Finding meaning in place, community and identity

A study of local food and reconnection in Inderøy, Norway

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Abstract

The way we relate to our food has changed. From knowing and practicing food production, it is now brought to us from distant places with little information about its origins. The modern industrial food system alienates people from the origins of the food they eat, and local food systems attempt to reconnect them. This study explores the alienation from, and reconnection to, three important elements in terms of food production, namely place, community, and identity (culture). Inderøy in Norway has an abundance of food producers and food production activities and is the case of this study. Semi-structured interviews with municipal actors, producers, and local inhabitants were conducted to explore connections to place, community, and identity (culture), and it was found that these were meaningful categories of connection that brought a sense of wellbeing into people's lives. Proximity to the origins of food was meaningful in several ways. Emotional attachment to place was fostered through consuming local foods, but also through self-provisioning activities in the landscape. Social connections were strengthened through producer-consumer relationships expressing trust, and the proximity between them facilitated education and sharing of knowledge. Consumers displayed a care for farmers, and the various actors showed a willingness to co-operate in maintaining the local food culture. In terms of identity and culture, Inderøy has maintained some important traditions, while at the same time being open to include new and modern products into their local food culture. As such, their local food culture was *glocal*, but managed to gather local actors around it, by being distinctively from Inderøy. Finally, the study found that there were limits to various actors' engagement in the local food culture, as individualised lives foster individualised concerns. Nevertheless, the connections to place, community, and identity were important components in people's perceptions of what a good life is.

Keywords: food systems, local food, reconnection, place, community, identity, wellbeing

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Contents

List of figures

1. Introduction

In May 2017 I visited Inderøy on a day trip from Trondheim with my family and some family friends. Our family friends knew the area well and showed us around northern Trøndelag, a region which has a rich history with Viking sites and large historical farms containing old and beautiful buildings. When we arrived in Inderøy, we started our tour by driving up some hills to the Øyna restaurant, which overlooks the fjord, mountains, and cultural landscape from a beautiful viewpoint.

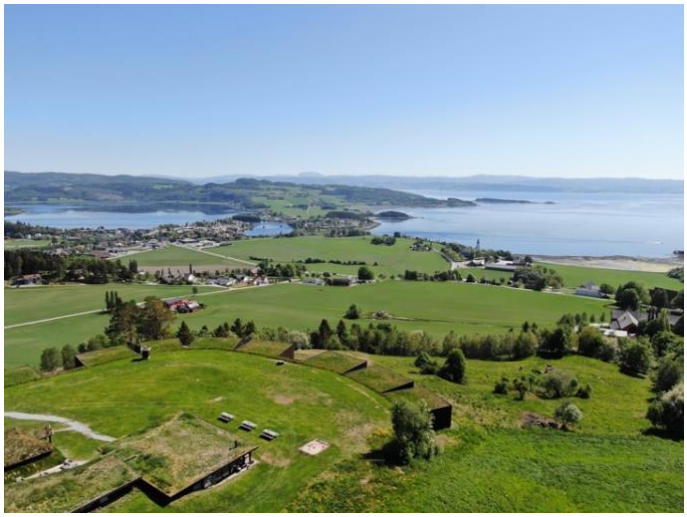

Figure 1: View from Øyna restaurant, Inderøy

We proceeded to go down to Straumen, the centre, to have a walk around the small, charming streets among wooden buildings by the sea front. As we reached a small park, we stopped at a sculpture by local artist Nils Aas – a flounder in front of the fjord landscape. Inside the fish figure is a sound installation, composed by Øyvind Brandtsegg, the sound of which is affected by the ebb and flow of the sea, the seasons, the light, and temperature (Den Gyldne Omvei a). It was while admiring this sculpture, listening to the sounds with great fascination, that I was almost hit in the head by a small cod, which landed in the small space between me and the sculpture. Naturally surprised, I looked up to see where it came from, and it did, of course, have a natural explanation, as I saw a stressed seagull flying above us. I have since thought to myself that fresh produce is abundant and everywhere in Inderøy.

1.1. The Place: The Inderøy peninsula

Inderøy is situated in the innermost corner of the long Trondheim fjord, in the county of Trøndelag, Norway. It is a peninsula covered in agricultural land, forested areas, small-scale farm businesses and large historical farms, medieval churches, and a charming administrative centre next to a tidal current in the Trondheim fjord. Together with Røra, the mainland area to the south-east, as well as Mosvik, a part of the Fosen peninsula to the south-west, it constitutes the municipality of Inderøy. The population of 6783 people (SSB, 2021) is spread out mostly along the coastline, with a concentration of people in the administrative centre of Straumen (Haugen and Stokkan, 2023).

Straumen is a charming small town with a mix of old wooden houses in different colours, and an increasing number of new buildings. The town's name means "the stream" and has its name from the second largest tidal current in the Nordic region (Inderøy Kommune), which flows vigorously past wooden buildings on the seafront. This is an area rich in coastal history and culture, which has been expressed through, among other things, old petroglyphs of fish, and a significant boat building industry in the 18th and 19th century (Haugen and Stokkan, 2023). It is also expressed through the municipal coat of arms, designed by local and nationally recognised artist Nils Aas, with four golden flounders on a red background (Haugen and Stokkan, 2023).

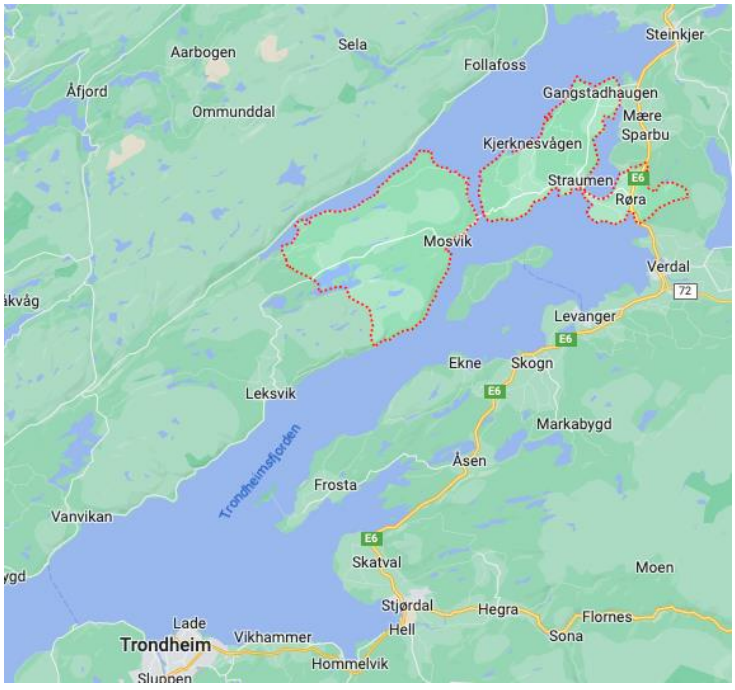

Figure 2: Map of the Trondheim fjord with Inderøy outlined in red

1.2. The Golden Road

Agriculture makes up a crucial part of Inderøy's economy, with various types of animal husbandry, and some horticulture, with a focus on vegetables and berries (Haugen and Stokkan, 2023). Many businesses work with the processing of these resources, and Inderøy is known for a network of farms, food and drink producers, as well as creative and handicraft businesses, that make up the tourism concept "The Golden Road" (Haugen and Stokkan, 2023). The idea came about after Inderøy had been awarded a price for cultural activity in the municipality in 1996. Ideas were exchanged in order to establish a proper tourism concept, and from this the Golden Road, or Den Gyldne Omvei (its literal translation is "the golden detour") was born. As Inderøy is reached by getting off the main road between the south and the north of Norway, it was a perfect name to attract tourists to come and slow down, enjoy the landscape and taste local flavours (Den Gyldne Omvei b).

Einar Jacobsen, a man working in the municipality with business development at the time, was essential in the start-up of this organisation. He brought together businesses he thought could offer quality products and services, and the network initially started with ten members. Today it consists of 23 different actors, still with a focus on quality, as well as on *cooperation*, which would become a key word throughout the data collection process (Den Gyldne Omvei b). Importantly, there are food actors outside of the Golden Road network in Inderøy, who have either not met the requirements for membership, or who are not interested in being a member. With this substantial food production and cultural activity, Inderøy plays an important role in the regional context of Trøndelag county, which has increased its focus on local food in the last couple of decades.

1.3. Rationale and key questions

Agricultural scientist and philosopher Christian Coff (2006) notes that a natural division of labour in the emerging towns of the past meant that only certain people worked on the land with food production, however, food producers were geographically close to their consumers. Today food production processes have become invisible to most consumers around the world (Coff, 2006). Warren Belasco (2008), who has written extensively on the topic of food, states that the food industry has actively encouraged a disconnection between consumers from production. Ever since the global trade expanded in the 18th century, obtaining raw material and products from distant places, and not having to struggle to get it

yourself, has been seen as progressive (Byrnes 1976, p. 30, in Belasco, 2008, p. 4). Food products come to us as abstractions, not giving many clues as to where and from what it comes from (Belasco, 2008). Wendell Berry (1989), quoted in Belasco (2008), writes about the modern consumer as such: "[the] industrial eater (…) who does not know that eating is an agricultural act, who no longer knows or imagines the connections between eating and the land, and who is therefore necessarily passive and uncritical." (p. 126)

Because food makes up an elementary part of our lives, it is an ever-important topic to delve into. The world and our societies are structured around food (Steele, 2008; 2020). In the past we would rely on ourselves and our communities to produce food and ensure our survival, but today food production stretches far and wide in long and complex networks across the world. We may be far away from the seeds, the plants, the animals, the landscapes, as well as the farmers and other humans involved in the production and processing that provide us with food and nutrition, and because of that, we are not able to see where and how value chains stretch across space, nor are we able to see how food is distributed unfairly around the world. I am not alone in arguing that this has had an impact on how we relate to food and our surrounding landscapes, places, nature, and communities (see e.g. Feagan, 2007; O'Hara & Stagl, 2001). There has been a disconnection between the consumer and the producer, process and origin of food, the consequences of which are explained by Robert Feagan (2007):

> *The geography of the modern food system reveals that, as food chains become stretched further and in more complex ways across space, we experience both the physical and psychological displacement of production from consumption, and all of the other disconnections and disembedding which follow in that stead – loss of agricultural resilience and diversity, degradation of the environment,* ***dislocation of community, loss of identity and place****. The irony is that the global north is more connected than in any other age yet, simultaneously, increasingly detached and alienated*. (p. 38)

Further, thanks to modernity and a globalised food system, all kinds of global foods are available to us in any supermarket or shop. This is at least true for the West, and moreover, affluent areas within the West. However, the globalised industrial food system and conventional food production methods have come under scrutiny after a series of events

starting in the 1970s. So-called food scares, or food scandals, have threatened people's health and safety and consequently caused panic, and as such has been a big reason for questioning the lack of transparency and knowledge about the food system and where one's food comes from (Renting, Marsden, and Banks, 2003; Harris, 2010). Salmonella, e. coli, foot and mouth disease, and the horse meat scandal of 2013 are some of the scares that have caused people to gaze at the long, global supply chains, as well as the information they are provided with, with a critical eye (Renting et al., 2003; Vermeir and Verbeke, 2006; Harris, 2010; Whitworth, Druckman, and Woodward, 2016).

More recently, the COVID-19 pandemic and the Russian invasion of Ukraine and subsequent war, has impacted the flow of food between countries, and this has strengthened the focus on food security and self-sufficiency within countries, including Norway (SIFO, 2022). There are also less selfish reasons behind consumers' criticisms of long invisible food chains, such as environmental concern and animal welfare (Renting et al., 2003). Carolyn Steele (2020, p. 20) writes that, because food is so important in our lives, it is therefore also a big determinant for a *good* life, and knowing how the food system works today will not contribute to any such sensation, because of all the exploitation of people, animals, and the rest of nature that goes on in it. We, as humans, are both on a constant quest for the good life, however, we are also, intentionally or unintentionally participating in this system of exploitation (Steele, 2020, p. 20).

Processes on the producer side have also contributed to a re-focus on local food. Farmers have for decades experienced the impact of a globalising food system with free trade and productivist demands, which hits small producers and those who live in peripheral rural areas the hardest (Renting et al. 2003; Ilbery and Kneafsey, 1999). A pressure for increased productivity and not enough money to get the job done means that many farmers cannot meet the demands put upon them. While it has created difficulty for many farmers, the productivity revolution has also been a success, mainly for a limited number of farms that have been able to upscale, invest in new equipment and technology, and produce enough volumes of the main agricultural products for consumption in Norway, namely grain, milk and meat, even if it is not enough to be self-sufficient in total (Sæther and Haugum, 2012, p. 12).

Productivity improvements and business innovations have contributed to falling prices on agricultural products, and as a result, if they are not able to deliver on volumes, the farmers take out less money for themselves and their employees, and many are still unable to do the necessary investments on their farm (Sæther and Haugum, 2012), something which has also led to the use of immigrant workers working for low wages (Harris, 2010). With this situation, many farmers have had to become creative and look for alternative ways of getting an income, either outside the farm or from the farm's resources. This is how alternative food networks and several business activities on one farm, such as farm shops and tourism, have become options for, in particular small-scale farmers, over time (Sæther and Haugum, 2012). More than just being about securing an income, local food production and alternative food networks maintain a diverse agricultural landscape, with products that echo traditions, sometimes lost ones that are reclaimed, and cultural heritage (Sæther and Haugum, 2012, p. 10). It is therefore less about big volumes of staple products that can feed a great number of people, than it is about food culture and the various meanings and roles put into food, in addition to the farmers' survival.

Because of the aforementioned challenges on both the producer end and the consumer end, the response has been to connect these two groups, as well as connect food in a larger degree to place (Harris, 2010). While all of these reasons are interesting look at in terms of local food production, I want to go back to Feagan's (2007) quote, and the deeper connections and meanings that food can mediate for people, such as connections to place and community, as well as a sense of identity. Therefore, in reference to past research, which has explored the importance of the elements of place, identity (culture), and community in relation to local food, this thesis wants to explore whether these three elements, in the context of local production and consumption, mean something to people in Inderøy, and whether it has the potential to challenge the food system.

The research question is hence: *How does the local food system in Inderøy challenge the food system by reconnecting food with place?*

1.4. Outline

The thesis is structured into six chapter and a conclusion. The following chapter (2) is a literature review going through some relevant studies on local food, providing context and

an overview of the field. Much of the literature focus on reconnection, which foreshadows the theoretical framework dealing with the antidote: alienation. Chapter 3 presents the theoretical concepts which will guide the analysis and discussion. Alienation is presented as the leading concept, with subsequent explorations into theories of place, community, and identity. Next, chapter 4 will present my research methods, as well as reflections on the research process. Chapter 5 consists of four sub-chapters, each of which deals with an analytical topic based on the theoretical framework, which goes into how each of the theoretical categories are meaningful to various actors in Inderøy. 5.1. looks at spatial connections; 5.2. explores communal connections; 5.3. looks into cultural connections; and 5.4. looks at (the disconnections to) food in modern life, as presented by the various actors that were interviewed. Chapter 6 discusses some of the main points of the thesis, such as how people relate to food production locally and globally, before chapter 7 provides a conclusion. Bibliography and additional documents are found in the final pages.

2. Studying local food

Local food is has become an increasingly researched topic since the 1990s. It has been researched in many capacities and from many angles, but most often it is in the context of an otherwise broken global industrial food system. It has become associated with exploitation of humans, animals, and nature overall, as well as with climate and environmental change, and social injustice. It describes a system seemingly out of order, and it can feel overwhelming, like modernity itself, leaving behind anxious people looking for meaning. It seems fitting to reiterate Steele's (2020) argument, mentioned in the introduction, that alludes to this. How can anyone lead a truly good life knowing that one participates in such a system? In the Norwegian context, Delsett (2022) looks at some of the same issues and asks why food can be both right or wrong in modern society. In a search for meaning, local food has become one way of finding it, through *reconnecting* with elements that we have become alienated from. The concept of alienation will be presented in the following theory chapter, while most of the literature in this part will deal with reconnection as a way of countering alienation from food.

2.1. Is "local" better than "global"?

First and foremost, there is a need to acknowledge the so-called "local trap". The term local is used as an opposition to global, but they are both abstract terms describing the scale at which one is looking. Purcell and Brown (2005) and Born and Purcell (2006) argue that there are no inherent qualities about the two that make one better or worse than the other. Moreover, one assumption about local food is that it is naturally more climate friendly because it saves food miles. However, studies (see e.g. Edward-Jones et al., 2008; Schlich and Fleissner, 2005) have shown that other factors save emissions more than cutting transport, which is the main positive climate-related factor associated with local food. Further, both conventional and organic food can be local, even if their values and production methods are vastly different (Winter, 2003). Indeed, production methods have a much bigger impact on climate and environmental sustainability than transport, or "food miles" (Edward-Jones et al., 2008; Adams, 2018).

Many other researchers have commented on the simplified dualism of global versus local, where the local is associated with the good, and the global with the bad (Hinrichs, 2003;

Winter, 2003; Feagan, 2007; Holloway et al., 2007; Harris, 2010). As expressed by DuPuis and Goodman (2005): *Localism becomes a counter-hegemony to [the] globalisation thesis, a call to action under the claim that the counter to global power is local power. In other words, if global is domination then in the local we must find freedom.* (p. 361) It becomes a force of resistance against global capitalism, but it cannot achieve its noble goals without looking at their own local systems, and practice inclusion and democracy within them (DuPuis and Goodman, 2005). Winter (2003) warns against *defensive localism*, which describes a situation where people only tend to celebrate the local and become sceptical against outside influence, or what would be seen as "other". He argues that a fixation on the local threatens to validate exclusion and xenophobic tendencies (Winter, 2003). To this, Schnell (2013) has countered the argument, by arguing that rather than becoming defensive, reconnecting with food production and farmers demonstrates care for others, and not to mention care for nature. Furthermore, rather than fostering intolerance, it fosters responsibility (Schnell, 2013, p. 623). Adams (2018) writes that rather than focusing on the instrumental values of local food, it can be appreciated on aesthetic grounds, giving it intrinsic value. He further argues that the aesthetic appreciation of local food—by using all the senses, invoking symbolic imagery and erasing any boundaries between human and nature—can lead to a care for one's environment and landscapes (Adams, 2018).

2.2. Re-spatialising food – landscapes and local food consumption spaces

Localised food systems seek to *respatialise food systems perceived to have become placeless* (Harris, 2010, 355). Harris (2010) reminds us that conventional food systems also operate in places, however, they do not have as clear links or a strong identity as localised food systems, which in contrast deliberately work with identities of place. "Place" and "the local" are after all social constructions (Harris, 2010), but as Schnell (2013, p. 616) argues, even though "place" and "local" are vague terms, they still carry a lot of meaning. One can also ask if local food systems represent a *re*localisation rather than simply localisation, since it arguably looks like a return to the food systems of the past, however, Harris argues that localised food systems are "not inevitably regressive" because of it (Harris, 2010, p. 364).

Food and landscape are heavily intertwined, thus there is much research on this relationship. Roe (2016) writes on how food production and consumption is both shaped

by, and contribute in shaping the landscape. These relationships create and contain cultural meaning and make up cultural landscapes (Roe, 2016, p. 709). Specific local landscapes are also what is contained in the word *terroir*. In response to placeless and cultureless global industrial food, the Slow Food movement has been particularly interested in protecting foods with a distinct tradition and belonging to specific places (Weaver, 2019, p. 219). The Slow Food movement, which has been studied by many, is essential to mention in the context of local food, and not least in context of the good life. According to Siniscalchi (2013), who has studied the movement over many years, the movement has: *presented itself as an association that defends quality food consumption that respects "human rythms" and pleasure*. (p. 295) Their philosophy has developed over the years to include many political issues (Siniscalchi, 2013, p. 295), however the movement remains in the realm of gastronomy and middle-class "eco-gastronomers", limiting the access to the pleasures of local food (Sassatelli and Davolio, 2010). While *terroir* is a French term originally used to describe the particularities of wines, it has become part of a wider celebration and recognition of regions, landscapes, peasants and agricultural methods, which in turn makes up French national identity (Beriss, 2019, p. 63).

Reconnecting with food also means finding spaces to do just this. Venn et al. (2006, p. 256) found four types of producer-consumer relationships in the realm of local food: producers as consumers (e.g. community gardens); producer-consumer partnerships (community-supported agriculture, CSA); direct sell initiatives (e.g. farmer's markets); and specialist retailers (e.g. online grocers or tourist attractions). Central to these spaces are re-spatialisation and re-socialisation (Venn et al., 2006, p. 249). More specifically, they have non-conventional supply and/or distribution channels, relationships founded on social embeddedness and trust, are tied to a specific geographical location, and are associated with authenticity and quality (Venn et al., 2006, p. 253). Whereas people who live in rural places are spatially closer to food production, they can be equally mentally distanced to the food production as any urban dweller. Roe et al. (2016) identify various foodscapes in the urban context, which can arguably be applied in many rural contexts as well. The foodscapes representing those who are attempting to have a more conscious relationship with food, or to get closer to the producers of it, are the farmer's markets, small-scale grow-your-own landscapes – of which allotment gardens belong – and the landscape of the urban food forager (Roe et al., 2016). Everett (2012) highlights how production places, meaning farms,

have become consumption spaces, in which tourists can have experiences. In the process of re-spatialising the food system, the food producers have had to open up their doors, in order to welcome consumers, which is not always without problems, seeing as consumer expectations can clash with producer needs and abilities (Everett, 2012).

2.3. Once disembedded, then reconnected

So, what can the local level give to people? As DeLind (2006) and Schnell (2013) point out, our lives are lived at the local level. We also give meaning to place (DeLind, 2006). Further, Schnell's (2013) research suggests that knowing where one's food comes from is one of the most important motivations among local food consumers. He also argues that a lot of the critiques against localisation and localism are simplistic, seeing as there is such a variety of motivations. They are not necessarily obsessing over food miles or represent over-protectionist locals who fear "the other". Rather, people want to reconnect with the producer of their food, with nature – soil, animals, seasons – and to be a part of a community and place. Most of all, people want to eat fresh, tasty, and nutritious food (Schnell, 2013, p. 620). This is also acknowledged by Edwards-Jones et al. (2008, p. 271), who, even though they demonstrate that local food is not more environmentally friendly because it saves food miles, conclude that the preference for local food often has more to do with belonging, place, and community. Eating local food is therefore to a large degree about connection (Schnell, 2013, p. 622).

Beriss (2019) argues local food is a tool to humanise food systems again. On a deeper level, DeLind (2006) argues that people tend to overlook the emotional, expressive, and sensual relations to food and place in the push for local food. The movement is largely market and commodity based, highlighting instrumental values, however, DeLind argues that highlighting the non-rational, emotional, and spiritual aspects of local food can strengthen the movement, as well as the importance of local food itself. We give meaning to place based on aesthetics, cultural, spiritual and emotional grounds. She further argues, through the work of Cone and Martin (1997; 1998)[1], that our bodies, our genetic make-up, are

[1] Cone, R. A. and E. Martin (1997), ''Corporeal Flows: The Immune System, Global Economies of Food and Implications for Health,'' The Ecologist 27(3), pp. 107–111

Cone, R. A. and E. Martin (1998), ''Corporeal Flows: The Immune System, Global Economies of Food, and New Implications for Health,'' in P. A. Treichler, L. Cartwright, and C. Penley (eds.), The Visible Woman: Imagining Technologies, Gender, and Science, New York: New York University Press, pp. 321–359.

adjusted to certain environments and the foods of those environments. The globalization of food, as well as the additives, preservatives and pesticides used in this process, introduce our bodies to foods "out of place", which affect our immune systems and health (DeLind, 2006, pp .132-133). As Dowler et al. (2009) observe, food is biology, consumed by biological creatures, however, our understanding and experience of food have become distanced.

Reconnection is also about the communal aspect. In a Norwegian study, Skallerud and Wien (2019) explored local food consumption in Tromsø county through an economic sociology lens. They analysed their respondents' motivations using the notions of instrumentalism and embeddedness. While embeddedness includes motivations based on social connection, civic engagement, reciprocity, belonging, community, tradition and loyalty; instrumentalism, or marketness, includes motivations such as freshness, taste, appearance, and availability (Skallerud and Wien, 2019, p. 80). Their study on local food consumers in Tromsø showed that in addition to motivations based on instrumentalism, people preferred local food based on embeddedness. Welfare for the local community, therefore, turned out to be an important motivation for local food consumption (Skallerud and Wien, 2019). Local food is seen as one of the ways in which one can repair weakening senses of community, by gathering people around place, culture and identity (Beriss, 2019, p. 70).

The aforementioned concept of *defensive localism* is used as a warning against closed communities. DuPuis and Goodman (2005) argue, similarly to Hinrich's (2003), that localism is apolitical, but that it has the potential, if used well, to create open and reflexive local food systems. This involves, however, agentive and purposive work (DuPuis and Goodman, 2005). Dowler et al. (2009), based on the research of Kneafsey et al. (2008)[2], found that 'reconnection' is more of a process than an end to people. They identified a variety of sought 'reconnections'. These were categorised into biological reconnection (to soils, animals, seasonality), social reconnection (feelings, perceptions, relationships between producers and consumers based on trust), and moral reconnection (reflecting on ethical values and choosing accordingly) (Dowler et al., 2009, p. 208).

[2] Kneafsey, M., Cox, R., Holloway, L., Dowler, E., Venn, L. and Tuomainen, H., (2008), *Reconnect- ing producers, consumers and food: exploring alternatives*, Oxford: Berg. * I could not access this book.

The aspect of trust was visible in a study on organic and local food by Zepeda and Deal (2009). Here, respondents displayed a distrust towards food corporations, whom they viewed as greedy and profit-seeking, thus sacrificing the interests of humans, animals, and the environment. They also blamed them for ruining food variety and diversity, and of driving small producers to bankruptcy (Zepeda and Deal, 2009, p. 702). Conversely, they viewed local farmers as caring, for their land, for animals and for the consumers of their products. Local farmers were people to be trusted, and they were given almost parental characteristics. In their view, the farmers were caring and protective, ensuring that the consumers were fed healthy, clean and nutritious food. By supporting these farmers, consumers would also meet like-minded people, with whom they could build relationships and a community (Zepeda and Deal, 2009, p. 702). Albrecht and Smithers (2018) had similar findings. Consumer motivations of those purchasing local food was to regain control over consumption, with a particular focus on health, and about building trust relationships. On the producer side, it was about regaining autonomy and a stable income, but also about building trust relationships (Albrecht and Smithers, 2018, pp. 71-72). Consequently, there seems to be something in distrusting big, abstract systems, and trusting what and whom you can see.

Albrecht and Smithers (2018, p. 72) also found that producers appreciated being able to educate consumers through their encounters, re-socialising the consumer with lost food knowledge. A study on fisheries and local food culture in coastal Newfoundland, Canada, also highlighted the element of educating consumers in lost food knowledge (DesRivières et al., 2017). Here, local restaurants became important actors in re-educating and re-socialising locals into old practices and knowledge about fish varieties, uses, seasons and ways of preparing them, and furthermore, connecting them to the place, history, traditions, culture, and community (DesRivières et al., 2017, p. 33).

2.4. Nostalgia for a sense of place, community and identity

We talk of *re*connection to food because we once had such a connection to it. This wish of *re*connection thus suggest that the previous situation is what we are longing for, however, many may have an idealised version of "how things were". As Dowler et al. (2009) put it, it seems to represent a time when "consumers knew where their food came from, farmers

earned a decent living, the environment was not degraded, and human health was not threatened" (p. 205). Consequently, many have a nostalgic view on food and locality. Weaver (2019, p. 218) writes that the quest for authenticity is a reaction to the industrialised food system and its "faceless commodit[ies]" lacking cultural identity.

A study by Autio et al (2013) found that Finnish local food consumers viewed local food as more *authentic*. As a growing number of people have a negative view of the global food system, people turn to local food systems. Not only do they criticise its impact on humans, animals, and the environment, but there is a perception that taste, freshness, and quality has declined with industrial mass production. In the same line of argument is the contention that their local foods taste more authentic, as it should taste, and as it used to taste (Autio et al., 2013). Moreover, there is a wish to help maintain food traditions and a lively countryside, with small as well as large farms and producers (Autio et al., 2013). When it comes to seeking authentic experiences, the sphere of gastronomy also plays its part. In Weaver's (2019, 2020) words, in a high-end restaurant: *Two kinds of cultural imperatives come into play: on the one hand the chef and his personal vision of real food—his artistic statement—and on the other, the consumer who chooses to be entertained by his performance.* People are inspired by the chef, not only in the restaurant, but also on TV and in magazines. Here, they talk about *real food*, alluding to issues of environmental sustainability and animal welfare. Celebrity chefs have become spokespersons for reconnecting with one's food and finding a good life in the process (Syse, 2015, pp. 170-172).

As several authors have argued, the development of food tourism has been heavily influenced and aided by celebrity chefs highlighting rural idyll and eating resources from the local landscape (Roe, 2016, p. 709; Syse, 2015, p. 175). Much of the local food literature deals with food tourism, of which local food has become a large part. It is also a strategy to develop local food cultures in places and develop an economy around it. For instance, Sims (2009) found British domestic tourists' quest for authentic experiences could be facilitated through consuming local food. Authentic food is hence linked to the place and culture of the destination, and Sims argues that the appreciation of which can help the economic and environmental sustainability of regions offering local food tourism (Sims, 2009). In a study of local food tourism and regional identity in Cornwall, England, it was

found that an increasing interest for local food tourism in the region had helped re-establish a regional identity that had weakened over time (Everett and Aitchison, 2008). Further, it was found that environmental awareness had increased, as well as social and cultural benefits, and the celebration of local traditional heritage, skills, and ways of life (Everett and Aitchison, 2008). This both echoes and contrasts with what Adams (2018) says about connecting to the environment through food. He does not believe it can be done through the help of tourism, because the basis of the connection is too superficial, whereas Everett and Aitchison (2008) found it has had an impact on the local population.

In a Norwegian study, Frisvoll, Forbord and Blekesaune (2016) found that a minority of rural tourism tourists were particularly interested in food, but for the tourists who took a special interest in it, local food played an important part of their tourism experience. Another study on the local food tourism sector in Norway found, similar to Everett and Aitchison (2008), that it helped reaffirm local food heritage and culinary culture, even if consumption happened more in the context of tourism than everyday life (Vittersø and Amilien, 2011).

DeLind (2011) asks if the local food movement has lost its way, with all the directions the wider movement has taken, with numerous actors using local food in their own way. While one of the primary goals of the movement has been to empower local communities, the movement has taken a number of other directions. She looks at the locavore, who consumes local food without questioning the politics of community; the fact that big corporations try to jump on the trend of local food, exemplified by McDonalds use of local meat; and the problem with following the general advises of Michael Pollan rather than connecting with your own locality's context. DeLind (2011, p. 280) therefore asks researchers to go beyond instrumental issues and quantitative problems, and into place-based contexts researching the deeper meaningful connections that local food may provide, which is what this thesis aims to do.

3. Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework that supports this thesis is modernisation theory – the idea that with modernisation came alienation and specific longings to certain things that have been lost. Within the theoretical realm of modernisation theory, this thesis will focus in on certain important concepts. It will look at the alienation from and hope of reconnecting to place, community and identity with food as a medium. Therefore, the following will explore place, community, and identity (culture) as meaningful concepts.

3.1. Alienation

Kristian Bjørkdahl and Karen V. Lykke (2023) write about how we have become alienated from the places and processes where living animals become dead meat. Using Norway as an example, their framework addresses this alienation along three axes: the *spatia*l, the *social*, and the *cultural* (Bjørkdahl and Lykke, 2023). I argue that these axes also provide a relevant framework when looking at food production and supply in general, as people have become increasingly alienated and distanced from the production of food, including where and how vegetables and fruits grow, where animals are kept and how they are treated, and what is involved in making the natural state of an organism into something that can be eaten – a food product. This alienation from food production, as well as the loss of knowledge about it, is *the* reason why local food has become a concept worth pursuing for a number of actors, and hence why there is so much literature on local food and *reconnection*, as seen in the previous chapter. People want to reconnect to place, their community, and their culture and traditions. These three axes of alienation will therefore guide the analysis, when it considers how local food may be able to reconnect people spatially, socially, and culturally to meaningful food practices and lives. Moreover, how local food can bring people closer to the knowledge and skills related to food production, as well as facilitate social bonds, communities, and relations to place and a local identity.

The *spatial alienation* has developed because the geographical distance between you, as a consumer of food, and the place where living organisms become food products, has increased (Bjørkdahl and Lykke, 2023, p. 11). This is also because an increasing number of people move to urban areas, and away from the rural places that make food. Even in the case of rural places, where people potentially live close to farms and production, they are

nevertheless far away from the places that produce *their* food, because the food they buy and eat from the supermarket are from distant and unknown places (Bjørkdahl and Lykke, 2023, p. 12). Often the products are only labelled with a country of origin, with no further information about the specific locality of the food. In other words, very little is known to the consumer. Moreover, with urbanisation, the number of people who produce food has decreased, and with it, most people's everyday contact with farm animals and other living organisms (Bjørkdahl and Lykke, 2023, p. 12).

With the spatial distance between producer and consumer, increasing urbanisation, and the decreasing number of people who work in primary sectors, comes a loss of knowledge about these professions and ways of life – a *social alienation* (Bjørkdahl and Lykke, 2023, p. 12). We eat the food, but we know and less and less about where it comes from, who has produced it, and how. And we do not need to know anything about growing vegetables or grains, nor keeping livestock, in order to feed ourselves, as Bjørkdahl and Lykke (2023) note. Meat is offered to the consumer, with the best pieces of the animal cut in practical sizes, vegetables have been cleansed of most of the soil, and excess leaves and twigs have been removed. The consumer cannot imagine where it has come from or what the original state of the food is, nor can they imagine the journey the food has been through to get to the supermarket in neat packaging (Bjørkdahl and Lykke, 2023, p. 12). The basic skills and knowledges related to food production that may have been taught to people through peers or personal practice in the past, are now irrelevant, and as such only farmers and people with an interest in food production know them. Further, the social connection between producer and consumer has decreased or vanished completely, meaning it is hard for the consumer to imagine the life and practice of farmers (Downey, 2011).

Lastly, while Bjørkdahl and Lykke (2023, 13) treat the cultural axe of alienation as the disappearance of a cultural justification for killing an animal for food, and the replacement of it by cognitive dissonance where we love the animal and like to forget that we kill it, it is more relevant here to instead look at experienced loss of tradition, heritage and identity related to food. Therefore, the *cultural alienation* deals with how a globalising culture of capitalism has changed what we eat in a particular place and how we obtain it (Phillips, 2006). The types of foods traditionally eaten by a people have been largely tied up with place and what the local environment and climate is able to produce. This has in turn

influenced the identity and culture of a place, as well as what we know to be the cultural heritage of a place. Although raw materials and dishes have crossed cultural and national borders for a long time, there has nevertheless been an increase in the spread of the types of dishes and food products that are eaten across the world in the last century, which has made some dishes nearly universal, such as the pizza, burger, taco, and curry. This is often referred to as McDonaldisation (see Ritzer, 1993).

With Bjørkdahl and Lykke's (2023) idea of the spatial, social and cultural alienation, comes a potential for reconnection along the same axes. As this thesis seeks to explore how *the local* accommodate these reconnections, it is therefore relevant to highlight the broad, but important, concepts of place, community, and identity, alongside the spatial, social and cultural axes, which will help to inform the analysis by how they relate to food. I will therefore address some concepts and theorists working under these broad themes in the following sections.

3.2. The spatial: Detached from place

The theory on *place* is vast, complicated, and it is a topic of constant discussion and development. For this part on place, I will therefore focus on a few scholars and discussions, as going into multiple and deeper discussions is beyond the scope of this thesis. The same can be said for the following sections on *community* and *identity.* This part aims to present how place can be meaningful to humans. Those engaged in debates on space and place in early modernity, such as Le Corbusier, favoured organisation, functionality, universality, "logic", and "rationality'" – everything which also related to machines and industry. Although more relevant for urban planning and architecture, it would nevertheless occupy the general minds of place-makers, influencing places beyond the urban, as mass-production needed mass-culture, which may arguably have led to mass-spaces (Ley, 1989, pp. 48-49). In it lay a wish for egalitarianism, where everyone would have access to the same (Ley, 1989, p. 50). In this sameness, critics began to sense a void and lack of meaning, and a post-modern search for this meaning began (Ley, 1989, p. 52), focusing in particular on people and places (Ley, 1989, p. 60). Today, many theorists understand local place as in conversation with the global. They are not two polarising constants, but rather processes in relation with each other. Although this may be true, it

then makes it hard to grasp what the local is (Savage, Bagnall & Longhurst, 2005, p. 3). We therefore have to try to describe what is significant about the local and place.

The geographer Yi-Fu Tuan (1979) said about place: *Place is not only a fact to be explained in the broader frame of space, but it is also a reality to be clarified and understood from the perspectives of the people who have given it meaning*. (p. 387) Tuan worked on how people relate to place and the emotional attachment people have to it. He separated space from place, saying that firstly, space is more abstract than place, but also that the ideas need each other to be properly understood (Tuan, 1977, p. 6). Space *is experienced directly as having room in which to move*. (Tuan, 1977, p. 12) Space becomes place when it *acquires definition and meaning* (Tuan, 1977, p. 136). In the most general sense, places are particular points in space, but, which will be discussed further, place contains substantial meaning (Tuan, 1975, p. 152). Importantly, you can talk about a place as "here", without implying that there is a "there" (Tuan, 1977, p. 136). In this thesis, the place – "here" – is Inderøy, and while there is no specific "there", it can be read throughout this thesis as the vast unspecified global space, however, it is rather the lack of "here" and its attached meanings, in relation to food that will be discussed.

There is a certain element of permanence inherent in place, as something unchanging (Tuan, 1977, p. 140). If it changes too much, the sense of place would be lost (Tuan, 1977, p. 179). Tuan (1977, p. 149) also conceptualises *homeplace* as a specific place of medium scale. This refers to a region, urban or rural, that supports livelihoods, and which is therefore associated with strong feelings. Place in general is constructed by meaning through experience (Tuan, 1975, p. 152), and the homeplace, specifically, can offer a sense of safety and rootedness (Tuan, 1977, p. 202).

These notions of place emphasise individual experience, meaning-making, and 'being-in-the-world', and its phenomenological foundations have been criticised by several scholars (Wylie, 2007, p. 180). Some of the criticism is that it fails to look at historical and material factors, and this is particularly important for feminist scholars, for instance, as such an approach to place does not challenge structures in the world, in addition to making the body a universal subject, as contested by Catherine Nash (2000) (Wylie, 2007, p. 181). Another criticism is that phenomenological approaches to place have a tendency to romanticise it, as

somewhere authentic in a world where people feel alienated, often a rural or pre-modern setting. The wish of phenomenology was to go against Cartesian dualism and erase the modern constructs and boundaries between the human body and place and nature. However, the danger is, as mentioned, that a pre-cultural body looks nostalgically at place, completely uncritically (Wylie, 2007, pp. 181-182). While phenomenology looks at place in terms of individual bodies' relations to place, it can also be difficult to handle meaning in a communal sense. In a now modern world coloured by pluralism and individuality, there may be hard to reach a consensus around the content of meaning attached to something or somewhere (Ley, 1989, p. 53). Further, something that may challenge place in terms of the permanence Tuan speaks of, are modern life characteristics such as virtual communication and increased mobility (Savage, Bagnall, & Longhurst, 2005, p. 1).

Peter Dickens, quoted in Ormrod (2016), has worked extensively on the connection human beings have to their surroundings, and how what happens to us affects our surroundings and vice versa. He argues, for instance, that under capitalist modes of production, human beings seem more alienated from nature than ever, and that this is partly due to the favouritism of abstract knowledge which serves capitalism, over lay knowledge (Ormrod, 2016). This includes how we produce our food, an act based in nature. Moreover, following Marx's ideas on human and nature, he argues that nature is an extension of ourselves, and that changing nature, will in turn change us (Ormrod, 2016). This illustrates how our surroundings have an effect on our mental well-being. Stedman (2002) describes "sense of place" as such: *Sense of place can be conceived as a collection of symbolic meanings, attachment, and satisfaction with a special setting held by an individual or group. Although anathema to some, this conception suggests a social-psychological model of human-environment interaction*. (p. 563)

People give symbolical meanings to landscapes and become attached to these meanings, and while there can be many meanings in one setting, usually as many as there are people in it, there are also common meanings based on shared ideas or experiences in a place (Stedman, 2002, p. 563). Casey (2001) relates the individual, or the body, to place and landscape as such: *The self has to do with the agency and identity of the geographical subject; body is what links this self to lived place in its sensible and perceptible features;*

and landscape is the presented layout of a set of places, their sensuous self-presentation as it were. (p. 405)

In this context, place is the local and space the global, representing the universal and unspecific. In place, one seeks to find the specific: community and identity, and not to mention meaning (Savage, Bagnall & Longhurst, 2005, p. 5). This section has as such addressed the importance of place in people's lives, and indirectly, the significance of spatial alienation.

3.3. The social: Loss of community

Many have written about how one of the consequences of modernity is the loss of community, due to, among other things, individualisation (Bauman, 2000). It is evident that social worlds have been changed by globalisation (Day, 2006). Berger, Berger and Kellner (1974) wrote that there used to be more unity around so-called "life-worlds". Even if there were different segments of people in society and differences in the way they lived their lives, there was more unity around the social organisation, where everyone was integrated in one way or another. This typically revolved around religion (Berger, Berger, and Kellner, 1974). Day (2006, p. 182) identifies the dissolution of place, vastly increased mobility, and the destabilisation of old identity categories along class, gender and ethnicity as some of the relevant factors that have changed communities in modern times.

Place is not necessarily a determinant for community anymore, however. In traditional communities, aspects such as there being far to the next community, village, or town, or that there were few individuals in the community, would necessarily have created local similarities and social bonds. Today, this is no longer the case, as mobility is freer and other influences are closer than before (Day, 2006, pp. 183-184). In contrast to older identity categories, there is now more diversity in society in general, in terms of race, class, gender identities, and cultural backgrounds, which affects whether people gather around certain identities and create communities. Instead of identifying with the community one is born into or grows up in, as in the past, there is now greater freedom to identify with a diverse range of identity categories, and one can actively choose and join, or establish, a community, which further has to be maintained over time (Day, 2006, pp. 186-187). Such

modern communities need, however, more work and effort to be maintained, due to the fast changing and fleeting nature of modern globalised society (Day, 2006, p. 214).

This development has followed an idea that freedom and development is to be found outside the local community, which hinders it (Bauman, 2000, pp. 132-133). Local communities are then left for the seemingly better options in economic centres, which has to do with what is valued in society and culture, leaving such communities behind to crumble (Berger, Berger, and Kellner, 1974, pp. 121-122). Furthermore, the opportunities outside the local community offer the freedom to create one's own social bonds, meaning to leave one community – perhaps the geographical home place – behind, in order to create bonds with people that feel more suited to one's personal and individual identity (Day, 2006, p. 184). Freedom and community are seemingly opposites in such a view. Community provides safety and security, which are human needs as powerful and desired as freedom. As Bauman (2000, p. 53) notes, freedom and safety complement each other, while being incompatible at the same time. He says there is good reason to look at history as making the movement of a pendulum going back and forth (Bauman, 2000, p. 53). Sometimes we want the safety of a community, and sometimes we want the freedom in the fluidity of the modern globalised world.

"The local", "place" and "community" are all associated with face-to-face interaction. However, today relations are equally often established with people across vast geographical space (Giddens, 1990, p. 18). This is what is termed the disembedding of local communities, as social relations are lifted out of local contexts (Giddens, 1990, p. 21), including services once received locally, which are now offered in places we cannot necessarily see. This is also true, of course, for food systems. We have to trust that someone we do not know, and whom we cannot see, will do the job properly (Giddens, 1990, p. 87). The issue of disembedding of social relations and trust in absent others in expert systems, has to do with, precisely, *trust*, which used to depend upon kinship with known people in the local community (Giddens, 1990). Further, instead of seeing, learning and knowing skills for ourselves, shared within a community, they are increasingly lost. While local communities have come to matter less in modern societies, we, as Giddens (1990, p. 141) notes, instead become part of global communities of shared experience.

What make communities meaningful? German sociologist Ferdinand Tönnies distinguished two different types of community or society. The one that characterised pre-modern ones, with tight-knit and warm relations, as well as consensus around behaviour, responsibility and goals, is identified with the word *Gemeinschaft*. Such units of community can still be found today, where certain ideas are taken for granted and followed, and where the loyalty to a group and common ideas is strong (Tjora & Scambler, 2020, pp. 9-10). The other type of society and community is characterised by the word *Gesellschaft*, which also translates as "company", where one participates on formal terms and by negotiation. Rather than thinking as a community, the *Gesellschaft* communal relations is characterised by individuals putting themselves over the rest of society, something which describes modern society well. There may be shared ideas and beliefs, and people depend on each other with a reciprocal self-interest in making things work (Tjora & Scambler, 2020, pp. 10-11).

Gemeinschaft plays on the emotional, and, as Bauman (2000, p. 33) notes, do we not become emotional and warm inside simply by hearing or reading the word "community"? It *feels* good to belong to a community – it meets a human need in us. Traditional communities provided a sense of continuity and security for people, in their reciprocal trust relationships, and consequently the disintegration of them had led to a sense of insecurity (Day, 2006, p. 189). Berger et al (1974) talks about a mental state of homelessness of modern people, which is due to the pluralistic nature of modern society and leads to mental discomfort. Giddens (1990) states that he does not wish to romanticise pre-modern life and communities. I will reiterate this, as pre-modern societies had their range of problems and unattractive features, however, one must ask whether something which was lost, an element of such societies which many people seem to cherish, is possible to retrieve again. In conclusion, some of the concepts within community which appear to be meaningful, and which have been presented above, are trust, care, safety, belonging, and emotional connections to others. As expressed by Day (2006): *Community has a form of social existence because people want to believe in it*. (p. 157) And people keep believing in it.

3.4. The cultural: Loss of tradition and heritage, and an emphasis on identity

Place – the local and specific – and community and identity are heavily intertwined concepts, and identity is what gives meaning and content to place and communities of people. With the loss of communities, or at least the sense of community, identity seems to

have become even more important, in its capacity to accommodate for individuals to attach oneself to a group and become a part of something bigger. It is, as Bauman (2001) notes, often only when things cease to exist as they were, that one may appreciate their value, as we take the specific form of a thing for granted (Bauman, 2001). Traditional communities seem to have been one such thing. In Bauman's *The Individualized Society* (2001), Jock Young (1999, p. 164) is quoted: *Just as community collapses, identity is invented*. Identity is suggested as a replacement for communities, somewhere to feel safely at home (Bauman, 2001). Bauman (2001) himself writes:

> *The paradox, though, is that in order to offer even a modicum of security and so to perform its healing role, identity must belie its origin, must deny being just a surrogate, and best of all needs to conjure up a phantom of the self-same community which it has come to replace. Identity sprouts on the graveyard of communities, but flourishes thanks to its promise to resurrect the dead.* (p. 151)

Bauman thus suggests that it is in identifying with attainable groups of people that we can find community in the modern world. The modern world is, as mentioned, characterised by its plurality, and we are constantly bombarded with information, as well as options (Berger et al., 1974, p. 67). Therefore, as Ashley et al (2004) remark: *It is unique to modern society that people can move relatively easily between places, and that their identities may adapt accordingly*. (p. 108) While there are so many identities to inhabit in modernity, some things that characterise a *modern identity* are that it is open (to new influences all the time), differentiated (affected by the plurality of modern society), reflective, and individuated (the individual and their freedom is the most important to themselves), which, as Berger et al (1974, pp. 77-78) note, can lead to a constant identity crisis.

There is consequently a freedom in being able to move around, join various groups or communities and adapt our identity thereafter. However, there is also something safe and meaningful about stability, that is found in the defined continuity of a community. Tartiglia and Rossi (2015) write: *The complexity of the dynamics of globalization for identity and culture, can lead to a fragmentation of self and identity, creating a need for stability often found in local identification*. (p. 105) In the uniformity and universality of global culture, of which people can also feel a part of, most appreciate particularities. Georg Ritzer (Ritzer,

2003; Ritzer, Stepnisky, and Lemich, 2005) has written on how processes of globalisation transform *something* into *nothing*.

> *Nothing is defined as a social form that is, generally, centrally conceived, controlled, and comparatively devoid of distinctive substantive content. Something can then be defined as a social form that is, generally, indigenously conceived, controlled, and comparatively rich in distinctive substantive content.* (Ritzer, 2003, p. 191)

He categorises *nothing* into four categories, namely *non-places* (e.g. a shopping centre), *non-things* (e.g. credit cards), *non-people* (e.g. telemarketers, relying heavily on general scripts), and *non-services* (e.g. ATMs) (Ritzer and Ryan, 2002). Their *something* counterparts are exemplified as a local diner, a one-of-a-kind painting, a local and familiar butcher, and services provided by distinct, and perhaps familiar, humans in distinct roles. The opposites are marked by either having distinctive substance or not; being unique or generic; having local ties or not having it; being temporally specific or timeless; and either having human relations or dehumanised relations (Ritzer and Ryan, 2002, pp. 53-54). That which is *something* can also be globalized, but it is to such a lesser degree that the impact remains low, as *something* will not capture people in all cultures. Furthermore, *something* can be turned into *nothing* by becoming a commodity produced and sold millions of times around the world until it seizes to be marked by place and people (Ritzer and Ryan, 2002, p. 54). Ritzer (2003) discusses the struggle between *glocalisation* and what he terms *grobalisation.* The latter term signifies the activities of, for instance, large corporations with imperialist attitudes, wanting to spread their generic products and services worldwide in order to exert influence and power (Ritzer, 2003, p. 192). Glocalisation is, on the other hand, the merging of global and local influences into something new, because, as Ritzer (2003, p. 192 &198) contends, almost everything that is local has been touched by globalisation in some form.

When local communities and cultures, or just people in general, seek to take back something that has been lost and claim an identity, they often turn to traditions and cultural heritage (Ritzer et al., 2005, pp. 124-125). About tradition, Giddens (1990) says: *Tradition is a mode of integrating the reflexive monitoring of action with the time-space organisation of the community. It is a means of handling time and space, which inserts any particular*

activity or experience within the continuity of past, present, and future, these in turn being structured by recurrent social practices. (p. 37) Tradition becomes a contrast to modernity, as traditional cultures value the past and tradition, whilst modernity looks forward and embrace the new (Giddens, 1990, pp. 37-38). Giddens (1991) expresses how modernity has been a process of freeing oneself from the constraints of small and traditional communities, while now the quest is for an authentic life – to be true to oneself through both finding and constructing oneself (Giddens, 1991, p. 79). However, authenticity takes on another meaning too, in a search for authenticity outside oneself. The search for authenticity may have occurred with industrialisation, when the unique became replaced by mass-production and copies of the same things (Benjamin, 1969, in Peterson, 2005, p. 1094). However, what is authentic and not can change, as it is a social construct that continually evolves (Peterson, 2005). These authentic elements are, however, often the products of tradition (Ritzer et al., 2005; Weaver, 2019).

Here, identity has been treated both as something relating to place, a culture of tradition and heritage, but also something which, for the individual, can make up a community. All of these concepts – place, community, identity – deal with how human beings emotionally relate to themselves, to other human beings, and to their environments and surroundings. We seek to find meaning, and as has been established by many theorists (e.g. Giddens, Bauman, and Berger) on globalisation and modernity, some meaningful connections seem to have been lost on the way. The above categories will therefore lead the analysis when I seek to understand what local food gives to people, and whether it is strong enough to challenge the impersonal global food system.

4. Methods

As Beuving and de Vries (2015, p. 15) write, humans are a curious and inquisitive social species. We ask questions all the time, and there are various ways to answer these questions in research. I chose an exploratory and interpretive path, where adjustments and changes were made along the way in response to the research process and its findings. This master's thesis is primarily based on data gathered from qualitative fieldwork in Inderøy municipality, in the Trøndelag region of Norway, in September 2021. The purpose was to gather data on local food in Inderøy and the inhabitants' views and reflections on the place they live their lives, the place's local food production and its value, and their own food practices. I was thus interested in the *qualities* of lives lived in Inderøy, as well as the qualities of their specific food production and traditions. Early in the process, my master's project became part of a larger research project conducted by Include research Centre, at the Centre for Development and the Environment, at the University of Oslo. The research project turned into this thesis, as well as a research article about how local food can contribute to community development, still under review, which I was lucky enough to contribute to.

4.1. Selection of Inderøy as case

Initially I wanted to look at the entire region and county of Trøndelag, and its substantial food production, but it was clear that it would be too much to cover. Inderøy, along with Røros, are two areas that stand out in terms of food production in Trøndelag, and who are well-known for their food products within the region. I chose Inderøy because of its position along the Trondheim fjord, which consequently provides food both from the sea and land, and because I had been there four years prior and had become intrigued by the beautiful landscape and the concept of The Golden Road (DGO) – the aforementioned tourism concept based on local foods, farm tourism, handcrafts, and experiences in the cultural landscape and the fjord. After some initial research it therefore seemed like a good place to study local food and the good life, because all of the abovementioned factors have contributed in giving Inderøy an identity beyond the municipality border, as an attractive place in northern Trøndelag with plenty of beautiful cultural landscape, farms and food production. Its history with big farms, its climate and position in the landscape, as well as

developments within food businesses – helped by municipal politics and regional tourist organisations in the last two decades – has indeed given Inderøy a unique status in terms of food production in Norway and a name associated with quality.

It was around the time I started focusing in on Inderøy that I was put in contact with Include research centre. They were planning a research project on local food, rural development and sustainable transformation, and we finally agreed that Inderøy seemed like a good case. Inderøy as a case represents a place where food production and processing is widespread, and a place that has created a name for itself through purposive work by select individuals. The Golden Road network represents an important part of the Inderøy case, because of its marketing of the good life in the cultural landscape. As food, place and the good life were aspects I wanted to look at, I found the connection between these in Inderøy. Whereas the Include project focused more on how three sets of actors contributed to rural sustainable place and community development in the context of local food, I focused more on the emotional and qualitative experiences of all the essential aspects of local food production in place, namely place itself, as well as community and identity, and asking whether these meaningful connections are enough to challenge the global food system.

4.1.1. Case study and approach

I wanted a flexible design, commonly associated with qualitative methods (Nygaard, 2017). A case study therefore suited the project, as it "is concerned with description, exploration, and understanding" (Cousin, 2005, p. 426). Inderøy works as an *intrinsic case study*, as it represents a unique and specific case worth studying (O'Leary, 2017; Cousin, 2005).

As I chose a case study, it became an interpretive approach, with which I worked both inductively and deductively. I was already determined to focus on the good life, both thematically and theoretically, and thereby worked deductively from this. With the rest of the process, however, an inductive logic was used, which, combined with deduction, makes up an abductive process. More specifically, it meant that I had some thoughts on how food matters in people's lives and how it is associated with a good life, as well as place and identity, however, I wanted to remain open to see whatever else I could find in the data and how it could be paired with theory. Abduction as an inference logic was developed by

Charles Saunders Peirce as an alternative to deductive and inductive inference, which represent two contrasting ways, and where abduction represents a combination of both. One can therefore move between the data and interesting findings, and established theory, in the process of coming up with the best explanation (Kennedy and Thornberg, 2017).

4.2. Fieldwork and data collection

My research project aimed to find out about people in Inderøy's relation to (local) food and their homeplace. Much of this relates to local identity and their experience of their home place, and it was clear from the start that I wanted to have a qualitative design with semi-structured interviews, where the informants and I were allowed to dive deeper into subjects, with some freedom to steer the conversation towards interesting reflections that came up. As I was collaborating with the Include project, we decided to interview the same informants for their project and my thesis with the same interview guide. I was allowed to have a say in the interview guide, and it eventually formed one that suited both projects.

The interviews represent the main source on which this thesis builds. The questions for local inhabitants revolved around food practice, knowledge on local food in Inderøy, how they spent their leisure time in the area, thoughts on their municipality (landscape, attractiveness, society, community, food and so on), and some questions on values and what they perceived to be the good life (in general, in association with local community, and in association with food). The questions for producers and municipal representatives revolved more around practical issues and social structures, but we also asked them the deeper questions and made them reflect about place, community, and identity. The Inderøy case was researched by two senior researchers and myself, where the inhabitant interviews were my main responsibility, as these would be the data material my thesis would mainly rest upon, but where I also worked on most of the producer and municipal officer interviews, which ended up becoming important to me as well.

My research is also informed by meals and farm visits around Inderøy. During our time there, we visited several food actors, such as Gangstad farm, Ystgård garden centre, Maren's Bakery, Kjerringa me' Straumen (café and shop), and Øyna restaurant. At Øyna we enjoyed a five-course meal largely based on local resources, and we were treated to small tastes of local foods throughout our stay there. We stayed at Husfrua, a farm hotel

and Golden Road actor, which allowed us to take in the cultural landscape through sight, sound and smell, but also taste. They served a breakfast based on local products, eggs from their own hens, and homemade jams. These food experiences also contributed in establishing a sense of Inderøy, the local food culture, and the inhabitants' relationship with local food.

Qualitative research rarely seeks to be objective, and one can therefore arguably indulge in some of these subjective sensory experiences, which end up informing the research. Being served eggs for breakfast from the hens right outside the breakfast room felt special, for instance. The taste of the eggs could be linked to visible and audible animals in a visible landscape. Likewise, tasting fireweed lemonade made by local apples and locally harvested fireweed at Maren's Bakery, conjured up images of my own memories of Trøndelag's summer landscapes. The sensuous act of eating can therefore speak to your identity and the landscapes and places of your personal history, and as such, the senses have been important instruments in this research.

4.2.1. Informants

In dialogue with my supervisor, as well as with the senior researcher in the Include project, we figured that sixteen would be a sufficient number of informants based on the interview length and questions we were planning. Ten of those were inhabitant interviews, as my thesis emphasises the inhabitant perspective on the issues raised, however, I also wanted perspectives from some producers and municipal officers in order to understand the processes behind Inderøy's local food development, and what role local food has had to each of them personally and professionally, and especially how they related to place, community, and culture. I recruited and was present at all the inhabitant interviews, and while I was present at the selected producer and municipal officer interviews, either doing the interviewing or note-taking, the recruitment was done by one of the Include researchers on the project. I have permission to use these because of my involvement in them.

Regarding the inhabitant informants, I began the recruitment by asking a friend who is relatively local to Inderøy whether she had any contacts there. From this friend I received a few names, whom I began contacting, and which resulted in two informants. There was little snowballing involved, apart from two of the informants, whose names were received

through two I had already spoken to. As snowball sampling risks producing similar and biased responses rather than representativeness (O'Leary, 2017), my strategy overall was purposive sampling with a focus on heterogeneity (Schreier, 2017). More specifically I followed a stratified purposive sampling strategy (Schreier, 2017), where I looked specifically for an equal number of men and women, a distribution across the age spectrum, and a diverse list of occupations/social situation**.** Therefore, all other informants were contacted by me individually, as I looked for these characteristics, which I hoped would give a random selection of perspectives. I wanted the viewpoints of a diverse set of regular inhabitants living in a food producing community, to see what kind of reflections they had on living a life in this exact location and context.

In terms of income, I did not have much information about them apart from their job descriptions, as well as three informants whose status was retired or living on benefits, but they all had a variety of professions (such as chef, kinder garden assistant and employed in a dairy business). In order to get a balanced view, I wanted to get an as diverse group of informants as possible. Below is a list of my informants, which have been given pseudonyms in order to protect their identity. Further, I have chosen not to list their occupations, as Inderøy is a small place and it may compromise some of the informants' anonymity. An overview of their approximate age is also listed, as we did not always go into exact age, but we spoke about age group. Following this is a simple overview of the other actors whose interviews have been used in the thesis, including a county municipality representative, municipal representatives, food producers, and one working with regional food development in Trøndelag.

Pseudonym	**Approximate age**
Nora	40
Amalie	55
Ada	25
Sofie	30
Ingrid	70
Jakob	55
Johan	45
Henrik	25

Isak	65
Emil	35

County Municipality representative
Municipal representative 1
Municipal representative 2
Regional food development representative
Food producer 1
Food producer 2

4.2.2. Recording and keeping data

We recorded all the interviews, and the recordings of which were uploaded to an encrypted folder on Microsoft Teams that was only available to the six researchers on the larger project, something which was communicated to the informants.

4.2.3. Ethical Considerations

My master's thesis was covered under the Include project's NSD ethical approval, due to using the same interview guide and collaboration, something which was checked with NSD in the early summer of 2021. We also notified all informants for the Inderøy case that they were contributing both to a larger research project and a master's thesis prior to the interview. Before we started recording the interview, we also asked for permission, along with the consent form to participate in the project.

4.3.Reflexivity

4.3.1. Scope and limitations

The scope of this thesis revolves around reflections on the meaning of place, community and identity in relation to local food, as well as the potential of these meaningful connections to challenge globalised and impersonal food value chains. It will say something about the connections between food, cultural heritage, and traditions, place-

making, communal relations, and identity formation, as well as their relevance in the current structure of the globalised world. Many talk about local food as a response to environmental and climate change, however, this thesis will focus on the social, and more indirectly economic, sustainability aspects of local food. We did ask about environmental attitudes in the interview, however, it did not end up forming an important part for the research project, nor my thesis. The primary focus is on social and emotional connections to people and place, and it will touch upon the economic sustainability of local food, especially for the producers. Thus, the environmental focus is beyond the scope of this thesis.

It can potentially show Inderøy as a success story in terms of establishing a flourishing food and tourism economy, and as a valuable example of how to boost a municipality's inhabitant numbers and economic situation, but there are limits to its transferability to other cases. As this is a case study, it focuses on the particularities of the case, place, and context. Although I am sure many people have similar sentiments when it comes to modernity and connections to place, community, and a sense of identity, Inderøy is a special example where local food culture has flourished, largely because of the agricultural fertile landscape and geographical position in this landscape, therefore, whether these connections can be re-established through food, may differ from context to context.

4.3.2. Reflections on benefits and challenges

Ideally, I would have liked to interview my informants walking in the landscape, an act which may have invoked memories and reflections surrounding food and the landscape, however, this way of conducting interviews was not compatible with the Include project. Nevertheless, working with professional researchers on a collaborative project gave me valuable insights into how a professional research project is planned and executed, and this was of great benefit to my learning and thesis process. While I would have had more freedom to shape my project if I was working on it alone, the Include project accommodated for my thesis and gave such value to it. It became a good partnership, where I contributed as a resource, and in turn learned immensely from the process.

As for the data collection process in Inderøy, my experience was that, while the people I was in contact with generally seemed to be eager to participate, coming as an urban

environmental student from the University of Oslo and asking questions loosely related to sustainability, climate, and the environment, but more directly *agriculture and food production*, felt uncomfortable at times. This is because there seems to exist a divide between urban and rural populations and their ideas of what Norwegian food production should be like, what is environmentally friendly and not, and whether big scale industrial farming is good or bad. You will find a range of opinions on both sides, however, it was clear from the interviews that my informants generally had other ideas about organic farming and meat production and consumption, for instance, than me. As I was the "urban environmental student", it might have made some people defensive when taking up questions on meat and how to farm, however, they were comfortable enough to express their opinion on these matters.

Therefore, in one sense, I was an urban outsider looking into the rural reality of these people, but I was also an insider in the sense that I am from the region myself. We speak the same dialect, and we could talk about people and places that were familiar to all of us. The fact that we spoke the same dialect, I felt gave me a level of trust when I called and sought out my informants. Finally, there is no doubt that my academic background in humanities and social science influence how I see the world, and therefore also this case. After all, perfect objectivity cannot be achieved, nor is it desired in this thesis, but my aim is to demonstrate that my interpretation of the data is valid, based on the theoretical framework that supports it (Nygaard, 2017), but also because my positionality can provide a valuable perspective. Translating the data material from a Norwegian dialect into English may have caused some elements to be lost, but a lot of work has been done in order to keep the sentences as they were presented to me, as well as convey their meaning, in the best possible way.

Finally, it was a challenge to not get carried away by the landscape and stories about food, and to keep a nuanced view on Inderøy, their local food products, the experienced community spirit, and their actual food practices. As Weaver (2019) writes: (…) *in the end, the big picture may not be as visually appealing as cookbook photography*. (p. 221)

4.4. Analytical Strategy

Some of the interviews were done by me only, and accordingly transcribed word by word, while others had sufficient notes from the interview situations to work like a transcription, as we had been two researchers present at the interview and one of us had taken detailed notes throughout. From these notes and transcriptions, I began categorising and coding the material by "open coding", namely sorting data into meaningful categories (Beuving and de Vries, 2015). However, throughout the fieldwork period in Inderøy we discussed interesting points that came up during interviews, thus beginning the process of analysing data early on. It was therefore easy to start the coding process, with some categories standing out already. I coded the material manually, as I only had 16 interviews, a number of interviews I could handle without technology – and I got to know the material in each interview well.

As mentioned, my approach was interpretive, but after gathering the data and beginning the interpretation and analysis, I further felt the need to question why my findings were what they were, and thus began a more critical approach, which, as Nygaard (2017) describes it, aim to look beyond what is in front of us, and to the larger social structures and power dynamics. With this data, that meant looking at, and scrutinising, processes of globalisation and disintegration of local communities. This resulted from an abductive inference process of moving between the data and potential theory.

5. Introducing Inderøy

Coming to Inderøy, it is evident that there is food production going on. There are green rolling hills of cultural landscapes interrupted by patches of forest, as well as clusters of houses that make up small communities. We were told that each of these communities on the peninsula used to have its own administration, and there would often be a competitive spirit between them. You would never go to the supermarket in another community, but always be loyal to be most local one. Since then, old municipal borders have been erased to make up a much bigger area, but a few informants said that some individuals of the older generation still would comment if you bought your food in anything but the most local supermarket. One informant, Isak, rationalised this to being about maintaining the importance of the local. He said, however, that he did not like it when it became this rigid a perception about locality, that you had to be generous with your fellow villagers. After all, they live modern lives, with greater mobility and communication than before, and with busy working lives. The older generation has experienced some of the big changes in agriculture and food production, as well as the dissolution of smaller communities in an increasingly connected world with more and more centralised control. Maintaining the importance of the local can be seen as a reaction to this development.

Inderøy is, however, a modern place that has kept up with the times. Many would say they have successfully done so, in terms of what they have achieved with the local food production and the Golden Road, which other rural municipalities elsewhere in the country seek to emulate as a recipe for successful rural place development. Local food production is very much an official strategy to develop rural places and the agricultural sector (Regjeringen 2021), but from what this research suggests, it often starts with the producers, who are willing, or feel that there is no other choice but to think alternatively, to establish these businesses. Coming out of a wish, from the farmers' side, to gain a better and liveable income, and from the Municipality's side, to become a more attractive place to live and to visit, the Golden Road was created. From that, an emphasis on place, regional identity and community has been fostered, offering the potential of meaningful connections mediated by food.

5.1. Food as expression of place: cultivating attachment and meaning

> *We forget that we are animals bound to the land; that the food we eat links us directly to nature.* (Steele, 2008, p. 51)

When we drove off the motorway from Steinkjer and onto the peninsula that makes up Inderøy around mid-day in late September, it certainly felt like we were entering a different, idyllic world, with soft hills, trees and fields, and few cars. One could imagine there had been more cars on these roads in the summer, the high season for the Golden Road tourists, however, in late September the season was already finished, and Inderøy had gone back to being a quiet peninsula. We drove off the country road crossing Inderøy and up a hill to look at a Medieval church we had spotted from the road. Here, we sat down in the grass and leaned onto a fence in the sun to eat our lunch. We looked out to take in the cultural landscape and the first impressions of Inderøy started to set in. This section will look at how the *place* of Inderøy is important to various actors, in particular in relation to local food resources, and how attachment to place is meaning-making.

5.1.1. **Changes in Inderøy and mass spaces for mass culture**

Inderøy, as it was indicated in the introduction of the analysis, has changed, like all places do in one way or another over time. Ingrid, a local inhabitant and retiree told us about how Inderøy had changed since she started her life there:

> *It has changed a lot since 1976, when we built a house here. Then there was no local food here. Or yes, the farms delivered to the slaughterhouse and ate the meat themselves. And there was a dairy, and cheese locally produced. My husband grew up right next to the dairy and would get curds and whey [mysostmasse], which he could eat when he was little. And there was a gouda type in the '70s, but then the dairy closed down, or it was moved to Verdal. But it began in the 90s at Gangstad [dairy farm], with Astrid Åsen, and that processing their own milk could be an idea. Then there were more who started, and when that succeeded so well, there were more who saw opportunities of increasing their income and start processing on the farm. And there was some ceramics and handcrafting. (…) They wanted an organisation where one could support each other, and that was the start of The*

> *Golden Road. It started with a contact network among many actors.* (Ingrid, inhabitant)

Her husband carried memories of the neighbourhood through the tasting experiences of the neighbourhood dairy's food products. Food is a powerful medium for memories, which can have both emotional and physical effects (Holtzman, 2006, p. 365), and for Ingrid's husband, the memory of how Inderøy used to be stayed with him through the taste of curds and whey. It is not only through the sensuous experience of food that memories are invoked; identity and history has a lot to do with what and how we remember (Holtzman, 2006, p. 366). As indicated by Ingrid, Inderøy has, inevitably, changed over the years. Elements such as dairies, farm buildings, businesses, and fields have appeared and disappeared. With this, the sense of place may change too, depending on the level of change. However, as Ingrid comments, and as was indicated by many other informants, the Golden Road and the other local food businesses in Inderøy have helped establish a sense of place that people have claimed and felt attachment and belonging to for the last twenty to thirty years. With all the changes associated with modernity, the stability and permanence Tuan (1977) speaks of, which is needed to have a sense of place is absent, and therefore creating an identity around regionally spatialised food is a way of holding on to something concrete in an otherwise fleeting modern reality. With the Golden Road network in particular, a lot has been communicated through storytelling and marketing about what kind of place Inderøy is, which will be explained in more detail later.

The world is in constant development, and consequently, so is Inderøy, and some inhabitants commented on the building projects in Straumen centre, that were seen as negative:

> *Aesthetically, I think Straumen has developed negatively in the last few years. If you look at the apartments over there [points at a generic square grey building], that used to be cultivated land, and I think it's a shame that they have built over cultivated soil to build a supermarket and apartments. But apart from that Inderøya is a very nice place and that's what's important to me, where I come from.* (Ada, inhabitant)

Ada had a negative perception of the development in Inderøy, as cultivated land and the otherwise wooden buildings were joined or taken over by modern multi-storey buildings. Here, space was being made for more people and supermarkets for people's daily globally oriented food consumption, rather than fields of cultivated land. These were generic buildings built for masses of people, accommodating for the generic space of the supermarket and modern lifestyles – mass culture. These buildings and spaces follow a pattern of the same rational organisation and universality that Ley (1989) writes about, the same type of space which Delalex (2002) writes about as *non-places*. The fear of people such as Ada is therefore that Inderøy will follow the same trend of creating universal and generic mass-spaces which lacks any meaningful content. However, Delalex (2002, p. 112) also argues that place recreates itself within non-place. Although supermarkets look more or less the same wherever you go, there can be particularities such as the people working there, contributing to a community feeling, or certain local products communicating tradition and identity. Thus, even in mass-spaces such as supermarkets, you can find a friendly and familiar face selling products coloured by identity and place. As Tuan's works (1975; 1977) on *place* state, when it comes to *homeplace*, it produces strong emotions within individuals, and since the experience of *place* demands a certain permanence and lack of change, change may therefore be resisted. In one sense, Inderøy has gone through many changes to develop the local food culture they have today, but they have also held on to certain elements and identity markers that say something about who they are and who they have been.

5.1.2. **What is local?**

What local food constitutes, however, is a debated subject. Onozaka et al.'s (2010) study found that consumers perceived local to be within a 50-mile (about 80km) radius, however, in this thesis I have chosen to let the informants speak in this matter, as it can be interpreted so individually. What turned out to be the case, however, was that we had many similar responses across the groups of inhabitants, official workers and producers. They considered local food to be first and foremost from within the municipal borders, then they would often add the region of Innherred as local, while a couple even said that they believed Norwegian food in general to be local. It was firstly a matter of geographical limits. One of the producers emphasised that he preferred the term *local* over *kortreist* [Norwegian word often used interchangeably with *local* and translates directly as short-travelled]:

> *I think perhaps that local food is better than 'kortreist' as a term, because a thing that is local has an attachment in your own municipality, or at least close to your own municipality. The word 'kortreist' is how many chains the product goes through. But local, then the product doesn't go through many chains. The longest chain in my shop is that I collect it from another producer. But I believe that with local food, then it's produced in the area where you buy or eat it.* (Food producer 1)

A key word in his consideration of the terms is *attachment*. It could be argued that it alludes to notions of attachment to the environment. It is what you see around you. Traditionally it was the land around you which provided you with nourishment, and food formed the basis of settlements. As stated by Jones and Ulman (2020): *Food is the basis of belonging cultures of place, the word "culture" derives from the Latin "cultura", which means to cultivate the soil.* (p. 21) It is with cultivation of land any society or community begins, and life is indebted to a world that is much-more-than-human (Jones & Ulman, 2020, p. 19). Such a relationship with the environment brings with it meaning and stand as a contrast to a product that has travelled from another place, even if these products too are indebted to their living environments. The point of being local, in local food, is hence that the food is from the land and environment that you can see around you. There has to be a degree of geographical limitation, because when the food is from an environment and land that is known to you, it is easier to have an attachment to it.

5.1.3. **Using local resources – the landscape and homeplace**

The fact that the raw material and production was local was indeed one of the motivations to purchase local food products among local inhabitants. Partly because the act of purchasing these local products would have positive effects for their homeplace. The same young woman which was concerned about the aesthetic development of Straumen, Ada, had an interest in how local resources could be utilised:

> *It's some of what I've been thinking when it comes to how we can contribute to both sustainability and local food, so it's about whether we can take advantage of the resources in Inderøy in a different way when it comes to meat production also. We do import a great deal of raw material for concentrate feed, for instance. Can we use the local to cut down on that in Inderøy, for instance? That's something I've been contemplating in my quiet mind.* (Ada, inhabitant)

She saw it as a sustainability measure, in order to avoid importing soy products as cattle feed, but it is also about making use of what the surrounding landscape has to offer. Rather than watching Inderøy's cultivated land being built over, she was interested in seeing how the natural resources and cultural landscape could provide its living beings, including more-than-human ones with food and life. This also relates to Tuan's conception of *homeplace*, the place that supports livelihoods, which is the foundation of our lives and therefore contain immense meaning. Extending this support of livelihoods to the lives of animals would further strengthen this relationship with the landscape, creating a full circle of resources in place. However, the act of buying from local producers and appreciating the outcomes local resources, made with the craftsmanship of the producers, also alludes to the *homeplace* connection:

> *With the Golden Road we have become fond of our homeplace. And it's being strengthened – something new shows up all the time, which is exciting. (Nora, inhabitant)*

The activities surrounding local food production created excitement and a stronger attachment to their homeplace. Further, several of the local inhabitants we spoke to, also those who did not live on a farm property, did self-provisioning of various kinds. Some had gardens with fruit trees, berry bushes and vegetable patches, some went fishing and hunting, and one young man, Henrik, had started bee keeping with his girlfriend on their property, something which he related to being beneficial for the overall local landscape:

> *One thing is that you produce it for yourself, but then you get pollination of your flowers too, in addition to everyone around you, which helps them get more out of their fruit trees, for example. And it becomes nicer around us. It grows better.* (Henrik, inhabitant)

Self-provisioning, and especially the idea that Henrik's bees contributed to the local landscape suggests a certain emotional attachment to the local environment, with his wish to maintain it. The landscape becomes meaningful in its capacity to provide food, and moreover, the bees in turn give back to the landscape, which creates a symbiotic relationship. As mentioned in Ormrod (2016), Marx's and Dickens's views on nature is that it is an extension of the human, which in turn is part of nature. Changes to the environment, both positive and negative, will be felt by the human, which has an emotional attachment to

it (Ormrod, 2016). Further, engaging with nature contributes to a sense of wellbeing, a well-documented fact (Richardson et al., 2021). The sensory and tactile experience of being physically in the field and physically working with soil and plants is what draws many to the cultivation of food (Schnell, 2013, p. 623). Moreover, landscapes can hold memories, stories, and cultural lessons, which can foster feelings of responsibility and belonging (DeLind, 2006; Adams, 2018).

Another inhabitant said that growing your own vegetables has become popular among her friends, and she saw it as a practice that they have taken back from the past:

> *It has become more widespread. Everyone has a small vegetable garden. In my circle of friends, everyone grows something themselves. Harvesting of berries and apples too. It's coming back in the same way as knitting. What they did in the past is coming back.* (Nora, inhabitant)

This demonstrates that there has been a period of alienation from certain skills situated in the landscape, some traditions that have been temporarily gone, but which have returned, as they are viewed as meaningful skills and activities to have. A reconnection. With modernity and its hierarchy of skills and knowledges, abstract knowledge has been preferred and gives higher rewards in society. This has caused a loss of practical skills and nature knowledge, however, these are now in increasing demand, because they are viewed as valuable. This was mentioned in Ormrod (2016), who argued that abstract knowledge in the developing capitalist economy took over more and more for practical skills and knowledge in, for instance, the landscape of food production. Therefore, there appears to be a wish to reconnect to these skills, which not only are meaningful and practical, but which can even be lifesaving. It is important because people, food, and landscapes constantly interact (Roe, 2016). Analysing food and landscapes can tell us a lot about how we live our lives, and simultaneously, how we live our lives affect the food we eat and hence the landscapes that produce food (Wylie, 2007). Therefore, food cultures grow out of environmental conditions paired with people's ideas on how to use the resources that are grown (Di Giovine & Brulotte, 2016; Roe, 2016). This makes up a meaningful and creative relationship between human and environment in place.

The importance of *place* was also understood by the food producers of Inderøy, especially when it came to the marketing of their food products. One of the producers we talked to,

who was also a member of the Golden Road, emphasised it as an ingredient in the total "artwork" of the food product:

> *Quality. And that the product should be produced on the farm. It's the identity of the product. You can't start a business in TGR where you buy everything for the product. You should produce a significant part of the goods yourself, just like an artist produces everything or most things themselves.* (Food producer 2)

She equated food production to an art, the whole process of which should be done by the artist's hands, further, the raw material should be of local origin, and the processing should also happen locally. It should be a product coloured by *here*, the environment and resources, including the farmer or producer, that exist in place. As Tuan (1977) says, place – *here* – contains meaning, as a contrast to space, which is undefined and lacks specific content. It can in this case symbolise the vast global space, the products of which are often largely unknown to the consumer. The point of local food is that it should be a meaningful representation of *here*. For the other food producer we talked to (Food Producer 1), using all the crooked vegetables that the landscape had to offer was one part of his, or the earth's, artistry. Not discarding vegetables that looked strange, but using everything that the landscape offered, was something he felt was really important.

This emphasis on food as the content of landscape which in turn is meaning-making also corresponds to certain ideas about the good life, something Tuan has explored in his book *The good life* (1986). According to Tuan: *The farmer can see all the steps from the planting of the seeds to the bread that comes out of the oven; there are no unconscionable gaps and yet he is daily confronted by the ultimate miracle of things that grow, mature, and die* (Tuan, 1986, p. 40). The slow life in the countryside is seen as an honest and good way of life, where working on and with the land and landscape is meaningful (Tuan, 1986). The rural *place* as a site of production is hence seen as meaningful. As iterated, modernisation has favoured jobs where abstract knowledge rather than practical skills ranks higher, and where lives are lived away from the natural landscape and rather separated from it by material and mental barriers in urban spaces (Ormrod, 2016). Still, the good life continues to be associated with the rural idyllic life, close to nature (Syse, 2015; Tuan, 1986).

5.1.4. **Place sells: tourism**

The landscape, along with its food, are also the features of a place most often marketed at tourists (Roe, 2016). In parallel with developing the wider region of Trøndelag as a food region, within which Inderøy is situated, there has been a strategy to market the region as an international tourist destination. These developments have gone hand in hand, and it has been marketed as a place that offers a variety of great food also to people from outside the region. Local foods and food experiences are presented and marketed by several actors, among others *Matriket Midt*, a web guide provided by the non-profit stock-based company *Oi!*. Here, it is described as such:

> *In the middle of Norway lies an area that has received something unique from nature. Something entirely distinctive about soil, climate, and ocean currents. From mild, damp coastal landscapes to cool, dry plateaus and mountains. Long, light summernights. When the raw material grows slowly over time, it acquires a unique taste.* (Matriket Midt c)

In the northern part of this region, representing coastal resources and fertile land, is Inderøy. The landscape is meticulously described in order to evoke some kind of sensation in the potential customer. The goal is to create a longing for the food, but also the landscape that produces it, and draw in tourists. Although it is part of a larger commitment to invite tourists to the region, Inderøy has managed to draw tourists to their specific place on their own through their successful work with the Golden Road. It markets itself as a "tasty detour" into cultural landscape and encourages visitors to take life slowly (Visit Norway). Further, their marketing use words such as *handcraft*, *tradition*, and *nostalgic*. Food Producer 2 said that part of her success had been due to her telling her family's and farm's history to consumers and visitors: *It's not a monotonous story, but a story that talks about life.* (Food Producer 2) The story is of course also about *place*, it is set locally and is about the farm and practices the landscape.

As Wylie (2007) contends, *place* is often romanticised as somewhere authentic, and it is this perception of authenticity that is often used by tourism marketers, especially with regards to local food. Sims (2009) write that British tourists use local food tourism as a way of having an authentic experience. What authentic means, might be up to each and everyone, however, it is clearly about a nostalgic view on tradition and rurality, where

eating – often traditional – foods from the place they are at, perhaps even given to them by the farmer or producer themselves, make up the authenticity (Sims, 2009). Autio et al. (2013) find something similar among Finnish local food consumers, who view the local food as more authentic, contrasting it to an increasingly problematic globalised food system. There is a nostalgia for a type of rurality and lifestyle which represents an imagined past, where you fish your own fish and go to a local market to buy cheese, honey and so on. This is what city dwellers in Finland do on their leisure time and holidays: go to their cabins and dream of a simpler, traditional life, which they can partly get to live out through local food consumption and self-provisioning (Autio et al., 2013). Dowler et al. (2009) also find that the local food movement contains nostalgic views about how things used to be, where consuming food from the local *place* is highlighted.

Local food does have the ability to create a sense of place, however, and local food production and tourism is a well-used combination in many different countries. In Norway it has become a strategy to maintain and develop rural areas and forms one of the "economic legs" on which small rural places stand on (Blekesaune et al., 2010). Further, by using farm tourism and local food to draw people to these places, distinctiveness is celebrated, something which helps counter the creation of mass-spaces and mass-culture, which Ley (1989) writes about. A case-study from Cornwall, England, suggests that local food tourism has had a positive impact in saving small places' economy, and further, retain and develop a firmer and more defined regional identity (Everett & Aitchison, 2010). As Everett (2012) argue, the tourists are co-producers of place in their "productive consumption", making sure, together with the local population, to appreciate local food production and place.

5.1.5. **Place sells: gastronomy**

For the French, the concept of *terroir*, the taste of place, has been important. This term celebrates the farmers of France and the landscapes they tend to, as well as the products that are created from them (Beriss, 2019, p. 63). There has, on the other hand, not been a tradition of using similar concepts in other countries, such as in Norway. However, whereas food used to be local by default, but is now local with a marketed intention, it appears emphasising locality, region, and landscape has become even more important in other countries too, taking after countries such as France and Italy. A woman working with

agriculture and food in Trøndelag County Municipality told us about how she conceptualised *terroir* in terms of regional landscape:

> *It's about how you should process raw materials from the same place. With inspiration from France and Italy. The wine producers in France have place as their foundation – soil and climate. Rørosmat [a regional food network] have been good at emphasising this. Reindeers who have grazed here have a completely different meat quality than reindeers from Finnmarksvidda, because of climate and genetics. The fish is different from mountain lake to mountain lake. You need to emphasise this and emphasise the local qualities. That's important in branding. It's much about how the raw material has lived and how to create raw material. There's a difference between a cow who's been grazing on grass and a cow who's been inside and been fed concentrate feed. It takes ten minutes to churn [butter] if she's been outside and fifty minutes if she's inside.* (County Municipality representative)

Here, there is a conscious attempt to reconnect food and landscape. Food from unspecified landscapes, which represents the alienation from food, which Lykke and Bjørkdal (2023) write about in terms of meat, is hence countered. Again, the food is coloured by *here*, which Tuan (1977) talks about. The specifics of place adds transparency and a story to the product, but it also suggests an appreciation for nature and its diversity. This can also be used for marketing purposes, as suggested above.

Creating links between food products and place, adding a strong sense of identity, has also protected producers from having their products exploited by national or international corporations (Beriss, 2019, p. 63). Not all efforts to create geographically trade marketed products have been successful, however, as it often demands some sort of state control, and potentially activism (Beriss, 2019, pp. 63-64). In Inderøy, the development of local food has had support from the official side, in addition to determined and business-minded producers. Furthermore, the region also has two food items that are officially protected with the mark Protected Designation of Origin, namely the meat soup *sodd* and flat bread *skjenning*, which will be further discussed later, in capacity of being part of the region's cultural heritage. However, the strong official support, as well as having products officially recognised, has given Inderøy a name and reputation, associated with its own food landscape.

Tying food to place has become the number one goal in the alternative movement to globalisation, which has become the local food movement. By tying food to place, you also give it an identity, something specific and unique, rather than homogenous and general to be consumed by anyone across the globe. Local food should contain meaning, just as *place* contains meaning (Tuan, 1975; 1977). Also, rather than mass-production, and rather than fast-food, local food is often associated with slow food, as well as being about niche production (Fusté-Forné & Jamal, 2020). The Slow Food movement has become emblamatic for some of the essential elements of local food, such as regional identity, communal and convivial thinking, supporting farmers, and preserving traditions (Siniscalchi, 2013). The irony of the Slow Food movement is that it is now an international movement concerned with protecting local foodways (Siniscalchi, 2014; Beriss, 2019). Despite being a transnational movement, however, its only globalising idea is to protect regional identity and culture, and to preserve good traditional flavours stemming from specific, local landscapes, which has indeed become a widely popular idea present across the globe (Beriss, 2019).

As Roe (2016, p. 709) argue, promotion of regional landscape for tourism and commerce, has been sufficiently helped forth by celebrity chefs, who have emphasised the health and wellbeing effects for animals and humans in local food provisioning. Celebrity chefs have time and again become spokespersons for ethical food production and provisioning, often championing a good life lived in rural settings where food can be found everywhere in close proximity (Syse, 2015, p. 175), which also echoes Tuan's (1986) writings on the good life. Chefs and various actors within the food industry have also been important in the development of the regional local food culture, of which Inderøy is a part. In order to provide some context, we need to zoom out and look back a little. To understand why local food has become such a topic on the agenda, it is important to note the beginning of the New Nordic Kitchen, whose accompanying manifesto – the New Nordic Food Manifesto – has operated since the early 2000s. World-famous Copenhagen restaurant Noma's chef René Redzepi and co-founder Claus Meyer were the initiators behind the concept, as well as those initiating the workshop, with some of the most prominent, notably only male, chefs in Scandinavia present, which ended up as the food manifesto (Leer, 2019).

Meyer has been credited as being highly prominent in the conception of this new philosophy of Nordic cuisine based on seasonality, locality, and foraging, as well as on ethics (Syse, 2015, p. 166). Foraging has also become widely popular because of the culinary industry (Roe, 2016, p. 709), which is also evident in Inderøy, where there exists a foraging business delivering to high-end restaurants, but which also offers courses and glamping in the Inderøy woods (Dammen, 2021).

The manifesto expresses a care for animals and landscapes, a wish for innovation mixed with tradition, an appreciation for locality and history, as well as a wish for cooperation with a range of actors, from farmers to teachers and politicians, in order to improve the region's food, health, and wellbeing (Nordic Co-operation). Mainly, they wanted to demonstrate that the Nordic kitchen could be as good as any other region's kitchen, with an abundance of resources within the Nordic geography, and thus created a new way of cooking in the Nordics, based on traditions mixed with innovation (Byrkjeflot et al., 2013, pp. 43-44). The TV series *Scandinavian Cooking*, with the Norwegian Andreas Viestad, Swedish Tina Nordström, and Danish Claus Meyer, also had an influence in spreading the popularity of the Scandinavian kitchen far and wide, as it was shown in 130 countries (Byrkjeflot et al., 2013, p. 45). It is important to mention chefs and gastronomy culture, because they have become highly influential figures in modern culture. According to Rousseau: *Chefs have become more than just chefs, they have become celebrity rock stars with a lot to say, and we follow them and let them influence how we eat* (Rousseau, 2012, p. xix).

Inspired by the New Nordic Food Manifesto, Trøndelag county decided to make their own, as the first county in the world to do so. It was a move meant to inspire actors within the Trøndelag food industry to cherish local resources and food traditions, as well as be mindful about seasons and sustainability. There has been targeted work in Trøndelag since the 1990s on the area, as public and private actors have worked to highlight the food region and to build a local food culture based on tourism and gastronomy. This work led to the Trøndelag Food Manifesto in 2011(Matriket Midt a), whose eight points are:

- *We seek to promote the uniqueness, diversity and flavour of the food produced in Trøndelag in all areas ranging from the coast and the ocean to the high plains and mountains.*
- *We seek to contribute to using raw materials and foods that further the enjoyment of food and health.*
- *We seek to contribute to the marketing of local foods and food traditions as tourist attractions.*
- *We seek to communicate the stories about Trøndelag foods and its preparations.*
- *We seek to utilise foods from the ocean and the land throughout their seasonal variations.*
- *We seek to encourage the use of foods and products that are environmentally sustainable.*
- *We seek to support good food and food culture among children and youth.*
- *The food and food culture of Trøndelag will be evidence based. We seek to contribute to the development of regional foods and products through education, innovation, and research (Matriket Midt b).*

The manifesto has inspired further work to develop Trøndelag as a food region. It has been a conscious attempt in seeking to establish local pride among producers and consumers, which has included making the local food production of Trøndelag more visible to consumers (Matriket Midt a). In 2022, the region, including Inderøy, received the honour of being *European Region of Gastronomy*, where they were able to highlighted the region's food, food actors, and food experiences (IGCAT). Two years prior, in 2020, Straumen, the administrative centre in Inderøy, won the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Modernisation's *Attractive Town Award*. It was the first place which was not actually a town that won the award, however their focus on their local food production and community initiatives won the jury over, according to a municipal representative. It demonstrates that the region's and Inderøy municipality's work, particularly done by producers, official actors and business actors, to highlight *place*, has had wide influence. In Inderøy's case, one municipal actor said this:

> *Straumen is surrounded by agricultural activity. Fields and food production merge with the urban qualities. The combination between local agriculture and place development was something we greatly emphasised when we welcomed the*

committee last year. That there is food production going on is very visual here. (Municipal representative 1)

Again, it is the specific and defined details that make up *place,* which create meaningful content for people. Place is made up of the landscapes, buildings, architecture, people, relations, activities, culture, traditions and identity or identities that are present – *here*. Further, it seems that, with the award, people have established a sense of place in Inderøy, which according to Stedman (2002) suggests a satisfaction with one's setting.

For modernists, there has typically been no focus on the connection between the self and *here,* but for those who live now, in the postmodern world, there is a wish to connect these again (Casey, 2001). As established, the *here* of food, stands in contrast to a distant, unspecific *there* (Tuan 1977), and this has been well utilised in the marketing of the local food in Inderøy and Trøndelag. Food draws people, and especially food with identity and meaning, which is arguably a part of the post-modern quest for meaning which Ley (1989) speaks of. While people search for meaning and the specific, the globalising, universalising influences are still strong, and like some informants mentioned, the building of mass-spaces and supermarkets over agricultural land still happens in Inderøy and changes it.

Food is also the foundation of our lives, and *homeplace* is where we establish livelihoods (Tuan, 1977). Although modern life is not dependent on growing one's own food, either individually or communally, we depend on the provision of it, and most people therefore live in close geographical proximity to a place that supplies it, such as the modern supermarket. The provision of food is always part of the homeplace. There is, however, a stronger connection to homeplace if the food is from *here*. Food can therefore be a mediator between the self and place.

In conclusion, for the producers, attachment to place is important and a natural fact of their fairly small-scale and locally focused production. Place and landscape is part of the product and makes up the total "work of art", as one of the producers put it. Local inhabitants connected to the local landscape and environment in their appreciation for the producers that have utilised local resources, as well as their own self-provisioning from the local nature. Henrik even felt he contributed positively to the local landscape with his beekeeping. All of these elements suggest an emotional and meaningful attachment to the

local landscape, which is able to provide for them in all its diversity. The municipality have emphasised place in the marketing of Inderøy, where they have participated in the wider regional place and food development, cooperating also with chefs and gastronomy actors. Place has thus become important in food production, gastronomy, and food tourism.

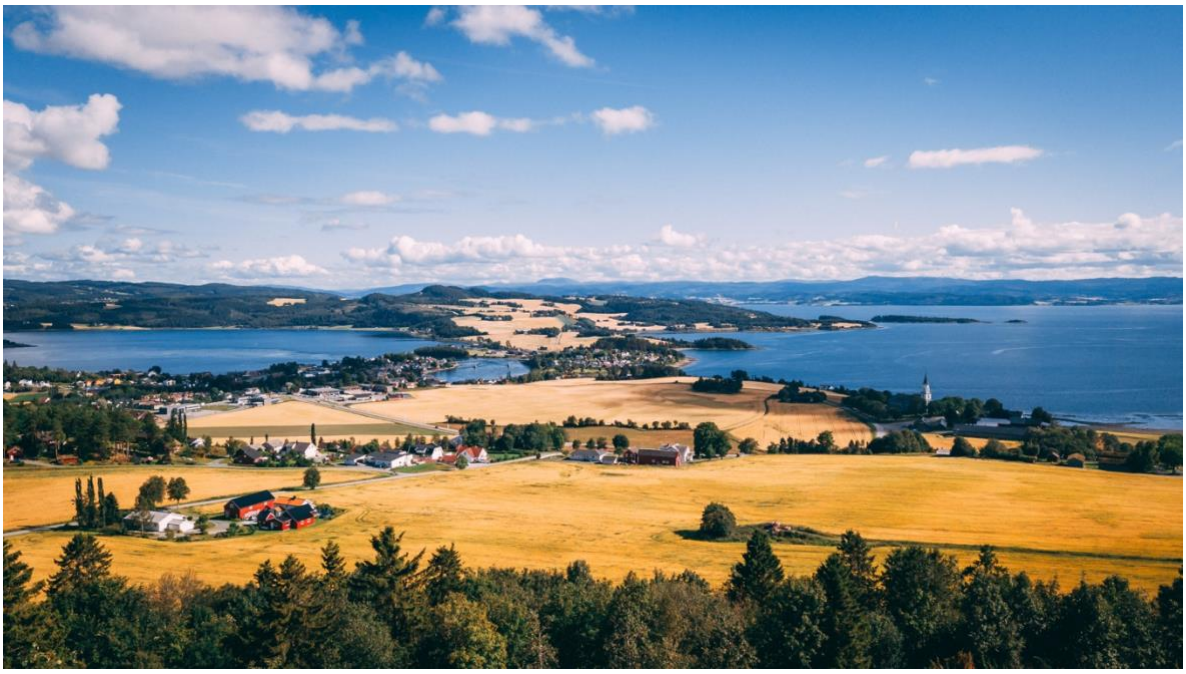

Figure 3: Cultural landscape in Inderøy

5.2. Food as a connector of people

> *Few acts are more expressive of companionship than the shared meal. As the Latin derivation of 'companion' indicates (from 'cum' 'together' + panis 'bread'), someone with whom we share food is likely to be our friend, or well on the way to becoming one.* (Steele, 2008, p. 212)

One of the most important aspects of local food is the proximity between the consumer and producer. If the food is sold to the consumer in formats such as on the farm, through the REKO-ring [local food distribution system originating in Finland], or in a farmer's market, chances are that the producer and consumer have a social interaction. This interaction can contain a lot of meaning both for the producer and the consumer, both in terms of being a social arena fostering community relations and education.

5.2.1. **Educating the consumer**

Nowhere is the proof of the so-called disembeddding of communities and people from the origins of products more evident than in food (Beriss, 2019, p. 66). As Bjørkdahl and Lykke (2023) have shown focussing on meat consumption, modern and particularly urban people generally have limited knowledge of the origins of the food they consume. Local food seeks to reconnect the alienated relationship between the producer and consumer, to give the consumer more education about food and food production, and simultaneously establish community connections (Beriss, 2019). For the producer, this education of the consumer is a way to show them what food production takes in terms of labour and stakes. In Inderøy, a vegetable producer, for instance, could show consumers that not all carrots are naturally straight, but that they taste as delicious even with a different shape.

Places such as farmers' markets provide people with a feeling of community and establishing social ties (Beriss, 2019). Often shopping local food at farmers' markets is more than shopping for groceries, but a pleasant leisure activity associated with socialising (Beriss, 2019, p. 66). Although Inderøy does not have its own farmers' market, the various farm shops and places to visit work much in the same way, especially since in Inderøy, there is already a sense of village community where most people know or know of each other. These places offering food, function as a type of meeting space. We talked to a

woman working with regional food development in Trøndelag, and the value, as she saw it, was the face-to-face interaction in producer-consumer exchanges. She emphasised this had been lost in what came to be industrial food production and distribution:

> *If we look at the agricultural history, the 1930s, there was established cooperatives and target prices. You as a farmer did no longer have focus on the customer. The customer is the milk truck or the slaughter truck, and you do not follow the finished product all the way out to the consumer. As a local food producer you follow the product out to the REKO-ring and so on.* (Regional food development representative)

Because of this, as well as many other developments and ways in which producers and consumers have become increasingly further away from each other, there has developed a social alienation between them (Bjørkdahl & Lykke, 2023). With less contact with the farmers, the consumer knows less and less about how it is produced (Bjørkdahl & Lykke, 2023). For one of the producers we talked to, the face-to-face encounters was a way for him to educate his consumers about the production and why things were as they were. Albrecht and Smithers (2018) found that one of the most important outcomes of face-to-face interaction is this type of education and exchange of information and knowledge that happens in such meetings between producer and consumer. They see it as a potential driver of change towards a fairer food system, as people learn more about each other's needs and realities (Albrecht and Smithers, 2018).

DesRivières et al. (2017) similarly found that education was key in making people have more sustainable food practices, by re-learning food preparation skills, as well as knowledge about local food resources, thus making use of more diverse resources, in addition to using the pieces of the entire animal, for instance. As skills and knowledge that used to be known to people have become lost with globalisation and modernisation, with convenient supermarkets filled with perfectly sized and shaped vegetables, as well as packaged pieces of bone and skin free meat, local food can foster the community relations needed to re-educate people around good food practices and knowledge, for instance the information that is not present in the said vegetables and meat packets.

5.2.2. **Trust relationships**

There are multiple examples of farmers setting boxes and bags of potatoes, jars of honey, or other products, at the end of their driveway along with a number to transfer money to. Several informants in Inderøy told us about this, among others Henrik: *But what is with many of these [farm] shops, is that they're based on trust. Where I shop my eggs and milk, there are no cameras, you can just walk inside, take it with you and walk out again, without them noticing.* (Henrik, inhabitant). And there are many examples across Europe where this is also the case, where you can get local food, but without the social interaction (Beriss, 2019). The trust relationship goes both ways. The farmer trusts that the customer pays for their goods, while the customer feels a greater sense of trust by knowing more about where the food comes from. While they do not talk to the farmer, the added element of this food purchase compared to a supermarket is that you can see which farm – and landscape – the food is from, thus there is still quite a lot of information present. Furthermore, there is an element of transparency here, which provides trust (Beriss, 2019). It differs greatly from the increasingly faceless shopping experiences at supermarkets, where one now can make use of self-service counters or do your shopping over the internet or a mobile app, and where the only interaction is with a screen, in addition to an occasional interaction with the delivery person of online food purchases.

This relates to what Giddens (1990) writes about disembedding of local communities and the issue of trust. Whereas trust is easier when you can oversee production or talk to the producer, the modern food system entails trusting in abstract expert systems, where production is outsourced to distant places with, mostly, invisible experts (Giddens, 1990). In Zepeda and Deal's (2009) study on consumers' trust in local and organic food producers versus in food corporations, they found, perhaps not surprisingly, that respondents very highly suspicious of food corporations, whom they saw as greedy and willing to sacrifice the interests of people, animals, and the environment. Further, they believed food corporations were ruining diversity within food alternatives (Zepeda and Deal, 2009, p. 702).

On the other hand, local farmers were viewed with warmth, as nurturers of land and animals, as well as people. Overall, they were seen as trustworthy people (Zepeda and Deal, 2009, p. 702). Therefore, the minimum of seeing where your food comes from, is important

to those who display distrust towards food corporations. Face-to-face encounters and fostering social relationships is in this case the best scenario: *By buying local food in particular, many organic food shoppers are seeking to build community and establish or renew trust with their food system through development of personal relationships with farmers and like-minded food shoppers.* (Zepeda and Deal, 2009, p. 702) Having the ability to meet the farmer or producer, as well as getting to know more about where one's food comes from, creates transparency and builds trust relations. Trust in each other, in turn, is essential to build community (Day, 2006).

5.2.3. **Caring for your neighbour**

For the inhabitants we talked to in Inderøy, it was clear that buying food from your neighbour or local community had a meaningful impact, even if it was not a regular occurrence. For one of the inhabitants, Henrik, buying food from the neighbour was in fact a regular experience, as they had a subscription on milk from one neighbouring farm and bought eggs regularly from another neighbour. He explained his motivations as such:

> *My position is that farmers earn to little, and I think it's better to buy from the farmer and what's close, so I know where it comes from. (…) I think it's better to buy from the neighbour. You become grateful that he provides it. You help him get some extra [income], so I think that's great.* (Henrik, inhabitant)

He is simultaneously talking about a care for farmers, supporting their struggle for sufficient incomes, trust in that he knows where the food comes from, and gratitude, in that he is thankful for what the neighbour and the local community can provide. This demonstration of care is rare in a common food provision scenario, where one straddles supermarket shelves for some cheap and convenient goods. Such relationships, therefore, re-embed trust and care in the modern food industry, which is coloured by the same disembeddedness as other community tasks and relations (Giddens, 1990).

As Inderøy is a fairly small place, having connections among the producers and sellers is also common, and Isak, a local, told us about how his family knew the family at Berg farm very well, and how they had a longstanding relationship:

> *And we used to buy a lot of food at Berg farm. That's the closest farm. Meat, especially sheep, we loved that. And pig – free range pig. We eat free range ribs for Christmas from there, we know them quite well. And my son and his family do that*

too. And I still buy from them. They don't sell out their last rib before we get ours.
(Isak, inhabitant)

As Isak suggests, even though the people at Berg farm are interested in selling their Christmas products, they will always save one for their friends, and Isak's family is sufficiently dependable that they come and buy the Christmas ribs, consequently there is a reciprocal relationship of trust and care. This is an example of a socially embedded transaction and community relations. They had known each other for decades, and perhaps Henrik and his neighbours will develop the same kind of relationship over time. Both of these examples show care for the neighbour and community, and as Day (2006) writes, it feels good to belong to a community. People seek it, and they want to believe in the idea of community.

A key issue for many locals was the existence of their local community and villages at all. As people move from rural places in favour of urban life, their economies crumble, and the fear is that these places will be left with nothing. Further, farms, in particular smallholdings, are left behind because it is too hard, economically, to keep agricultural activity going. One of the informants in particular spoke of the importance of having a *lively countryside,* and how the local food network and culture that was established with the Golden Road in Inderøy has saved many a farm and smallholding. Local food production is one of the ways in which small-scale agriculture can survive in Norway, among the volume producers (Regjeringen, 2021, p. 3). However, it is not only the smallholders who want to keep their production and land going, the surrounding communities, and even people in the urban centres around are interested in their continuation. A report from SIFO [Consumption Research Norway] demonstrated that social sustainability was the most important aspect when people bought local food (SIFO, 2021). People want to support farmers and display gratitude by buying directly from them. Further, the exchange itself is meaningful and creates a sense of belonging to something (SIFO, 2021). It is precisely this feeling of belonging and meaning-making that is important for fostering community, and which local food has the ability to create and develop.

5.2.4. **Cooperation and community**

Berger et al. (1974) were some of those who wrote many decades ago about a trend where people leave rural villages for economic centres, and this trend has been exacerbated rather

than slowed down. Inderøy is also affected by this trend of young people moving out of the rural village to urban centres, and the local food culture that has developed is one way to make Inderøy more attractive, not only to tourists, but to people wishing to settle down, as well as those who already live and come from there. It appears that the local food culture has created engagement among locals, because as data gathered by the multinational market research firm Ipsos found, in their Norwegian population survey called Norsk Monitor [Norwegian Monitor], the population of Northern Trøndelag, the region in which Inderøy sits, buys the highest quantities of local food in the country (Stiftelsen Norsk Mat). The impression that local food means something in this area, is therefore corroborated by this data. However, the details are unclear, for example what type of products they buy most of. Like Day (2006) writes place used to be a more important determinant for community than today, however, in Inderøy, it seems that place has been important in the creation of some form of community identity where cooperation and unity around some ideas exist.

It became clear that cooperation was a key word in Inderøy. It was mentioned by official actors, producers, as well as inhabitants as something that had been important in the success of developing the local food network and culture here. One of the municipal representatives that we talked to mentioned the municipality's motto: *We have to be 'better together' [Inderøy's motto]. I don't know anyone who only thinks about themselves. Greed and jealousy are bad for business development.* (Municipal worker 2) For him, the element of cooperation was essential for the economic development and growth in Inderøy, which also meant the municipality's survival and potential attraction of more people. The aspect of cooperation for the sake of business development was also important for the producers, who had become convinced decades ago that cooperating with each other would provide the most success for all of them, instead of only working for yourself and your farm. This entailed mentioning and talking about each other's businesses when customers came by.

While mainly being used as a tool by the food producers, other businesses in Straumen had been included in the overall strategy. The managers of other types of businesses in Straumen were offered a course in how to promote the food businesses to tourists and visitors to Inderøy when they stopped by their own respective businesses, as explained by one inhabitant, which owned a business in Straumen: *It's about supporting each other, us who have businesses here. In Inderøy we have a motto, which is that we are 'best together',*

and that means we have to use each other. So, when others use [support] me, then I have to use [support] them. So, if everyone thinks like that, then everything will be fine. (Amalie, inhabitant)

The motto, as with the word "cooperation", was mentioned frequently among the various actors we interviewed. Although an aspect of community, this form of cooperation was more pragmatic. If we look at Tönnies's two conceptions of community, it fits the category of *Gesellschaft,* with looser connections and formal and negotiated participation (Tjora & Scambler, 2020). Essentially, all the individuals, on behalf of their businesses, have a self-interest in participating in this *community* (Tjora & Scambler, 2020, p. 11). Even the inhabitants in Inderøy mentioned that they cooperated in the way they could: *It's individuals who've been the driving force, but the whole village helps out – and take credit!* (Isak, inhabitant) Hence, there is a view that everyone in the village helps out and cooperates, and that they have been able to develop the local food culture together. Several informants mentioned that the local food businesses would not have survived solely on tourists and are helped out through regular purchases by locals throughout the year. It did not seem, however, that daily practice among locals was based on purchasing local products, as will be explored further down (5.4.), but the development and maintenance of the local food culture was nevertheless seen as something binding people together locally.

Central in the local food literature is the concept of *reconnection*. Because of the alienation that occurs between humans and their food (Bjørkdahl & Lykke, 2023), working for reconnection becomes a goal. While different producers and consumers can have equally differing motives for reconnection, it is nevertheless an important point in itself. Skallerud and Wien's (2019) study about local food consumption in Tromsø, found that people normally buy it for instrumental purposes, such as taste, freshness, and health. However, the social element of embeddedness is also a strong motivator for local food consumers, as also demonstrated in the SIFO (2021) report. Especially for the local inhabitants, then, the feeling of connection and belonging that is initiated through local food consumption is an important meaning-making element. For the official actors and producers, it may seem as if the emphasis on cooperation has a more business-focused reasoning, but they are all working for the benefit of their own place and community: the survival of food producers and the municipality's existence, as well as Inderøy's cultural offers and social arenas.

When vi visited Inderøy, we also got a glimpse into a more traditional element of communities, namely the informal sales of fish from fishermen in one of the marinas there. Inderøy seemed progressive with their business-minded development of local food, even if it was a strategy for producers to survive – which in turn attracted people to the municipality – but there was one place we found a glimpse into more traditional social relations and exchange forms. As we went around Inderøy to observe and take in the landscapes and atmosphere, we stopped in a marina that had been mentioned by several informants already: Kjerknesvågen. Here, we saw some fishermen gutting their recent afternoon catch, which they would sell through connections. When, in some of the following interviews with locals, we asked about these fishermen, some would tell us:

> *In Kjerknesvågen you can buy fish directly from the fisherman – if you know someone you can get fish here.* (Sofie, inhabitant)

> *And in Kjerknesvågen there are some men fishing who come in and sell it, and there you have to know that they're there. It goes through connections.* (Isak, inhabitant)

It was an example of trading outside of the formal economy, based on social connections. Since most of the community-building based on local food in Inderøy happened within the formal economy, it was interesting to see one remnant of a traditional coastal community. Furthermore, with the local food culture happening within the frames of the formal economy, it may have limited effects on community relations.

The official actors were naturally eager to present the positive aspects of Inderøy, as well as all the good things that take place there. One such thing was how their work adaptation program had a couple of different departments, with one in the centre of Straumen. Here, they had useful roles in an interior shop with self-made candles, among other things, as well as a bakery and café selling some local products:

> *It was normal to have it in storage buildings in the periphery. This is people who need help to move on. It's nice that they can be in a gluten free bakery and work themselves forth in the shop [from the bakery in the back to the counter in the front], when they are ready for it. Everyone has a valuable social role, which is valuable to the local community. Some make candles, repair things, everyone*

> *produces something for sale. It's not made-up tasks, but products and services that there's a demand for.* (Municipal representative 1)

The municipal representative emphasised how they were including these people into the centre and community, with useful tasks and a meaningful workday for them. The work adaptation program was also a platform where local food was made and sold, through their own bread and pastries, including gluten free ones, and products from other Inderøy actors. The overall local food network and culture therefore appears to have been planned and conceptualised in a holistic manner. The local food culture includes an array of people in the community, which can further enhance this same community, and provide the continuity and safety which Day (2006) writes about.

All of this displays Inderøy from an attractive view, however, there is also a need to problematise community. Even though it feels good to belong to a community, they are not always open and inclusive to everyone, and belonging to a community based on geography in particular often means that if you stand out as a person, you will have a hard time adapting to the place-based community. It is also why, with the help of a more modernised and globalised society with increased mobility and more information, traditional communities based on place have in a larger degree been left for communities based on identity (Day, 2006). Several informants, although proud about Inderøy and wanting to support the local community through their food purchases and cultural participation, mentioned less attractive features of community. Ada, for instance, had lived outside of Inderøy for several years because of studies and work, and when she came back, it was hard to get back into friend groups. Sofie also mentioned how when she was little, it was more accepted to show up to someone's door and have a chat, whereas now, you would have to schedule a potential visit over the phone in advance. People have become more closed in and focused on their individual lives, only in the last couple of decades. It is perhaps also why more and more people appear to seek community, in a world that becomes increasingly individualised. People hence become more focused on their individual needs, and one producer informant mentioned that some inhabitants had complained about the smell of cow manure, when in fact they had built and moved into houses closer and closer onto his property, and not the other way around. Such things oppose the cooperation and community building that was otherwise emphasised in the interviews.

To conclude, the social aspect of local food deals in a large degree about creating a sense of community and bond around the food which is produced and consumed by a group of people. From the consumer side it is about showing care for farmers and the wider rural community, ensuring fair wages for farmers and ensuring a lively countryside. It is also about trust, in both the producer and in what you consume into your body. Proximity and a social connection to the farmer or producer provides a large degree of transparency and trust, and this is an important element of community. From the producer side, close relations with customers also provide an opportunity to educate consumers about their produce, as well as food preparation skills and knowledge. These exchanges have been important in Inderøy, however, the community here is still a negotiated business-like transaction, even if it does provide inhabitants and producers with a sense of meaning and belonging to the local culture.

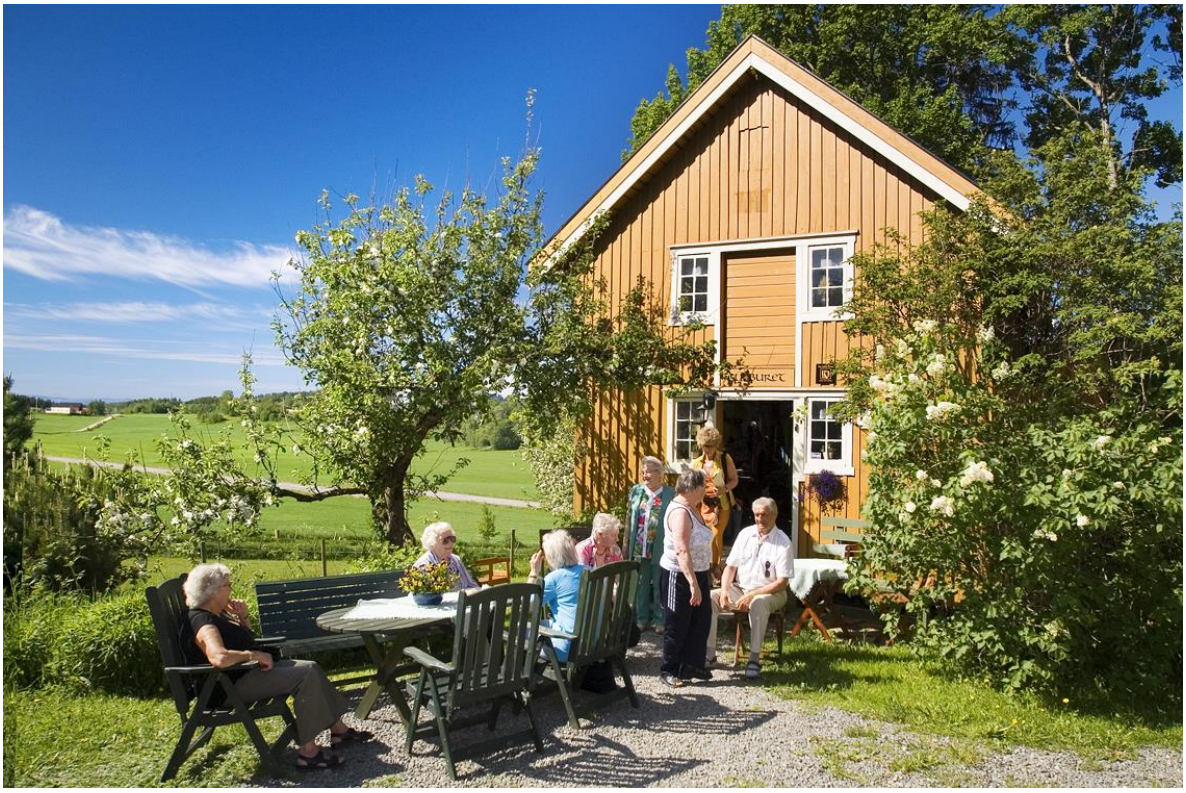

Figure 4: Gulburet farm bakery and café

5.3 Food as a container of culture and meaning

> *Food identifies who we are, where we came from, and what we want to be.*
> (Belasco, 2008, p. 1)

The already mentioned Slow Food movement was birthed out of the desire to fight the homogenisation of food due to globalisation. Carlo Petrini, the movement's founder, famously protested against a McDonalds that opened in Piazza di Spagna in Rome, which started the movement whose purpose is to protect and celebrate unique food traditions and agricultural methods from various regions of the world. The movement also emphasises the importance of education in history and culture and carrying on traditions to today's young people (Kummer, 1999). McDonalds is perhaps the biggest symbol of the homogenisation of food, hence, for protectors of traditions and the unique, it becomes the greatest enemy. The Slow Food movement has had influence world-wide, and the interest in keeping traditions is also an issue in Inderøy, although it is not a member of the movement. The focus on local food has also gained popularity beyond this movement, with an equal interest in the identities and cultures of specific places.

5.3.1. **Tradition and cultural heritage: the *sodd* soup and *skjenning* bread**

The Innherred region, of which Inderøy is a part, has its own food culture based on long traditions, with some food items protected by the Protected Designation of Origin mark. These are the *sodd*, a meat and vegetable soup, and *skjenning*, a potato flour based flat bread brushed in milk and sugar, which are often eaten together. The name *sodd* comes from the old Norse word *sjoda*, which means 'to boil' and used to signify a soup cooked on broth stemming from meat. It used to be found in many local variations in Norway, however, the one from Trøndelag and Innherred is the one that has stuck through time (Høberg, 2022). Since it contained meat, *sodd* was considered a fine meal and used to be eaten at festive occasions and formal events, as well as Sundays (Høberg, 2022), but as meat has become a regular everyday commodity, the soup has consequently become part of informal weekday dinners, even though many locals are championing the case of keeping the *sodd* a formal dish:

> *We're also lucky with the sodd, but we try to maintain it as a festive meal. We've experienced that it gradually becomes more like everyday food. It's simple. Just heat it up and eat. We have to keep it as festive food!* (Johan, inhabitant)

> *Inderøy slakteri [butcher shop] makes a good sodd and meat soup. Sodd is sodd – the sodd meat balls makes the difference. It's a secret what's inside the sodd balls. Sodd is sheep meat, the sodd [balls], and potato and carrot. It's festive food! Meat soup is meat soup, and that's something else. Meat soup can be eaten every day.* (Jakob, inhabitant)

Their wish to maintain the *sodd* a festive dish is due to the meaning added to the dish. Traditionally it was a festive meal, the culture was as such, and people have memories of eating *sodd* at formal occasions. It is therefore about meaning-making and struggling to maintain the meaning behind the *sodd*, the meaning of which may disappear if the dish becomes mainstream and for every-day consumption. Food practices evolve over time, and in Norway, as an affluent country, people have access to many new and different foods. This has both been enriching, but with all the new foods, Norwegian food traditions have become less important. Giddens (1991) writes that modernity has been a process of freeing oneself from the constraints of traditional communities, however, now, in a modernised and globalised reality, people seek authentic experiences, and these days authenticity is often found in the realms of place, food and tradition (Sims, 2009; Weaver, 2019). This is because authenticity is found in the unique and special and is a contrast to everything that is mass-produced and universal (Peterson, 2005). Hence, with a globalised diet, the options have become diverse and exciting, but it is more difficult to find something that is experienced as authentic.

Giddens (1990) also says: *Tradition is routine. But it is routine which is intrinsically meaningful, rather than merely empty habit for habit's sake*. (p. 105) This meaningful repetition of certain ways of producing and consuming food—tradition—brings with it a range of emotions:

> *People are proud about it. It's pretty alright when we are able to get local food, Røra flat bread – skjenning. And to be able to view sodd as local, in addition to the history behind it. Many years ago, there was talk of establishing two slaughter lines*

> *for the Inderøysodd, and to make the old quality, but to also go down on quality for Rema [supermarket chain] and the demand. But there was an uproar: 'Don't mess with the sodd!' It was pretty interesting. It's a strong tradition. To mess with that, if people around the country are to eat Inderøysodd of bad quality, that just doesn't go well.* (Isak, inhabitant)

The locals were not only concerned with keeping the tradition alive and formal, but it should also hold a certain level of quality. Even though the *sodd* is relatively mass-produced and can be found across supermarkets in Norway, the *sodd* is made under certain regional and local brands, such as the *Innherredsodd* and *Inderøysodd*. Making a *sodd* type with less quality, as well as under a supermarket name was a step too far. This would strip away spatial and cultural elements and the tradition may have lost its particularity. The wish to reconnect to certain traditions or to farmers or to place, is often accompanied with a sense of nostalgia to the past, when things appear to have been easier or a purer way of life (Dowler et al., 2009, p. 205). Most of the time, this is an idealised version of the past (Dowler et al., 2009). However, as mentioned in section 5.1.4. on *place*, the wish to experience something authentic is another feature of such nostalgia for the past. An authentic flavour is then viewed, apart from being an expression of place, as what something used to taste (Autio et al., 2013). As a consequence, keeping traditions becomes important in order to experience authenticity (Autio et al., 2013) Authenticity is more than a quest for old ways of doing things, however, as it is also associated with the small-scale farmer and craftsmanship (Ashley et al., 2004, p. 87). The personal involvement of a producer is both seen as delivering quality, but also adds the element of authenticity, compared to large-scale volume production (Ashely et al., 2004, p. 87). In Inderøy, the personal involvement of small-scale farmers and producers is a very clear feature, which consequently provides the feeling of quality and authenticity for its consumers, and this includes the producer of the most local *sodd* variety.

The butcher shop in Inderøy is the producer of the most local variety of the *sodd* – *Inderøysodd*. As a response to the concern of keeping the *sodd* more formal and festive, the butcher shop began making a new meat soup variation, which the locals could consume for weekday dinners, thus encouraging them to save the *sodd* for formal events. The reason why *sodd* has become a regular weekday dinner, is also because it is easy to make in its

modern form, as Johan points out. People buy the soup in big containers, and you just need to boil carrots and potatoes on the side while heating the soup up. This makes for a convenient dinner. Interestingly, none of our informants said they would make it themselves from scratch, and as Jakob said, the *sodd* meat balls had a secret recipe, therefore people would buy the readymade container, which can be found in supermarkets, in addition to the butcher shop, and keep the tradition alive in this way, rather than through the whole process of making it themselves. It is a traditional carrier of culture found in a mass-space.

As meat has become an everyday ingredient in our daily meals in Norway, with the number of kilograms we eat every year steadily increasing since the 1950s (Kjos et al., 2022, p. 125), it is therefore not a point to keep the *sodd* holy for *being* a meat soup, rather another meat soup for weekdays has been made to accompany the formal meat soup. This breaks with traditional eating and is a feature of the modern world, where meat is so readily available. On the other hand, vegetarianism has also been linked to anxieties stemming from modernity and the globalisation of the food industry. The fact that you cannot see how the food is being produced, and the occurrence of the previously mentioned "food scares" with various health-threatening bacterial outbreaks, make some people choose to not eat meat for their health, as vegetarianism and health have become increasingly associated with one another (Ashley et al., 2004, p. 193). In Inderøy, most informants defended meat eating on the basis of their landscape and local livelihoods. Norwegian farmers frequently use the argument of cultural heritage when defending Norwegian agriculture, as upholding cultural heritage and agriculture are linked, and the farmer is portrayed as a caretaker (Daugstad, Rønningen & Skar, 2006). However, defending meat eating based on tradition and heritage should also take into consideration how we relate to the animal and the process of killing it, a process most people were more familiar with in the past, but which few have a relationship to or conception of in modern society (Bjørkdahl and Lykke, 2023).

5.3.2. **Finding meaning in experiences with food**

Tradition was also an element at Berg farm, mentioned already in the text, and mentioned frequently among inhabitants. The tourism website Visit Innherred, representing the region, highlights the various ways in which this farm upholds tradition in order to attract tourists. For instance, Berg farm is evoking tradition and cultural heritage in their farm shop, which

is designed and built in an old-fashioned style, with products and decor hanging from the ceiling. The smell of smoked sausage and tar fills the air as you walk in (Visit Innherred). Furthermore, they have taken up the tradition of making aquavit locally: *119 years after the last aquavit was bottled at Sundnes distillery the tradition is reclaimed, with enthusiasm and forgotten knowledge*. (Visit Innherred) Because of people's quest for authenticity, tradition is emphasised on the farm. The fact that forgotten knowledge is regained mean that old, traditional, and authentic flavours can yet again be tasted. And much in the same way as British people seek rural tourism spots with local food in their search for authentic experiences (Sims, 2009), so can Norwegian, or international, tourists experience this same authenticity at Berg farm and other locations in Inderøy.

However, as asserted, the farm was frequently mentioned among inhabitants, and this was due to their own experience with it. It was apparent that locals appreciated the farm and its traditional setting as much as any tourist might:

> *Aquavit tasting is an amazing experience. It's unbelievable that aquavit can be so diverse. (…) Sven experiments with flavours. He uses local caraway. He picks some herbs in the forest. As well as clover which he mixes in. He's located on a farm, with serving in the barn. You walk up the barn bridge and see the barrels standing there. It's the setting and framing that makes it into a great experience. It's the same with beer tasting in Kvam [Inderøy Farm Brewery]. The last time we were there, we were sitting outside. The fence for the cows was right next to the tables. It's not the same as going to a tasting in Trondheim.* (Jakob, inhabitant)

> *If you want Christmas food, you have to go there. It's recommended, they have a very old-fashioned dining experience. It's not so much of that anymore.* (Sofie, inhabitant)

Sofie appreciated the old-fashioned dining experience, which is a rare and perhaps almost exotic experience, as she explained it. Jakob emphasised the setting of his food experiences. Not only did the food and drinks taste good, but the rural setting with fences and cows, barn bridge and barrels, enhanced the experience. It is traditional, it is rural, and provides a feeling of authenticity and meaning which contributes to sensations of the good life. These experiences provide the same kind of frame as the dish *sodd* does, something traditional

and familiar. It provides safety for the individual, as this is something that has not changed much over the years. Therefore, in a fleeting and plural world filled with impressions and information, the stability of these elements can provide comfort (Tartiglia and Rossi, 2015; Berger et al., 1974). When these shared meals, inciting strong emotions, span time, it becomes cultural heritage (Di Giovine and Brulotte, 2016, p. 1).

Many inhabitants also mentioned the yearly boat festival in the summer, which appeared to be a highlight in peoples' calendars:

> *I just remembered that we have something called 'båttreff' [boat festival] in the summer. During the day it's served food, and it's self-fished from the sea. There are shrimps, mussels, fish burgers among other things, which they have fished outside [Inderøy], that they prepare. (…) And the fish burger they serve, it's heavenly. It's the best I've ever tasted.* (Henrik, inhabitants)

Henrik's appraisal of the locally produced fish burger from fish that swims in the fjord outside Inderøy again highlights the meaning of place. Further, it is shared with the local community in a festive and convivial setting. These are components that contribute to a sense of wellbeing. Food is affective and can produce strong emotions, and it also binds people together (Di Giovine and Brulotte, 2016). What both of the above examples illustrate are emotional responses to the environment, settings, and food that is consumed. DeLind (2006) argues that the local food movement tends to focus on instrumental values, such as taste and health, which has an impact on how it is developed and acted out. The deeper emotional and spiritual connections, which may be easy to ridicule or dismiss, are equally important, if not more (DeLind, 2006). The elements of place and the people that food experiences are shared with, adds *something*, a distinctiveness to the experience. This *something*, conceptualised by George Ritzer (2003), will be elaborated on below.

5.3.3. **Mixing old and new to create identity and meaning in Inderøy**

While local food culture and its traditions can provide experiences of authenticity and meaning, it was not only tradition that coloured the local food culture in Inderøy. In Trøndelag in general, but also in Inderøy, they were encouraging new thinking and entrepreneurs to add to the local food culture. The regional food developer said that you had to allow some flexibility when it comes to what can be considered local, and how it should be produced:

> *While others believe, like Eldrimner in Sweden, that it should be handcraft. There should be no machines, it should be the hand that produces from beginning to end. It becomes religion. We allow calling coffee local, because it is roasted in Trøndelag, even if nobody produces it here.* (Regional food development representative)

Instead, being too traditional was seen as a barrier for the local food culture. Inderøy and the Trøndelag region have, in addition to being bearers of tradition, also created an identity around new thinking and entrepreneurs. A place where, if you have new ideas, you are encouraged to share them and start something. This openness and willingness to welcome new influences and ideas fit well with how Berger et al. (1974) described the *modern identity*: open to new influences, differentiated, reflective. They also wrote, however, that such an approach can lead to a constant identity crisis. One of Inderøy's products is, for instance, kombucha. Surf Kombucha, as it is named, is created locally by the daughter of Gangstad farm's Astrid Åsen, and it is a popular drink in many countries. It is thought to have originated in China and spread to eastern Europe through the Silk Road, and it is now seen as a healthy drink, thus popular among health-conscious westerners (Petruzzello, 2023). The kombucha brand from Inderøy is sold all over the country and is one of those products that does not carry a strong Inderøy identity with it. First of all, because it is a universal product sold in many countries, but also because they are flavoured with exotic fruits rather than local flavours from Inderøy. Personally, I have found it in a small supermarket on the remote island of Vega in the north of Norway and in the middle of Grünerløkka, the popular neighbourhood in Oslo, and it is rather a universal product that suggests a modern and health-focused identity, rather than something spatial and traditional. Nevertheless, it is part of Inderøy's food production and has that geographical connotation, which provides the potential of people creating meaningful connections to that specific place through tasting this exact kombucha.

Peng et al. (2020) state: *Place identity is the image inhabitants hold of the home area, and the embodiment of such an image in regional development activities encourage people's creativity and entrepreneurship*. (p. 13) This quote rings true for Inderøy, where there was an impression that you were able to, and welcome to, start up new food businesses:

> *It's a municipality where you can start something up without being looked down on, or that the Law of Jante steps in. The inhabitants appreciate all initiatives. (…) People believe that things will do well. It's pretty hard to start something up, but someone has walked up the tracks, so we see that this works as a door opener for those who have started up later. It's cooperation. Many want to support the ones who start something up.* (Johan, inhabitant).

Because of the Golden Road, Inderøy has actors with decades of experience, and with the focus that they have had on cooperation, new business can ask for advice from those with the knowledge. In this sense, it seemed like Inderøy was open to evolve and welcome new products in their local food culture. The inhabitants, as evidenced in Johan's quote, were also welcoming when it came to new businesses. The impression was that it was enriching Inderøy and made it a livelier and more attractive place to live. Creativity and entrepreneurship is not only about creating new things, but it can also be about bringing back lost traditions, or new takes on tradition. While it is meaningful to maintain traditions, it is also not a point to only stick to what one has done in the past. There is no way, nor is there a reason, to try to reverse globalisation or modernisation. By combining both old and new, they are being open and reflexive in their local identity development. Woods (2007, p. 502) discusses the new rural identities not as subordinated by globalisation, but as an outcome of '*a micro-politics of negotiation and hybridisation*.' Almost all local cultures and places have been affected by globalisation, but local and traditional influences have mixed with global and modern ones to make new identities. This is what Ritzer (2003) terms *glocalisation.*

Ritzer's work on globalisation (2002; 2003; 2005) discusses how *something* becomes *nothing* in the globalisation process. To identify what is something, as opposed to nothing, Ritzer identifies five contrasting points: distinctive substance versus lacking in distinctive substance; unique versus generic; local ties versus no local ties; temporally specific versus timeless; and human relations versus dehumanised relations (Ritzer and Ryan, 2002, p. 53). Following Ritzer's framework, food products from Inderøy have distinctive substance, as they are largely made out of local raw materials and resources, and they have taken on local identity, in that they are clearly part of Inderøy's local food culture. However, there are also foreign resources imported through global value chains, the most inconspicuous sources can be exemplified by concentrate feed, which in the end is part of the process of creating

many of Inderøy's products. Furthermore, one of the cheeses from Gangstad is a Camembert type, not a local cheese type, but is given further distinctiveness by telling a story, giving it a local name, and connecting it to a particular person, which in this case is Astrid Åsen. It thus ends up as a *glocal* product. Even as these products are sold around the country, Inderøy as a place is associated with them, and they become unique, rather than generic. As the county municipality representative said: *Storytelling is important, because it is here you can retrieve the extra money people are willing to pay*. The stories can persuade people to take part in a food culture that feels meaningful and personal, because it represents *something* distinctive, with local ties, and with visible humans behind the products. As such, the storytelling, the marketing of the local, is important in the creation of *something.*

Mostly, the local food producers and markets in Inderøy fit the *something* category. They make up a *something* place, largely because of what they have accomplished, through the use of *something* products and services, conveyed through *something* people. When asked what local meant to locals, they answered:

> *It's part of the whole package. You could do without, but in the long-term it is sad with just standardised food products. There's something about using raw material and creating good products.* (Emil, inhabitant)

> *It's not the same without those producers. You look forward to the day you can buy [the good] food from the local producers. It means something when I enjoy the good local cheese.* (Sofie, inhabitant)

The standardised products Emil talks about are the *nothing* products which lack distinctive content, place and humanised relations. As he says, food is first and foremost nourishment, and covering this basic need stands as the first priority. However, the *something* food products adds a meaningful quality to life. Sofie says she looks forward to eating local cheese and implies that the producers make Inderøy a good place to live. There are positive emotions attached to the notion of them and the food. The landscape, history, traditions, and cultural heritage also contribute in making it a *something* place, perfect for local food production and for maintaining traditions that have existed in this agriculturally rich region. Although the local supermarket in itself has become a *nothing* place full of *nothing* products, the people who work there can be *something* people, especially in smaller local

communities, because they are the familiar face chatting to their regular customers. Perhaps they offer *something* services, doing an extra favour for a local customer. In all the supermarkets in Inderøy you can also find *something* products among the global industrial *nothing* products, namely Inderøy's own local food. The *somethingness* is largely created by place and community, which helps form an identity and culture, and this identity and culture in turn helps strengthen community. It is meaning making and builds relations.

The local food culture has an air of gastronomic quality as well, exemplified by another beverage producer, Inderøy Mosteri [juicery]. They treat their cold pressed juices like wine, as is read in this Lonely Planet article: *This one lingers on the palette like honey. We can taste gooseberry, lemon, even pineapple – it's super sweet*. (Williams, 2023) In fact, four of Inderøy's producers have received "Matmerk", a brand for exemplary quality and taste, within Trøndelag's food producers: Gangstad Gårdsysteri cheese; Skjenning from Røra Bakeri; a sausage from the Inderøy butcher; and "Den gyldne aquavit" [the golden aquavit – the maker harvests the herbs along the Golden Road route] (Matriket Midt d). Inderøy's local food product range largely consists of specialty products, like cheeses, beer, aquavit, and cured meat. However, there are also examples of products that can be consumed in the everyday setting, such as vegetables, milk, and eggs, which for instance Henrik talked about. These products are not the ones that are emphasised when it comes to the marketing of Inderøy's local food, however. To the outside world, in order to attract tourists, visitors, and customers, the quality products are often emphasised. They are part of the yearly food festivals and receive awards for their products, firmly establishing themselves within a culture of gastronomy. Not least because they became the European Region of Gastronomy 2022. As Bourdieu's (1979) influential work argues, how we eat is part of our identity. More specifically, food knowledge and food culture can be used as a means to achieve status and distinction (Bourdieu, 1979), and the overall food culture in Trøndelag is no different. Food knowledge is hence cultural capital (Ashley et al., 2004, p. 185). Although Inderøy and the wider region of Trøndelag produce food for their own inhabitants, it has always also been about creating an international name within tourism and food, which seems to be succeeding, judging by the various articles about the region, as illustrated by the Lonely Planet article.

The local food culture in Inderøy, consisting of many hard-working actors, have created a name for themselves. As this chapter has demonstrated, some of the local food culture is based upon already established regional foods, such as the *sodd* soup and *skjenning* flat bread. These are fiercely protected as formal dishes, while at the same time, their formality competes with everyday convenience. The *sodd* is no longer formal because it is a *meat* soup, as this has become an everyday food item, but people want to keep it formal based on tradition. The local food culture consists of more than the traditional dishes and products, however. They have created a distinctive *something* that is only found in Inderøy. This *something* consists of various products tied to the place, culture and traditions, but also new and creative entrepreneurial ideas and products, such as introducing the kombucha into the local food culture there. They have consequently created their own specific food culture, which is a mix between local culture and global influences, in a true *glocal* manner. Much of the work that has been done in the context of local food in Inderøy has, however, been part of a strategy to promote food tourism in the region. It has therefore served the municipality in this purpose. For the producers, selling products with an identity has created an added value, and adds further meaning when it becomes part of the local culture. For the inhabitants of Inderøy, the local food culture and the name it has established for itself, creates pride and a meaningful connection to the local. Food experiences had in contexts that evoke cultural heritage and tradition, or which reflects the origin of the food that is consumed, was mentioned as meaningful to the locals of Inderøy, further establishing the idea that connecting with place and culture foster meaning and wellbeing. While the local food culture can be seen as *glocal*, local people from the municipality, producers, and in general, have gathered around the joy of establishing a distinctive food culture here.

Figure 5: God Mat Lokalt, local food shop in Inderøy

5.4. Food and modern life

The previous chapters have dealt with how people are reconnecting, or attempting to reconnect, to place, community, and identity through local food in Inderøy. However, these connections are attempted in the context of the fast paced, mobile reality of the modern world. It is therefore important to include a chapter at the end, in order to balance the findings with some highly relevant points, before discussing. Although people find meaningful connections in their consumption and support for local food, everyone lives modern lives with work, children and leisure activities, and food provision tends to be led by convenience. Further, individualised lives mean that individual priorities will be made over those associated with place, community, and culture (identity). For those who care about making conscious decisions regarding their food, the supermarket may seem like a battle ground, as noted by Andreas Delsett (2022, p. 14), as there are so many ethical, environmental, social and health concerns to think about in the modern food system.

5.4.1. **Fast lives, fast meals**

While the inhabitants we spoke to were generally interested in buying local food, as it was experienced as something meaningful, they also wanted to get home quickly from work and not spend too much time on food provisioning and cooking in a busy everyday life. Isak, an older inhabitant, had some reflections on people prioritising time and convenience in their lives:

> *I think some, if they don't have it from the family and know the significance of farming, and they start a family and live with small children, they think first and foremost about what it costs and time – that they have to drive here and there. You need to have time, and many people want to save time. Maybe that understanding comes later*. (Isak, inhabitant)

Since he himself came from a farm and his wife had been very interested in food, which meant the family was used to buying local food and fresh produce, as well as home-baked bread and more, Isak was used to putting some extra time into activities related to food. Other families may not have the same experience with farms, nor the same interest in food provisioning and cooking. Consequently, different people spend different amounts of time on it. Whereas food provisioning would have taken up a significant part of people's lives in

earlier times, people in the Western world, Norwegians specifically, now have the luxury of spending much of their time on other activities, since the acts of food provisioning and cooking have been made increasingly convenient. The preference for time-saving food related activities is in turn due to the modern fast-paced lifestyles people lead. These lifestyles, as mentioned, have taken us mentally, and often physically, far away from food production sites, thereby obscuring our knowledge and awareness about food production, and effectively alienating us from it (Bjørkdahl & Lykke, 2023). Norway is the country in Europe with the most supermarkets per capita (Delsett, 2022, p. 15; Karampour et al., 2016, p. 10), suggesting food provisioning is marked by convenience. One can therefore easily get to one of these *mass-spaces* filled with *nothing products*, which are happily chosen over the *something* counterparts in a busy schedule. People do not have time to invest in place, community, and identity in their everyday lives. However, a *mass-space*, or a *non-place*, according to Ritzer and Ryan (2002), can still have *something services*, marked by humanised relations, done by familiar supermarket employees, *something people*, through daily chats and services beyond what is expected. In comparison, *non-people* in *non-places*, for instance a cashier in a large supermarket, who meets hundreds of people a day, use the same empty words and questions for every exchange.

The issue of time is a big component in people's everyday decisions. When asked about whether he would take the extra time to drive to the local food shop on the outskirts of Inderøy, *God Mat Lokalt*, Henrik initially said no, before reflecting on it:

> *No. No, I wouldn't bother myself. You simply spend too much time on it. But of course, if you're already on the road, you could swing by. And try to facilitate for it. Try to plan. It's possible. You can shop what you need there.* (Henrik, inhabitant)

On the other side of the food exchange, there was also an understanding that people chose convenience. One of the food producers said that they would lose some money over people being convenience focused:

> *But in addition to price, I think it has to do with simplicity. You're going to the shop to buy food, so if you're in Rema, you just shop everything and you don't want to go for a longer trip. We lose some income on that, even though we're only two minutes away from the big shops here.* (Food producer 1)

Convenience, through saving time on food shopping, and hence individual needs are prioritised. This affects the community and lively countryside, when this means supporting the local food producers. Blaming the individual for how the food system works, however, is wrong. Guthman (2008) writes that to get people to buy local food as the right choice, as opposed to global food with all its problems, is still to individualise responsibility. Here, practice theoretical analysis of habits and practices entrenched in systems and infrastructures provides a useful framework of understanding, however, this is beyond the scope of this thesis, thus the focus will return to how actors navigate decisions in modern life, while considering the meaningful relations to place, community, and identity. Even though a significant percentage of Norwegians buy local food, a majority does not, but those who have bought local food like to return to this way of obtaining food (SIFO, 2021). Another local, Ada, said she had more time and energy for food shopping and cooking in weekends and holidays, and would take those extra rounds at those times. But daily life, in contrast, makes us choose convenience. This is also true when it comes to cooking, and even has some cultural implications, as seen with the *sodd.* Because it has become an easy dish to make, it is used conveniently to save time in a busy everyday life, but this has implications on the dish's perceived and traditional formality. We organise our modern lives largely according to time, and spending much or little time on various daily activities, such as food provisioning and preparation, depends on interest, preferences, and values, among other things. As Casini et al. (2019, p. 233) note, food preparation can be both a duty and leisure. Their study find that large families and young people are some of the groups willing to pay extra for timesaving and convenience in their food preparation, and where *foodies* find more pleasure in food making, thus setting aside more time for it (Casini et al., 2019). The same reflections and answers were heard in our interviews, where particularly families with children, as well as young people, were seen as those seeking convenience to a larger degree. Nevertheless, with the pace of modern life, despite an interest in food or not, and despite what age-group or family composition within which you find yourself, time is a factor in food provisioning and preparation.

5.4.2. **What we value**

There was a sense that people in Inderøy understood what it takes to produce food. Inhabitants felt sympathy for producers, who work so much for so little income. They were also concerned that if they did not invest in their producers, they might disappear, and that

would be a huge loss which would make their countryside a less vibrant and attractive place. However, local food was perceived to be expensive, which was a problem for some, and less of a problem for others. It is nevertheless something to address. Views on prices varied according to which type of actor we talked to, where municipal actors, the regional food developer, and food producers, who all had an understanding of what food production entails, believed local food has a fair price, and pointed out that Norwegians spend a significantly small share of their wage on food. Food producer 2 said she felt that the prices on her products were fair considering what it takes to produce them. Additionally, she noted Norwegians have a lot of money to spend:

> *People have much more money in the bank. Some are poorer, and some richer, but we notice that some people have a lot of money. And there are more than enough people with money – those who don't look at the price and buy what they want.* (Food producer 2)

Even though the more expensive products sold less than the cheaper ones, her impression was that even people with less money would indulge once in a while. When asked if she thought her products were expensive, she said:

> *For us, who know what it takes, it's not expensive, even though we understand that some customers would think that.* (Food producer 2)

On the one side, you had people arguing for the fairness of the pricing on local food products. It was an investment in Norwegian and local agriculture, helping local communities, and in particular local producers to survive. In the context of a modern fast-paced life with supermarkets around every corner, and which offer "cheap" food, people do not prioritise investing in local food products. As the county municipality representative pointed out, supported by data from Statistics Norway (SSB, 2018), Norwegians spend only around 11 per cent of their wage on food, and she also pointed out that there is an impression among people that food should be cheap. This notion has been helped forth by, among other things, the development of supermarkets marketing cheap food since the 1970s (Delsett, 2022, pp. 23-24). Supermarkets were in turn helped by the liberalisation of the time, which exchanged price control with a competition authority for a free market (Delsett, 2022, p. 26). In the 1990s imported goods increased in Norway, due to the European Economic Area Agreement and WTO Agreement of 1995, but a level of import

protection on agricultural goods ensured that Norwegian farmers survived even with the competition (Delsett, 2022, p. 27). However, supermarkets have taken over an increased share of the market, including further back in the value chain, with distribution and processing, consequently adding pressure on farmers and independent processers of food (Delsett, 2022, p. 28). Nevertheless, a 2011 report on the Norwegian supermarket industry concluded that Norway has the most expensive food, poorest selection and the least competition in Europe (Delsett, 2022, p. 34). These days, supermarkets have responded to the interest in local food, and they normally have separate shelves displaying a selection of local food. This was also the case in the supermarkets in Inderøy.

For local inhabitant Sofie, however, it was not possible to purchase great quantities of local food because of the price. Her social situation made it necessary to consider price when she bought food.

> *Yes, I can't afford to buy it often, it's for Christmas and parties. I think those with a lot more money are more able to afford themselves often. (…) I think that at least people in their twenties and below can't afford it.* (Sofie, inhabitant)

She found it valuable when she was able to buy local food, as seen in 5.3., looking forward to those days she was able to purchase local products, such as cheese. But in her daily life, she, like many others had to make thorough considerations as to what she could afford herself in terms of food. As the report of 2011 report concluded, Norway does in fact have expensive food compared to the rest of Europe, and with local food being more expensive, most people buy whatever they can afford in supermarkets. As Delsett (2022, p. 44) notes, with most necessary expense posts you have to pay a fixed price, however, with food you have a choice. You can choose the cheap food basket, most likely with processed fatty volume products, or the more expensive food basket, the ethical and healthy one. Today, there is thus a choice between cheap, less nutritious food that does not necessarily consider animal welfare, social and ecological sustainability, and the more expensive food which does so. Not all can afford to invest in ethics, nor in place, community, and identity, and many who can afford it, still do not, in order to spend it on other areas of consumption. For them, food is so available, it becomes a taken-for-granted thing.

In general, local food products are seen as specialty products and niche products, more than something to be consumed daily. The county municipality representative emphasised in her

interview, however, that cheap everyday food products do not have to be industrial commodities made in big volumes. She exemplified it with Røros milk [regional dairy brand], where the local milk brand has become as cheap as the national distributor Tine, and it has also become the most widely used milk to drink in the Røros region. It distributes milk to supermarkets all around the country. It has, nevertheless, not lost its identity as milk from the Røros region, perhaps something that has to do with the geographical indication in the name, in addition to successful marketing and branding of the Røros region and its food. They appear to have claimed ownership over it, despite its wide distribution. This product is thus affordable and still has an identity. If we look at Ritzer's framework, an upscaling of the distribution of a something product may risk losing its *somethingness* and become a *nothing product*. With wider distribution it is easier to lower the price, whereas with limited distribution, products may need a certain price level in order for the producers to survive. The range of distribution is often what separates a *something product* from a *nothing product*, and although the price does not necessarily determine anything, wider distribution may have an impact on how cheap it is (Ritzer and Ryan, 2002, p. 54). The impact of a *something product* versus a *nothing product* can also have different implications on the landscape; as Steele (2008, p. 51) notes, you get the countryside and landscape you pay for. Responsible food production which ensures production activity across many places, necessitates a certain cost, however, in a world where you can choose another type of food production through cheap, although still not-so-cheap food, where supermarket chains and the free market shapes production, distribution and prices, it is hard to choose and invest in the right kind of food production and have a meaningful connection to it.

5.4.3. **Too many strangers on the doorstep**

One of the producers said that she was ready to step down and reduce on-farm visits, after years of receiving people on their doorstep. Visitors would still be welcomed, but at reduced opening hours, with more of the weekend off. They wished for some privacy and to have more time with their family, which meant scaling down visiting activities on the farm and the face-to-face connection with consumers. Notably, this had reactions from consumers and visitors:

> *What I spent a great deal of time on now is explaining why we close at 3pm on weekdays and completely on Saturdays. It's to take care of the family, and to take*

care of oneself and life. We live on a farm, it's private, we live here. (Food producer 2)

There was one who had written on Google or Trip Advisor that everything was great, but he had given us one star. So, I asked what it was: Did you misunderstand, or did you mean one star? He said we hadn't understood how to take advantage of our resources. Here, you walk around the farm shop and spend all your money, and then he had to leave. He had been around France a lot, in places with food and wine tasting. He had a picture of what he wanted us to be, but we offer ice cream and a nice afternoon, so we have to be careful about how we communicate our business. (Food producer 2)

Choosing to become a farm open for visits and receiving masses of people can understandably be exhausting. Although one can sympathise with this feeling, it does affect the special face-to-face connection that is so special in local food networks. Visiting farms has become one of the ways that regular people can experience the site of food production, and gain insight and knowledge from it. If the farmers are too tired for these encounters, there is a danger of losing one of the main attractions of such a food system, namely the social reconnection and the community. As explained by scholars such as Bauman (2000), communities and individualism often stand in opposition to each other, and if you choose to live the individualist life, it is hard to maintain a community at the same time. Our modern lives are individualistic in nature, and it is precisely why many seek community; however, it may also be tempting to keep a certain level of individuality in life, as it represents a level of freedom (Bauman, 2000). Social worlds have been changed by globalisation (Day, 2006), and the disembedding of local services (Giddens, 1990), such as food production, have led to alienation and can only be helped by closer connection with producer and place. With tourism development many production places have become consumption spaces, offering experiences, education and leisure, leading consumers to have certain expectations when they visit farms (Everett, 2012). Tourists and regular visitors to the Golden Road farms in Inderøy, in particular, are there for leisure activities, and the farms have been facilitated as such by the producers. At the same time as they are production places of food, they have also become leisure and consumption spaces, the implications of which can be that consumer and tourist demands and needs become too much for the producer (Everett, 2012), as it appears to have become in this example. Farms have had to adjust their

activities according to the farmer's contemporary situation, which is a poor one, unless you are creative and come up with alternative solutions for value creation, beyond simply producing a raw material.

5.4.4. **The Golden Road – business development or place development, or both?**

The Golden Road, although not encompassing all the local food producers in Inderøy, is an important actor and network when it comes to the development and continued local food culture there. The motivation to create TGO was to attract tourists as potential customers and create more value out of their farms and businesses. They have had to open up their farms and provide people with experiences. For the Municipality, local food was an apparent part of developing the local economy through a strategy of tourism and destination development:

> *We've not had a specific focus on local food, but it has to do with the destination development work, to develop Inderøy as a tourist destination. Local food is closely related to and supports destination development.* (Municipal representative 1)

It is therefore apparent that, like in so many other places, the development of local food, where place and regional identity and tradition is emphasised, is used also, if not only, as a means to draw tourists, and in turn money. Because of deteriorating rural economies, rural tourism is seen as one salvation. While young people move to economic centres, as acknowledged by many modernisation theorists (e.g. Bauman, 2000; Berger et al., 1974) and modern agriculture becomes less and less profitable (Sæther and Haugum, 2012, p. 12), many rural place stand in danger of being completely abandoned. With nothing to offer people in terms of making a living and living well, rural municipalities have to look for ways to provide these things for their population. For producers, it depends on the size of their farm, as well as type of production. The political discourse among the ruling parties in Norway, as well as actors like Norges Bondelag [the Norwegian Farmers' Association], is that volume production will be prioritised, while small-scale agriculture will only contribute with niche products and tourism, constituting local food (Fjetland et al., 2023). Local food is thus not seen as something which will feed the masses, but rather something that can please a few on their travels. Local food tourism benefits local producers, but the strategy does not automatically benefit the local community. However, as a tourist development strategy it emphasises place and identity, consequently helping to highlight

and maintain tradition, regional culture and the specificities of that place. Everett and Aitchison (2008) found that tourism development in Cornwall had helped bring back a focus on, as well as maintain, the area's regional identity. Further, local food tourism helps foster connections between people and food through the consumption spaces Everett (2012) writes about. These connections are not necessarily between local inhabitants and the local community's food producers, as it can also be a tourist connecting and engaging with another locality and identity through a bite of its local food.

Food producer 1 represented, on the other hand, a producer that used to be a Golden Road member, but was not anymore, explaining that:

> *It has to do with how much money you need to have to be in it. TGR is an organisation that does marketing towards tourism and experiences, and I guess we eventually saw that we don't have that many experiences to offer tourists, other than offering tourists to come here and buy [products]. And TGR is growing, they increase the marketing and member fees.* (Food producer 1)

For Food producer 1, who was not a provider of tourism experiences, but rather running a place that simply sold their own produce, as well as other local producers' food products in their farm shop, the goals of the Golden Road and tourism development were not applicable. Instead, they represented a business used by locals more than tourists, thus being an actor more in tune with the local community. Local inhabitants would also argue that TGR and the other food producers were not only for tourists, and that the local food businesses would not survive without their help:

> *You can look at the one who fishes. If those who live in Inderøy had not bought from him, he couldn't have continued. He has to pay for the boat and all that. And he can't live off tourists, they're not here in the winter anyway, so it has to be the local population.* (Henrik, inhabitant)

They would claim to be part of the reason why local food businesses survived, thereby making up a community that helped each other out. Furthermore, the local food culture, despite also being part of a tourism development strategy, was seen as contributing to the attraction of Inderøy, giving locals exciting offers and leisure and consumption spaces. None of the local food businesses in Inderøy existed solely for one consumer group. Although the Golden Road to a much larger degree catered to tourists, all of the businesses

were open to both tourist visitors, as well as local visitors. What the tourism has done for Inderøy, however, is to give it a reputation beyond municipal borders, fostering pride and some sense of community among its locals. Further, for the producers, it has given their farm resources much more value than if they sent them to wholesalers. When it comes to the community component, cooperation, as was mentioned in 5.2., was both a business strategy ensuring income for the producers in the network, but it also fostered community relations through various forms of cooperation, and in the end it benefited Inderøy as a whole, leading to food production activities and a lively countryside. Mulcahy (2021, p. 47) writes that some of the most successful local food destinations in Ireland have had a so-called creative collaboration between locals and other actors, benefiting the local community socially, as well as financially. This means that the locals in Inderøy may have had good reason to claim some of the credit in the overall success of Inderøy's local food culture and tourism.

To summarise, *convenience* is key word on the consumer end. We move around more, we have many chores and activities during one day, often in various different places, and therefore the activity of provisioning for food is not necessarily prioritised. And it is possible, when convenient dishes in convenient supermarkets offers the chance to spend less time on food and more on other things, unless you want to spend more time on food. As exemplified with the *sodd*, it has become victim to a breach of tradition due to convenience. People try to maintain its formality, but many end up cooking up the soup as an easy and convenient everyday food alternative. Furthermore, the price of food is prevalent. Not all Norwegians can afford the right kind of food basket. Even among those who can afford the "right" kind of food basket, which invests in environment and social sustainability, there are many who buy the cheapest one. To reiterate, this is not to individualise responsibility, but it highlights the tension between attempting to establish meaningful connections and a good life with food, and the infrastructure of modern life, making it hard to invest in what is meaningful.

For producers, their struggle to survive and thrive means that they cannot only sell produce, necessarily, as they often need to open up their farms and offer other services, such as hospitality and tourism services. This has been good for alienated crowds who wish to reconnect to the origins of their food, however it demands much from the producers. For

the municipality, local food becomes part of a strategy to attract tourists which contributes to the local economy. It does, however, add to the attraction of the place even for local inhabitants. Through the tourism development strategy, there has also been an emphasis on place and identity, which contributes to the sense of place and regional identity which is felt and cherished in Inderøy today. It gathers people in Inderøy around a certain culture and pride about their homeplace.

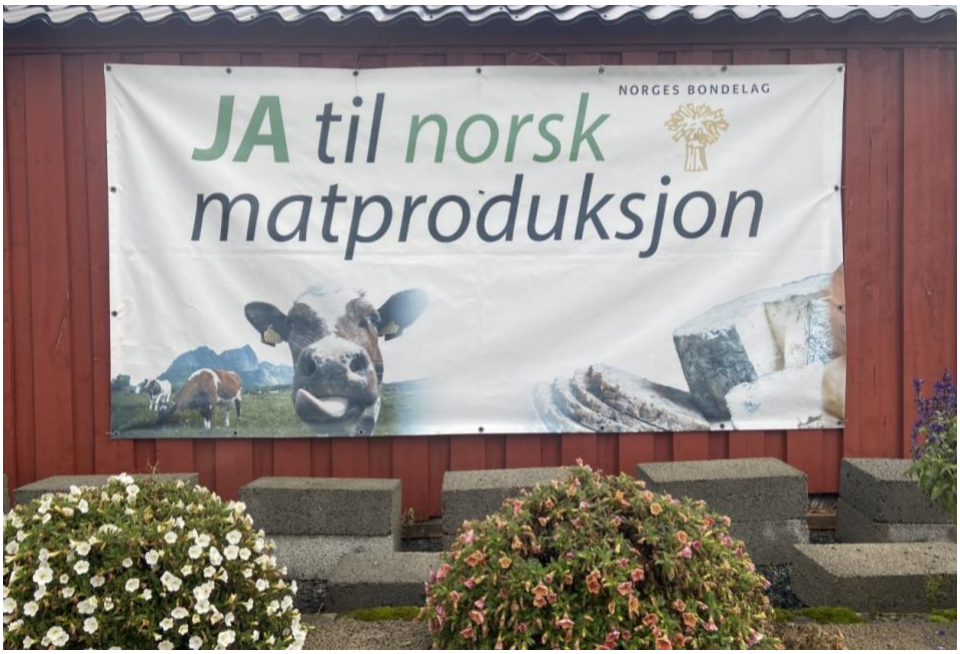

Figure 6: Poster in Inderøy: "Yes to Norwegian food production"

6. Discussion: Reconnecting meaningful relationships

> *This practice [the global food industry] is often seen as a sign of deep alienation, not only from the sources of food but also from each other.* (Beriss, 2019, p. 70)

With modernisation, the world has also become globalised. People's life-worlds, what we perceive in everyday life, were in pre-modern times local, while today they are to a larger extent global. Important in this context is the globalisation of services and various types of production, which in many instances have been lifted out of local contexts and to distant locations, thereby obscuring certain things that used to be part of everyday life, such as food production (Giddens, 1990). It is the implications of this which forms the basis of this thesis. The blurring of the origins of food, creates a distance between humans and nature, community, other human beings. Peters and Steinberg (2019), in their article on a "more-than-wet ontology", which deals with how we relate from, through and to the ocean, refer to Feagan (2007) in their contention that we do not *taste the ocean* to the same extent as before. The invisible industrial process between sea and plate, which often spans the globe, disconnects people from the knowledge that fish is the ocean. In the same way, it disconnects people from the responsibilities connected to caring for these resources (Peters and Steinberg, 2019, p. 300). The same point can be extended to on-land food resources, whose links between nature and plate have become blurred to us. Steele (2020, p. 3) also argue that some of the planet's greatest challenges are due to our failure to value food.

Assuming that the local is necessarily better than the global in and of itself has been contested. Like Purcell and Brown (2005) and Born and Purcell (2006) argued, after much praise of *the local* in academic literature, there is nothing inherently good or bad about any geographic scales. In particular, the environmental sustainability of local food systems compared to global food systems has been contested (Edward-Jones et al., 2008; Schlich and Fleissner, 2005), and although environmental sustainability has not been a topic in this thesis, it was mentioned by several informants in this project as a taken-for-granted idea. What this thesis does find, however, is that local food has the potential to offer social sustainability, as well as provide local food producers, normally small and medium scale farmers, and the rural municipalities within which the local food systems operate, with financial sustainability. In contrast, the global food system is too big and full of large-scale

actors in distant places for it to offer social and financial sustainability for all, but most importantly, too big, fluid, and impermanent to offer meaningful connections. Even though food production still happens in *places* in the seemingly abstract global food system (Harris, 2010), it is the lack of knowledge of these that matters. To reiterate, in a global food system you do not necessarily know the place from which your food originates. You do not know the producer. You are not necessarily familiar with the cultures that use a specific food item, nor its traditional uses and meanings. Therefore, you cannot make meaningful connections to any of these aspects through the global food you consume. And it is just this, a sense of meaning, which local food systems can provide, and that the global food system cannot. Like Schnell (2013), I therefore argue there *is* indeed meaning in the local.

Bruun Hansen (2015) writes about how we achieve different kinds of wellbeing, and how the affluent Western world is more than satisfied in the realm of *hedonic wellbeing*, immediate satisfaction. People live comfortable lives, are materially well off, and can satisfy their needs easily in their convenient surroundings. On the other hand, people struggle to find meaning in their everyday lives, *eudaimonic wellbeing* (Bruun Hansen, 2015). The notion of individual progress, which has been a guiding principle during modernity, is one of the reasons so many people moved to urban areas and out of the countryside, in order to raise their standard of living. This is essentially a quest for hedonic wellbeing, the immediate satisfaction of needs, often centring around material values (Bruun Hansen, 2015, p. 177). For eudaimonic wellbeing to become more attainable, however, Bruun Hansen argues people need more leisure time. This is in order to foster social relations (Bruun Hansen, 2015, p. 184). The issue of convenience and having time has also come up in this analysis as something which stops people from investing in local food products, therefore one can assume that more time would allow more people to buy local food, if it was not for other barriers, such as price. Another thing that came up was the nature of local food products. Local food was in several instances perceived as specialty products, often accommodating more for tourists, or finer events such as birthdays and holidays. However, local food was also vegetables, milk, eggs, and other foods for everyday consumption, they were just spread out in different farm shops, or found in the shop in the outskirts of Inderøy which few locals felt they had time to visit on the way home from work. What people would do with extra time is hard to say without research, but

having time to invest in local food, would also mean that they would invest in social relations with producers and the overall community in Inderøy, further contributing to a sense of meaning, or *eudaimonic wellbeing*.

Fast food is emblematic of the modern industrial world and food system. People live fast-paced lives, they need food fast, and those who make the food have other interests than people's health. Fast foods are also associated with *nothing* food products, because although they can be from a certain culture, they have become universalised and stripped of cultural meaning to fill the need for a quick food intake. There are no meaningful connections to environment or people. Slow food has become the antidote to this, praising the kind of food which is handmade with care, based in tradition, culture, and place. It also celebrates the enjoyment of food and convivial sharing of food, however, it is also an exclusive group of local food promoters consisting of mainly middle-class gastronomy-minded consumers (Sassatelli and Davolio, 2010). In Inderøy, the notion of "Slow Food" was not present or emphasised. The Golden Road marketing would advise tourists to slow down and enjoy the countryside and food (see Den Gyldne Omvei c), but no connections were drawn to the specific movement, which may be smart considering issues of inclusivity and openness. Nevertheless, many of the same values were emphasised in Inderøy, and slowing down is seen as enhancing wellbeing, particularly in the context of food consumption.

It may also seem like a first world problem to talk about the profound meanings in food, since, in the Western world, people are to a large degree so sufficiently fed and nourished, therefore we can ponder on other aspects of food. However, eating a culturally suitable diet, based on the local environment, landscape, and climate, as well as sharing food in a convivial way with others, is a meaningful thing. This is a connection which was thoroughly explored by writer, smallholder, and activist John Seymour in the 1970s (Syse, 2015, pp. 175-176). It is also something which is attempted to be claimed back in many developing countries through the struggle of peasants and small-scale farmers and the organisation La Via Campesina, fighting for, among other things, food sovereignty and the right to eat what they themselves produce – an environmentally and culturally appropriate diet, which ensures good food and nourishment (La Via Campesina, 2023). Having enough

to eat, but moreover, a food practice that is meaningful is therefore also a question of justice and equity.

This leads us further into the topic of access and equity. Local food systems are seen as ways to ensure more democratic control over food, however, localised food systems are not usually found to provide better access for poor people on a local level (Chapman & Perkins, 2020), and one can therefore also question the social sustainability of local food. In Inderøy, the social sustainability came from working together to enhance their own local food culture, but it did not provide better access for the poorer part of the population. The local food culture in Inderøy was to a large degree dominated by the Golden Road and the tourism strategy. There was therefore a business aspect to most things, even to "working together". Local food culture is in general prevalent in food tourism and gastronomy, areas which are not accessible to all, but which to a great degree belongs to the larger realm of foodie culture. As Cheney (2016, p. 106) writes, although foodie culture is coloured by class-distinction, it says something about the wish to connect to nature through food, something which will be explored more further down. However, true social sustainability and community would be to ensure access to everyone, but the local food in Inderøy is not part of such a strategy. It offers, nevertheless, a taste of community and working together towards common goals, in terms of maintaining a local food culture and attracting tourists, in the overall municipality. However, even our informant on welfare benefits had had the opportunity to eat a local meal in the barn at Berg, in a convivial setting with others, offering her a meaningful experience, further emphasising the enjoyment of sharing food with other people. This is another important point when it comes to what is lost in an increasingly individualised reality.

Furthermore, there is the caution by several scholars on local food, mentioned earlier, which deals with *defensive localism* (see e.g. DeSoucey, 2010 ; Winther, 2003). A community should be open and include people from different cultures, rather than defend "the local" from "other" influences. It should not be a goal to insulate places and protect them from change, but there is meaning in keeping traditions and culture, such as the *sodd* and aquavit, while at the same time introduce the kombucha, like in Inderøy. As was mentioned, being too traditional was in fact seen a barrier for the local food culture in Inderøy, and accordingly they had an open and reflexive attitude. People will keep making

international dishes, but using the food that grows around you, which you can know and have a relationship to, will still offer a more meaningful relationship to food. Food cultures can further be shared and appreciated for their *somethingness*. The main point is that connecting people with the origins of their food, providing a sense of place, a sense of community, and a sense of culture, is essentially meaningful. It is not surprising that, as Zepeda and Deal's (2009) study found, people that are interested in organic and local food mistrusted global corporations, while they felt local farmers looked after them in nurturing and caring ways. Proximity to the people who produce your food fosters trust, while long and abstract value chains from unknown people and places do not. There is a difference between mistrusting "other" influences and mistrusting the global food system, and I argue that most people only care about the latter.

Béné et al. (2019, 127) argue that, since food is so much based in culture and identity, a global food system becomes too abstract and lacking in content, making it an unfruitful concept. It is not an argument to only consume food within your own regional culture, it is an argument for appreciating the *somethingness* of various food cultures, with the cultural content and identities that exist within them. It is in these instances people connect with what they perceive as authenticity. People in Inderøy found authentic experiences in settings where local food was served in certain local environments that were associated with something special, such as in the barn of Berg farm. However, eating cuisines from other countries can also provide experiences of authenticity. In these cases, it is still the *somethingness* of the food which provides it. The turn to locality and place, traditions and culture, and community and conviviality, is a reaction to the spread of *nothing*, which Ritzer writes about. Consequently, where the spread of *nothing* leads to loss of meaning, *somethingness* can bring it back. As Ashley et al. (2004, p. 125) write, when people want a "proper meal", there are specific meanings and feelings attached, often relating to culture and place, as well as a convivial setting. However, just because something is traditional, does not mean it should be defended at all costs. The example of foie gras is illustrative of this. Outside of France, including actors inside France, it is viewed as unethical animal abuse, while some people in France still vigorously defend it on grounds of tradition and authenticity, because it symbolises French identity (DeSoucey, 2010, p. 444). There are thus issues within the realm of local food, which reminds us yet again to not label local and global food systems as neither completely good or completely bad.

This brings us back to the following: Can and should local food systems challenge the global food system? The global food system consists of enormous volumes and complex value chains that ensures food is distributed around the globe. It is not distributed in a fair manner, however, and the overall trading system can be criticised for its unequal distributions of power and big powerful actors which pressure developing countries into export of raw materials and cheap imports of processed goods, which in turn pressure local suppliers out of the market (Trolio et al., 2016, p. 213). This is what actors such as La Via Campesina fight against, and instead for more sovereignty and self-determination over countries' own food production. It is also a fight for place, community, and culture, and its concomitant meanings. Further, echoing an old and established argument by Marx, throughout industrialisation, and modernisation, humans have become increasingly alienated from nature (Barca & Bridge, 2015, p. 8). Animals have been put in cages in industrial compounds, and are being treated as commodities and products, rather than living beings that deserves to live out their natural lives before becoming food. All forms of nature are commodified, further distancing us from it. Food is living things, from living landscapes, shared with other living beings. It is this alienation, from nature, the landscape, place, culture, and other human beings, that inspires the quest for reconnection. As Bjørkdahl and Lykke (2023) write, the task of mending these broken bonds is not easy. Yet it is left to the consumer to do most of the job (Bjørkdahl and Lykke, 2023, p. 27). If there is a scale in which normal people can make a difference, however, it is in the local. As Bauman (2007, pp. 82-83) contends, the global level is the one which affects our lives, but it is on the local level we can actually hope to do something.

Though the analysis finds that the meaningful connections local people try to achieve through their interaction with the local food culture is very limited, largely because of the way in which the modern world is structured, the most interesting thing is that it is in fact attempted. The meaningful connections are small, and may seem futile and insignificant, but they are small attempts at finding meaning within their community, homeplace and food culture, as well as in a search for the good life. Everyday convenience trumped daily investments in place, community, and identity, but local food consumption and the meaningful connections attached to it, was nevertheless present in Inderøy. Those connections cannot be found in the global food system. Local food systems can never

compete with the global because of scale, but local food is something that provides connection to meaningful aspects, where it is absent in the global food system. As previously mentioned, Dowler et al. (2009) found that people were in a constant process of reconnecting, rather than it being an end that they had reached. In Inderøy, people have attempted to reconnect to lost aspects of food, but there is nothing that suggests that they have arrived at where they want to be.

7. Conclusion

This thesis has explored some of the deeper meanings relating to food, beyond instrumental values, such as nutrition and food security. It has looked into the more emotional and spiritual aspects relating to finding meaning and searching for the good life through food consumption, which is so elementary to us. Through asking municipal actors, producers, and local inhabitants in Inderøy, I wanted to see how the elements of place, community, and culture played a part in how they relate to the local food culture in Inderøy, as well as how it contrasts to the global food system. These are non-rational, immeasurable aspects of food, but which are nevertheless important for people's wellbeing. What I found is that these elements have been important not only for emotional and spiritual reasons, however, but for securing better incomes for farmers, and attracting people and money to the municipality through tourism. Tourism has been important for the development of local food in Inderøy, like in so many other places. Still, the local food culture, benefiting from tourists, also contributes in making Inderøy an attractive place for its residents. It therefore helps increase people's wellbeing through a number of ways.

Place has always been a natural part of the livelihood of producers. Using resources from local place is the foundation of most food production. Further, place is being used in the stories told about these products, helping them take on an identity, which in turn stands out from other generic products. As stated, place in combination with food and other cultural activities has been used by the municipality to attract people and money, and by producers to sell products, in the name of economical sustainability. It helps small- and medium-scale farmers generate a decent income, and it helps make Inderøy attractive to those who live there, and potential settlers. Place has been heavily emphasised within gastronomy and tourism, and food based in place is therefore highly valued by those interested in food – the upper-class foodies. It has added an attractive element to Inderøy, and one can conclude that place gives meaning to food, in the same way as food give meaning to place. Local inhabitants also engaged with place and the landscape through local food consumption, as well as their own self-provisioning. These were experienced as meaningful endeavours contributing to a good life.

The community aspect was found in how consumers displayed a care for local producers, especially with regards to fair payment for the amount of work that was put in by farmers. There was also a sense of gratitude for what they were able to provide to the respective individuals, but also the whole municipal community as a whole. All the actors interviewed took some of the credit for the success of the Golden Road and wider local food culture, even inhabitants. Together they were able to sustain a lively countryside. The proximity between consumers and producers also fostered relationships based on trust, where the transparency ensured consumers about responsible production, and where producers could use face-to-face encounters to educate consumers about important aspects of food production and adjusting expectations. Such relationships of meaningful exchange were possible at a local level and cannot exist in a global food system.

The local food culture in Inderøy highlighted both tradition, through for instance *sodd* and *skjenning*, as well as new ideas and products such as the kombucha. With a mix of both local and global influences, it is a *glocal* food culture. It has established distinctiveness made up of, using Ritzer's framework, *something* people, places, products, and services. The elements of small-scale farmers, handcrafted products, and place also help establish a sense of authenticity when consuming the local food here. Further, people had "authentic" experiences when they ate or drank in a setting echoing tradition and cultural heritage, or in a setting that reflected the origins of the food or drink that was consumed.

However, the context of people's lives is the reality of the modern world. Convenience takes precedence over other, potentially more meaningful concerns. In a fast-paced life, food provisioning is not prioritised, and it does not have to be when there are supermarkets around every corner, offering seemingly cheap food. Although the supermarket food might not be as cheap as we like to think, it does nevertheless typically cost less than local food, creating a dilemma between paying farmers a fair price for the food versus individual affordability. In general, Norwegians only spend a limited amount of their wage on food, and they can choose between more and less responsible food production in the supermarket. It is clear that people prioritise quick satisfaction over long-term considerations. In other words, rather than *eudaimonic* wellbeing, which gives a larger sense of meaning in life, people opt for hedonic pleasures with immediate gratification. Further, the individualised

nature of how we live our lives in Norway suggests that we make considerations based on individual concerns rather communal.

The blurring of the origins of food has distanced us from nature, place, community, and culture, and we have become increasingly integrated in a global economy of *nothing* products, services, and places. Modernity and globalisation have therefore been the cause of alienation, but also what has incentivised the quest for reconnection. It has highlighted the loss of important connections, which therefore have been sought re-established. Eating nourishing and culturally appropriate food from one's own surroundings is a global struggle, fought by actors such as La Via Campesina, which brings in issues of justice. However, it is important to bear in mind that localisation and localism is not without problems. Some traditions might be better left behind, and fierce protection of the local should not come at the cost of rejecting new and other influences. At the same time, there is meaning in keeping traditions alive. They are not mutually exclusive. Many equate local food with slow food, as opposed to the fast food of fast-paced modern life, and perhaps there is something in having more time. More time to produce better food, and more time to make decisions regarding food.

Since we live our lives at the local level, we cannot sufficiently relate to everything that happens on a global scale. While we can perceive it, we cannot connect to it on a deeper level. Moreover, we can act on a local level, more than we can have an influence on a global level. When the global food system feels alienating, not only because of lack of knowledge, but because of knowledge which suggests that people, animals, and nature are being exploited and suffer under global capitalist structures, local food systems can seem more appealing. On the local level, transparency is greater, and social relationships possible. One can grow connections to place, landscape, farmer, community, and culture. These are the kinds of connections which contribute to *eudaimonic wellbeing*. In Inderøy, it was clear that attempts at connecting to place, community, and culture were made. Although small and seemingly insignificant, they demonstrated that people find these connections to be meaningful. The local food culture here does not in any way pose a threat to the global food system or the surrounding supermarkets carrying its products, but the meaningful connections which people seek are significant and say something about what makes a good life.

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References Images:

Figure 1: Accessed from Øyna Hotel and Restaurant website https://www.oyna.no

Figure 2: Accessed from Google Maps (screenshot) https://www.google.com/maps/place/Inder%C3%B8y/@63.6726237,10.8277866,9z/data=!4m6!3m5!1s0x46729df3b6fd3e0f:0x560e5a2fd0c3c8e6!8m2!3d63.8449932!4d11.0414943!16zL20vMDE4YjFx?entry=ttu

Figure 3: Accessed from Visit Innherred, https://visitinnherred.com/fjordlangs-pa-inderoy/

Figure 4: Accessed from Visit Innherred, https://en.visitinnherred.com/tour-suggestion-from-gulburet-to-oyna/konica-minolta-digital-camera/

Figure 5: Photo by Thea Sandnes (author)

Figure 6: Photo by Thea Sandnes (author)

Appendix 1

Consent form in Norwegian given to the participants in the study. The Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD) confirmed that we could give the same consent form and use the same interview guide for both the research project and my thesis, as this was a collaboration. We would communicate this verbally to all the participants in the study prior to handing out this form.

Spørsmål om deltakelse i Kortreist: et forskningsprosjekt om lokalmat og opplevelser.

Bakgrunn og formål

Gjennom forskningssenteret Include, som finansieres av Norges forskningsråd, skal det gjennomføres en studie av lokal mat og opplevelser og kommuners rolle. Vi er interessert i hvordan kommuner kan bidra til å etablere kortreiste kretsløp for mat og tilknyttede opplevelser og hvilken betydning kortreiste kretsløp spiller for stedsutvikling. Vi er også interessert i å kartlegge økonomiske, sosiale og institusjonelle barrierer for slike kretsløp. Det er vårt mål at vi skal kunne gi råd til kommuner når det gjelder utvikling av kortreiste strategier.
Kortreist-prosjektet startet opp i 2020 og varer fram til og september 2023. Forskningen i prosjektet vil baseres på dokumentstudier og intervjuer med sentrale aktører (kommunalt ansatte, politikere, næringsaktører, ulike andre organisasjoner og innbyggere) i et utvalg kommuner.

Hvem er ansvarlig for prosjektet?

Universitetet i Oslo er vertskap for Include-senteret og er behandlingsansvarlig. Include er et samarbeid mellom følgende forskningspartnere: Universitetet i Oslo, Fridtjof Nansens Institutt, CICERO Senter for klimaforskning, OsloMet, Transportøkonomisk institutt, Universitetet i Tromsø og Durham University, UK.

Hvorfor får du spørsmål om å delta?

Vi ønsker å intervjue sentrale personer i tilknytning til lokale matsatsinger fra kommune, næringsliv, relevante andre organisasjoner og befolkningen. Vi henvender oss til deg fordi du er i en av disse gruppene.

Hva innebærer det for deg å delta?

Vi ønsker å kartlegge arbeidet med lokalmat i ulike kommuner gjennom intervjuer med relevante aktører. Vi har utarbeidet en intervjuguide som vi bruker i intervjuet, men det gis også rom for at informanten kan belyse ting utover det som denne dekker og som er av interesse for studien. Vi gjør notater under intervjuet, bruker lydopptak og i noen tilfelle transkriberer vi det som blir sagt.

Det er frivillig å delta

Det er frivillig å delta i intervjuer. Hvis du velger å delta, kan du når som helst trekke samtykke tilbake uten å oppgi noen grunn. Alle opplysninger om deg vil da bli anonymisert. Det vil ikke ha noen negative konsekvenser for deg hvis du ikke vil delta eller senere velger å trekke deg.

Ditt personvern – hvordan vi oppbevarer og bruker dine opplysninger

Vi vil bare bruke opplysningene om deg til formålene vi har fortalt om i dette skrivet. Vi behandler opplysningene konfidensielt og i samsvar med personvernregelverket. Vi vil slette data som kan klassifiseres som særskilte kategorier av personopplysninger (tidligere kalt «sensitive

personopplysninger»). Eksempel: Hvis noens helsesituasjon nevnes på et møte, vil vi ikke notere det. Det betyr at alle persondata vil bli betraktet som begrenset, og vil lagres i henhold til Universitetet i Oslo sin lagringsguide for 'gule' data. Vi bruker Office 365 under UiOs databehandleravtale med Microsoft samt et lagringshotell ved Universitetet i Oslo som har begrenset tilgang.
Det er kun forskere knyttet til Include ved Universitetet i Oslo og ved forskningspartnerne nevnt over som har tilgang til data som beskrevet i dette informasjonsskrivet. Dette utgjør rundt regnet 30 forskere og 2 forskningsassistenter. I alle publikasjoner vil navnet ditt være erstattet med en anonym kode eller dekknavn. Din arbeidstittel og arbeidsplass kan bli nevnt i publikasjoner. Vi vil etterstrebe å presentere opplysningene på en slik måte at du ikke kan gjenkjennes.

Hva skjer med opplysningene dine når vi avslutter forskningsprosjektet?
Prosjektet skal etter planen avsluttes 2027, og data vil lagres i 10 år etter prosjektslutt. Vi kommer til å anonymisere datamaterialet senest ved prosjektslutt i 2027. Det betyr at personopplysninger fjernes fra notater, feltnotater, referater og transkripsjoner, og erstattes med en anonym kode eller dekknavn. Lydopptak slettes.

Dine rettigheter
Så lenge du kan identifiseres i datamaterialet, har du rett til:

- innsyn i hvilke personopplysninger som er registrert om deg,
- å få rettet personopplysninger om deg,
- få slettet personopplysninger om deg,
- få utlevert en kopi av dine personopplysninger (dataportabilitet), og
- å sende klage til personvernombudet ved UiO eller Datatilsynet om behandlingen av dine personopplysninger.

Hva gir oss rett til å behandle personopplysninger om deg?
Vi behandler opplysninger om deg basert på ditt samtykke. På oppdrag fra Universitetet i Oslo har NSD – Norsk senter for forskningsdata AS vurdert at behandlingen av personopplysninger i dette prosjektet er i samsvar med personvernregelverket.

Hvor kan jeg finne ut mer?
Hvis du har spørsmål til studien, eller ønsker å benytte deg av dine rettigheter, ta kontakt med:

- Hege Westskog, prosjektleder for kortreist-prosjektet, hege.westskog@sum.uio.no
- Ole Smørdal, ansvarlig for intervensjoner i Include, ole.smordal@uv.uio.no
- Roger Markgraf-Bye, personvernombud ved UiO, personvernombud@uio.no
- NSD – Norsk senter for forskningsdata AS, personverntjenester@nsd.no/ tlf: 55582117.

Med vennlig hilsen

Hege Westskog
Senter for utvikling og miljø (SUM)
Universitetet i Oslo
94307077

Samtykkeerklæring

Ved å returnere dette dokumentet til avsender med et kryss i boksen under bekreftes at jeg har mottatt og forstått informasjon om prosjektet Kortreist: et forskningsprosjekt om lokalmat og opplevelser. Det bekreftes videre at jeg samtykker til å delta i intervju og at mine opplysninger behandles frem til prosjektet er avsluttet, etter planen i 2027. Etter prosjektslutt vil opplysninger lagres anonymisert for eventuelle oppfølgingsstudier.

Sett kryss hvis samtykker:

☐

Navn informant (blokkbokstaver):

Signatur informant dato

Appendix 2

Appendix 2 consists of three interview guides in Norwegian for municipal actors, producers and business actors, and finally inhabitants/households. They constituted only suggestions for questions, as the interviews had a semi-structured format.

Intervjuguide offentlige aktører

Informasjon om prosjektet gis innledningsvis

- Om delprosjektet og Include
- NSD godkjenning og samtykke
- Tillatelse til opptak

Om informanten og organisasjon

Formål: Få fram rolle og ansvar til informant.

- Rolle, ansvar og oppgaver
- Bakgrunn

Omstilling og arbeid med lokalmat

Formål: Introdusere hovedtema i intervjuene – omstilling og lokalmat. Få fram hva som er motivasjon for satsing(vekststrategi/omstillingstrategi) og hvordan de ser sammenhengen mellom klimaomstilling og ev. satsing på lokalmat, samarbeid med næringsliv, betydning for befolkning og stedsutvikling . Her er det viktig å også utfordre dem med tanke på hvorvidt de har planer/er innstilt på å også jobbe for nivå tre i klimaomstilling (eks mindre kjøttproduksjon/mer frukt og grønt)

Lokalmat – næringsliv, kundegrupper og involvering:

- Hvordan har dere (kommunen selv) jobbet for å fremme lokalmat i kommunen
- Hva er bakgrunnen/motivasjonen for satsing/ikke satsing? (inkludert om dette ses som en vekststrategi eller en omstillingsstrategi/strategi for endring av en ikke bærekraftige utviklingstrekk i økonomi)?
- Hvem vil du beskrive som sentrale aktører (for eksempel lokalmatprodusenter, distributører, næringslivsorganisasjoner, ildsjeler, etc) i denne regionen innenfor feltet lokalmat?
- Hvordan vil du definere lokal i denne sammenhengen?
- Hvordan samarbeider kommunen med næringslivet for å fremme/utvikle lokalmat?
- Har lokalbefolkningen blitt involvert i utviklingen av lokalmat?
    - I så fall på hvilken måte? (inkl tilrettelegges det på noen måte for at hele befolkningen kan delta).
- I hvilken grad er det samarbeid med aktører (næringsliv, andre kommuner, regionale og statlige aktører) utenfor kommunen (geografisk) om lokalmatsatsing?
- Hvordan vil du karakterisere kommunen/stedet (for eksempel - hvordan vil en fra Vågå/Inderøy/Hurdal snakke om stedet sitt)?
    - Er lokalmat knyttet til dette?
    - Er det forskjeller mellom ulike befolkningsgrupper når det gjelder dette?
- Hvilke kundegrupper er lokalmatsatsingen(ene) rettet mot?
- Lokale/tilreisende/aldersgrupper/inntektsgrupper?
- På hvilke måter gjør satsingen mot spesifikke grupper seg gjeldende?

Klima:

- Hvilke enheter/sektorer i kommunene er normalt involvert i arbeidet med klimaomstilling?
- Hva er kommunens:
    - hovedmål for reduksjon av klimagasser?
    - viktigste styringsverktøy/virkemidler for reduksjon av klimagasser?
    - Kjennskap til og eventuelt bruk av Klimabudsjett som virkemiddel?
- Er arbeidet med reduksjon av klimagasser knyttet til andre kommunale ansvarsområder, for eksempel innenfor helse, miljø, skole?
    - I så fall på hvilken måte?
- I hvilken grad (og ev. hvordan) kobles lokal matproduksjon til kommunens klima- og omstillingsstrategi? (Adressere også hvorvidt det er planer/motivasjon for å jobbe med omstilling av produksjon/forbruk mot mer frukt/grønt og klimaomstilling på nivå 3).
- I hvilken grad (og ev. hvordan) kobles lokal matproduksjon til kommunens arbeid med stedsutvikling?
- Hva er dine synspunkter på lokalmat som stedsutviklingsstrategi og klimaomstillingsstrategi. Er dette en god strategi? Har du motforestillinger?

Barrierer, mulighetsrom og hensiktsmessighet

Formål: Avdekke hva kommunene oppfatter som barrierer i arbeid med lokalmat og mer spesielt – lokalmat som omstillingsstrategi. Få fram mulige ulemper ved kortreist.

- Hva er mulighetsrommet til kommunen for å fremme lokalmat?
    - Barrierer? (praktiske, politiske, kulturelle/verdibaserte)
    - Muligheter? (for eksempel i form av positive effekter på andre områder kommunen jobber med)
- Er det andre virkemidler kommunen burde tatt i bruk for å fremme lokalmat og hva kunne man gjort mer av? Ev. hva er årsaken(e) til at slike ikke er tatt i bruk? (for eksempel politisk motstand)

- I hvilken grad ser dere følgende tre ansvarsområder i sammenheng i satsingen på lokalmat; stedsutvikling, lokal næringsutvikling og klimaomstilling?
- I hvilken grad er det utfordringer knyttet til satsingen på lokalmat (Merknad: først stille spørsmålet generelt for eventuelt å få fram globale rettferdighetsspørsmål også, deretter spesifisere).
    - Er det noen grupper/innbygger i kommunen som enten ikke drar nytte av satsingen eller har ulemper? Hvorfor?
    - Er det noen ansvarsområder i kommunen som enten ikke drar nytte av satsingen eller har ulemper? Hvorfor?

Intervjuguide tilpasset næringsaktører

Om prosjektet

- Om delprosjektet og Include
- NSD godkjenning og samtykke
- Tillatelse til opptak

Om informanten og organisasjon

Formål: Få fram rolle og ansvar til informant.

- Rolle, ansvar og oppgaver
- Bakgrunn

Satsing på lokalmat –hva gjort.

Formål: Introdusere hovedtema i intervjuene – omstilling og lokalmat. Få fram hvordan de ser sammenhengen mellom klimaomstilling og evt satsing på lokalmat, samarbeid med kommune, betydning for befolkning og stedsutvikling

Lokalmat – næringsvei, kundegrupper, involvering og nettverk:

- Hvordan har dere jobbet for å fremme deres konsept for lokalmat (både bakgrunn for satsing/ikke gjennomførte tiltak og hovedgrep som de har gjort)?
- Er deres lokalmatsatsing knyttet til opplevelser for tilreisende og lokale?
- I så fall på hvilken måte?
- Har det vært endringer i deres satsing over tid?
- I så fall på hvilken måte og når?
- Hvem vil du beskrive som sentrale aktører (for eksempel lokalmatprodusenter, distributører, næringslivsorganisasjoner, ildsjeler, etc) i denne regionen innenfor feltet lokalmat?
- Hvordan vil du definere lokal i denne sammenhengen?
- Samarbeider dere med noen aktører om lokalmat?
    - I så fall på hvilken måte?
- Har dere et samarbeid med kommunen om lokalmat?
    - I så fall på hvilken måte?
- Hvordan vil du karakterisere kommunen/stedet (for eksempel - hvordan vil en fra Vågå/Inderøy/Hurdal snakke om stedet sitt)?
    - Er lokalmat knyttet til dette?
    - Er det forskjeller mellom ulike befolkningsgrupper når det gjelder dette?
- Hvilke kundegrupper er lokalmatsatsingen(ene) rettet mot?
- Lokale/tilreisende/aldersgrupper/inntektsgrupper?
    - På hvilke måter har dere eventuelt satset mot spesifikke grupper?
    - Har dere vært i dialog med lokale innbyggere om utvikling av lokalmatkonsepter?
    - I så fall på hvilken måte?

Klima

- Inngår satsing på lokalmat som en del av en klima- og omstillingsstrategi lokalt?
- Dersom ikke – hva er bakgrunnen for satsing på lokalmat?
- Hvordan kan lokalmat bidra til lokal omstilling i mer klima- og miljøvennlig retning og hvordan kan din produksjon bidra i så måte?

- Hvilke muligheter finner i regionen for å omstille lokalmatproduksjon mot mer frukt og grønt og hvordan ser du i så fall på dette?

Virkemidler og tiltak

Formål: Få fram hvilke virkemidler/tiltak de ser for seg kunne være nyttig for dem og for andre lokalmatprodusenter for å fremme lokalmat/lokalmat.

- Hva vurderer du som de viktigste virkemidlene/tiltakene for å fremme lokal matproduksjon (offentlig og egen/andre næringsaktører)?
- Hva er dine synspunkter rundt satsing på lokalmat (offentlig og egen/andre næringsaktører).
    - Er dette en god strategi for stedsutvikling/ lokal næringsutvikling/klimaomstilling?
    - Har du motforestillinger?
- Hva kan være aktuelle virkemidler for å fremme lokalmat/lokalmat som opplevelser og som del av stedsutvikling?
    - Hva ville vært de viktigste tiltakene for dere?
    - Hvordan tror du mulighetene er for å få gjennomført disse virkemidlene og tiltakene?

Barrierer, mulighetsrom og hensiktsmessighet

Formål: Avdekke hva næringsaktøren oppfatter som barrierer i arbeid med lokalmat og mer spesielt – lokalmat som omstillingsstrategi. Få fram mulige ulemper ved kortreist.

- Hva er mulighetsrommet for å fremme lokalmat?
    - Barrierer? (praktiske, politiske, kulturelle/verdibaserte)
    - Muligheter? (for eksempel i form av positive effekter for andre sektorer lokalt).
- I hvilken grad ser du/dere følgende tre områder i sammenheng med lokalmat; stedsutvikling, lokal næringsutvikling og klimaomstilling?
- I hvilken grad er det utfordringer knyttet til satsingen på lokalmat (Merknad: først stille spørsmålet generelt for eventuelt å få fram globale rettferdighetsspørsmål også, deretter spesifisere).
    - Er det noen grupper/innbygger i kommunen som enten ikke drar nytte av satsingen eller har ulemper? Hvorfor?
    - Er det noen ansvarsområder i kommunen som enten ikke drar nytte av satsingen eller har ulemper? Hvorfor?

Intervjuguide lokalmat - befolkning

Om prosjektet

- Om delprosjektet og Include
- NSD godkjenning og samtykke
- Tillatelse til opptak

Om informanten

- Om informanten
  - jobb/yrke,
  - eier fritidsbolig/tilgang til fritidsbolig

Praksis (mat og opplevelser)

Her adresseres deltakeres matpraksiser, bruk av lokalmattilbud og opplevelser.

Matpraksis

- Hvordan ser en vanlig dag ut for din familie/deg når det gjelder måltider/hva spiser dere til frokost, lunsj og middag?
- Hvem er ansvarlig for å lage de ulike måltidene?
- Hvor gjør du/dere vanligvis innkjøpene?
- Har dere handlet lokalt produsert mat? I så fall hvor?
- Hva tenker dere om de lokalmattilbudene som er her?
- Hva er årsakene til at du/dere benytter/ikke benytter dere av tilbudene? Er det forskjeller i familien på dette? Og hva tror du/dere om venner/bekjentes bruk av lokalmat?
- Hvilke lokalmataktører kjenner du fra ditt nærmiljø?
- Er lokalmat et tema som kan komme opp i samtaler med venner/naboer. Hva er da mer spesifikt tema?

Opplevelser:

- Hva gjør du/dere i fritiden og i ferier?
- Tilbringer dere fritid og ferie sammen med venner? Og sambygdinger?
- Hvem gjør valgene når det gjelder fritidsaktiviteter og ferier?
- Hvordan vil du karakterisere bygda di/stedet/sentrum?
- Hva gjør deg stolt av lokalsamfunnet og hva er mindre attraktivt?
- Har du/dere brukt lokale opplevelsestilbud? I så fall hvilke?
- Har dere brukt opplevelsestilbud knyttet til lokal matproduksjon (eks åpen gård etc)? Og hva synes du/dere i så fall om dem?
- Har dere oppsøkt slike tilbud sammen med familie og venner?
- Hva er årsakene til at dere benytter/ikke benytter lokale opplevelsestilbud (inkl for lokalmat)? Og er det forskjeller i familien/venner på dette?

Barrierer

Her adresseres viktigste hindringer – først åpent, deretter med tanke på hovedkategoriene (materielle betingelser, erfaring/kunnskap og holdninger)

Hva tenker du er de største hindringene for deg/dere når det gjelder å kjøpe lokalmat/benytte tilbud på lokalmat som opplevelser?

Spørre mer om:

- Pris/for dyrt?
- Synlighet? Kunnskap om hva som finnes lokalt?

- Tilrettelegging for lokale opplevelsestilbud (inkl lokalmat som opplevelser) (utenfor sentrum for eksempel)
- Attraktivitet av tilbudene?
- Annet?

Verdier

Denne delen er for å fange opp holdninger og verdier rundt klima, miljø og betydning av lokalmiljøet i fritidssammenheng.

- Hva er det gode liv for deg?
- Hvordan tenker du/dere at lokale opplevelser/lokalmiljøet/lokalmat påvirker det gode liv?
- Vil du/dere beskrive deg/dere som miljøbevisst?
- Jobber du/noen av dere med miljø og klimarelaterte ting?
- Er du/dere medlem av noen miljøorganisasjoner?

Virkemidler og tiltak

Her skal vi få fram synspunkter på mulige virkemidler og tiltak for å fremme kortreist mat og matopplevelser.

- Tror du/dere at kortreiste alternativer som lokalmat og lokale opplevelser kommer til å spille en viktig rolle i klimaomstilling i fremtiden?
- Hva tenker du/dere er positive/negative sider ved kortreiste alternativer (forklar kort)? Økonomisk? Miljømessig? Sosialt/Kulturelt?
- Hva tenker du/dere er viktige virkemidler for å kjøpe mer lokalprodusert mat?
- Og virkemidler for å fremme kortreiste opplevelser inkl opplevelser knyttet til lokal mat?
- Hvordan kan kommunen spille en rolle?