

Introducing the baltfood project



baltfood - The Baltic Sea Region Food Cluster: Innovation and Competitiveness in Action

The food industry has developed into a highly competitive and strong industrial sector within the Baltic Sea Region. Emerging trends like more demanding consumers, changing functionality of food, a concentration process in the retail sector and shorter product lifecycles require a constant technological evolution. In this regard various deficits within the SME sector were identified: late recognition of food trends; low conversion of scientific findings into marketable food products or below average innovation rates.

baltfood is about to secure this dynamic, but very mature marketplace within the BSR by addressing common challenges and channelling know-how in process and product innovations through trans-

national cooperation. The project partnership consists of 13 national and regional organizations from the business and scientific communities as well as public bodies representing food cluster organizations in six of the nine countries within the BSR.

baltfood integrates local, regional and national food cluster organisations around the Baltic Sea into one commonly managed food cluster, thus making regionally embedded knowledge available on a wider geographical basis. In this regard a branding concept for worldwide promotion of the cluster will be applied. Further, baltfood will identify actual and future food innovations and trends disseminating them into the food production throughout the Baltic Sea Region. To successfully transfer knowledge from science into the production process adequate training curricula will be developed and a Baltic Food Academy shall be established.

The project contributes to the Baltic Sea Strategy and will help to make the Baltic Sea Region a prosperous place.

Business and research look to the future

Welcome to the first baltfood newsletter!

With the idea of networking among the business and scientific communities in the food industry we started the baltfood project with 13 partners from universities, public institutions and food-industry networks. With our in-depth knowledge and experience in the food industry we are addressing common challenges of the food processing sector.

Our principal goal is to provide support for small and midsize businesses, enabling them to recognize trends more quickly, transform research findings more readily into marketable products and penetrate international markets with greater success.

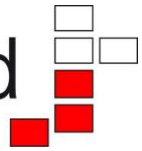
With this regular newsletter we will keep you informed about project efforts, activities and outputs. Furthermore we will inform you about possibilities how companies and other stakeholders can take an active part in the project.

We would be delighted by meeting you at one of our forthcoming events



Your baltfood project team





Towards a „Baltic Food Academy“ pilot course

baltfood has started with a workshop in Lund to develop an education program.

In order to establish lifelong learning in the food industry one aim of the baltfood project is to provide a basis for improving further education for the food industry. As a first step towards this, the project will investigate the supply and demand of education. Next an ICT-based course for food companies will be produced: A “Baltic Food Academy” course. The background for this is the ongoing tendency from handicraft to industrial processes in the food production chain has so far not been reflected in the qualification and education curricula of professional training.



Communication tool - Web conference between baltfood partners

During a workshop in Lund on April 20th nearly 20 members of baltfood discussed the design of such a pilot course with external guests. The day was organized by one of the baltfood partners, the Øresund Food Network. As regards the baltfood pilot course the actual requirements for training are still unidentified. Therefore a questionnaire for food companies in the Baltic Sea Region (BSR) is investigating the training needs. At the same time an inventory of further education is built up to get an overview of the system in each country. This is done by desk research, interviews with experts, a quick scan of all

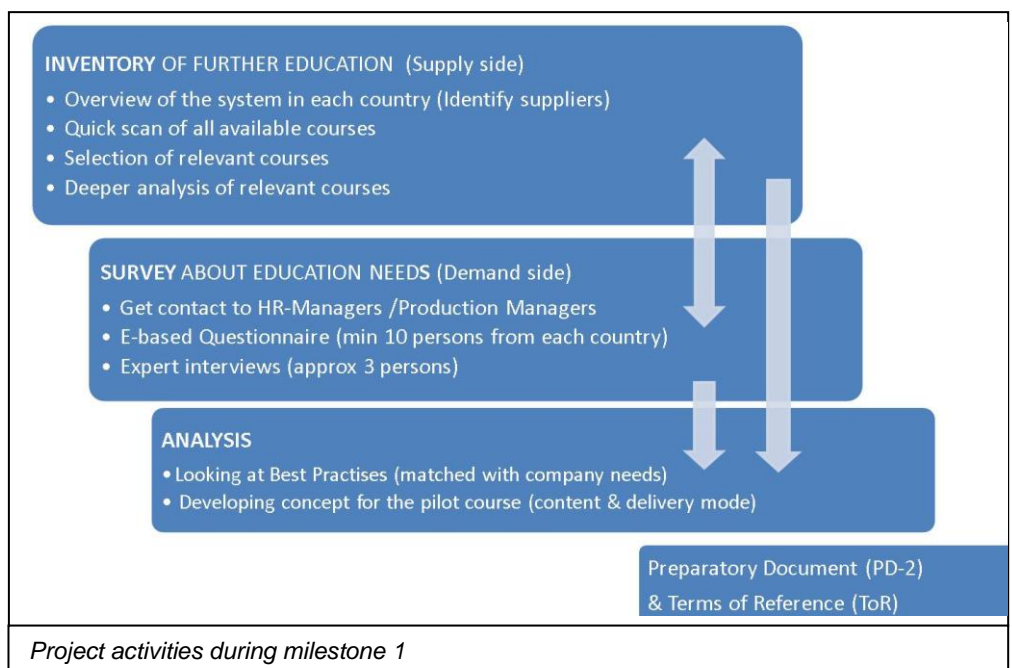
available courses, but also by a selection of relevant courses. After obtaining this data an analysis will look at “Best Practices” (matched with company needs).

Concerning the content of the projected course, the participants of the workshop agreed upon a training offering generic content. It should be a course that can be offered across different cultures or countries, that can be delivered to a large extent by e-learning and in which the majority of food companies should have an interest – e.g. according to future needs or upcoming regulations.

After a brainstorming process the participants of the workshop compiled a list with ideas for possible content for the pilot course. The best three ideas were chosen and more specified. The proposals are: A “food trend radar” should be developed. The objective is to increase performance in the food industry by innovation and to find the latest food trends amongst consumers. The second proposal is a course which can help to increase the awareness on sustainability and the implementation of sustainable

production methods. The target group for this course is the middle management in SME´s. The third proposal was named “Healthy to Go” and refers to eating while you are not sitting down at a table having a typical meal. The concept is applicable to many situations and products e.g. in relation to irregular working hours. The primary objective of this course is to develop healthy food products for new markets. Furthermore it should foster partnership between companies and at least it should draw attention to typical ingredients coming from the Baltic Sea Region.

After analyzing the results of the inventory and the questionnaire, a decision with respect to content and delivery mode will be taken. The next steps for the involved partners of this baltfood workpackage are to create the course by involving authors to produce the content and to transform the technical solutions, the programming and to do the planning for the implementation. +++



Fresh report on the supply and demand of further education in the Baltic Sea Region's food sector

The report, available in August, presents an overview of the current situation, drawing attention to specific conditions in the involved countries and identifying best practices. Second, based on conclusions about the relation between supply and demand as well as taking into consideration future learning needs, the report pinpoints the areas where a transnational further education curriculum could be beneficial for the development of the food industry. One of these areas will be selected as the core focus of the up-coming "Baltic Food Academy" pilot course. The study will soon be available at www.baltfood.org.

The "Baltic Food Academy" pilot course is a new multimedia-based course open for participants from the food industry in the BSR. It will be launched by the end of the year and participation is free of charge. For more information, contact jb@oresundfood.org.



Jenny Bergsten

How to get on to the track on food trends

People talk a lot about trends, and write about them even more, but few can really discern what is on the horizon. For this reason, the baltfood project is bringing together experts from companies and universities in order to identify relevant trends for the Baltic region.

On April 22, 2009 a group of approximately 30 experts gathered in Copenhagen to kick off a series of workshops on market research of food trends. The day was organized by the Skåne Food Innovation Network, a partner of the baltfood project. In attendance were a wide range of participants involved in food business, research and networking from companies and universities in Denmark, Finland, Lithuania, Germany, Sweden and Poland.

The purpose of the kick-off was to identify food trends in a current and in a future perspective, on a global and a regional level and to specify a few main trends. The aim at subsequent conferences will be to explore their effects on the food industry in the Baltic countries. These results also seek to inform further studies and tasks within the Baltic Food Trend Project, such as an online "Trend Radar".

During the workshop three lectures were given by the baltfood partners, who are working on the trend subject. Lotta Törner, managing director of Skåne Food Innovation Network, introduced the subject of consumption trends in general: Consumers have a lot of demands on the food products they buy. They should be tasty, healthy, safe, exotic and convenient all at once and in a trendy but environmentally-friendly package. In short, consumers want everything, often with conflicting demands.

A thorough introduction to the subject of

"Food & Health" gave the second presentation. After outlining government guidelines on healthy eating, Teemu Halttunen from the University of Turku, discussed the regulation of consumer information and labeling. It went on to comment on the consequences of increasing obesity and an ageing population in the Baltic countries. The presentation concluded with an exploration of scientific and technological developments as related to the food industry.



Johanna Tanhuanpää from Agropolis Oy in Finland informed the audience about "Sustainable Food". Point of departure was the increasing threat of climate change and its impact on food consumption. As the amount of fossil energy on the earth is decreasing, there will be a competition for raw materials also within the food industry, and the call for renewable energy will be more frequently articulated.

The participants of the panel discussions and the following three focus group discussions agreed on many specific food trends. Being present in the market or just taking off are amongst others the following trends: Personalized food, health foods, functional food and allergy-adapted foods, self-selected food, such as make your own musli.

In addition to the kick-off meeting two internet surveys on food consumption trends and on expertise and facilities of the food research institutions are carried out. The results can soon be found on www.baltfood.org. +++

The 13 partners of the baltfood project

Denmark / Sweden

- Øresund Food Network, Danish-Swedish Clustermanagement for the foodprocessing industry in the Øresund region

Germany

- Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg
- Lübeck University of Applied Sciences
- University of Rostock
- Lübeck Business Development Corporation

Finland

- Agropolis Ltd.
- Turku School of Economics, Finland Futures Centre
- Universit t Turku, Food Finland Theme Group

Lithuania

- Lithuanian Cluster of food industry

Poland

- Lubelskie Voivodship, regional Clustermanagement Biofood
- University of Warmia and Mazury in Olsztyn, Polish Cluster with focus on dairy industry

Sweden

- Sk ne Food Innovation Network
- University of Lund, Lund International Food Studies

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Interview with a Swedish trendsetter

Johan S holm is an inventor and entrepreneur. In 1997, after having different positions within Tetra Pak and having been Director of Development for Tetra Laval, he founded Arom Pak, which was sold to Tetra Pak in 2002. His latest invention is Pastair – a new way to treat liquid food products without the product being exposed to the stresses of heat-treatment.



Why did you become an entrepreneur?

"I think the reason is curiosity. The things that excite you are things you want to make happen; it should be possible somehow, although I can also get a bit fed up sometimes. There are far more naysayer sceptics than people who are positive and many are against change. So it means a lot when someone has the courage to stand up and speak positively about a concept or innovation. This type of player is needed.

When you are an inventor it is also important to be a bit of an entrepreneur, to have the courage to commit and drive things forward. "

What motivates you?

"It is fun when you manage to advance technology. You can compare it to a farmer who is about to start farming a new field. The field might be full of rocks and it is backbreaking work to convert it

to a useable condition. But then one day it is finished and the farmer has new land to farm.

I have probably been an entrepreneur since I was little. It is a gift I have been given;---It can be a trial sometimes, but it is often stimulating. I am happy when I go to work."

Does being an entrepreneur in Sk ne in particular mean something?

"Sk ne has always been a rich area in food terms; lots of production and lots of clever people. I don't think that Pastair would have been able to be developed so easily anywhere else than in Lund. In the area you have the packaging industry, the food industry and the university and there is a history surrounding food-stuffs. Developments have happened here before. Knowledge is important. If the knowledge is not there it is difficult; you make every mistake. In Lund it is easy to come into contact with knowledge and skills, both through the food cluster but also through the university. The food cluster and organisations such as the Sk ne Food Innovation Network, Ideon Agro Food and, for example, the Swedish Dairy Association are really a great asset. They function to bridge the gap between the university and entrepreneurs and commerce. And bridges are needed."

Pastair is a new way to treat liquid food products without imposing heat-treatment stresses on the product. Pastair works by adding active oxygen to the product for a defined time and then removing it again. The bacterial eradication that is achieved, almost 99%, is higher than that achieved with traditional heat pasteurisation. At the same time the taste and nutritional elements are preserved to a significantly higher degree.

In 2008 the Pastair process won the Ideon Agro Foods Innovation Award and has been the focus of attention in a number of international publications.