



Workshop 4.1

Mountain food products: A special system of provision

Convenors:

Markus Schermer, University of Innsbruck, Austria

Cesar Revoredo-Giha, Scottish Agricultural College, United Kingdom

Andreja Borec, University of Maribor, Slovenia

This workshop is aimed at researchers who are interested in issues of mountain quality food products as a means to support rural development and agriculture in disadvantaged mountainous areas.

One part of the workshop will consist of the presentation and discussion of results of the EU 6th framework project EuroMARC: European Mountain Agrofood products, Retailing and Consumers. The main objectives of EuroMARC were to assess the perceptions for, and interest of, European consumers and retailers in mountain food products, in order to find ways of adding value to these products, thus contributing to the survival and management of mountain diversity – biological, rural, cultural and economic. The findings are based on research activities in six European countries: Austria, France, Norway, Romania, Scotland and Slovenia.

We would like to broaden the scope of the interdisciplinary research conducted within this project by considering contributions from other researchers and scholars working on the specific issues of mountain food products and their impact on the future development of mountain areas. While further studies from the countries covered by EuroMARC would allow comparison with our results, we would like to invite also colleagues working on similar topics in different countries and regions so as to widen the workshop's scope and help with generalising the findings. Participants from new EU-member states and Non-EU-member states are in particular encouraged to share their research findings.

A wide array of contributions to the workshop dealing with issues of production, processing, retailing and consuming of mountain foods will be welcomed, such as:

- Which quality aspects are distinctive of mountain foods products?
- What is the quality perception of mountain foods by different actors along the food chain?
- What role(s) can mountain quality foods play to reduce the vulnerability of mountain farming systems and increase their resilience?
- What is the role of food production in multifunctional mountain farming systems?
- How can the possible impact of mountain food on the rural development of mountain areas be enlarged?
- How can connections between the production of mountain food and the provision of ecosystem services be sustained or improved?
- What is the impact of (public and private) regulatory frameworks and support schemes on the performance and development of mountain food chains?

Please send your abstract to the convenor (**Markus.Schermer@uibk.ac.at**) until 15 October 2009.