

National Food Strategy 2.0

Summary



Photo: Agtech Sweden



Government Offices of Sweden

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Background

In 2017, the Riksdag adopted the objective of the National Food Strategy: a competitive food supply chain that increases overall food production while achieving the relevant national environmental objectives. The strategy still applies, but the Government has revised it to meet current challenges and opportunities. The new strategy, the National Food Strategy 2.0, has been developed in dialogue with businesses and organisations in the food supply chain.

Challenges

The National Food Strategy 2.0 identifies key challenges within the food system. Businesses in the food supply chain face economic pressures that reduce their profitability and capacity to invest and innovate. Global events, including the deteriorating security situation, have exposed the vulnerabilities of the food system, which needs to be more resilient to cope with peacetime crises, heightened states of alert and ultimately war. The basis for building this resilience is profitable businesses, and this lies at the heart of work of

the National Food Strategy 2.0. Stable profitability for businesses in the food supply chain is the most important factor in making individual businesses more resilient.

Swedish producers compete with imported goods, especially in lower price segments, which has reduced market share for certain products, for example meat. The regulatory burden, including EU regulatory frameworks, and inconsistent interpretation of them, is a barrier to growth, especially for small and medium-sized enterprises.

Skills supply and labour shortages hamper growth and sustainable production. Climate change is creating new challenges for agriculture and aquaculture, with changes in cultivation conditions, new pests and diseases as well as water shortages. Obtaining capital has become harder, especially for newly established businesses and in conjunction with the generational shift in agriculture, partly due to higher interest rates and stricter risk assessments.

To address these challenges, businesses need better conditions to increase production through enhanced competitiveness and profitability. Competitiveness and profitability are fundamental to agriculture being able to invest in the climate transition and to meet environmental and climate challenges. This is especially true of climate change adaptation efforts.

Opportunities

Despite these challenges, there are significant opportunities for the Swedish food sector. Domestic production can increase in strategic areas such as plant-based proteins, sustainable aquaculture and garden products, which contributes to greater resilience of food supply. Regional cooperation and improved use of local resources offer development opportunities in which public procurement can support local producers.

The growing global population and rising prosperity create the potential for increased exports of Swedish food products. Sweden has strong competitive advantages through high food safety standards, low antibiotic use, environmental sustainability, good animal welfare standards and attractive raw materials and products with unique origins and distinctive tastes. Effective communication of these added values can strengthen Swedish products' position both nationally and internationally.

Sweden has an opportunity to lead progress in sustainable food production with its environment and climate-smart agriculture. Investment in research, innovation and digitalisation can increase efficiency and productivity throughout the entire food supply chain. There are also opportunities for food production in continuing work on simplifying regulations and reducing costs for



Photo: Felix Gerlach



Photo: Restaurangakademien



Photo: Poppels Brewery

businesses through lowering the administrative burden, improving interactions with public authorities and streamlining regulatory frameworks.

In addition to its broad-based work to improve the business climate for businesses in the food supply chain in Sweden, the Government will intensify efforts to implement the National Food Strategy 2.0 in the following three focus areas:

- increased resilience in the food supply chain;
- export promotion; and
- Swedish quality and gastronomy.

Goals and follow-up

The National Food Strategy 2.0 aims to strengthen Sweden's food supply chain, increase Swedish food production and contribute to sustainable development. The Swedish Board of Agriculture has previously been tasked by the government to continuously monitor and evaluate the food strategy and the development of the food supply chain until 2025. The government considers continued monitoring essential to achieving the strategy's goals and therefore decided to extend the Board's assignment as regards to the ongoing evaluation of both the strategy and the food supply chain. The Government will take a more active role in the implementation of the strategy in close cooperation with food supply chain actors, including through a food policy council and strengthened coordination at strategic and operational levels. The Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth is tasked with coordinating the implementation of the new strategy.

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