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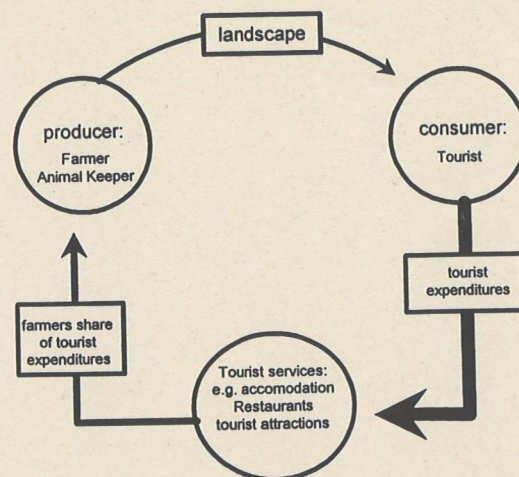
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Synergistic approaches to the development of livestock products in the regional economy: links with tourism

Gerold Rahmann

Dept. International Animal Husbandry, University of Kassel, Germany

- What is a Less Favoured Area? Many areas are not favoured for farming because the yield is low but are favoured for tourism. For example in the rural council of the Werra Meißner Kreis the tourists spend more money than the farmers earn. So this council is more favoured than the high yielding areas of "Hildesheimer Boerde", where no tourist would go for recreation. Even other parameters for LFAs are not always negative: for example low human density.
- Animals play an important role in many LFAs even for tourism. Preferred landscape are often pastures, because of steep or low fertile conditions for crop production. Grassing animals are more than meat, milk or fibre production. They produce rural atmosphere, landscape preservation, biotope maintenance and resource protection. The absence of grassing animals in many areas has shown the importance of these "products". So, two different levels of products can be identified: direct and indirect products.
- Indirect products are related with the way of animal keeping. These can be special landscapes, good air, resource protection (ground water and soils) but even individual relations to farmers or the location, recreation etc.. These indirect products, produced by farmers with his animals, cannot be bought, they are immaterial and often immobile goods.
- Rural tourism plays an important role in the local economy of many LFAs. Tourists spend money in hotels, restaurants, sight seeing places and others. Beside the consumption of accommodation and food they consume landscape and rural atmosphere, but without payment. Farmers produce this landscape, but are not paid for it. It is seen as a side product of farming. In LFAs the problem occurs that farming is abandoned more and more, particularly the small scale farming which is very attractive for rural tourism.
- Touristic enterprises like hotels and restaurants rarely use regional products, because they are too expensive or too difficult in use (product quality, seasonality, internationality). Farmers in LFAs can seldom compete with products from better production areas. They are leaving farming, land becomes fallow. Tourists enterprises (hotels and restaurants) who are living on the attraction of the farm related landscape are losing their economic backbone with the farming.



Questions arising from the mentioned aspects:

1. Must we specify LFA with more attention to regional issues?
2. Should the production of "indirect products" become more important as "direct products" for farmers in touristically attractive LFAs?
3. Must pastures, landscapes, farming and at least animal keeping measured/valued for direct and indirect products? Of course, for every region individually.
4. Should the tourist pay for landscape consumption?
5. Should tourist enterprises support farmers via buying regional products for a higher price (indirect payment)? If so, how can that be granted?
6. Should tourist enterprises pay for landscape consuming direct (e.g. via taxation or direct contracts between tourist enterprises and farmers)?