Reconnecting Initiatives in the Food System
A study on food initiatives in Stockholm and their role in reconnecting people to the biosphere

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Abstract

Reconnecting humanity to the biosphere; i.e. to understand the biosphere and how we affect it, manage natural capital and actively work for a societal change in tune with the planet; is imperative for a sustainable development within the planetary boundaries. The food system is one area where there is a growing disconnect between consumers and producers, and through that also a reduced mental connection to the biosphere that supports food production. This thesis introduces, and analyses, the concept of Reconnecting Initiatives as a sub-category to Alternative Food Initiatives. These Reconnecting Initiatives are the diverse set of actors that are both small-scale producers and larger intermediaries and work with producers on both local and global scales. At the same time they share the similarity of opposing the conventional food system and curate information to consumers about the specific processes of food production and the food system in general. Reconnecting Initiatives are bringing producer and consumer closer together and by informing about food system practices encourage consumers to mentally reconnect to the biosphere. This study looks at Reconnecting Initiatives in Sweden, around the capital Stockholm, and aims to assess their main characteristics and information strategies. The study does this by conducting semi-structured interviews and textual analysis among a diverse set of Reconnecting Initiatives. The study finds that Reconnecting Initiatives around Stockholm are diverse in classification, categorization and size and that they use two information strategies: written channels (e.g. facebook, website, newsletter) and meeting producers. In conclusion, the diversity among Reconnecting Initiatives in Stockholm indicates a possibility for a larger and more diverse group of consumers to get information about the food system functions and enhance their possibility to mentally reconnect to the biosphere.
1. Introduction

1.1 Problem Statement
We now live in the age of the Anthropocene, where human actions have become a major driver of Earth processes (Crutzen 2006). More than half of humanity now lives in cities and the decisions made by them greatly affect the resilience of the planet as a whole (Seto et al. 2011). At the same time, people know little about the biosphere and how we affect it (Folke et al. 2011) and the modern and industrial food production is contributing to this mental disconnect by distancing consumers both spatially and temporally (Francis 2005). Reconnecting humanity to the biosphere (i.e. understanding of the biosphere and how we affect it, manage natural capital and actively work for a societal change in tune with the planet) is imperative for a sustainable development within the planetary boundaries. Human wellbeing, and utterly survival, is therefore dependent on such a mental reconnect that this conceptual framework brings about (Folke et al. 2011).

Food production is one of the main causes that place pressure on the environment (Foley et al. 2005) and there is need for fundamental changes in the food chain to be able to achieve sustainable development (FAO 2016). There is a number if initiatives that are counterbalancing the conventional food system by trying to act in favour of a more sustainable food system (Allen et al. 2003), by particularly focusing on the relations between consumers and producers. Examples of such initiatives are farmers markets, ‘dedicated’ retailers and box-schemes that fall under concepts like Alternative Food Initiatives, Short Food Supply Chains and Local Food Systems (Renting et al. 2003). The literature on these initiatives will in this thesis be summarized under the common name of Alternative Food Initiatives defined as organizations and initiatives opposing the conventional food system and working for an “environmentally sustainable, economically viable, socially just (Allen et al. 2003)” food system (Allen et al. 2003).

In Sweden there is a number of initiatives that classify as Alternative Food Initiatives (Milestad et al. 2010, Joose and Hracs 2015). Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations identifies improving knowledge creation and sharing as key for consumer to better drive production through their consumption patterns (FAO 2016), and a common theme across initiatives in this thesis based in Sweden is a practice in support of such improved knowledge.
1.2 Aim of thesis

The aim of this thesis is twofold. The first aim is to develop the concept of *Reconnecting Initiatives*, as a sub-concept to Alternative Food Initiatives, based on frameworks of Reconnect to the Biosphere (Folke et al. 2011) and ecological literacy (Orr 1992). Reconnecting Initiatives is introduced in order to emphasize initiatives that bring producer and consumer closer together and inform about food system practices, and in that way enable consumers to mentally reconnect to the biosphere. The impact that the different Reconnecting Initiatives have on environmental, social and economical change (Allen et al. 2003, Renting et al. 2003, Feenstra 1997) is beyond this thesis.

The second aim is to apply the concept to a diverse set of Reconnecting Initiatives found around Stockholm, Sweden, and to analyse the characteristics they hold and information strategies they use. The result of this analysis will be discussed in relation to the Reconnecting Initiatives existence across the field and ability to reach a diverse group of consumers.

The first aim will be applied to the theory section. The second aim will be answered in relation to the two research questions stated below.

1.3 Research Questions

RQ1: What are the characteristics among Reconnecting Initiatives in Stockholm?
RQ2: What information strategies does the Reconnecting Initiatives in Stockholm use?
2. Theoretical Frameworks and Application

The study is placed in the context of food systems in general and with a focus on Alternative Food Initiatives more specifically. The thesis is framed as a social-ecological system and draw on the frameworks of Reconnect to the Biosphere and ecological literacy to introduce the concept of Reconnecting Initiatives. These parts are here presented in that same order.

2.1 Food System Initiatives and Alternative Food Initiatives

The conventional food system has through the years in many ways been unable to deal with both environmental and social costs (Kneen 1993, Holt Giménes and Shattuck 2011). This is argued to be one of the reasons for the creation of tens of thousands social movements, on all scales, concerned with the question of sustainable food and agriculture (Hawken 2007). Consumers perceptions of food and farming have changed as a consequence of larger public concerns (for e.g. ecology, health, animal ethics) as well as mistrust to the conventional agriculture and the quality they provide (e.g. food scandal, GMO) (Renting et al. 2003). There is a larger demand from consumers for this ‘good food’ (here defined as good quality, produced in environmentally friendly and socially just ways) and they are looking for initiatives providing that (Renting et al. 2003, Joose and Hracs 2015).

2.1.1 Alternative Food Initiatives

There are a variety of different terms used in the context of initiatives, movements, organizations and businesses that are changing the conventional food arena. Alternative Food Initiatives is one concept defined as initiatives and organizations that work in many different places of agrifood systems and that aims to challenge existing food system practice (Allen et al. 2003). The initiatives are suggested to share the political agenda to: “oppose the structures that coordinate and globalize the current food system and to create alternative systems of food production that are environmentally sustainable, economically viable, and socially just (Allen et al. 2003).”

2.1.2 Short Food Supply Chains

Short Food Supply Chains (SFSC) is a term that describes production-distribution-consumptions configuration. A SFSC is usually defined by few intermediaries (i.e. all activities linking producer and consumer) or by a short geographical distance between producers and consumers. For SFSC’s it is important to look at the relationships between producers and consumers and the social value of these relationships, and not just focus on the
product being delivered. Three categories are distinguished to extend SFSC over time and space: face-to-face, proximate and extended. In face-to-face SFSC consumers purchase the products directly from producers and authenticity and trust are mediated through that personal interaction. Some sales are restricted to farms, some delivers into cities and some are virtual face-to-face sales. Proximate SFSC extends to go past the direct interaction with producers and can include intermediary actors in the food chain like local shops and ‘dedicated’ retailers. Extended SFSC includes products being sold to consumer that has not experienced the place from where it originates (Renting et al. 2003).

2.1.2 Local Food Systems
Local Food Systems is about connecting food producers and food consumers in the same geographic region and support local economies (Feenstra 1997). New economic arrangements (Hinrich 2000) and movements (Feagan 2007) have emerged to distribute such products. Local Food Systems aims to be “economically viable for farmers and consumers, use ecologically sound production and distribution practices, and enhance social equity and democracy for all members of the community (Feenstra 1997)”. In short, a localized and sustainable food system is viewed to be more ecologically and socially sustainable (Kneen 1993, Feenstra 1997). Common examples in a Local Food System are farmers markets, farm shops and community-supported agriculture (Feenstra 1997).

Farmers market, and other examples of direct sales found in Local Food Systems, is characterized by a meeting between producer and consumer and where that meeting provides the potential of learning. Producers can find out what consumers like, and adapt their practice thereafter, and consumers learn about the agricultural practice (Milestad et al. 2010). Learning contributes to adaptive capacity, which can be a driving force in building a resilient food system (Armitage et al. 2008).

2.1.3 Curation
In this thesis, intermediation is a concept used for all activities that links producer and consumers. Curation is, a concept used to understand what helps consumers make the right choices in the large expanding ‘good food’ market of fair trade, organic and ethical production. Joose and Hracs (2015) developed and described curation in local food systems as “interpreting, translating and shaping of the marketplace through the practice of sorting, organising, evaluating and ascribing value to specific products (Joose and Hracs 2015)”. Curators also provide recommendations to consumers. Different contexts must be a major part
in looking at curation since it takes place in many different places, e.g. scales and locations (Joose and Hracs 2015).

2.2 Mental Reconnect to the Biosphere
This thesis is set within social-ecological systems theory were humans and nature are interlinked. The frameworks of reconnect to the biosphere and ecological literacy frame the necessity for humans to understand social-ecological systems and the interdependence within.

2.2.1 Social-Ecological Systems
The foundation for the thesis will be framed within the theory of social-ecological systems, the theory that humans and nature are truly interlinked. Humans can neither prosper nor survive without the services the natural environment provides, nor is nature free from the impacts of humans (Folke 2006). Applied to this study, what we choose to eat will affect the ecosystem, i.e. the biosphere. If ecosystems, and the services they provide, are mistreated that will have a negative consequence on our health and wellbeing. The social and the ecological systems are truly interlinked.

2.2.2 Reconnecting to the biosphere
Reconnecting to the biosphere is a conceptual framework about how humanity should understand their role as a dominant force in shaping the biosphere, start accounting for and governing natural capital, and actively shape societal development in tune with the planet (Folke 2013). The definition of the biosphere used here is: “The biosphere is the global ecological system integrating all living beings and their relationships, including their interaction with the elements of the lithosphere, hydrosphere, atmosphere and cryosphere (Folke et al. 2011).” It is argued that humanity must make this reconnect to the biosphere in order to have a chance for a sustainable development (Folke et al. 2011). The framework largely relates to a mental reconnect (Folke et. al 2011).

Other studies have been done where the framework of reconnect to the biosphere has been applied to describe how humans can reconnect to the biosphere. The focus of some of them has been on how environmental consciousness among children can lead to a reconnect (Giusti et al. 2014) and how people within cities can reconnect to the biosphere (Andersson et al. 2014). In this thesis, the focus is on initiatives that place consumers closer to producer and curate information about the food system, and how that practice could enhance consumers understanding that we as humans shape the biosphere through our food consumption choices.
and discuss to what extent that can contribute to a mental reconnect (i.e. understand that we are a part of a social ecological system).

2.2.2 Ecological Literacy
Ecological literacy relates to the ability to understand the natural systems (in other words: the complexity of ecosystems and the services humans derive from them (d’Arge et al. 1997)) and that humans are fundamentally dependent on this. The concept draws on system thinking and ecology to encourage a learning process about nature and the role we have in it.

Having ecological literacy is an understanding that caring for the environment is needed for our survival and wellbeing, and that this will lead to action for a sustainable society in tune with the planet. “Environmental education ought to change the way people live, not just how they talk (Orr 1992).” Orr (1992) argues for the need of environmental education integrated in all parts of the school system in order for people to become ecologically literate. “The ecologically literate person has the knowledge necessary to comprehend interrelatedness, and an attitude of care or stewardship (Orr 1992).” Orr (1992) also stress that ecology is an applied subject and should be placed outdoors where it is found. The subject in schools is argued remote from its actual subject matter.

The ecological crisis is, within this concept, a consequence of the lack of education about how humans are a part of the system (Orr 1992). It is in this sense closely related to both social-ecological systems and the framework of reconnect to the biosphere.

2.4 Reconnecting Initiatives
The concept of Reconnecting Initiatives is here introduced as a sub-category to Alternative Food Initiatives. It emphasise curation of information targeting consumers about the food-production system and recognize initiatives that can enable a mental reconnect to the biosphere and build ecological literacy among consumers. The curation could for example include information about producer, production methods, seasons and the general food system.

The concept builds on three steps. Firstly, Reconnecting Initiatives are initiatives where producer and consumers are more closely linked and where information about food system practices is curated to consumers. Secondly, that information enhances the understanding that we, through our consumption, affect the food production landscapes specifically and the
biosphere in general. Thirdly, that understanding enhances the possibility of a mental reconnect to the biosphere, i.e. understand that we are part of a social-ecological system and dependent on its maintained functions for our wellbeing. Understanding this is vital in order for action towards a sustainable development in tune with the planet as argued by Orr (1992) and Folke et al. (2011).

A Reconnecting Initiative will more specifically be defined to (1) classify as an Alternative Food Initiative (i.e. initiatives and organizations that work in many different places of the agrifood system and that aims to challenge the existing food system practice) and (2) provide information about producer and often other food system related issues.

The term Reconnecting Initiative will in this thesis be applied to a case study, more specifically the Alternative Food Initiatives in and around Stockholm that provide information about producers and other food system related issues. From here on, the concept Reconnecting Initiatives will be used throughout the thesis.

2.5 Thesis Contribution

The contribution of this thesis is the introduction and development of the concept Reconnecting Initiatives to emphasise how consumers and producers move closer to each other and how that increases the possibilities of a mental reconnection. The contribution is also to apply this concept and look at a diverse group of Reconnecting Initiatives identified around Stockholm, analyse their characteristics and information strategies and based on that result discuss what potential they hold to reach a diverse group of consumers.
3. Case Study Description

The study is placed in Stockholm, Sweden (figure 1) where Reconnecting Initiatives can be found (Milestad et al. 2010, Joose and Hracs 2015). Sweden is a relatively small country with its population of almost 9,900,000 people (year 2015). The population in Stockholm, the capital, with surroundings have around 2,200,000 inhabitants (SCB 2016). The Swedish agriculture has been declining during the last decades and currently only 1% of the population is working within this sector. The amount of farms has halved since 1970 and amounts today to around 67,000. The production itself has not decreased but farms have grown bigger and productivity has increased. Currently Sweden imports around twice the amount of the exports of food (Jordbruksverket 2016). There are six large food actors in Sweden that dominates the food sector and those are Ica, Coop, Axfood, Lidle, Netto and Bergendahls (DLF 2015). One trend visible in Sweden is that the digital market for food sales is growing. Five of the large food actors are part of that business, but there are also other examples of networks facilitating the sales between producers and consumers. The digital market of food purchases grew with 40% in 2015 but still only holds 1% of the market.

Another trend is organic sales. In 2006 the government stated the goal of public procurement to be 25% organic of their total purchases. In 2015 public procurement among Swedish municipalities and county councils in general had fulfilled and exceeded that goal. Also, in 2015 organics sales increased with 39% compared to previous year and amounted to almost 6% of total food sales. There is a fast growing demand for organic food and at the same time, the development is slowed down by a lacking supply of KRAV-certified produce (Swedish certification of organics) (KRAV 2016).
There is an increased awareness and interest from the consumer side about the food system in Sweden (Fox Research AB, 2011). There are also more food initiatives providing local food such as farmers market (Milestad et al. 2010) and intermediaries curating ‘good food’ to consumers (Joose and Hracs 2015). KRAV (The Swedish organization for certification of organics) state that their target group is more aware, engaged and want to contribute to a more sustainable consumption, for their own health and for the health of nature and animals. According to a survey made by KRAV, this group constitutes 38% of all swedes, a number that has grown from 27% in the last 10 years (KRAV 2016).
4. Method

A qualitative and descriptive approach is used to provide information about what characteristics the diverse set of Reconnecting initiatives (RI) holds and what information strategies they use. Seeking to investigate a diverse set of RI, and their characteristics, the use of open-ended semi-structured interviews was an appropriate methodological choice. A textual analysis of the RI information strategies was conducted to investigate what information they included.

4.1 Epistemological Background

This study takes on the approach of epistemological pluralism, which emphasise the useful application to studies in and on social-ecological systems (Miller et al. 2008), which is the frame of this thesis. Food systems are highly affected by social trends and ecological factors. A relation that also goes the opposite way. It is therefore vital to examine this field of Reconnecting Initiatives in the food system with a social-ecological approach to fully understand the context.

4.2 Method for data gathering

Firstly, different RI was located around Stockholm, key agents were contacted and semi-structured interviews then conducted, followed by a transcription of interviews that later were inductively coded (figure 2). Secondly, a textual analysis of the RI websites and facebook-pages was conducted in order to analyse their information strategies.

Figure 2. Overview of data gathering process concerning interviews.
The choice of RI to contact was based on two requirements. Firstly, the RI were to be identified as an Alternative Food Initiative (i.e. initiatives and organizations that work in many different places of the agrifood system and that aims to challenge the existing food system practice). Secondly, the initiatives needed to have information about producers (such as the name of producer or farm) and also indicating to include further information about the food system and practices within (information strategies).

The initiatives were preferred to be diverse in terms of what type of RI they categorised as (e.g. store, box-scheme). This decision was based on the assumption that a more diverse set of initiatives has the potential to reach a more diverse set of consumers. There are for example studies stating that farmers market excludes lower income groups (Milestad et al. 2010, Joose and Hracs 2015).

Sixteen initiatives were initially found matching the above-mentioned criteria’s. These were found through Internet searches and tips from people that had bought from an RI before. There are certainly more RI that would fit into the above-mentioned criteria’s but due to time restrictions and the aim of the study the number deemed fit as 10 to 15 interviews is a general recommendation for conducting qualitative research (Esaiasson et al. 2009). The RI was contacted and if agreed to an interview, interview guides were prepared in preparation for the in-depth semi-structured interviews. Most RI responded and key agent within thirteen RI was interviewed. This person was chosen based on that they had been in the RI since the start and/or that they had substantial decision power currently within the RI. The agents were considered to have in-depth knowledge about the RI they were involved in. The interviews were transcribed and later inductively coded (based on themes described in table 3) in a data analysis programme called NVivo.

Textual analysis concerning information strategies was based on the RI websites and facebook pages and was inductively done based on themes further explained in section 4.4.2. One telephone-app was included since that was the major channel of that RI.

4.3 Critical reflections

Critical reflection on data sources

There are always restrictions in time, resources and opportunities (Esaiasson et al. 2009) and so is also the case for this thesis. RI can be found in other places in Sweden but due to above
mention restrictions, some strategic choices was made. Stockholm was chosen as a first restrictor. Urban consumers are a factor to weigh in where most of the world’s population live in cities and have a great affect on the resilience of the planet (Seto et al. 2011, Seto and Ramankutty 2016). Stockholm is the largest city in Sweden, which makes it a suitable choice. The RI did not have to be based in the city but work toward Stockholm consumers. The number of RI’s working in Sweden is relatively small and hence, a strategic choice instead of a random sample was a suitable method for this study (Esaiasson et al. 2009).

**Critical reflection on interview methods**

Interviews are always a co-creation of knowledge. The context in which the interview take place (Skype, cafés, office of interviewee) might have an effect on the comfort of the interviewee and therefore the answers they provide (Esaiasson et al. 2009). The framing of the thesis (Reconnecting Initiatives and reconnect to the biosphere) when contacting interviewees can also contribute to answers adapted to what respondent believe fit to that framing.

**4.4 Methodology for data analysis**

The methodology section corresponds to the order of the two research questions stated in introduction. First the methodology of analysing RI characteristics will be explained, and secondly the RI information strategies.

**4.4.1 Characteristics of Reconnecting Initiatives**

RI will be divided in categories that describe what general type of business or organization is studied. Examples that usually are categorised as Alternative Food Initiatives are farmers markets, local shops and box-scheme practices. In order to define different characteristic in the RI the terms from Short Food Supply Chains concept and Local Food System concept is used. From Short Food Supply Chains the terms face-to-face and proximate are used to define what actors are managing the RI (example of their use as shown in table 1). Face-to-face is defined as producer meeting with consumer at time of sales and proximate is intermediaries *between* producers and consumers. Local Food System identifies local initiatives as those that support the regional economy. This study will use that definition to classify the RI as local or non-local. An RI could be considered to fall into both classifications (local and non-local) if they sell products from local producers as
well as from non-local producers. How categorisation and classification relate to RI and Alternative Food Initiative is visualised in figure 3.

**Table 1.** The two categories used from extending Short Food Supply Chains over time and space and what type of initiatives that is usually categorized under each category (adapted from Renting et al. 2003)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Face to face</th>
<th>Proximate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type of initiative</td>
<td>Farmers market</td>
<td>Local shops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Box-Scheme</td>
<td>“Dedicated” retailers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A timeline will be used to present when the RI started. Size of RI will be assessed based on estimated purchases, or users, per year. Amount of producers, what type of request that RI place on the producers they buy from (e.g. organic, local, no e-number) and the relation the RI’s have to their producers will be stated.

**Figure 3.** Visualization of how Alternative Food Initiatives (level 1) relate to Reconnecting Initiatives (level 2) and their categorizations (level 3) and classifications (level 4). Categories are in this thesis box-scheme, technology-sourcing, farmers market and store. They can be classified as face-to-face (producer) or proximate (intermediary), and local (supporting regional economy) and/or non-local. (The allocation between the two groups (level 2) is unknown but Reconnecting Initiatives is for now hypothesised to be the larger group based on the assumption that ‘good food’ is something beneficial to inform about.)
4.4.2 Information strategies among Reconnecting Initiatives

There are two ways of curating information to consumers that will be analysed in this thesis. It is through their different written channels (e.g. facebook, website, newsletters) or by meeting producer. Information curated, will in this thesis be placed in two groupings: information of specific agricultural practices (Process and Product) and more general food system information and how it connects (Food System). Process and Product will contain information about agricultural production, produce and seasons. Food System information is analysed based on providing transparency (process from a specific farm to fork), linking a (good) production to a (good) produce, informing about conventional and alternative food system, and linking to articles that covers issues about the food system. The groupings of information relate back to the terms emphasised in the concepts of reconnect to the biosphere and ecological literacy (visualised in table 2). Biosphere and ecology could be argued to relate to the process and product category where specific information about production processes in the landscape is curated to consumers. Understanding how we affect the biosphere and system thinking could be argued to link to food system category where larger issues and connection in the food system is highlighted.

Table 2. Description of how (1) reconnect to the biosphere and ecological literacy relates to (2) analysis of information about agricultural food practices in this thesis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Reconnect to the biosphere &amp; ecological literacy</th>
<th>2. Analysed in thesis: Agricultural Food Practices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Biosphere &amp; Ecology</td>
<td>Process and Product information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understand how we as humans affect the biosphere &amp; system thinking</td>
<td>Agricultural production (seasons)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Agricultural produce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Food system information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Transparency: farm to fork</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Linkage: production-produce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Food system (creating debate)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Information in written channels will be analysed based on above stated groupings (Process and Product and Food System). Information that is provided between a producer and consumer will not be analysed in this thesis (due to time restraints), but instead what type of producer meeting the RI offers. A meeting with a producer will in this thesis be considered as a way for consumers to get informed about the similar issues as analysed in the different written channels. That consideration is based on literature of learning at farmers markets (Milestad et al. 2010) and on ecological literacy that states that outdoor and practical
experience is preferable to gain ecological literacy (Orr 1992). The assumption made is that by meeting with producer, the consumers will at least be provided with the possibility of learning about the produce that they purchase, production if they visit the farm and about transparency when consumer learn the connection of where food comes from.

Figure 4 illustrates how the RI information strategies will be analysed. Information strategies include two channels of providing information, which is written channels and meeting producer. The type of information that can be curated through the channels (but will only be analysed in written channel here) are grouped into process and product and food system.

**Figure 4.** The Reconnecting Initiatives have different information strategies. The channels of information is written channels and meeting producer. Type of information is classified in the categories of more specific Process and Product information and more general food systems information.
Table 3. Themes and questions asked to data when coding in data analysis programme NVivo.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes to use when coding in NVivo</th>
<th>Questions asked to material</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Characteristics</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.1 Categorization and classification</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Face-to-face or proximate</td>
<td>Is the RI identified as face-to-face or proximate?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local or non-local</td>
<td>Is the RI identified as local or non-local?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Categories</td>
<td>What categories based on their practice can the RI be sorted into?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.2 Year started</strong></td>
<td>What year did the RI start the practice studied?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.3 Size</strong></td>
<td>What is the estimated size of the RI based on yearly purchases/users?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.4 Producers</strong></td>
<td>How many producers does the RI have?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Producer geography</td>
<td>Are the producers only from Sweden or Sweden and the world?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Producer and RI relations</td>
<td>What does the contact between RI and producers look like?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2. Information strategies</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2.1 Written channels</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2.1.1 Process and Product information</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural production</td>
<td>What information about the agricultural production is the RI informing about?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural produce</td>
<td>What information about the agricultural produce is the RI informing about?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Season</td>
<td>What information about seasons is the RI informing about?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2.1.2 Food system</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transparent process: farm to fork</td>
<td>Is the process from farm to fork explained and what more information is given about the producers?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linkages: production and produce</td>
<td>Does the RI express and explain a link between production forms and produce result?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food system</td>
<td>Does the RI provide information on conventional and alternative food systems?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debate</td>
<td>Do the RI link to debate articles and other material related to create a thought about the food system?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2.2 Meeting Producer</strong></td>
<td>Does the RI provide consumers with a producer meeting and to what degree if so?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. Results

Result is divided in two parts. The first describes the characteristics of the Stockholm RI and the second part defines information strategies they use.

5.1 Characteristics

Here the first research question will be answered – “What are the characteristics among Reconnecting Initiatives in Stockholm?” To nuance the understanding of RI within the food system, and to examine their existence across the field, a range of diverse food-related businesses and organizations was studied.

5.1.1 Categories and classification

The categories and classifications here stated are used as a tool to structure the RI diversity and to help inform the reader of the RI main characteristics. Firstly RI are catalogued in categories and thereafter, in those categories, further classified as face-to-face or proximate and local and/or non-local as described under methods (4.4.1).

The RI has in this study have been grouped in four possible categories (table 4): box-scheme, stores, technology-sourcing and farmers market. More than these categories likely exists in Stockholm but where not found in initial searches.
Table 4. Short description of the Reconnecting Initiatives, where (n) is number of initiative, based on category (box-scheme, store, technology-sourcing, farmers market) and classification (face-to-face or proximate, local and/or non-local).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories (n)</th>
<th>Short description of Reconnecting Initiatives</th>
<th>Classification: Face-to-face or proximate</th>
<th>Classification: Local and/or non-local</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Box-scheme (6)</td>
<td>Meat to pick-up places in city</td>
<td>Face-to-face</td>
<td>Local</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Organic selection, veggie/fruit boxes and grocery bags to home</td>
<td>Proximate</td>
<td>Non-local</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Organic selection and veggie/fruit boxes to home</td>
<td>Proximate</td>
<td>Non-local</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Organic-meat to home and through store</td>
<td>Proximate</td>
<td>Non-local</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Organic-meat to home</td>
<td>Proximate</td>
<td>Local</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Selection from local farmers to home</td>
<td>Proximate</td>
<td>Local</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Store (3)</td>
<td>Grocery stores with a lot of organic, small scale production and local produce</td>
<td>Proximate</td>
<td>Local and non-local</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grocery stores with a lot of organic, small scale production and local produce</td>
<td>Proximate</td>
<td>Local and non-local</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Farmers store with mostly organic</td>
<td>Face-to-face</td>
<td>Local</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology Sourcing (3)</td>
<td>App for sourcing towards farmers store</td>
<td>Face-to-face</td>
<td>Local</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Website and app for sourcing towards farmers store</td>
<td>Face-to-face</td>
<td>Local</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Facebook page for direct sales of food</td>
<td>Face-to-face</td>
<td>Local</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmers market (1)</td>
<td>Farmers market</td>
<td>Face-to-face</td>
<td>Local</td>
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Reconnecting Initiative: Box-scheme

Box-scheme is the group with the largest variations in its structure (e.g. what they sell, the variety of products, and in what way like e.g. consumers selecting products themselves or prepared grocery bags with food recipes). Box-schemes are usually classified as a farmer selling directly to producer (Renting et al. 2003) and one of the box-schemes in this study classifies as that (face-to-face in city). The other five are all classified as proximate as they act as an intermediary between consumer and producers. Two of the five proximate started as face-to-face. The face-to-face and two of the proximate also classifies as a local initiative in relation to Stockholm consumers.

Reconnecting Initiative: Store

Two of the stores are ‘dedicated’ retailers with a focus on a lot of organic, small-scale production and local produce. Both are proximate RI since they act as intermediary between producers and consumers. They both work with local producers to some degree, which makes
them classify as local. Since they have a large supply of more than just local though, they both also classify as non-local. The third RI store is a producer that has opened a farm store in central Stockholm and there sell products only from their own farm. The farm is located within an hours drive from Stockholm and the RI classify as a local initiative. The producers are the ones working in the store and therefore provide a face-to-face meeting.

**Reconnecting Initiative: Technology-Sourcing**

Technology-sourcing refers to RI that provide the service for consumer and producers to meet. Two of them are sourcing consumers to the producers’ farm. The third RI is providing an interactive environment online where consumers and producers can decide how and where to meet and make a trade. The producers are found across all of Sweden and all of these count as local initiatives based on that interactions will be done in the closest environment of consumers. All of them classify as face-to-face either on farm (all cases) and/or in the city (partly last case).

**Reconnecting Initiative: Farmers Market**

The Farmers Market is placed in central Stockholm and have around 20 market days on Saturdays during spring, fall and before Christmas. Majority of those days occur during fall. The farmers market classify as local with its 25 kilometre maximum distance of the producers farm to where the products are being sold directly to consumers, a face-to-face meeting.

**5.1.2 Timeline of development**

Based on the RI in this thesis it can be argued that there has been a rapid development over the last five years of these initiatives.

Most stated reasons of why the initiatives started related to the large-scale structure (e.g. the centralisation of power to a few large actors, farmers not getting enough pay) of the food system and its industrial process, as well as disconnect between producers and consumers in that system. That disconnect is refereed to in terms of e.g. mental, spatial, social and emotional disconnect. One RI explain the social disconnect as: “*As in my generation, we had someone, often a grandma or grandpa, that had friends, or they themselves had a connection to farming life. But the generations younger than me, and I’m born in the late 60’s, doesn’t have that. That connection is missing.* (RM4)” A few agents mention a lack of knowledge among consumers concerning the food system in relation to the disconnect and one specifically states that: “*We were worried about the growing distance between producers and*
consumer and the lack of knowledge among consumers (RM10).” The identified problems appear to shape the reason for initiation that for many sums down to changing the practice for consumers (e.g. fresh food, organic produce, food security) and producers (e.g. fair pay, transparency of where produce go).

The first RI found in Stockholm started in 1996 and can be seen as a forerunner. Reasons to start then was that food had started to become a trend with the start of several food-magazines as well as the creation of the Swedish National Chef Team. The stated reasons also related to a structural change of the way the business was built: “We had talked about where the industry was headed. It was only logistics. But going to France, it is something entirely different there. Why can’t you sell food with a value or an experience attached to it? (RM11)” However, the majority of studied RI (61%) started their practice 2011 or later. Included in that range is all of the technology-sourcing, three box-scheme and two stores. One store and the farmers market started 1996 and 2000. Three forerunners started box-scheme practices 2001, 2003 and 2006. The years that all the RI studied in this thesis started are presented in Figure 5.

Figure 5. Visualisation of year that the Reconnecting Initiative started their practice and divided by the four different categories. X-axis is year and Y-axis is amount of Reconnecting Initiative staring that specific year.

5.1.3 Estimated size

The size of the RI are difficult to measure, due to the very different structures and their different ways of measuring their sales, but when asked they stated an estimate on the amount
of purchases they had. The estimates of consumer purchases per year can not all be double checked but is used as a way of estimating general sizes of the RI. The number of purchases varies largely. It is from a few hundred purchases per year to some hundred thousands. The RI vary in size in general and the same applies within the four different categories. How many individual consumers there is, is not possible to answer. The purchases could be from people that shop at a specific RI once a week or it could be a unique individual each time. It can be assumed that one individual tend to shop at several identified RI in this study in their quest for ‘good food’. The farmer’s market amount of purchases per year is unknown. The technology-sourcing RI only have users since they provide the service of linking consumers with producers. Two of them have unknown users and the third had over 300 000 unique users in 2015.

5.1.4 Producers: Amount, Type of Production and Relation

Number of producers in each RI varies from just one to almost 2000. Two of them are producers themselves and only sell from their own production. The majority of RI works with 20-50 producers and most of those are identified as box-schemes. Two stores and one box-scheme work with a couple of hundred producers. The two that have over a thousand producers are technology-sourcing RI and the third technology sourcing RI has an unknown amount of producers. An estimate has been done to the unknown one and lands on 166 producers. The estimate is based on a producers register in the RI but is according to the interviewee not a complete list. Most RI have producers only from Sweden. Four RI have producers both from Sweden and other parts of the world. Out of the RI including world-producers two are box-scheme and two are stores. Three out of the four cooperate with more than 100 producers and they all have over 100 000 purchases estimated per year.

The amount of producers the RI work with varies largely. The variation is also visible within the different categories where box-scheme and stores can be a RI with one producer (being a producer and selling themselves) to an RI working with more than a hundred producers. The RI category does not appear to decide the size or number of producer, but there appears to be a relationship between having a larger amount of producers and working with producers outside of Sweden’s boarders.

Production criteria and stated wishes about type of production are used as an indicator for what producers the RI prefer, and therefore work with. Questions asked related to what
criteria they had on producers and a general discussion about what they thought was a good produce and production. The most common criteria that the RI holds to their producers is that is should be organic. Two RI have KRAV-certification (i.e. a Swedish certification for organic) and two other RI have EU-organic as a required criteria. The others mention these certifications (and two RI mentions Demeter-certification i.e. biodynamical grown) as an advantage. Some make more contextual decisions: “We work with both conventional and organic farms, grass-fed, biodynamic, KRAV. And it is not always that there is a criterion that suits all, not just one truth. Sometimes we see that producers that have done this for many years, and generally are considered leading in animal keeping, don’t have a KRAV-certification because there are certain things that don’t suit them for different reasons. So our prime focus is not on KRAV and other certifications. (RM7)”

Almost two thirds mention natural products (e.g. no or less e-numbers). One actor says that they exclude products with certain types of e-number and explain that: “It’s a gate keeping function there (RM5).”

More than a third specifically mention locally produced as criteria and two of these have a set maximum distant from where the produce can be retrieved. Almost a third mention small and middle scale producers. Many stress the importance of animal welfare and other production criteria connected to breeding (e.g. grass-fed, organic feed and no concentrate feed). “It is grassfed meat, a quality selection and a communication with the producers that doesn’t exist if you only buy IloveEco (largest retailers own brand: authors comment) (RM1)”

Two thirds of the RI state that everything is context based and that they make sure to have an open contact with the producers. The three technology-sourcing RI have no production criteria on the producers. Stated reasons for this had partly to do with wanting consumers to make context based decision. They say that no production is completely good and the best is if the consumers themselves listen, decide and then purchase. One agent exemplifies this in saying: “I don’t think that there is just one model that is possible to apply to all places on earth. I think that it is important to see to local prerequisites and based on that, take the decisions suitable. (RM12)” The context based decisions is not only restricted to technology-sourcing RI.
Most RI expresses a close relationship with the producers they cooperate with. Many visit producers on farms and have regular contact with them over phone and mail. Three RI expressively state that they have had a long cooperation with their producers. Only a few state that they have very little contact with the producers.

5.2 Information Strategies
Here the second research question will be answered – “What information strategies does the Reconnecting Initiatives in Stockholm use?” To nuance the understanding of RI further, the aim is to find out about their information strategies, i.e. what information about the food system in general, and agricultural practices in particular they provide and through what channels: written channels and by producer meeting.

Two parts will be presented here. Firstly, written channels the RI use to inform their consumers about the food system with and what that information contains. Secondly, what type of producer meeting the RI offers.

5.2.1 Written Channels
Here, the first information strategy written channels will be analysed. First, the channels they use will be presented and then the information curated by the RI will be analysed as described in method (4.4.2) The curated information has been gathered from their facebook pages and websites, and will be presented based on the groupings Process and Product and Food System.

Channels
The RI are providing information to consumers through their broad variation of written channels. All of the investigated RI uses Facebook as a communication channel towards consumers. Eleven of them use websites and the same amount Instagram. Almost half of the RI have a newsletter and/or a blog. The most common channels are in fact different kinds of social media as can be seen in figure 6. Other channels include: twitter, apps, information pamphlets, podcast, and videos.
Process and Product: Production, produce & season

Most of the RI include at least some information about the production of foods. It is based on how many of them inform about season, about breeding and/or agricultural practices. Most mention seasons (e.g. season guides, informing that something is only available at certain times of the year, having season-based produce). “We have a guide to show what produce is in season at that moment. And, personally, I believe that in order for us to achieve a sustainable food system, we need to do several things. To a higher degree follow local supply, what can be produced in a sustainable way at a certain place and at a specific time, and then to consume thereafter. That means that we have to renounce certain foods during certain parts of the year. Or consume it more sparsely if we import it. (RM12)” More than half of the RI mention practices on farm (e.g. guides for production practices). One agent explains their information pamphlets and what these provide consumer with when they are curious about the product: “Was this tasty? Yes it was. But let’s read about these pigs and how they have been raised. What is it that separates them and their upbringing? Everyone can then have that debate and discussion. (RM4)”

Most also include information about produce and that is based on information about different types of produce, how to handle produce and how to cook it. About 66% describe diverse produce (e.g. describing the specific production for that produce, the amount of a variety of breeds or crops that exists). One agent mentions how they provide a variety of produce: “We cultivated around 200 different kinds of black kale (...) and we want to access older kinds of
produce again. (RM6)” And from the same agent: “We want to enable a lot of products to consumers that they otherwise wouldn’t get. (RM6)” A little less than half of the RI informs their consumers about how to handle the produce (e.g. guides for cutting meat, general guides on how to prepare a new produce) and how to cook it (e.g. recipes). One agent states, in relation on using new produce, that: “We want to provide help for them to use parts of an animal that they normally don’t buy. (RM13)” And another agent sums up that it is all really about explaining why certain products are preferable: “It is about explaining why we have chosen to not have certain products and why we have chosen the ones we do have. Why ASC- and MSC-certification on fish are important. (RM5)”.

**Food system: Transparency, production-produce linkage & food system**

The criterion for choosing the RI was that name of producer was mentioned, which is to provide information about a transparent process of how the food travels from farm to fork. Besides this, most of RI also include a picture of producer, production and/or farm. Almost all have more information about the producers. It includes producer interviews, blog about visits to farm and newsletters about what happens on the farm.

Almost all (10/13) also talk about the connection between a good production and how that turns into a good and tasty produce. Many stress that good production quality usually leads to (but not equals) good eating quality. Some mention the added value of just knowing from where the food comes from and how that adds to the taste: “The consumer wants to see that the pigs are raised under good conditions. And to see that there are pigs that have good breeding conditions. That makes them happy. And will make them enjoy the food more. Because there is a connection there in some way, the ethics of breeding and how tasty the food will be. (RM8)”

All RI are in some way informing about the general food system, either by talking about the conventional and alternative food systems (e.g. stating what is not working in the conventional and what must be changed, relation between large and small scale) and/or creating a debate about it (e.g. linking to articles questioning conventional farming, the meat-industry). One agent stress the importance to generate an understanding of ‘good food’: “And if we can contribute to an understanding about why it is important with genuine and well produced food, then I think we have won on all levels. This applies both to us as a business,
but also us as humans since we have a planet to care for. (...) I hope that it’s possible to create an interest, a curiosity for what one could do. (RM5)

5.2.2 Meeting Producer

There are four different categories in what degree of producer contact the RI offer (visualised in figure 7). Almost half of the RI provide for a meeting between producer and consumer at all times. It includes all of the technology-sourcing RI, the farmers market and the one store and one box-scheme that themselves are producers. “I think it is a benefit for the consumer to meet and talk with the producer. But I don’t know. For who can you otherwise talk to? The person in charge of vegetables at the supermarket? (RM9)” Three RI are encouraging (defined as linking to producer websites/facebook), two sometimes offer consumers to meet producers (e.g. conducting events such as field trips and/or tastings with producers), and two both encourage and sometimes provide a meeting.

![Figure 7](chart.png)

Figure 7. The x-axis describes if and how the Reconnecting Initiative provides the option of meeting, sorted after most (left) to least (right) contact with the producer and y-axis describes how many of the thirteen Reconnecting Initiative provide each option.
6. Discussion and conclusion

This section will start with a discussion of the findings in this thesis concerning RI in Stockholm and their characteristics and information strategies, and then apply a general discussion of the concept of RI, followed by limitations and some concluding words.

6.1 Reconnecting Initiatives found around Stockholm

The emphasis for the descriptive part of this study was to choose a range of RI in Stockholm that classified into different categories. The reason for this was to be able to say something about the range of consumers they could reach and in extension, what range of people they could curate information to and enable a mental reconnect among. The different RI in the thesis was identified as box-schemes, stores, technology-sourcing and farmers market. Here follows a description of these and their limitations and possibilities of reaching the Stockholm consumers.

Farmers market is bound by place and time (Milestad et al. 2010), which limits the accessibility of the market to people in that specific area and with no other obligations during the time of the market. Technology-sourcing is also restricted to people that have a car to go to the farm, as mentioned by one of the respondents in this thesis. Box-schemes that delivers home have the possibility to reach people without resources like a car and with limited time (where travel to a farm or a farmers market is difficult). The stores are, as the farmers market, bound to its place in Stockholm but open-hours are more generous to people than the farmers market. A general restrictor, to reach a diverse set of consumers, might still be a potential higher price of the food, which would exclude lower income groups (Milestad et al. 2010). The price, within these RI and compared to the conventional system, was not studied in this thesis though. To conclude, there is a diverse set of RI in Stockholm, which could reach a variety of different consumers. A continued discussion about the diverse RI and the implications of their practices on consumers in Stockholm will follow here.

Based on the result from this thesis, most of the RI have started their practice in the last five years. The amount of RI investigated in this thesis might limit what conclusions to draw from this, but it does reflect the general trend in Swedish society with a growing demand for organic products (KRAV 2016), which many RI provide, and consumers search for ‘good food’ and initiatives providing that (Joose and Hracs 2015). With an increasing demand for
organic products all over Sweden it is likely that consumers that purchase from RI (that provide organics) are becoming more and more diverse and with different requirements on how the food supply solution should look to best suit them. It is therefore vital that the RI can respond to that diverse demand from consumers. As this study has concluded, the Stockholm RI seem to meet this need with a diverse set of different RI categories e.g. box-schemes and store, where consumers could find the RI best suited to them and their daily routines.

RI stores with local products as well as a larger assortment of world products (non-local) could have a larger potential in reaching a broader group of Stockholm consumers. Such RI with a wide variety of assortments might attract a group of consumers used to the conventional food system, usually shopping at larger supermarkets or conventional grocery stores. RI like these, familiar in structure but different in assortment, might make it possible to reach a new group of consumers. The curated information that RI provides about process and product and food system will enhance the possibility of a mental reconnect among a new and diverse group of consumers. This reasoning also relates back to the importance of a variety of RI that suits different people.

**Information Strategies**

This thesis identified and analysed two information strategies found among RI, producer meeting and information through written channels (e.g. facebook, website, newsletter). The findings indicate that the ones identified as a face-to-face initiative usually tends to have less information through their channels. On the other hand that is not the case for the store and the box-scheme identified as face-to-face who curate a lot of information through their written channels. The RI that curate more written information on the other hand tends to offer less producer meeting. What is the best way to enhance the possibility of a mental reconnect to the biosphere? Is there an information strategy that is more effective: written channels or producer meetings? Farmers market, where producer and consumers meet, provides for a learning environment according to Milestad et al. (2010). And the concept of ecological literacy stress practical and outdoor activities as way to learn about nature (Orr 1992), which could be argued to place emphasis on producer meeting as a way to understand the biosphere and how we affect it. At the same time, the written information can entail much more, and in-depth, information that the consumers can absorb at their own pace. In ecological literacy there is also the call for education at large. A note to be made on the case of Stockholm is that most of the RI in this study in fact use both strategies (to different degrees). Also, consumers
that use one of the RI potentially also use other RI in e.g. the quest for ‘good food’. In that way the consumer might get written information curated from one RI and producer meeting information from another RI.

**6.2 The concept of Reconnecting Initiatives**

The concept of RI makes it possible to apply the conceptual framework of reconnecting to the biosphere to cases of Alternative Food Initiative that provide curated information about agricultural practice and food system. The RI-concept provides one way of understanding the first criterion of Folke et al. (2011)’s three suggested parts of what is needed for humanity to reconnect to the biosphere. This first criterion deals with how humanity understands the biosphere and affects it. The other two criteria are about actively managing natural capital and work for a societal development in tune with the planet. These two are not covered in this thesis. Although, the thesis do touch on the second criterion about managing natural capital.

Related to the second criterion, it could be argued that if the RI work closely with producers and encourage, through their choice of cooperation, good production methods, they are also managing natural capital in tune with the planet. Alternative Food Initiative are generally known for ‘good food’ practices that work towards a sustainable ecological, social, economical food system (Renting et al. 2003). The result of this study indicates that same trend. The producers that most RI prefers to work with are organic and local producers. With the transparent process, the good production is almost a mandatory criterion since it has to be attractive ‘good food’ for the consumer to want to buy it. The third criterion in the framework of reconnecting to the biosphere is about working for a societal change in tune with the planet. The RI are all identified as Alternative Food Initiatives that in its definition is working for a change of practice. Reconnecting Initiatives is through their practice of curating information, and selling ‘good food’, a part of the change of practice in the food system.

RI adds value to the concept of ecological literacy as well. Ecological literacy is a concept that is usually used in schools where it emphasise the need for a holistic environmental education (Orr 1992). By adding the concept RI and applying it in a context outside of school (such as business) people in other settings of the society has the potential become ecological literate.
6.3 Limitations

The concept of RI is so far only relating to a hypothetical mental reconnect to the biosphere. The contribution of the thesis is to describe the diverse set of RI in Stockholm and their main characteristics and information strategies. The concept and how it is applied in this thesis does not conclude any result on an actual mental reconnect among people as a consequence of their consumption through, and exposure to information curated by, a RI. Further research on the effect RI and their information strategies (i.e. channels used and what they contain) have on consumers would be the next step to further develop the concept of RI and the initiatives potential effect to mentally reconnect people to the biosphere.

The context of Stockholm and Sweden, a wealthy country in the global north, is not generalizable to all other cities in the world and therefore the RI characteristics and information strategies are not either. Alternative Food Initiatives are though identified in many parts of Europe and North America (Hinrich 2003, Illbery et al. 2005, Venn et al. 2006). The application of the concept RI could be used in these parts of the world and the findings from this study might be relevant to similar (e.g. size, environmentally aware consumers) cities as Stockholm. The fast rising demand for organics in Sweden, from both individual consumers and through public procurement (KRAV 2016) need to be taken into consideration which could make the case of Swedish RI less applicable to other countries if these trends of ‘good food’ is more evident here than elsewhere.

6.4 Concluding words

The thesis concludes with both aims in mind, of introducing the concept of Reconnecting Initiatives and applying it to Stockholm as a case. Reconnecting Initiatives is argued a useful common concept to add to the Alternative Food Initiatives specifically and the food system discourse in general. Reconnecting Initiatives are, in summary, the diverse set of actors that are both small-scale producers and larger intermediaries and work with producers on both local and global scales and at the same time share the goal to oppose the conventional food system and in their Reconnecting Initiatives have different information strategies to curate information to consumers about the more specific processes of food production and more general structure of the food system.

In conclusion, the creation of Reconnecting Initiatives provides a common concept within Alternative Food Initiatives and can offer a foundation for further studies about this sub-group
that covers the potential to enhance ecological literacy among consumers and in extension, a mental reconnect to the biosphere. Reconnecting to the biosphere is vital for a sustainable development in tuned with the planet and Reconnecting Initiatives could have a part to play in that.
7. Bibliography


Appendices

Appendices 1: Methods

Literature Review
In order to gain knowledge about the RI’s the first step was about reading up about the RI through their webpages, Facebook pages, Instagram-posts and through any potential articles written about them. This was done in order to see if the RI matched the criteria stated for being chosen and as a first step in gaining knowledge to prepare for the interviews.

Contacting the Interviewees
The 16 RI were all contacted by email. 14 responded back and agreed to an interview. 1 answered but did not have the time to conduct an interview at the moment and 1 never replied. 13, of the 14 interviews conducted, were found suitable for the study. The exclusion of one RI had to do with the fact that there was one agent starting it and another agent that had taken over it and developed it. This meant that not full information about the RI could be found based on that interview.

Semi-Structured Interviews
Semi-structured interviews with open-ended answers were chosen as the method to gain the information needed to answer the reasons questions (Esaiasson et al. 2009). The interviews lasted between 45 minutes and up to 2½ hours. The one that took 2 ½ hours was an outlier. In general, the longest interviews lasted around 1½ hour.

Interview Guides was written for all interviews as part of preparation for the semi-structured interview (Esaiasson et al. 2009). There was one general one for all RI. All the interview guides have then been adapted for the different interviewees and their organization/initiative/business. The guides for the RI had three themes: history of the initiative, the RI relationship with the producers and lastly the relations towards consumers. Some RI work in very different ways why some guides where more different from each other than others. The interview guides work as a guide and therefore, some questions were not asked in certain interviews when those seemed unfit. On the other hand, follow up questions
was added in all interviews to expand further of a line of thought (Esaiasson et al. 2009). These are, for obvious reasons, different dependent on different interviews where different information was given.

**Transcription of interviews**
All of the interviews were transcribed since the interviews were going to be coded. After that they were read through and summarized in order to pick up on any general trends and for gaining new insights.

**Data analysis: Coding in NVivo**
The transcripts were added to the data analysis programme NVivo. This is a descriptive research about the RI and therefore the coding was inductively done and decided by the data available (Esaiasson et al. 2009). Themes were set up around the research questions and their sub-questions. Coding was based on the interviews but also from available relevant information from the RI’s websites and facebook-pages.
Appendices 2: Interview Guide

1. Historic timeline of RI start-up and development
We will begin by talking about the emerging and development of RI and how it is that you have chosen to have a business that is working on linking producer and consumer. This aims to create a historical timeline of your food initiative.

Comprehensively
I am interested in your organization since you link producers and consumers. In what way do you at RI make sure that you bring producers and consumers closer to each other?

Start-up and development
How was it that RI started? When did you start?
- Was there any specific event/person that marked the start? (general trend/tendency/change/inspiration that enabled the start?)

Would you be able to give some examples of events that have affected you, at the start-up or during the time you have been active? Either something that has helped you along the way or hindered you?
- And how have these lead to you conducting your business differently?

Vision
Could you describe your vision (your goal) with RI?

What is a “good” produced product according to you?

Inspiration
Can you think of any other food initiatives that have inspired your operation?
- Have you heard that your initiative is an inspiration to others?

Could you mention some examples of other food initiatives that have a similar practice to yours?

Are there any forums or opportunities to converse with initiatives similar to yours?

What types of collaborations do you have with other actors? (Municipality, university, producers, consumers, RI)

2. Producers in RI
How many producers does RI work with?
- Where are your producers located, geographically?

Do you know if the producers you work with also work with other RI? And if the do, which these are?

Could you describe the process when a new producer join RI?
- Does the producer find you or do you actively look for producers to join your initiative?
What kind of reasons do you hear from producer on why they want to sell their products through your organization?

**Advantages and disadvantages**
Could you give some examples of advantages for producers who sell their products through your RI compared with selling its products through a conventional store?

What disadvantages might there be for them?

**Requirements/Criteria**
What requirements do you insist upon for producers to join RI?
- Do you have any opinions/guideline on the producers practices and how they should conduct them? Certifications?

Have the producers expressed any indication that they have changed their practices after they started working with you? In what way?

**Communication and knowledge exchange**
How do RI communicate with your producers? What channels (email, phone calls, skype etc) are used?

What information is exchanged during this communication?

How often do you meet face-to-face?

What have you learned from the producers? Have you made any changes to your business strategy or practice after interacting with them?

3. **Consumers in RI**
How many consumers purchase from you?
- Week/Month/Year

Which consumers do RI want to reach?
- Which consumers do you actually reach today?

**Communication channels**
What channels/tools do you use to reach your customers?

What do you communicate/tell to your customers?

Do you know how consumers find out about you?

On RI website there are information about your products? What is your purpose with that information?

What do you want your customers to know about the producers?

**Advantages and disadvantages**
What can RI offer consumers that they cannot get when by purchasing food from a conventional store?
• Could you give any examples of what consumers have expressed they find positive about your organization? (feedback)

What do you think are the largest challenges/problems for consumers when they shop at RI?
• Could you give some examples of what consumers have expressed they think needs to be improved about your organization? (feedback)

4. Closing
What motivates you in your work?

What are some things that you would like to see changed in order to facilitate this type of initiatives connecting producer and consumer?
• Who has the power/ability to influence this?

That is all the questions I had, would you like to add something?