

## Transregional cooperation, Food cluster visit

RDI2CluB is not about public authorities planning strategies together, for themselves. RDI2CluB is connecting experts and businesses with mutual interest for new innovations. Baltic sea region with its diverse actors has potential, and it is our job to prove this.

Our partner region Vidzeme stakeholders were interested in joining Food Craftmanship competition in Jyväskylä. Delegation from Latvia came to Jyväskylä for the competition, but also to share experiences with us. Regional Council of Central Finland arranged meetings based on the requests from the delegation. Two rather different topics were discussed in our B2B dialogues.

Plant based proteins was the first topic. Representative from Latvia on bean and potato starch products guided our discussion with local hemp entrepreneur concerning the potential of vegetarian and vegan proteins in Scandinavian and European markets. There is high potential on these products, and even a boom in Scandinavia. Latvian markets for plant-based proteins are relatively small, majority of the products are for export. When marketing these products, the certificates (organic, gluten free) are a necessity, customers do expect these.

In processing the plant-based material, residues and side streams have also possibilities. Biogas production includes the possibility to use digestate as fertilizer and thus close the loops. In processes, especially when drying the products (powders), energy consumption is high. For this purpose, there should be economically affordable solutions.

Another topic was breweries. A site visit to a brewery gave some seeds for thoughts both for visitors and hosts. Non-alcoholic beverages are not produced in high quantity in Finland, while they have economic significance for breweries in Latvia. Craftsman beer promotion and marketing is breweries joint effort. Join events (Finland) or "local beer tours" in Latvia are good examples of this cooperation between breweries. Also, in this case, the potential of wastes have been utilized. Local bakeries are interested in mash for bread.

Local craftsman breweries are mainly targeting for local and domestic markets. Finnish brewing companies saw, that both local supermarkets and pubs are quite eager to get local products to the shops. Also customers are nowadays willing to pay little extra to get local, craftsman beer.

Our experience in organizing this kind of B2B discussions with the project are very positive. New ideas and possibilities for cooperation start from knowing each other's strengths and opportunities. Common interests and mutual learning especially between the entrepreneurs will

Companies involved this action:

Latvia:

Aloja-Starkelsen: <https://www.aloja-starkelsen.lv/en>

Valmiermuižas alus : <https://www.valmiermuiza.lv/en/>

Finland:

Suomen hampputuote (Finnish Hemp Seed Products)

Hangaround & Nobody brewing <https://hnbrewing.fi/en/>

Panimoyhtö X (Brewingcompany X) <https://panimoyhtio.fi> ( in Finnish)