

Artisan cheese production

Abstract

Artisanal cheese production has been reinvented in countries such as the United States and Britain in recent years. In Denmark the scene of artisanal cheese production has not yet met the same reinvention. Through qualitative interviews and literature reviews the objective of this research has been to uncover and unfold the challenges Danish artisan cheesemakers meet when producing cheese in order to capture the major blockages for a potential development.

Motivation

For a few years ago I worked voluntarily for an artisan cheesemaker in piedmont, Italy. I was instantly inspired by the way in which the natural environment shaped the taste and consistency of the cheeses together with the art for Mario the cheesemaker. Since my stay at his farmstead dairy I have been driven by an eagerness to experience the same diversity of cheeses in Denmark as can be found in Italy, France and Spain.

Findings

The collective group of artisan cheesemakers in Denmark represent actors with different normative and cognitive values, which have turned out to be a challenge for cumulative action.

Within the production of artisan cheese in Denmark; food safety, administrative tasks, milk supply, and raw-milk cheese production have turned out as the major challenges for artisan cheesemakers in their pursuit to produce high quality cheese. The common denominators within the four conceptualizations is economy and time which both in many respects challenge the production of artisan cheeses, but the most substantial blockage has been noted as the legislation.

Take-Home

One-size-fits-all agricultural systems create agricultural sceneries where small-scale producers of food are obligated to live up to the same standards as big corporate food companies. This accounts for one of the major structural challenges within the artisanal cheese scene and may be so too within other sectors of small-scale food production.