

Manual for conducting focus groups and consideration on the marketing of "Green Infrastructure"

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1 Introduction

This manual is aimed at working groups of so-called "Green Infrastructure" (GI) marketing initiatives. It provides instructions for conducting simple market research on GI products and services. For this purpose, it introduces the "focus groups" method (see chapter 3) and then explains it using a concrete example (see chapter 4). Focus groups are used to capture attitudes and opinions of consumers and provide important information about the expectations and preferences of a certain target group regarding the quality of a product or service. In addition, focus groups can reveal which "messages" are particularly appealing to a target group, which in turn can provide important information for consumer communication. Furthermore, this manual provides an overview on general considerations in the marketing of GI products and services (see chapter 5). This includes the development of a network, creation of trust, choice of sales channels and consumer communication. The overview of important considerations for the marketing of GI products and services provided in this document should serve to increase the initiative's chances of success on the market and thus contribute to the preservation and economic upgrading of GI locations.

2 Definition and marketing of "Green Infrastructure"

"Green Infrastructure" (GI) is a strategically planned network of environmental elements in urban and rural areas. These environmental elements can be hedges, green roofs, a species-rich meadow in the city park or extensively managed agricultural land, but also complete ecosystems, such as intact riparian forests, moors or free-flowing rivers. The network of environmental elements must be created and managed in such a way that a broad spectrum of ecosystem services is guaranteed, biodiversity is protected and nature is used sustainably.

Examples of ecosystem services and functions of GI:

- Food production
- Protection against flooding
- Promotion of crop pollination
- Recreation in nature
- Environmental education

Ecosystem services support health, well-being, social development and the economy. On the other hand, GI also positively impacts nature conservation areas by linking them across urban and agricultural landscapes.

One advantage of GI is its ability to fulfil several functions in a common area. These functions can include agriculture, forestry, housing, tourism and recreation, while protecting drinking water and nature. Accordingly, an intensively managed monoculture that serves purely for food production does not count as a GI. Only if an extensively used agricultural area and its environmental elements, such as an adjacent flowering strip or cairn, which promote biodiversity, prevent soil erosion and protect groundwater, can this green area be considered as GI. Such multifunctional GI gives green and open spaces a tangible benefit that can also be marketed.

But the ecosystem services of GI are not always visible. An orchard, for example, produces fruit, but it can also be a breeding ground for special bird species or a site for special plant species. Through targeted and well-planned marketing, it is possible to draw consumers' attention to the services and significance of special sites. In this way, the willingness of certain consumer groups to buy and purchase can be increased and the additional benefits in marketing can be increased. In the long term, this supports the conservation of special sites, which ensure the production of diverse ecosystem services.

GI products and services can have additional benefits in the areas of environmental protection and nature conservation, regional value creation, tourism, etc. It is worthwhile to start by initially considering what potential additional benefits GI brings. This provides a clear idea of what the product or service stands for and what should be communicated to consumers. Communicating these additional benefits is important because they help to define the quality of a product and its production. They are therefore buying arguments for certain target groups. If there is a large number of messages, market research via focus group can help. It helps to make a sensible selection of messages that are relevant for the end consumers.



Due to the structural diversity and the absence of synthetic chemical pesticides, orchards provide a habitat for many animal and plant species. This can be marketed as GI additional benefit.

Source: Hochstamm Suisse, 2013

3 Qualitative market research using focus groups

3.1 Short introduction

Market research distinguishes between qualitative and quantitative methods. With a questionnaire, a method of quantitative market research, the views of many consumers on a certain topic can be collected in order to be able to formulate general statements that are valid for a large group of consumers. Qualitative market research, on the other hand, does not aim to measure views, but to understand them. The aim is to gather and discuss different opinions or expectations of consumers about a topic or a product. The focus group method is very popular for gathering this kind of information. Qualitative market research is particularly useful in the product development phase. It can help to adapt and optimise products to the expectations of the target group.

In focus groups, opinions, attitudes, motives, etc. are not ascertained through individual conversations with consumers, but in the group. The focus group corresponds to an everyday conversation situation, which makes it easier for participants to share their opinions and views. Due to the group dynamic, topics and ideas can be taken up and further refined by the participants. As a result, more topics are addressed and the collection of opinions, ideas and views is more diverse than from individual interviews.

The focus group is a low-cost survey method with little lead time. A moderator leads the discussion and follows focus group guidelines that contain pre-defined guiding questions, sub-questions and a timetable (chapter 3.4). From experience, the optimal group size for a focus group is eight to twelve consumers. The duration should be based on the time needed to cover the topic, without being so long that discussion fatigue sets in. The average duration of a focus group is usually between one and



one and a half hours. In order to get a complete picture of the existing opinions, several focus groups should be conducted according to the same concept, whereby experience shows that no significant new insights are to be expected after the fourth focus group. In most cases, the main opinions on a topic are already discovered after the first round of discussion.

All participants of a focus group should be able to see each other. A round table or rectangular tables placed together make this possible. Source: FiBL, 2018

3.2 Objectives definition of focus groups

First of all, the objective of the market research by means of focus groups needs to be defined in keywords or sentences. The topics and questions to be answered in the focus groups can then be derived from this concrete objective.

The following are possible topics and questions for focus groups related to GI products and services. Possible topics and questions can be supplemented by concrete examples for discussion:

- What additional benefit(s) of GI should be communicated? Discussion on different additional benefits e.g., focus on biodiversity? Focus on regional additional benefits? Etc.
- How should the additional benefits of GI be communicated? Discussion and testing of different slogans, labels etc.
- How should the product or service look, taste etc.? Discussion and testing of different products and services, e.g., prototype apple box, concept presentation nature walks, etc.
- How much would consumers be willing to pay? Simulation and discussion of sales situation with products and price tags, etc.

3.3 Organisation of focus groups

Define and identify focus group participants

To find suitable participants for the focus groups, first it is necessary to clarify the products sale channels and what special characteristics, e.g., purchasing intentions and buying habits, the buyers have. It is important that the participants in the focus group are potential buyers of the product. This means that they have a sufficient degree of interest and connection to the topic or product to be discussed, e.g., interest in regional and environmentally friendly products. Furthermore, the participants should preferably have a similar level of knowledge or no previous knowledge regarding the topic.

Location and equipment

Focus groups should ideally take place in a neutral and independent place, e.g., a quiet room in a community centre. In order to save on rental costs, it is sometimes possible to hold two focus groups in a row, provided that a 30-minute break is planned between the two discussions.

Recruiting participants

Once having determined what the participants in the discussion have in common, the participation criteria are defined. It is helpful to summarise these criteria in a checklist or questionnaire, which can be used to select suitable candidates. The selection can be done through personal interviews, but also through short telephone or video conference interviews. It is important to note that the participants in a focus group do not know each other well. Otherwise, there is a risk that these participants are more likely to have the same opinion and hold the same views or dominate the group dynamics. To cover a potentially more diverse spectrum of consumers, several focus groups with different participation criteria could be conducted.

The participants should all sit at one (round) table and they should be able to see each other well. To facilitate moderation and later evaluation, it is advisable to record the discussion. It is recommended to use two audio recorders in case one of them fails. For this purpose, the verbal consent of all participants in the discussion must be obtained in advance. The moderator should point out that the focus groups will be analysed anonymously.

Checklist for material and equipment

It is helpful to prepare a checklist of the material needed for conducting a focus group in advance (see chapter 4.4).

3.4 Implementing focus groups

Moderation

The most important rule for an unbiased result of a qualitative market study is that the moderator should not allow his or her own opinion on the topic to influence the discussion. The moderator should also take care to intervene as little as possible in the discussion so as not to interrupt the flow of arguments and to avoid influencing the participants. This also includes avoiding gestures on the part of the moderator, such as verbal or non-verbal approval of certain contributions to the discussion. However, in the case of prolonged digressions and deviations from the topic, the moderator should intervene during the discussion. The moderator should encourage reserved persons to contribute to the discussion. By calling on the other participants in the discussion with questions such as, "What do the people who have not yet expressed their opinion think?", opinion leaders can be indirectly quieted down, while encouraging the quieter participants to speak up. It is very important to make the participants aware that only one person should speak at a time, otherwise it is difficult to evaluate the discussion. If questions arise during the focus group, they should be answered by the moderator at the end of the discussion, not during the discussion.

Design of focus groups

The design of focus groups is usually defined in focus group guidelines: The discussion begins with welcoming the participants, informing them of the background and objectives of the study and general procedure. In addition, consent must be obtained to record the focus group with audio equipment for evaluation purposes. The participants must also be informed that the data will be analysed anonymously. Finally, the moderator should point out that only one person should speak at a time and that there are no right and wrong opinions.

Ideally, the moderator should start the focus group with a general and simple question that helps the participants to get to know each other and to approach the topic. Such a question could be, for example, "What is important to you when you buy food?" This helps to reduce possible reservations and creates a friendly atmosphere.

After this first, so-called "icebreaker question", the actual core topics are approached step by step with questions getting more and more concrete. It is important to limit the duration of the individual discussion sections and questions to allow enough time at the end to discuss the last and often very relevant questions.

3.5 Analysis and conclusions

The focus groups can be analysed in five steps:

1. Taking notes on tape recordings

Taking notes of the tape recordings is time-consuming because individual passages often have to be listened to several times before they can be transcribed. One focus group takes about 5-8 hours. When taking notes, unnecessary filler words can be deleted and cumbersome box sentences can be simplified, as long as the content remains the same.

2. Content analysis for each focus group

The content analysis of a focus group is about creating an overall picture of what was said. To do this, first collect all the aspects that were mentioned in a discussion round, then note the most and least relevant opinions. The relevance can be deduced from the context. If an aspect is mentioned by the majority of participants and has an important place in the discussion, it is to be classified as relevant. Thus, one tries to sort all statements according to their relevance. First, the most relevant aspects should be mentioned and what has been said about them should be summarised. Then the less relevant aspects are to be mentioned and described, and finally those aspects that were only marginally discussed.

3. Summarise the most important results for each focus group

The most important results of a focus group should be summarised in a few sentences or keywords. When deriving the results, it is important to get an overall picture that is as realistic as possible. If an aspect is controversial and opinions are not clear, this is also a result and therefore should be addressed in the summary.

4. Compare and summarise results from several focus groups

This step only takes place if several focus groups were conducted according to the same scheme. In this step, the results of several focus groups are summarised, checked for consistency and the overall picture is supplemented by individual statements that were mentioned in one focus groups but not in the others. It may happen that some aspects are more relevant in one discussion than in another. Major differences between focus groups are rare but can occur. It is important to consider and describe these differences as an outcome.

5. Deriving conclusions

The last step is to derive concrete implementations for the product design and consumer communication of the GI product or service from the results. If, for example, it can be deduced from the discussion that the regionality of the product is most important for the most participants, it can be deduced from this that regionality should have priority in consumer communication, while other additional benefits such as biodiversity or similar should not be addressed. Or if, for example, several product variants are presented and evaluated, the variant that performs best should be retained in the marketing initiative, while the other variants should be discarded.

4 Practical example - focus group for marketing chocolate pears

The following explains how to conduct a focus group is explained using a practical example.

4.1 Initial situation

A regional fruit-growers' association wants to preserve an economically unviable high-trunk orchard with several old and regionally specific pear varieties. Together with a small manufactory, he has created chocolate pears, consisting of processed pears that are partly covered with chocolate. The aim is to make the standard orchards more profitable by refining the fruit, thus contributing to the preservation of the orchards. The manufactory developed the recipe. The fruit-growers' association organises the collection of the pears and the delivery to the confectionery, decides which fruit to use and then processes them. The chocolate pears are to be sold regionally in two grocery shops and three bakeries, as well as in two grocery stores located in a nearby town. Small test batches of chocolate pears have already been produced, each with a different recipe. Consideration has also been given to the additional benefits of the production and the origin of the pears, which and how to the additional benefits should be communicated to target groups.

4.2 Define objectives and research questions of focus groups

The marketing initiative is now planning a small qualitative market research with the aim of optimising the recipes for the chocolate pears as well as the taste, container size, packaging and sale price and to obtain concrete clues for consumer communication. Relevant additional benefits and the type of communication, as well as the appropriate price for the chocolate pears from the consumer's point of view, are to be defined.

The following research questions are defined:

- Which additional benefit(s) is/are relevant for the target group and should be the focus of consumer communication?
- In what form would consumers like to receive information (slogan, leaflet, website about production)?
- Which chocolate pears recipe variant tastes best?
- Comparison of different formats and sizes: what format and size should the chocolate pears ideally have and what price would be "fair" from the consumer's point of view

4.3 Location and participants

Since it can be assumed that most of the chocolate pears will be sold in the two grocery shops in the nearby town, the focus group participants should consist of the customers of these shops. It is planned to conduct two focus groups. A room suitable to conduct the focus groups should be rented in advance: a meeting room from a foundation located near the grocery shops is identified. A short questionnaire for the selection of suitable participants is to be prepared:

Questionnaire to identify suitable participants

Text example: We are conducting a study on a newly created chocolate pears whose pears come from the region [name region]. We are looking for participants for a focus group in which, among other things, the appearance and taste of the chocolate pears as well as information about the chocolate pears will be discussed among consumers. Previous knowledge is not necessary. A total of 8-12 people will participate. The duration of the focus group will be about 1.5 hours and you will receive [expense allowance/gift/shopping voucher] for your participation. Would you be willing to participate in the focus group?

If the answer is "no": end the interview

If the answer is "yes": ask for participation criteria by means of a questionnaire:

We are looking for specific consumers to participate.

Do you consume pears at least occasionally?

If the answer is "no": thank them and end the interview.

If the answer is "yes":

Do you consume chocolate at least occasionally?

If the answer is "no": thank them and end the interview.

If the answer is "yes":

Are you generally interested in regional food?

If the answer is "no": thank them and end the interview.

If the answer is "yes":

Are you generally interested in environmentally friendly food?

If the answer is "no": thank them and end the interview.

If the answer is "yes":

The focus groups will take place on the following dates: [read out dates].

1. date, time and place

2. date, time and place

Make appointment, note e-mail address, give contact details of the focus group organiser and point out that if unable to attend, cancellation should be made in good time.

Finally, ask invited persons: are there acquaintances/relatives who also shop in this grocery shop and whom we could also invite to the focus group? Note: if possible, do not invite acquaintances/relatives to the same appointment.

4.4 Implementation

Moderation

A member of the marketing initiative takes over the moderation of the focus group. This person informs him-/herself in advance about the most important aspects of moderating a focus group (see chapter 3.3).

Material checklist

- List of participants,
- 2x audio recorders,
- Moderator guiding questions:
- Variant A: Show PowerPoint presentation with guiding questions of the individual discussion sections; beamer and laptop as well as the collection of slides are required for this.
- Variant B: Write questions one after the other, clearly visible, on a flipchart. Use a new page for each question.
- Allowance/present for participants,
- Drinks and snacks, if necessary,
- Pens and paper,
- Chocolate pears samples of chocolate
- Small paper plates and napkins,
- Short questionnaire with three questions about the taste of chocolate pears

Procedure of the focus group: focus group guidelines

Time	Section	What/How?
4.30 pm	Arrival of the moderation at the venue and set-up Welcome participants	Set up table and chairs, provide snacks and beverages and, if necessary, provide paper and pens, install flipchart or beamer and laptop and open PowerPoint slides. Set up audio tapes, sound check. Welcome arriving participants and note them on the list of participants.
5.30 pm	Start of focus group with welcome and introduction to the topic	The moderator introduces himself, informs about the marketing initiative of the chocolate pears and the aim of the focus group (to improve the appearance and taste as well as the packaging of the chocolate pears and to discuss information about the chocolate pears), obtains consent for audio recording, informs about the observance of anonymity in the evaluation of the results, points out that only one person should speak at a time and gives a brief overview of the course of the discussion.
5.35 pm	Switch on audio devices	-
5.35 pm	Short introduction round of the participants	"We will start the focus group with a round of introductions: Please take turns to briefly state your name and a keyword that spontaneously comes to mind when you think of the region [region name]."
5.40 pm	Moderation leads over to the first round of discussion: Repeat the keywords that were mentioned in connection with the region. First questions	"You have now named the following keywords in connection with the region [region name]: ..." "There is a standard pear orchard in [the region], in which old and regional pear varieties grow. The additional benefits of the orchard are that the pear varieties are very rare and only occur in this region, that the orchard provides a habitat for many and partly rare animals and that the orchard is typical for the landscape of the place." [Show photos]. "Which of these pieces of information or additional benefits do you personally find most interesting and would motivate you to buy chocolate pears from said orchard and why?"
6.00 p.m.	Second question	"Would you like to be informed about the additional benefits of the pears that were grown in the orchard? And if yes, in what form would you like to be informed about the special attributes of the product and why? - flyer - homepage - product label - other?"

6.15 pm	Third question	"The next section is on the chocolate pears. The first test products have already been made. There are three variants with different recipes, which we will now taste." [Explain tasting and questionnaire, distribute samples of the three chocolate pears varieties, questionnaires and pens] [Start tasting. Everyone tastes for themselves and fills in questionnaires for the three variants.] When everyone has finished: "Now that you have tasted all three recipes variants, I would be interested to know how well the three variants did overall, whether there were any big differences, which variant you found best and why?"
6.40 pm	Short opinion poll	"The next topic is the format of the chocolate pears and its price. First of all, the format: which shape do you prefer? All the formats have the same weight, but a different shape [show three shapes]. We'll have a short round of opinions on this, would you like to start?" [address a specific person]
6.45 pm	Forth question (answer to be written down)	"Now we come to the last question, which is about the price: We would be interested to know what the upper price limit for one package of chocolate pears is for you, up to which you would generally be prepared to buy a package of chocolate pears. We are also interested in the lower price limit at which you would consider the chocolate pears to be very favourably priced. Please write down the upper and lower price limits on the sheet in front of you, which we will collect at the end. This price assessment remains anonymous."
6.55 pm	Farewell	[Thank participants and hand out gift or expense allowance and say goodbye].

After the group discussion, take a 30-minute break, fill up and prepare the material and welcome the participants of the second focus group. Then conduct the next discussion with a timed but otherwise identical focus group guidelines.

4.5 Analysis and conclusions

Carry out steps 1 and 2 as described in chapter 3.2.4. First, transcribe the audio recordings and summarise them in a content analysis.

Step 3: Example of summary of the most important results of the first discussion round: In the first round of discussion, the additional benefits of the standard pear orchard mentioned by the moderator were discussed:

- Old pear varieties,
- Rare and regional pear varieties,
- Habitat for many and partly rare animals,
- Shaping the landscape.

The majority of the participants found the additional benefits "habitat for many and partly rare animals" the most interesting, whereas no clear picture could be drawn for the other additional benefits, and these were also taken up less frequently in the discussion.

Step 4: Compare the results listed under 3. with those of the second group discussion.

Step 5: Define consequences: Put the additional benefit "habitat for many and partly rare animals" in the foreground in the consumer communication of chocolate pears.

5 Considerations for marketing GI products and services

The following chapter provides an overview of relevant considerations on the marketing of GI products and services that can assist working groups or bodies of GI marketing initiatives in planning and implementing their marketing activities. The overview is a summary from the brochure "Guidance document and consideration of the marketing of biodiverse food products" by Rey and Oehen (2019).

5.1 Networks

A network of actors with varying skills, knowledge and experience in the production and processing of GI products and services can contribute significantly to the success of a GI marketing initiative.

Civil society actors

Collaboration with civil society actors that may be active in the region, such as a consumer association, can be strategically valuable to successfully design and market GI products and services.

Artisan processors

Artisanal processors (bakeries, mills, etc.), chefs and other sensory experts are also valuable network partners, as they can contribute to successful product development and can also be suitable customers.

Tourism and local authorities

Stakeholders from tourism associations and rural communities may have an interest in GI products and services related to territorial identity and local supply of quality products. Local authorities provide funding in certain cases. Cooperation with tourism associations can help to find (new) outlets for GI products.

5.2 Choice of sale channel(s)

Many marketing initiatives start their marketing with local and short supply chains. These allow direct interaction and communication with consumers about the quality and history of the product. Direct interaction and communication with consumers help to create transparency and trust. In the case of

a GI, the marketing network consists of farmer, processor, intermediary and/or retailer. Later, a network can be expanded by interested persons and actors and further marketing opportunities can be created.

Especially direct marketing through **local markets and farm shops** offers the opportunity for communication about the specific quality of GI products. Local markets can also attract people who are willing to pay higher prices for high quality, local GI products. **Involving consumers in the cultivation of GI products** through growing and harvesting activities can also lead to a strong commitment from consumers to the farm and its goals. Another possibility is marketing through **local processors such as bakeries**. Often bakeries and other artisanal processors are useful marketing partners and support the initiative with their skills in artisanal food processing. **Smaller specialist food shops** are also suitable for marketing local GI specialities. As a rule, GI marketing initiatives should include marketing materials, such as attractive packaging and additional point-of-sale communication materials in grocery shops and other specialised outlets, to increase the chances of success. The gastronomy sector is another possible sales channel. There is a growing interest in speciality, local products in the **gastronomy sector**. Top chefs in particular demand authentic and sustainable products. This trend is an opportunity for rarer and local products, especially if the chefs are involved in the development of the products.

5.3 Communication of GI-additional benefits

Communicating the additional benefits of GI products and services is crucial for creating awareness among consumers and an important prerequisite for sustainable management of GI sites. Successful communication is based on generally understandable core messages, which are backed up with "values" that are relevant not only for consumers, but also for other actors in the value chain, including

Online sales also offer huge opportunities for communicating GI products through product descriptions with authentic images, relevant additional benefits, testimonials. However, the time and effort required to implement an online sales platform and the associated logistics should not be underestimated, especially when it comes to fresh products.

In addition, GI products can also be sold in **general grocery shops and supermarkets**, which offers the opportunity to market nationwide. This enables to reach people who may not go to local outlets. However, working with supermarkets could be challenging, as few marketing initiatives initially can provide product volumes large enough to supply larger supermarkets. In addition, there is a risk of market failure due to a loss of authenticity, as supermarkets are often associated with mass-produced goods. Before entering into negotiations with large and powerful partners, good preparation is very important. In particular, it is important to define the goals of the cooperation, to make agreements such as subsidies or donations beyond the delivery of the product, to describe the specifics of the product and to calculate the guaranteed quantities in advance.

processors, small retailers, and other local actors. With the help of focus groups, relevant additional benefits can be identified, and messages formed from them can be tested for their comprehensibility and persuasiveness.

The use of appropriate communication tools for the chosen sales channel and target group is crucial. There are various instruments for communicating the messages of GI products

and services, whereby the context and the resources required for this are decisive in each case.

Marketing events

Marketing events such as "open farm days", tasting events, information stands, farm festivals, market stalls, storytelling cafés, etc. enable consumers to get into contact with GI products and their production through sensory and emotional experiences such as tasting, a nature experience or meeting farmers. They are an exciting experience for many people and connects producers, processors and consumers providing an opportunity for exchange. Telling stories about the origin, the characteristics and the best use of a variety or product can complement these emotional experiences. Further information on planning marketing campaigns can be found in the brochure "How organic actions become results: Building blocks for communicating the additional benefits of organic food - a guide" by Mareg markt+region Hrsg. (2011) (Original German title: Wie Bio-Aktionen zu Erlebnissen werden. Bausteine zur Kommunikation der Mehrwerte von Biolebensmitteln – ein Leitfaden) (URL address see bibliography in chapter 6).

Production information at the point of sale

Point-of-sale information material can be very useful for communicating the additional benefits of GI products. Such material can consist of leaflets, signs, etc. The retailer's direct communication, i.e., the ability to convey the story, the special characteristics of the GI products is also relevant. Likewise, a suitable label or information on the packaging can rouse consumer interest and emphasise the special quality, the additional benefits and the products message.

Websites

Websites are one of the most popular communication tools, also for farmers. They can be the

first entry point for interested consumers who want to learn more about GI products. A website can present the product and convey the history and special characteristics of GI foods and services. They provide access to a large amount of information, not only about products or services, but also, for example, about the farm that produces the products. Websites must be kept up to date in order to maintain their attractiveness.

Social media

Social media makes it possible to quickly spread short messages, but the use of social media requires continuous engagement. Depending on the target group, the use of social media can vary to a large extent. In general, when marketing GI products and services, social media seem to have a rather low response compared to other communication tools. An exception is Facebook, which is used by a significant part of the population.

E-mail newsletter

Similar to social media, email newsletters provide the opportunity to send regular messages to potential target groups. A common strategy is to include so-called teasers, which are linked to more detailed information on a website. Newsletters can be sent specifically to the appropriate target groups for invitations to events and promotions.

Public relations (television, radio, print media)

Public relations can be very effective in building trust and credibility for GI products. However, if awareness and scope is limited, the media is unlikely to be interested unless the topic is very specific. Especially in local media, communication can be very effective and help raise awareness of GI products and services. To attract media attention, regular media releases can be a very useful tool.

5.4 Trust and credibility

Establishing direct contact between farmers and consumers (that comes along with direct marketing) is probably easiest to build trust. Guidelines and a control system are an institution way to build trust, to face criticism from potential regular customers and to reach many stakeholders. Depending on the fee system, it can also be the most costly way to build trust. It is important to determine the costs of using a trademark or label beforehand.

6 Sources

Mareg und TU München (2011) „Wie Bio-Aktionen zu Erlebnissen werden“. Bausteine zur Kommunikation der Mehrwerte von Biolebensmitteln – ein Leitfaden.“ On: <https://www.markt-region.de> [16.06.2021]

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