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FOOD PROVINCE

Regional Food Label
from South Ostrobothnia

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Presentation of Good Practice

Regional Food Brand/Label: Food Province

1. How it was build? (Development project)
2. What did we learn?
3. How does it look like now?
(Operational model)
5. What's the transferability?



Background and context

- The idea of Food Province is not new.
- Food sector plays a key role in the regions economy.
- The concept of Food Province have been adopted also in the key strategies within the region.
 - The **regional strategy** emphasises the need to promote the region as the Food Province.
 - The **rural development strategy** also highlights the goal (Food Tourism development)
 - **Smart specialisation strategy** (sustainable food systems)

During the ongoing programme period 2014-2020 many development activities have been directed to develop the region as a Food Province.

- Food tourism projects: creation and promotion of the brand, food province menu's for local restaurants, events to promote the food etc.



The need behind.

The activities around the brand have always been dependent on an existing EU project.

-> Need to create more permanent structures for the brand to ensure it's independency from changing projects.

-> Need to clarify and sharpen the brand identity and make it more appealing for consumers.

A brand development project was set up (2018-2019)

1. to further develop the brand identity
2. to create an operational model (independed from external funding)

Pilot project under
Interreg NICHE project

How was the brand build?

The pilot project: August 2018 – November 2019

Budget: 50 000 eur

Key actors:

- Coordinator: Regional Council of South Ostrobothnia
- External experts
 - **Foodwest Ltd.** (core action group meetings, consumer studies, operational model development)
 - **Kamon marketing Ltd.** (brand visual identity development, storytelling)
- **Core action group:** 25 members from all over the food chain

Key activities:

- Core action group meetings (6 meetings)
 - Brand concept creation
 - Operational model creation
- 2 consumer studies (outside the region)
 - Testing brand concepts

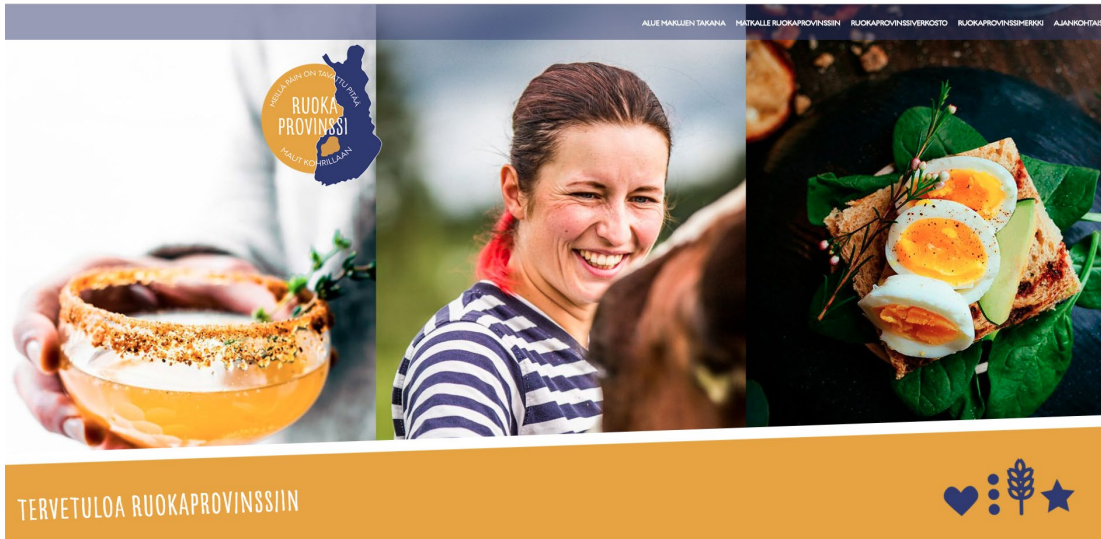


Outcomes from the project

- **Renewed brand identity** (brand book defining logo use, fonts, pictures, visual elements, slogans and storytelling)
- **Updated websites and social media channels**
 - www.ruokaprovinssi.fi
- **Marketing material templates**
- **Operational model for the brand**
 - Business model, coordination model
 - Criteria



Visual identity & slogans



SLOGANS:

Being an South Ostrobothnian means that we do what we have promised to.

We are proud of our know-how.

We are relentless in our souls.

And we offer nothing but the best on your table.



Lessons learned

- **Go outside your region (consumer studies)**
 - Testing the brand outside your region is highly valuable
 - Without the studies the output would have been very different.
- **Finding the right balance**
 - Brand identity: Consumers vs. wider regional perspective
 - The brand is now useful both for food producers, restaurants and RDI-organisations.
 - Criteria: not too strict but still reliable



How does it look now? 1/3

The operational model

One organisation took responsibility of the overall coordination of the brand / label

- **Rural Women's Advisory Organisation of South Ostrobothnia (RWAO)**

Rotating advisory group (5-10 members)

- Meetings 3-4 times a year
- Defines the rules, decides and approves the applicants, guides the work and activities around the label

The labels is open for all actors within the food value chain.
Yearly member fee varying from 500 to 900 euros.

Core idea is to increase the sales of the member SMEs and increase the visibility of the label holders.



How does it look now? 2/3

Criteria: Avoiding too strict criteria, but still trustful and reliable to consumers.

Three criteria:

1. Assured quality

1. Pass national quality standard (Oiva report)
2. Clean premises when visiting
3. A good company reputation

2. Origin from the region

1. Company and its production facilities locating in the region
2. Ingredients and production need to be from the region (many if not clauses).

3. Making things together

1. The label holder need to hold the label visible in its premises and digital media channels (websites etc.)
2. The labels holder should be open to auditing process.



How does it look now? 3/3

Auditing process:

- After receiving an application the staff from RWAO visits the company and makes the audit.
- The application and the results from the auditing process are then brought to the advisory board, who decides if the company will be accepted as the member

The yearly basic payments:

- **500 euros – smaller package** – permission to use the labels, social media updates (facebook and instagram), visibility on the websites, marketing material etc.
- **900 euros – larger package** (more visibility)

At the moment there are 15 member organisations.



Transferability

The pilot project structure

- How one can start building a brand.
- Engagement of local actors.
- Consumer studies highly recommended.
- Emphasis on the visual identity, storytelling, slogans etc.

The operational model

- Organisation of the model
- Criteria & auditing process





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Thank you!

Questions welcome



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