

SFSC in Latvia

1. What is the current situation with respect to SFSC in my country (specifying from whose point of view)?

In Latvia, the current situation regarding Short Food Supply Chains (SFSC) is characterized by active efforts to enhance sustainability and resilience within regional food systems. Vidzeme Planning Region has been a focal point for initiatives aimed at strengthening connections among all stakeholders in the food chain, including producers, processors, traders, logistic enterprises, and catering service providers. Key objective is to develop and maintain a sustainable and resilient regional food system, with a particular emphasis on fostering direct relationships between producers and consumers.

Additionally, the Cities2030 project has been instrumental in promoting Green Public Procurement (GPP) policies in Latvia. In the Vidzeme region, stakeholders, including national authorities, have engaged in discussions to enhance regulations on GPP, focusing on how local food systems can better support sustainable public procurement. These efforts emphasize the importance of sourcing locally produced food and integrating SFSCs into public procurement processes, thereby contributing to the stability of regional food security.

These initiatives reflect a concerted effort from regional authorities and stakeholders to promote SFSCs in Latvia, aiming to create a more sustainable and resilient food system that benefits local producers and consumers alike.

2. What is the ideal or desired situation with respect to SFSC in my country?

The Latvian Rural Forum (LRF) envisions a robust and sustainable framework for Short Food Supply Chains (SFSCs) in Latvia, aiming to strengthen rural communities and enhance local economies. Their ideal scenario encompasses several key objectives:

Empowering Local Producers and Communities: LRF emphasizes the importance of engaging local societies, communities, organizations, and companies in identifying their needs and capabilities to foster a sustainable and resilient food system. This involves supporting small and medium-sized producers, processors, and other stakeholders in the food chain to actively participate in SFSCs.

Promoting Sustainable Practices: The forum advocates for the development and implementation of sustainable methods and tools to establish and strengthen regional food ecosystems. This includes encouraging environmentally friendly production, processing, and distribution practices that minimize the ecological footprint of food supply chains.

Enhancing Policy and Strategic Alignment: LRF aims to prepare and provide recommendations to state institutions and local governments to better align their strategies, plans, and actions with the guidelines of the EU strategy "FOOD 2030." This

ensures that policies at various levels support the development of sustainable and resilient food ecosystems.

Facilitating Public-Private Partnerships: The forum seeks to create public-private partnerships that foster systematic changes in existing and emerging food chains within regions. These collaborations are intended to create favorable conditions for the development of SFSCs, benefiting both producers and consumers.

By pursuing these objectives, the Latvian Rural Forum aims to create a more sustainable, resilient, and community-centered food system in Latvia, where SFSCs play a pivotal role in supporting rural development and ensuring access to healthy, locally produced food.

3. How to get from the current to the ideal or desired?

To move from the current situation to the ideal or desired scenario for Short Food Supply Chains (SFSCs) in Latvia, as envisioned by the **Latvian Rural Forum (LRF)** and related initiatives, several actions need to be taken across multiple levels.

a) Foster Consumer Awareness and Demand for Local Products

Current: Consumer knowledge about SFSCs and the benefits of local food is limited.

Path to Ideal:

- **Educational Campaigns:** Raise awareness about the environmental, social, and health benefits of buying local.
- **Public Events:** Organize farmers' markets, tasting events, and educational programs to build direct relationships between consumers and producers.
- **Labeling and Certification:** Create recognizable labels for locally produced food to make it easier for consumers to choose local options.

b). Enhance Policy and Financial Support

Current: Policies and financial incentives for SFSC development are limited and not fully integrated into broader strategies.

Path to Ideal:

- **Policy Alignment:** Ensure that national policies align with EU strategies such as “FOOD 2030” and Green Public Procurement (GPP) guidelines.
- **Regulatory Simplification:** Reduce administrative burdens for small producers to participate in public procurement and markets.

c). Build Strong Public-Private Partnerships

Current: Collaboration between public institutions, private sector stakeholders, and civil society is still developing.

Path to Ideal:

- Regional Development Projects: Encourage multi-stakeholder collaborations in regional food system development.
- Joint Investment in Infrastructure: Promote shared ownership of food processing and distribution facilities. (funds will be available, LRF was one of organizations working on it).

d. Monitor, Evaluate, and Adapt

Current: There is limited monitoring and evaluation of SFSC initiatives.

Path to Ideal:

- Data Collection: Establish systems for continuous monitoring of SFSC performance.
- Feedback: Regularly engage with stakeholders to adapt strategies based on lessons learned.
- Impact Measurement: Focus on environmental, social, and economic indicators to track progress.

We do have the platform for farmers to distribute the produce www.novadagarsa.lv, but its not very popular neither from farmers, nor consumers side.