

Marketing Strategies for Ark & Rescue Centres

Recommendations for Guidelines

ELBARN Working Group 4

Introduction

Marketing is an important part of the process to find ways to finance A&RCs. A&RCs should be as self sustainable as possible because relying on state subsidies can be dangerous in times of a cutback. Besides marketing the actual products from rare breeds like milk, meat and wool, there are some possibilities to market services like landscape management, promoting tourism and education etc. The marketing strategies strongly depend on the type of A&RC, its location and market surroundings, such as possible end customers and outlets. So the marketing strategies discussed here are more general guidelines for marketing, labelling and financing. After identifying possible A&RCs in the regional areas with the focal points “Educational A&RC “, “Farm A&RC “, “Rescue station” or “Quarantine station” (see WG 2) a closer look on the individual marketing possibilities is necessary.

Short Summary of WG 4 Discussion

The discussion contained the role of rare breeds in marketing services like tourism, education, grazing, the marketing of products like meat and wool, the tracing and labelling of products and services as well as financing rescue and the importance of location and type of A&RC.

- In tourism and education the focus lies in raising awareness for the importance of conserving rare breeds and the positive aspects in their use as preserver of cultural and natural heritage.
- For the marketing of products the core elements were discussed. They are: identifying Unique Selling Points (USPs), end customers and ways to market, obtaining endorsements, promoting the product and linking producers with outlets.
- In the case of wool the focus must first lie in an educational aspect to get people more acquainted again with the product wool.

Marketing the products is one point, another one is the possibility for consumers to identify products from rare breeds through a label and/or a tracing system. For example in Hungary there is a WAP service where you can get an access to the central database from your mobile phone to find out in the shop from which animal and which farm the meat in front of you comes.

The way of labelling products from old and endangered livestock breeds was discussed thoroughly. A label for the products of A&RCs should at least contain that the product comes from a small scale, extensive production from local breeds, uses a traditional

process in the manufacturing and animal welfare is respected (as the organic label was, before it shifted to mass production with industrial breeds). The adaptation of the label to the specific country or region of an A&RC must also be possible. As certification is a crucial point for a small organisation, the new label should be an add-on to labels already in use. For that, cooperation with regional, national or international institutions and programmes (e.g. catering trade-chains, mountain farmer programmes, biosphere products, Slow Food) is recommended. The promotion of such a label should not only run through the ELBARN channel but also via the planned “Green book of Europe” for the furtherance of quality production by the EU Commission.

Financing rescue was a further point of discussion. An A&RC focused on the points “Rescue” or “Quarantine” has a limited possibility of marketing something because animals are only there for a short time. Therefore lobbying for rescue funds on regional, national and/or EU level should be pursued. Rescue funds are comparable to fund for damages created by wildlife, safeguard cultural heritage, disease control, etc...

Need for action

The need for action to finance A&RCs through marketing products and services as well as lobbying for additional funds can be divided to more overall actions and actions after identifying A&RCs in the regional areas. So guidelines for the ELBARN Project Team, for the Area Workshops and for individual A&RCs must be developed. The following actions are necessary:

Labelling:

- A new label for small scale, extensive production from local breeds and plant varieties using traditional manufacturing and respecting animal welfare should be created as a general tool to promote rare breeds (among others).
- Determination of final criteria for a supplementary A&RC label
- Creation of a logo for A&RCs to print on products
- Identify an official certification body for second and further audits
→ Certification from an official certification body is in a later stage probably needed. Otherwise the correct use of the logo will depend on the good will of the producers
- Identify possible institutions and/or programmes for cooperating with the labelling of an A&RC label
- Identify regional, national or European-wide Institutions who can support nature conservation with rare breeds
- Lobby for rescue funds on regional, national and European level
- Integration of specified wool, meat and milk processing points in Arca-Net

For the regional areas and A&RCs it is important to:

- Identify and promote „Flag-Ship Breeds“ for the region
- Promote farm park visits for children and adults through Arca-Net, but also by advertising, course materials for schools, information leaflets etc.

- Identify suitable breeds for landscape management (an additional database in Arca-Net with passport data on characteristics and quality of each breed would be helpful)
- Promote the value as Cultural Heritage and for Consumers Health
- Identify marketing possibilities and analyse the market surrounding, such as end customers, ways to market, ways to promote the products and services

Open Questions

Who will be responsible for the whole marketing scheme and activities in favour of the A&RCs in the long term. Maintaining a good marketing strategy needs time and money. Richard Lutwyche e.g. does the marketing for the rare breeds in the UK with the “Traditional Breeds Meat Marketing“, it would be ideal, if such a person or company would exist for each area.

If there are several A&RCs in an area they could work together. A closer look at the possibilities for a European wide standard and its final implementation is needed.

Conclusions

Marketing is a large field with several opportunities for the conservation of rare breeds and for the financing of A&RCs. Marketing can be divided into more general considerations and in more special ones adapted to individual regions. An overall aspect is the development of a label which could be applied to A&RCs in the whole of Europe. Besides that it is necessary to connect regional, national, and European marketing initiatives and lobby for additional funds from different institutions. On a more regional level the first step is to identify the different kinds of A&RCs and their location and then develop a special marketing scheme for one or more of these centres. This must be accompanied by education of tourists and local population to clarify the importance of conserving rare breeds which is accompanied by positive aspects in their use as preserver of cultural and natural heritage. Finally, through the marketing it must be achieved that the conservation of old and endangered breeds as a source of valuable Animal Genetic Resources is as self-sustainable, in the long run, as possible.