they invite people over for dinner they follow recipes carefully, but they do not use recipes for the everyday cooking, they just cook what they have in their minds, and what they think will taste good together:

“Maybe something we have seen from a recipe and then we have that in our minds and try to make it as we remembered it. We experiment a little with the food we have at home.”

Angelica is 56 years old and lives together with her husband and two of their four kids, aged 21 and 18, half-an-hour outside of Malmö. Angelica lets us know that she and her husband cook a lot together and during the weekends they like to cook something special together. However, her husband cooks most of the everyday food and she often comes home to a ready set table, where the entire family gathers for a nice meal together.

“We try to always sit down all together in the family during supper so that no one is off here or there during that time. We have been keen on that part in our family so that we at least sit down together and talk once during that day. It is sacred somehow.”

Their kids are interested in cooking as well and Angelica can see a bigger interest for food from their boys than from their daughter.

“All our boys hunt, and I do not know if that hangs together, but they are really interested in food.”

4.1.1 Analyzing foodie identification and practices

Cairns (2010: 601-602) argues that foodies often have memories from cooking early in their childhood, and also that the memories often centers on the mother in the family. This is true for many of our respondents who voice that they always have been interested in food, and many also have their mothers as food role models.

Laura’s mother liked to cook and did not see it as her motherly duty, which were the common view during that period of time in Sweden (Hollows 2003a: 240). Laura looks up to her mother for standing by her passion for food and today Laura can practice her passion for food without having to be not perceived as an independent woman, because the home is no longer seen as a place where women works, as it was during her mother’s time (Hollows 2003a: 240). Laura’s mother hence contributed to

the view of women having cooking as a leisure activity and passion, just like men, and not a womanly responsibility. Today there are many women who contribute to this view, one of them is the chef Nigella Lawson who shows that cooking can simply be a source of joy and a choice for women, and not a duty (Hollows 2003b: 179).

Some of our foodies however, gained their food interest later in life, and in those cases through cooking lessons. This can be because these respondents did not have a strong food role model in their family and hence not gained a connection to food earlier in their life. For example, Elisabeth gained her interest for food through the house craft lessons in school, and when she started to experiment with food at home her father also became interested in food. Further, Hannah's father, who worked at the sea, was not at home very much nor was he a food professional but interestingly served as a great source of inspiration for Hannah, which, according to Cairns (2010: 601), is not common for memories about men and food.

From the presentations of our respondents and their cooking behavior in their families, it is clear to us that it is mostly the woman in the family that does the cooking. This strengthens Cairns (2010: 593) statement about women being the main food provider. Moreover, many of our respondents expressed a desire to provide healthy and good food for their kids, which is also a common food aspect when it comes to women according to Cairns (2010: 603-604). Although some of our respondents' husbands enjoyed cooking as well, this was not as common.

Furthermore, many respondents cook together with the entire family. This connects well with Aarseth and Olsens (2007: 277) third pattern of food consumption, where the food preparation becomes a family project and something they do together. This is strengthened by Brownlie et al (2005: 20) who argue that food often provides a mutual activity to people who share an interest in food. Many of our respondents enjoyed having people over for dinner, which Cairns (2010: 593) argues is common for females, who preferably cook for others, rather than themselves. Moreover, some of our respondents' men liked to barbeque, which can indicate that they see cooking more as a leisure activity, which, according to Cairns (2010: 593) is common amongst men. In addition, some respondents also expressed the importance of sitting down together and socializing during meal times, which also is an important aspect of the third pattern (Aarseth & Olsen 2007: 277). They valued the time they spend together during cooking and dinner, where everyone met at least once during that day, and could talk about their day and family matters. This gathering effect was an important attribute that the meal facilitated within their families; they valued the fact that the meal brings the whole family together (Aarseth & Olsen 2007: 280). Hence,

a dinner can be seen not only as a way to consume food but also as a means of constructing a family, a home and a gathering point for friends (Bugge & Almas 2006: 204).



Image 4 – Some of the respondents' food role models.

From the left: Leila Lindholm, Jamie Oliver, Tina Nordström, Leif Mannerström

4.2 Inspiration

As our foodies mentioned above, they get a lot of their cooking inspiration from TV. However, they also reveal that another great source of inspiration comes from eating out at restaurants. Cairns (2010: 595) states that an interest for food is costly because cooking is an expensive hobby. Eating out is of course something that not everyone can afford. Cairns (2010: 595) argues further that foodies often have certain privileges due to the fact that it is a hobby that requires economical capital because cooking is an expensive hobby. Laura explains to us that she and her family go out a lot. Although, this varies from month to month because of the salary she gets from her job as a consultant, but if they can spend money on food, they usually go out to eat a lot.

"We do go out and eat a lot! Off course! Going to restaurants is very important for me."-Laura

Hannah also explains that she gets a lot of inspiration from restaurants for her own cooking.

"There was this one time when we went to "Oljebaren" in Stockholm where I got a chocolate mousse with salt flakes and olive oil on top and it was so good! I would never have thought of that myself, so I do get a lot of inspiration from restaurants to try new things."-Hannah

In addition, she lets us know that they used to go out and eat more before her husband became so good at preparing meat. Hannah thinks that the restaurants in her town is not good enough and that she enjoys eating out in other larger cities, such as Stockholm for example, where she likes to visit the food

fair and try new restaurants. If they lived in Stockholm she believes that they would go out and eat at restaurants more often. However, at home they enjoy spending time in their garden and preparing a nice meal together and eating it outdoors if the weather is nice.

“When we go to restaurants we often feel that we could have done the food better ourselves, when we for example get in a piece of meat that is not at all medium-rare and then also paying over price for a dinner that might not be that special. We rather do it our self and have a cosy dinner in our garden.” -Hannah

Elisabeth explains that the variety in restaurants in the town closest to her is not as elaborate as in Stockholm for example; she thinks that the food is almost the same on most of the restaurants. She believes that a restaurant with forging or experimental food would not survive in a small town, because she thinks that the inhabitants is a bit scared to try new flavours, because they are not used to it.

“We do have a sushi place and that is doing surprisingly well. I thought that it would never survive here, so who knows, but it feels like most restaurants serve the same food, so there is not a lot of variation I am afraid...” -Elisabeth

Elisabeth thinks that the range of food in restaurants influences the food people cook at home, and that people living in her area hence not experiment as much. However, she believes that other people think that she cooks a bit different food, not because she and her family travels more than any other, but because she gets inspired by TV-shows and magazines and wants to try new things, something that other inhabitants in her town does not dare to try, or do not have the interest in trying.

“I think that people in larger cities eat more at restaurants than people here. I don’t know why, maybe it’s easier somehow, with the range of restaurants being better and maybe people go out after work to eat together.”-Elisabeth

Elisabeth thinks that she would cook differently if she had more variety of restaurants in her city to get inspired from or travelled more.

Angelica tells us that they had theme evenings in the past. If they have been to the Alps for example, then they cooked something that was specific for Austria and something that they ate when they were there. They have also had a tapas evening after a trip to Spain, wine tasting after a wine tour and Greek food when they had been in Greece. Angelica means that they get inspiration for new dishes after travelling. She explains that it is both for the memories and emotions but also for the taste itself. She thinks that they get the feeling back from the holiday experience when they sit together and enjoy a meal that resembles something they eat during that trip.

Hannah lets us know that they do travel, but not very often. She describes that they chose their honeymoon, based on the food experience, because she had read a lot of food magazines that has made food trips to Toscana so they went there to experience their food culture. Hannah wished to learn more about the Toscanian food culture. According to Cairns (2010:606) foodies use their knowledge about food and their constant desire to learn more as a way of constructing and maintaining cultural capital and distinguish themselves from other food consumers, hence to create and build their own identity.

Moreover, Hannah also wants to go to London and go to expensive restaurants and try the food on the English countryside.

"I have always wanted to go to the English countryside as well. It sounds a bit boring but I think that it can be really cosy and I want to go around to different villages and pat dachshund and wear something checked and eat scones, clotted crème and drink afternoon tea and visit those pubs that Jamie Oliver writes about!"-Hannah

4.2.1 Analyzing inspirational sources

The limited supply of restaurants, that many of our foodies experiencing in their hometowns, might be one reason why they try a lot of new food while travelling. Angelica tells us that they have made city trips in Europe and something that they appreciate while travelling is to find a good restaurant and eat something nice. Good food is something Angelica and her husband think is worth spending money on while travelling, it is okay if it costs a little, she explains. They rather spend less money on activities than skimp on food that is new and exciting. Spending more money on food than on activities shows the great pleasure food gives Angelica. This can be strengthened by Cairns (2010: 119-120) who states that foodies find that food gives them pleasure in their life's and is not only a means to an end, it is a source of joy.

Our findings show that all of our foodies spend a lot of money on food, not only the costs to buy ingredients for cooking, but they go out at restaurants a lot and they do also spend a lot of money on food while travelling. For example, Laura states that she chooses destinations after food and they have spent substantial amounts of their income on food and travels. Laura says that she loves to go to destinations to experience local food and wine cultures.

"However, there is a limit to how much the children can tolerate, they do not think it is fun to walk around in a wine chateau."-Laura

Laura tells us that they make a rapid version and then they spice it up with something more child-friendly, but her trips are mostly about food. Being a foodie requires a high economic capital because

cooking is an expensive hobby (Cairns 2010: 595) and as our foodies get a lot of inspiration from restaurant visits and “food-travels”, it might get even more costly. However, the above indicates that there are not financial aspects that can be in the way for our foodies’ food practice, rather other factors in life, such as kids and time constraints.

4.3 Rural life

All of our respondents have a connection to rural life from their childhood. All, but two, respondents have grown up in rural areas and have positive memories from that time when they could be out in the nature picking berries or playing in the forest. A foodie’s memories involving food are often located early in the person’s childhood (Cairns 2010: 602), and in this case their early food experiences seem to have some connection to the countryside. This connection makes them favour the country side before urban life and they all feel that the quality of life is better on the country side. Magnusson (2012) states that many people in Stockholm, Gothenburg and Malmoe choose to move from the city center to smaller towns within the same county. This is something that Laura has done. When moving out from her parents’ home she got an apartment in the city center of Stockholm, but she did not manage living there for long.

“Concrete it is just not my thing. I like being in the city, but living in it, I never felt comfortable with it. I feel claustrophobic, even in this one apartment I had where I got some herbs in a window and an amazing view over the canal and a park, but it was just not the same. Then it’s all the people, they are just everywhere! Here it’s just earth, trees and water, but still close to the city, I feel so lucky that we have the resources to be able to live like this” – Laura

Molly grew up in a larger town than the one she lives in today. However, she does not miss the larger city and do not see the rural life as an obstacle.

“I’m so used to take the car and go to different places so I don’t see our current location as a problem. I can just take my car as I always have and I can go wherever I want, I do not miss the larger city, I go to Stockholm quite often with work and that’s enough for me” – Molly

All of our foodies describes that they prefer to buy food in the local shops if it is possible. The Swedish food shop site, ICA-handlarna.se, states that a food shop works as a mutual gathering point for people in the area and that it is a place to meet and make the village more alive. They mean that, for that reason, it is important that the customers choose to purchase their food from the local food shop (www.ica-handlarna.se). This is something that Angelica wants to support. She would like to buy most of her food

from a more local food shop to support them, but the quality is often unfortunately too bad. Angelica says that she buys milk and cereals and similar products when she is there, but she does not make larger purchases there. Angelica is sorry to say that she has to go to one of the larger shops where the range and products are fresher.

“I turn on my heels if it is a shop that looks a bit shabby and where the vegetables are boring.”-Angelica

Further, ICA-handlarna.se states that the people living in the rural area need to be active and have a dialog with the owner so that they can improve their supply and attract more customers. Laura would have preferred to buy everything in her local shop; but the local ICA shop cannot hold everything she desires, although they often take in special products if she asks. Laura talks a lot about food with the purchaser, and he learns a lot from Laura about how to enlarge the assortment in an attractive way. She can tell that he has been inspired a lot from the things Laura asks for, for example he often takes in locally produced products, which he did not do before, and nowadays he does often ask her if there is anything else she wants. She also buys meat and eggs from a local farmer, not all the time, but for special occasions.

Buying food from local farmers is something that all of our foodies do. According to Belasco (2008 :8) responsibility is about the individual’s impact on the environment, animals and also other people. Our foodies all take responsibility because a lot of the food products they buy are locally produced, from local farmers and thus the food is not transported long distances, which would have a negative impact on the environment. Four out of six foodies mention that they buy some or several organic food products regularly from their local farmers. Many of our foodies also mention that locally produced food tastes better. Hannah says that she likes to buy meat from animals that she know have had a good life.

“We use to go to a farmer in the north of Öland who sells lambs that has been going outside and cropped. It is nice to make it as an excursion, and then when we sit down and eat the meat I think about the nice little shopping trip we had when we bought the meat. That makes the dinner even more pleasant.”-Hannah

McEntees (2010: 790) two food cultures can also be detected in our participants. We believe that all of them mostly support the Contemporary local food culture because they all want to contribute to their society by supporting local farmers and purchasing locally produced goods.

“It is nice driving to the local farmers; they have all kinds of nice things. Everything is locally produced and organic and it is nice to know that you are supporting the local farmers” - Elisabeth

“It depends on the season, but I think we go to the local farmers at least once a week. They have all sorts of ecological fruits and vegetables and the meat taste so much better there. We don’t buy just any food, we like to know that the animals have had a good life and buy them locally and not just from a place far away in some other country.” – Hannah

“My goal is to be self-sufficient, to take care of the entire cycle! Grown and eat only things that are in season, and if it’s not in season we don’t buy it! Some things are of course not available in Sweden, such as coffee or chocolate, so that we have to buy, but we try as much as possible.” – Laura

There is also a hint of the Traditional local food culture that McEntees (2010: 790) speaks about, because some of our respondents points out that the food price at the local farmers actually are cheaper than in the supermarket, however this is not their main agenda for purchasing there. In addition many of our respondents grow their own vegetables and herbs which fit well into the Traditional local food culture.

Christina has her own garden where she grows currants and rhubarbs and other things that return year after year. In addition she has a little greenhouse where she used to have tomatoes and cucumber. This year, when she is on parental leave and has a little more time, she is thinking about cultivate some more, like salad and things that requires a little more attention. She is also thinking about planting blueberries, which she likes a lot. In addition, she buys some of her meat from the local farmer.

“The local meat shop here have really nice lamb mince and many of the meat products do even have lower price than in the supermarket” – Christina

Angelica’s husband produces chickens. They also grow crayfish and hunt wild boar, fallow deer and sometimes also red deer and roes. According to Angelica, they eat a lot of meat from wild animals, when it is hunting season. In her garden she also cultivates some vegetables and fruits.

“We don’t cultivate as much as we used to but we still have spinach, lettuce, radish, onions, and beetroot. Also some berries such as raspberries, currants and some fruit threes, apples, pears, cherry and plum” – Angelica

Hannah tells us that she has got a very serious herb and spice garden where they have rosemary, basil and thyme, salvia and lavender. She further describes that melissa and oregano grows like weeds on Öland, which is something that she likes.

“I try to cultivate my own vegetables but the animals keep eating them. However I do have a very serious herb garden. It is very fun to cook and then go out and pick some herbs in your own garden and then cook with that. That is very good!” - Hannah

4.3.1 Analysing the choice of food consumption

Our foodies make several choices when it comes to food and we here connect to Belasco’s (2008: 8) three competing factors in the choice of food: identity, convenience and responsibility.

Belasco (2008: 8) argues that identity is influenced by individual preferences, creativity and current position in the lifecycle. The aspect of identity is visible in our respondents’ answers where many of them talk about providing good food for their kids, which indicates a desire to be a good mother. Many have people over for dinner, indicating that they want a social lifestyle. Moreover, many of our respondents are from the countryside and the culture there can have influenced them into preferring a rural lifestyle. Although, two of our respondents have grown up in larger cities before their present location, which indicates that the preference for rural areas can be an individual preference.

Our foodies are also affected by convenience aspects, which Balesco (2008: 9) argues can be price, accessibility and preoperational needs, which require different resources such as time, effort and skills. Our foodies voice time as their most scarce resource. All would place more time on cooking if they could, however all of our respondents are employed, all, but one, are mothers and most have an active spare time, which all contributes to a busy life and time constraints. Many of our respondents would for example, like to go to many different shops to find the best products, however this is something that most do not have time for and hence choose to buy their food in a larger supermarket. Nevertheless, all respondents do take the time to go to local farmers to shop locally produced meat and vegetables. They make it an excursion and they see it as a leisure activity. Also, when they are there, they often buy quite a lot which means that they do not have to go there too often if they do not have time for it.

The last aspect is responsibility, which we feel all of our foodies are actively involved in. Balesco (2008: 9) argues that responsibility is about people’s knowledge about their impact on the environment, animals and other humans. We believe that all of our foodies take responsibility by purchasing products from their local farmers. In addition, many cultivate their own vegetables, herbs, berries and fruits which also indicate a sustainable lifestyle. These sustainable acts indicate knowledge about food productions effect on the environment which is important aspect of responsibility. Furthermore, many of our respondents express that they care about the animals and want them to have a good life. This is a common viewpoint

Howard (2005: 3) argues, because when it comes to ethical issues about food, consumers think it is important to know where their food originates from and the most important aspect is that the animals have been treated in a humane way and the second most important aspect was the issues of locally produced food.

Angelica's family produces most of the food they eat themselves and hence, we believe, that she is the respondent who thinks most about the responsible aspect. Laura is not far from Angelica and are one of our respondents that most expresses a desire to live a sustainable life. The respondent that least expresses a desire to be self-sufficient is Molly, who shops at local farmers but says that producing her own food is not really her cup of tea. However her children cultivate carrots and arugula.

4.4 Foodie levels

There are different definitions of a foodie but the one we have chosen is the following:

"We characterize foodies as people with a long-standing passion for eating and learning about food but who are not food professionals" (Cairns et al 2010: 593)

All the respondents in this study were asked, before they were acquired as participants, if they had a strong interest in cooking and learning about food. After studying our respondents we can tell that all of them are foodies – although in varying degrees. Further on we will compare two respondents which, as we see it, is on each side of the foodie engagement spectrum.

Photos from the diaries during 'a day with food in focus'



Image 5 – Molly's pasta dish with mozzarella and Parma ham



Image 6 – Laura's dish is a replica of the "Chef of the year" winning dish

When Laura describes herself she says: *"I am food."* Her interest for food is very strong and almost everything she does involves food in one way or another. In their household they spend a lot of money on food, and when she comes to a larger city, she can walk around for hours to get exactly the special

food products she desire. Her kids ask her: *“Mummy, mummy, why do you have to stand by the stove all the time?”* and she tells us that she can talk with friends about food for hours.

As we can interpret from above, Laura has a huge passion for food. This can be compared with Molly who cooks a lot, but who does not seem to put as much effort to the food that Laura does. For example, we had one day in the food diary called “a day with food in focus”. At that day, Molly did an ordinary pasta dish with mozzarella and Parma ham, which can be compared with Laura, who replicated the winning “Årets kock” (“Chef of the year”) dish, which took her five hours. Molly describes her dish as follows:

“The main ingredient in this dish is the cheese, and how it blends with the rest of the ingredients” – Molly

This can be compared with how Laura describes her dish:

“I have long cooked a turnip in homemade veal stock, and then glazed it, I made smoked bone marrow butter that I have on the knife, I have filled an onion with a tasty onion and marrow cream and to this a delicious steak fried with peppercorns from Gotland. I used everything from the meat to the side dishes.” – Laura

Corrigan (2010:119-120) argues that the aim for quality on food has led to class differences, where the upper class see an opportunity to separate themselves from the lower class and knowledge about food has become a sign of high social status.

When we look at other differences between the two foodies we see a difference in Laura and Molly’s status. Laura is high educated and Molly does not have a higher education than upper secondary. Further, there are demographical differences like age, income and that they live in different areas, which can affect their food consumption (Arnould & Thompson 2005: 871-875), but it can also be affected of different interests. We think that Molly might not be as excited about food as Laura is, but she still cares a lot about food, just like all our respondents do. We believe that all our respondents spend different amount of time on food and therefore they are more or less foodies, and because of this, together with the reasons mentioned above, we do think that they have different status.

5 DISCUSSION

This chapter will discuss our most insightful findings which centre on our two main focus areas: female food practice and rural lifestyle. We explain how we contribute to the field of CCT with the knowledge this thesis has generated and how it helps narrow the gap in theory about foodies and their rural lifestyle. In addition, we clarify the limitations for our findings and suggest topics for future research.

With this thesis we contribute to the field of CCT by investigating how female foodies practice their food hobby in rural areas. We chose to look at females due to the lack of previous research of female foodies, and emanated from Cairns et al. (2010: 593) definition of a foodie:

“We characterize foodies as people with a long-standing passion for eating and learning about food but who are not food professionals”

Further, we chose to focus on rural areas, also because of the lack of previous research. The outcome of this thesis hence, adds to CCT by both contributing to the knowledge about female foodies, but also rural foodie lifestyle, which has not received any attention in previous research due to the fact that they are two contra trends to the on-going urbanisation and gastrosexuality.

As stated above, we have chosen to look at female foodie practice, however not in relation to male foodie practice and hence, have not focused our attention to the gender perspective as such. However, in our connection to the rural life we still feel that we have contributed with research about female foodie practice. We have not investigated the rural foodie gender perspective and hence we do not know if there are any differences between rural male foodies and rural female foodies. In addition, due to the fact that the gender perspective not was the focus for this thesis, we leave it as a subject for research in the future.

All of our respondents enjoy cooking and would like to spend more time on it then they do today. Many of them also cook together with their husbands and kids. This is connected to Aarseth and Olsen (2007: 280) who argue that there is a new pattern within food preparation in the household, where the cooking is seen as a family activity, where everyone participates due to mutual interest for food. It is not uncommon that families like these often sit down together and have friends over for dinner and socialize through food (Aarseth & Olsen 2007: 280). In this research, we have found that it is the time aspect of cooking that hinders our participants to exercise their interest in food, and not an economical aspect as

also could be expected, due to the fact that cooking is an expensive hobby. We believe that the participants spend more time on cooking than people who are not foodies, however they still want to spend even more time on their hobby.

All our respondents expressed that they preferred to live in a rural area and travel to a larger city when they needed special products or just wanted a broader variety of products or inspiration sources such as restaurants and delicatessens shops. All respondents have a decent income and hence the privilege to go on trips and holidays every year, some even several times a year. When they visit a larger city they like to visit delicatessens shops to buy new ingredients and experience new restaurants and flavours, which are common for people who live in rural areas and do not have access to a vast amount of food products (Broadbridge et.al 2002: 395-396). Although many of our respondents kept a dialogue with their local shop owners, so that they would provide the food they desired, it is common that many small local stores on the countryside often stock standardise products and have a narrow range of products because it is not profitable to stock a vast amount of different products when the customer base is rather small. In addition, many have a hard time keeping up with the latest trends in food and cooking and hence struggle to attract customers (Broadbridge et.al 2002: 395-396).

The respondents further find that their rural location provides them with a large amount of fine food products, which are local and organic, from farmers and like to purchase food products there regularly. Many of our respondents also try to eat as in-season as possible because they know that these products taste most but also are the most healthy.

The main reason for living in a rural area was, for most of our participants, the quality of life, which was perceived as higher than in urban areas. Many expressed the joy of being outdoors and the closeness to nature as an important factor in their life. However, these areas are traditionally seen as locations that does not provide a vast amount of variety in terms of food products and inspirational sources. Even so, the ability of being able to be outdoors enables the opportunity to grow food products which all of our respondents did in form of vegetables, herbs, berries and/or fruits. Some even had animals and root crop and one of them, Laura , aimed for a self-sufficient lifestyle. The cultivating indicates a traditional local focus, however we believe that our respondents are mostly contemporary local because many expressed a desire to support local farmers, attain healthier food products and support local stores, which are all important aspects of the contemporary local focus (McEntee 2010: 786).

Inspiration to cooking, as the respondents argue, is found mostly by famous TV chefs, but also in magazines, book, travels and restaurants. There are a large amount of sources to find inspiration from, for example TV-programs such as “Sveriges mästarkock” (Masterchef, Sweden) (www.tv4.se), or in any of the many magazines that writes about food and cooking (www.tidningskungen.se). Many respondents also voiced that sources for inspiration was everywhere and not something that they lacked or felt was inadequate in their rural location. The range and variety in restaurants was however, something that most of the respondents felt was inadequate and hence not served as a source of inspiration, rather a source for inspiration to cook a nice meal at home instead. If the range and quality of restaurants was better, most of our respondents would dine out more often and value spending money on restaurant visits.

Laura is the respondent that we think is most foodie among the foodies participating in this research and as a final speculation we are wondering if this is because she is the one of our respondents that lives closest to a large city, a city with 861 000 inhabitants, and has closer access to a larger variety of food and inspirational sources. She revealed that she often goes in to the city to eat at restaurants. Although it can also of course be because of her personality as an individual and her interest for food. However, the person we think is least foodie among our respondents is Molly, who live quite far from a large city, although not farthest among our respondents. If there is a difference between different rural areas depending on what city the rural area is located outside, is interesting but beyond the scope of this thesis and hence a subject for further research.

In sum, we find that many of our respondents have proven to be foodies, although they live in rural areas. All of them also feel that they get access to good food products through local farmers, and travel to larger cities when they need something special, and hence do not perceive their rural location as a hinder to their foodie practice. The main conclusion from this thesis is that a rural foodie values the higher life quality that they feel they get on the countryside. The narrow selection of special food product does not hinder our respondents to cook fine and good food. Instead they cultivate and purchase food products from local farmers. In addition, they do not experience a lack of inspirational sources, due to their rural location. Rather, they get inspired by travels, TV-chefs and eating at restaurants.

5.1 Limitations and Future research

Through our respondents we found a lot of substantial meanings for being a rural foodie. However, we can see a gap in knowledge when it comes to literature and research about rural foodies. We have found research conducted about urban foodies, but no one that has looked at the phenomenon rural foodies before. During the writing of this thesis we had both budget and time constraints, which meant that we could not investigate further rural foodies, and this *may* have influenced our results. An investigation with more respondents would have got a more accurate view. Therefore, we hope that in the future rural foodies will be further researched.

Furthermore, the selection of female rural foodies we have made may differ from rural men's food behaviour. Hence, something that would be interesting to investigate in the future is men who are rural foodies. Some of our respondents husbands like to cook and those who normally where not interested in cooking, made the barbeque and even the meat.

Another area about foodies that would have been interesting to look at in further research is the foodies who have moved from a rural area to an urban one and the reason why they moved. It would have been exciting to see if it was for a food reason or something else. A comparison between rural and urban foodies would also have been interesting to see what the differences are, more than the once we found in our research.

Finally, it would be interesting to look at differences in different rural areas. One of our respondents that live outside of Stockholm revealed that she often goes in to the city to eat at restaurants. She did also mention that twice a week when she are in the city because of job meetings, she walks around in different food shops to get special food products. Therefore it would be interesting to look at if the geographical location in terms of distance to larger city affects the rural foodie's food practice, or if there are differences in different part of Sweden, which is something that we think could have given us even more interesting insights.

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5 Molly's pasta dish: Photo taken by Molly

6 Laura's replica of the winning "Chef of the year" dish: Photo taken by Laura

7 Herbs from Elisabeth's garden: Photo taken by Elisabeth

7 APPENDIX

7.1 Photo diary – In Swedish

FOTODAGBOK: Matlagningsvanor

Denna undersökning genomförs som en del av ett större forskningsprojekt vid Lunds universitet. Syftet är att undersöka hur kvinnor i en rural kontext utövar sitt matintresse. För att förse oss med djupare insikter inom detta område skulle vi vilja att du fyller i denna fotodagbok under fem olika dagar. Dessa fem dagar behöver inte vara sammanhängande eller genomförda i ordningen som är presenterad här, utan under perioden 26 mars – 9 april kan du välja de dagarna som passar dig. Tanken är att du ska dagboksföra dina dagliga matrutiner, -tankar och -aktiviteter. Dagboken kommer sedan att användas som underlag för den efterföljande intervju vi kommer att hålla med dig.

Dag 1 är en vardag som representerar en helt vanlig dag i ditt liv

Dag 2 är en avslappnad dag då du kanske inte orkar lägga ned så mycket tid på matlagning

Dag 3 är en dag då maten står i fokus och du lagar något som kräver tid och kunskap

Dag 4 representerar en dag då du bjuder hem folk på middag

Dag 5 är en dag då du inte äter i hemmet men då middagstillfället är viktigt, exempelvis

äter på restaurang eller hos kompisar

Vi är medvetna om att det kan vara svårt att på förhand veta när dessa dagar kommer att inträffa, men det kanske finns någon aning om när de olika typerna av dagarna vanligtvis inträffar och då kan ni vara beredda med kameran. Bildkvaliteten är inte det viktiga utan att det tydligt framgår vad bilden föreställer eller representerar.

När du har färdigställt fotodagboken ber vi dig att senast den 9e april kl 24.00 sända in den via mail till: cecilia.ahlfors@gmail.com samt a.tullstrom@gmail.com. All din information kommer att behandlas med största försiktighet och anonymitet inom forskningsprojektet.

Om du har några frågor så hör gärna av dig till oss. Din hjälp är mycket uppskattad!

Med vänliga hälsningar,
Anna och Cecilia

Generella instruktioner för genomförandet av dagboken

För att vi ska hinna bearbeta materialet är det viktigt att fotodagboken fylls i så snabbt som möjligt, ju förr vi lyckas få svaren desto bättre. Det kan vara en god idé att titta igenom fotodagboksformuläret för att sätta dig i materialet redan innan du börjar. På detta sätt kan du förbereda dig att ta bilder av speciella situationer under de dagar som kan bli aktuella för projektet. Känn dig fri att tänka kreativt när du tar bilderna (t.ex. genom att ta en bild av en bild i en tidning som fångar meningen av det du hade velat ta en bild av egentligen).

För varje bild skall du skriva ner varför och vad du har tagit bilder av (närmare instruktioner finner du på varje sida).

Spendera inte för mycket tid på att formulera dina svar eller fundera på stavning eller grammatik. Det viktiga är att du skriver ner vad du finner mest relevant med dina egna ord.

Fyll i detta worddokument och lägg in bilderna så att de hänger ihop med rätt rubriker (förslagsvis under varje bildbeskrivning) och svara på frågorna bäst du kan!

Vi ser helst att du tar naturliga bilder, du ska till exempel inte städa upp eller liknande innan du tar bilder i ditt hem.

Försök, så långt som möjligt, att ta med dig kameran under perioden – på det sättet kan du ta bilder när du får en god idé eller när relevanta situationer inträffar. Ett bra alternativ är även att använda kameran på mobiltelefonen om inte vanlig kamera finns till hands.

Inledningsvis ber vi dig att besvara ett fåtal frågor av det generella slaget, samt ta några illustrerande bilder

Ditt namn:

Ålder:

Kön:

Sysselsättning:

Utbildning:

Individuell inkomst/månad:

Hushållets inkomst/månad:

Genomsnittligt utlägg på mat / månad (t.ex. X000 till hushållet och X00 på restaurang/person):

E-mail-adress:

(Mobil)telefonnummer:

Information om andra medlemmar i ditt hushåll:

Namn: Ålder: Relation till dig:

Namn: Ålder: Relation till dig:

Namn: Ålder: Relation till dig:

0.1 VAR GOD TAG EN BILD AV DIG SJÄLV

Var god beskriv bilden:

0.2 VAR GOD TA EN BILD PÅ EN SAK ELLER PRODUKT I DITT HEM SOM ÄR KARAKTÄRISTISK FÖR DIG

Var god beskriv bilden:

På följande sidor (4-12) finner du fotodagboken.

DAG 1 - En vanlig vardag**Datum:****1.0 VAR GOD BESKRIV DAGENS VIKTIGASTE TANKAR, KÄNSLOR OCH AKTIVITETER.**

Var god ta bilder på de matprodukter du har använt under dagen (max 7 bilder):

1.1 PÅ MORGONEN - FRUKOST

Beskriv kortfattat vad du tagit bilder av:

Förklara varför:

1.2 PÅ JOBBET/ I SKOLAN/UTE - LUNCH

Beskriv kortfattat vad du har tagit bilder av:

Förklara varför:

1.3 PÅ KVÄLLEN - MIDDAG

Förklara kortfattat vad du tagit bilder av:

Förklara varför:

1.4 EN MATPRODUKT (och dess VARUMÄRKE) SOM DU INTE KLARAR DIG UTAN

Förklara kortfattat vad du tagit bilder av:

Förklara varför du tycker att det är en produkt du inte klarar dig utan och var du förvarar den:

1.5 EN MATPRODUKT DU KÖPTE BARA FÖR SKOJS SKULL

Förklara kortfattat vad du tagit bilder av:

Förklara var och varför du köpte produkten/varumärket och var du förvarar den:

1.6 EN MATPRODUKT DU ÄR LITE GENERAD ÖVER ATT DU HAR

Förklara kortfattat vad du tagit bilder av:

Förklara var och varför du köpte produkten/varumärket, varför du är generad över den och var du förvarar den:

1.7 EN MATPRODUKT SOM DU BARA ANVÄNDER VID SPECIELLA TILLFÄLLEN

Förklara kortfattat vad du tagit bilder av:

Förklara var du köpte den, när du använder produkten/varumärket och var du förvarar den:

1.8 NÅGOT SOM FÅR POSITIV INVERKAN PÅ DIN MATLAGNING

Beskriv kortfattat vad du har tagit bilder av:

Beskriv hur detta har positiv inverkan på din matlagning:

1.9 NÅGONTING SOM FÅR NEGATIV INVERKAN PÅ DIN MATLAGNING

Beskriv kortfattat vad du har tagit bild av:

Beskriv hur detta har en negativ inverkan på din matlagning:

DAG 2 - En avslappnad dag

Datum:

2.0 VAR GOD BESKRIV DAGENS VIKTIGASTE TANKAR, KÄNSLOR OCH AKTIVITETER.

Var god tag bilder av följande:

2.1 EN MATVARUPRODUKT SOM SYMBOLISERAR EN SÅDAN DAG

Förklara kortfattat vad du tagit bilder av:

Förklara varför du väljer denna matvaruprodukten just idag:

2.2 ETT VARUMÄRKE SOM SYMBOLISERAR EN SÅDAN DAG

Beskriv kortfattat vad du har tagit bild av:

Beskriv varför varumärket symboliserar dagen:

2.3 EN TYPISK AKTIVITET FÖR EN SÅDAN DAG

Beskriv kortfattat vad du har tagit bild av:

Beskriv varför aktiviteten är typisk för en sådan dag:

DAG 3 - En dag med matlagning i fokus Datum:

3.0 VAR GOD BESKRIV DAGENS VIKTIGASTE TANKAR, KÄNSLOR OCH AKTIVITETER.

Var god tag bilder av följande:

3.1 EN DAGLIGVARUBUTIK DU BESÖKER NÄR DU SKA HANDLA NÅGOT SPECIELLT

Förklara kortfattat vad du tagit bilder av:

Förklara varför du väljer denna butik för inköp till speciella tillfällen och hur miljön/människorna får dig att må när du är där inne:

3.2 DE PRODUKTER DU KÖPTE (spara också kvitto)

Beskriv kortfattat vad du har tagit bild av:

Beskriv vad du ska använda/använde produkterna till:

3.3 ETT REDSKAP DU GÄRNA ANVÄNDER TILL MATLAGNINGEN DENNA DAG

Beskriv kortfattat vad du har tagit bild av:

Beskriv varför redskapet är bra att använda:

3.4 NÅGON/NÅGRA KRITISKA MOMENT AV SJÄLVA MATLAGNINGSPROCESSEN

Beskriv kortfattat vad du har tagit bild av och varför de är viktiga:

3.5 EN RÅVARA SOM ÄR VIKTIG FÖR DEN MATRÄTTEN

Beskriv kortfattat vad du har tagit bild av:

Beskriv vad som gör råvaran viktig i maträtten:

3.6 DET SPECIELLA MIDDAGSTILLFÄLLET

[detta inträffar kanske en annan dag än inköpsdagen, kommentera i så fall detta nedan]

Beskriv kortfattat vad du har tagit bild av:

Beskriv förväntningarna du hade på maträtten och huruvida maträtten levde upp till dessa förväntningar. Varför/varför inte?

DAG 4 - En dag då du bjuder hem folk på middag Datum:

4.0 VAR GOD BESKRIV DAGENS VIKTIGASTE TANKAR, KÄNSLOR OCH AKTIVITETER.

Var god tag bilder av följande:

4.1 EN DEL AV FÖRBEREDELSE INFÖR KVÄLLEN

(besök i affär, förberedelser i köket, receptpå läsning etc.)

Förklara kortfattat vad du tagit bilder av:

Beskriv varför det här är en viktig del av förberedelserna:

4.2 NÅGOT SOM SYMBOLISERAR ATT DU SKA HA GÄSTER

Beskriv kortfattat vad du har tagit bild av:

Beskriv varför detta är viktigt:

4.3 ETT REDSKAP DU GÄRNA ANVÄNDER TILL MATLAGNINGEN DENNA DAG

Beskriv kortfattat vad du har tagit bild av:

Beskriv varför redskapet är bra att använda:

4.4 NÅGON/NÅGRA KRITISKA MOMENT AV SJÄLVA MATLAGNINGSPROCESSEN

Beskriv kortfattat vad du har tagit bild av och varför de är viktiga:

4.5 EN RÅVARA SOM ÄR VIKTIG FÖR DEN MATRÄTTEN

Beskriv kortfattat vad du har tagit bild av:

Beskriv vad som gör råvaran viktig i maträtten:

4.6 SJÄLVA MIDDAGSTILLFÄLLET

Beskriv kortfattat vad du har tagit bild av:

Beskriv responsen du förväntade dig av din gäst/dina gäster och responsen du fick, samt hur responsen fick dig att känna:

DAG 5 - En dag då du inte lagar maten själv, men då middagstillfället är viktigt (restaurangbesök alternativt middag hos vänner) Datum:

5.0 VAR GOD BESKRIV DAGENS VIKTIGASTE TANKAR, KÄNSLOR OCH AKTIVITETER.

Var god tag bilder av följande:

5.1 NÅGOT SOM SYMBOLISERAR ATT DU ÄTER UTE/HOS NÅGON ANNAN

Beskriv kortfattat vad du har tagit bild av:

5.2 EN DEL AV OMGIVNINGEN

Beskriv kortfattat vad du har tagit bild av:

Beskriv hur omgivningen får dig att känna:

5.3 NÅGON/NÅGRA AV MATRÄTTERNA

Beskriv kortfattat vad du har tagit bild av:

Beskriv hur maten står sig mot din egen matlagning, hade du kunnat göra det bättre själv?

7.2 Interview guide – In Swedish

Frågeformulär inför intervju

Hur började ditt matintresse?

Vem är din matförebild?

Hur många i hushållet är matintresserade?

I ditt hushåll, är det en speciell person som lagar mat oftast eller hjälps alla åt? Har ni olika dagar eller hjälps ni åt alla dagar?

Känner du att du alltid har tillgång till just de matvaror du vill ha? Erbjuder din lokala mataffär det, eller måste du åka någon annanstans?

Vart åker du i så fall?

Finns det någon delikatessaffär eller liknande nära dig? Eller vart åker du om du handlar speciella varor/delikatesser?

Producerar ni egen mat? (Trädgårdsland, odling, jakt eller liknande?) Vad?

Om du hade haft tillgång till ett bredare sortiment nära dig, hade du då lagat annan sorts mat?

Hur ofta lagar du något utöver det vanliga? (Några gånger i veckan, eller mer sällan?)

Hur ofta besöker du en större stad?

Var sker de flesta av dina matinköp? I lokal mataffär eller någon annanstans?

Vad fick dig att flytta ut/stanna kvar på landet/mindre stad?

Vad innebär landet för dig? (känsla, tankar, upplevelse, berättelse)

Varför inte staden?