

More sustainable, resilient, and competitive food systems through the development of intermediate food value chains



PRACTICE ABSTRACT No: 52

Intermediate food value chains offer win-win situations for farmers, consumers and regions

How we produce, distribute and consume food today is not sustainable. We mainly rely on so-called large value chains. These are highly efficient and economically optimised, but dominated by large producers, processors and retailers. This often comes at the price of hyper-choice of mass-produced convenient food, but unhealthy diets, inadequate incomes and poor working conditions for smaller farms and processors, as well as the exploitation of natural resources such as soil, water and biodiversity. By contrast, in small food supply chains, farmers sell their goods directly to consumers: they achieve higher incomes, and serve consumer demand for healthy, fresh, and locally produced food. However, volumes and distribution are often limited and prices for consumers are higher.

Why not establish intermediate food value chains? They represent a “middle path” and combine the strengths of both short and long value chains while minimizing their weaknesses:

- Small and mid-sized farmers and/or food processors and consumers form a network or strategic alliance;
- This network or alliance scales up food production up to larger quantities, offers a diversified portfolio of high-quality products and sells the food products beyond the local market;
- The members of the network or alliance share the values of sustainable production, trustful and just relationships, and a fair distribution of value created.

Become an initiator or coordinator of an intermediate food value chain in your region! How? Identify those farmers, processors, distributors, customers such as canteens or caterers and consumers who have a vital interest in changing conventional food production and consumption. Invite them to actively engage in a process of co-creation on what a intermediate value chain regionally fit-for-purpose, should look like. Identify the technological, organisational, social and environmental innovations which are required on your journey towards an intermediate value chain.

Other FAIRCHAIN practice abstracts, the innovation platform (<https://www.sustainablefoodplatform.eu/en>) and our e-learning courses may provide inspiration.

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End Users

Policy maker, Farmers association, regional development agency

Country

EU member states



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Links for additional information

Youtube videos: Playlist From large and small to intermediate value chains:
<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLqxyobdLP44oulzkZbYoKpfvBWoUKkYW>

E-learning courses:

1. Introduction to Intermediate Food Value Chains:
2. From Short to Intermediate Food Value Chains
<https://moodle.iseki-food.net/enrol/index.php?id=86>



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www.fairchain-h2020.eu

All Practice Abstracts prepared by FAIRCHAIN can be found [here!](#)

ABOUT FAIRCHAIN

The FAIRCHAIN project launched in 2020 and coordinated by INRAE, is developing intermediate food value chains in the fruits and vegetable and dairy sectors. Through technological, organizational and social innovations and by developing business models FAIRCHAIN will enable small and mid-size stakeholders to scale up to supply fresh, sustainable and high-quality food products to consumers at a regional level.

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