



Small green farm shops on the countryside and their green marketing strategies

A cross case study of how and why small green Swedish farm shops work with green marketing strategies to interact with potential customers

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Abstract

This thesis examines how small green Swedish farm shops are using green marketing and why customers are buying from small green farm shops. To examine this, two farm shops were chosen based on specific criteria; Gudmundsgården and Skrea Ost. The owners were interviewed about their marketing strategies and a questionnaire were handed out to their customers, regarding their attitudes towards green products and farm shops, in order to collect data from two perspectives and compare the farm shops' perspective to the customers' perspective. Both interviews resulted in similarities and differences between the farm shops regarding different marketing strategies and approaches, where customer relationships were the most important one. From the customers' perspective, it was concluded that if a product was considered green, the green customers did not care much about the location of the farm shop or the price of the product. They are willing to drive further and pay more if they know that there are no additives in the product and that it has lower environmental harm. The research contributes with new knowledge about small green farm shops in Sweden, their marketing strategies and the importance of relationships.

Keywords: green, marketing, marketing mix, green marketing, green products, green customers, small green companies, farm shops

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1. Introduction

The introduction aims to give the reader some background information about small green companies and previous studies. Furthermore, the research question will be introduced and some important key concepts for this thesis will be explained.

Small green farm shops differ from small non-green companies because they are often located in the countryside, far from the city centre, and they are selling green products. A green product means that when growing or producing the product it must have as little effect on the environment throughout the whole process as possible (Liu & Wu, 2009).

Due to that small green companies often are located in the countryside, people do not pass by them often. Consequently, the awareness of small green companies is much lower. These companies need to communicate that they exist and where to find them, so customers are aware of them. Therefore, it is important for them to promote themselves and communicate why potential customers should choose to buy their products. According to Ulvenblad and Ulvenblad (2016), there is a need for increased marketing for small green companies, such as local farm shops, in order to create more awareness of them. This thesis will look into how small green farm shops are using the marketing mix to reach out to (potential) customers and why customers buy local green products.

1.1 What green marketing is and the need to study small green companies

Green marketing is a relatively new type of marketing (Líšková et al., 2016). It slowly began in the 1970s, but it was not until the 1980s this marketing strategy started to grow (Líšková et al., 2016; Peattie & Crane, 2005). Peattie and Crane (2005) argue that what was considered as green marketing during the 1990s is not real green marketing. This, due to some critique as it did not start with a marketing research of the customers' needs, wants, attitudes, beliefs and knowledge. Companies' green marketing was only short-termed and the green marketing was not reflected through the whole company as well as its products and processes. (ibid.) Peattie and Crane (2005) mention that green marketing used to be a way of trying to connect people's concern about the environment and their desire to continue their consumer lifestyle. Though, in reality, green marketing should be considered as a tool to connect the current lifestyle and marketing with a future of a sustainable production and consumption (ibid.). Green marketing

is about satisfying customers' unlimited wants with the limited resources the company has, while the company also reach to achieve their selling objectives (Polonsky, 1994).

A company that takes into consideration that their products and business activities are environmental friendly and communicates this is working with green marketing (Polonsky, 1994). Green marketing, which includes green food and business activities, has become more important, both for companies and customers due to environmental concerns (Cherian & Jacob, 2002; Líšková, Cudlínová, Pártlová & Petr, 2016; Polonsky, 1994) and the share of sold green products increases every year (Líšková et al., 2016).

Though, there are some risks about being a green company and using green marketing (Grinsberg & Bloom, 2004). It can require big invests, both financially and in keeping the image of being green. A green company has to know how to react to new environmental issues and how to act. It needs to find a business practise that keeps people's consumption patterns (wants and needs) together with being a green company where sustainability of the environment is important. (ibid.) Green marketing is a complex issue, where the company must be able to bring the environmental considerations into each part of the business concept (Líšková et al., 2016). Each process should have as little negative effect on the environment as possible (ibid.).

Studies within green marketing started in the 1990's (Polonsky, 1994) and have been made regarding what is important about green marketing, what to think about green marketing and how to do green marketing (Bavorova, Unay-Gailhard & Lehberger, 2016; Fuentes, 2015). Most of the studies about green marketing and local farm shops, also known as small green companies, are made in North America and lately a study has been made in eastern Germany. Since regulations differ a lot between North America and the EU (European Union), more studies need to be made within the EU. (ibid.) Another aspect that have not been studied considerably, is how green marketing works in practice (Fuentes, 2015). The studies that have been made are done at a general industrial level. Often, they have been about adapting traditional marketing strategies to green products and not about examine any special green marketing strategies. (ibid.)

Only a few studies are made from the customer's perspective and how local farm shops are benefiting their needs (Alonso & O'Neill, 2011). What is known about the green customers are which generations that prefer to buy green products and that customers are different levels of

greens, which means that some people believe that it is very important to buy green products, while others believe it is less important (Lišková et al., 2016).

Studies in North America, regarding green products, are increasing while studies in the EU are still rare (Bavorovav et al., 2016). Therefore, it is important to study small green companies, more specifically farm shops, to understand how they are working with green marketing and communicating with customers to interact with them. These farm shops need to find a way to create awareness and communicate why they are unique in order for customers to consider going to the countryside to buy everyday products, such as green produced local food, even if the prices can be higher than average.

Only a few studies have been conducted of how small green farm shops are working with green marketing, and therefore it is necessary to broaden the theoretical knowledge within this specific topic due to the fact that these small green companies are not often well-known by many of the people who lives nearby. Adding to this, most prior studies have been made in North America, and therefore there is a need of studies that extends theory and findings to European settings. Studies about green marketing within local farm shops barely exist in Sweden, and therefore this study will be conducted in this setting to see if there are any differences in how small green farm shops are working with green marketing compared to what is known about this from rest of the world. By examining how small green Swedish farm shops are working with green marketing, we can get a better understanding about the green food industry and their business goals within marketing in the Swedish context.

Consequently, this thesis will examine how and why small green farm shops are working with marketing strategies and the marketing mix and why customers are buying green food.

1.2 Research question

Based on the reasoning above, we formulate the following research questions;

- *How and why do small green farm shops within the food industry use the green marketing mix to interact with customers?*
- *Why do green customers buy from small green farm shops?*

1.3 Purpose and problem specification

The purpose of this study is to develop a better understanding of how small green companies are working with their marketing mix in order to create awareness and interact with their customers. In order to make people buy more green products, these small green companies need to find a way to interact and communicate why customers should buy their products instead of non-green products, even though they often are located outside the city center where fewer people is normally visiting.

By examining how these small green farm shops are working with green marketing, we can get a better understanding about the green food industry and their business goals within marketing.

1.4 Key concepts

Green company - A green company has no negative impact on the economy, on the global or local environment or on the community (BusinessDictionary, 2017a). Green companies are also having environmentally responsibilities and concerns about human rights within their policies (ibid.).

Green marketing - Marketing is “a social and managerial process by which individuals and groups obtain what they need and want through creating and exchanging products and value with others” (Kotler, Armstrong, Wong & Saunders, 2008, p. 991). To classify marketing as green marketing, the whole process needs to be environmentally friendly and has as little negative effect as possible on the environment (Lišková et al., 2016).

Green customers - Green customers are in this thesis defined as people that are observant about environmental associated concerns and commitments (BusinessDictionary, 2017b). They also support companies that are careful of the environment even if they often have higher prices than other non-green competitors (ibid.).

Green product - According to Durif, Boivin and Julien (2010) there are no or few definitions of the term *green product* that is socially accepted. In this thesis, we are using the academic definition from Liu and Wu (2009) that involves that the function of green products takes into account the process of material retrieval, the production process, the sales, the application and recycle- and waste treatment. The products also have low impact on pollution and energy (ibid.).

1.5 Chapter disposition

This thesis has the following structure:



Figure 1. Chapter disposition

2. Theoretical Framework

This chapter provides the reader with information about the theories that will be used later in the analysis chapter.

2.1 Literature review

In the USA, locally produced food that is being sold in farm shops has benefits for both the seller and the customers (Alonso & O’Niell, 2011). For the seller, it can mean higher returns and market parts because of the value-added products that can boost the sales. They can get higher profits of selling direct to customers since they do not have any middle men. Since the farm shops have direct contact with the customers, they can receive feedback and create a personal relationship with the customers, which are seen as value-added features. For customers, the benefits can be fresh and tasty food. Also, visiting farm shops can be seen as a positive experience (ibid.).

Only a few studies from the customers’ point of view have been made (Alonso & O’Niell, 2011). What have been studied are the customers’ experiences of farm shops, not their wants and needs which can explain why they do their grocery shopping at farm shops. It is known that the customers are interested in locally produced food, which they see it as tastier, fresher and with higher quality than food that are bought in the supermarket. Customers also want more information about the products they are buying, which they can get at a farm shop, along with tips about how to cook it in the best way. (ibid.) The knowledge of knowing where the products come from can be important in the customer perspective (Bavorova, Unay-Gailhard & Lehberger, 2016).

According to Alonso and O’Niell (2011), customers are happy with farm shops. Previous studies are often indicating that customers have a positive association with local food products in terms of taste and freshness (Alonso & O’Niell, 2011; Bavorova et al., 2016). Other studies are also showing that customer decisions to buy food from local farmers are driven by the will to support local farmers and regions (Bavorova et al., 2016) and they appreciate the service they get there (Alonso & O’Niell, 2011). Though, some customers think the prices are too high, more vendors are needed and some customers wish farm shops were open all year and not closed during winter season (ibid.).

In Germany, they are often using farm shops and farmers as distribution channels for direct marketing to the customers for the farmers' products (Bavorova, Unay-Gailhard & Lehberger, 2016).

About 80 percent of the customer respondents, from a study made in Germany, agree that food purchased directly from the farmer is fresh, and almost 70 percent thinks that it tastes better than food purchased from other stores (Bavorova, Unay-Gailhard & Lehberger, 2016). The study also revealed that over 60 percent of the respondents were interested in how and where the food products were produced (ibid.).

2.2 Green marketing

Líšková et al. (2016) define green marketing as the marketing of products that are environmentally safe, have as little negative effect on the environment as possible and that the company takes in to concern that the whole business and production process is environmentally friendly.

All these three aspects are included in Polonsky's (1994, p. 2) definition of green marketing:

“all activities designed to generate and facilitate any exchanges intended to satisfy human needs or wants, such that the satisfaction of these needs and wants occurs, with minimal detrimental impact on the natural environment”.

Polonsky (1994) argues that this definition includes all the important aspects, such as the interest of the organisation and its customers - a purchase will not go through unless both the seller and the buyer mutually benefits from it - and the environment which needs to be as little affected as possible when it is green marketing. Polonsky (1994) points out that green marketing is about minimising the environmental harm, not eliminating it all.

Green marketing includes every business activity; product modification, changes in the production process, packaging changes and modifying advertising (Polonsky, 1994). It is accomplished through a combination of different marketing practices and not only one sort of marketing practice (Fuentes, 2015).

2.3 The marketing mix integrated with green marketing theories

The marketing mix consists of product, price, place and promotion (Kotler & Armstrong, 2010). These variables are usually called the four P:s and are used as marketing tools (ibid.).

Product indicates what the company is offering the customer, whether it is a good or a service as a final product (Kotler & Armstrong, 2010). A good or service can consist of many different parts combined. It can for instance consist of variety, quality, features, design, brand name, services and packaging (ibid.). Green products have low negative impact on the environment throughout the whole business process (Liu & Wu, 2009).

Place indicates what the company does to be available for the customer on the targeted market (Kotler & Armstrong, 2010). Both channels, coverage, locations and logistics constitutes the place in the marketing mix, but also inventory, transportation and assortment are parts of the element *place* (ibid.). The location of companies matters (Porter & Kramer, 2011). If a product is produced far from the place where it will be sold to the final customer, it requires long transportations. Long transportation distance leads to higher costs of the product due to factors like fuel, transaction costs, inventory and management costs. Higher costs for companies lead to higher prices for the final customer. Locally produced products are not affected by these factors since they are produced and sold in the same place, or at least nearby. The closer the producer is to its final customer the better, both in terms of environmental effects and costs. (ibid.)

Price is what the final customer is paying to access the final product (Kotler & Armstrong, 2010). When it became known that green marketing could create costs savings, many companies became interested in the environmental issues (Peattie & Crane, 2005; Polonsky, 1994). With today's technology, trying to minimise the environmental effect can even lead to cost savings for the business (Porter & Kramer, 2011). The cost savings included energy savings, efficiency in material input, packaging reduction and changes in logistics (Peattie & Crane, 2005; Polonsky, 1994). This way made it cheaper to produce the products and at the same time they could be premium priced because it was environmentally friendly (ibid.). Companies have realised that they have a social responsibility for the environment and that the financial reason should not be the reason to work with green marketing (Polonsky, 1994).

Promotion is the company's activities that allow the company to communicate with their customers (Kotler & Armstrong, 2010). It can be about how the company is advertising, their sales promotion and if they have any public relations and personal selling (ibid.).

2.3.1 Marketing communication

Marketing communication can be valuable when communicating with a company's potential buyers and is necessary to build relationships between the seller and the buyer (Varey, 2002). It is the people that contribute to the profit of the business, not the produced product (ibid.).

The marketing communication has two sides, the offer and the inquiry (Varey, 2002). The offer strives for the most effective information providing about the company and their products to the targeted customer segment. This is a risky action since the company does not consider the actual customer interests and preferences, it is guesses about what the customer wants. The inquiry on the other hand, is more interested in the learning process from others, both about their values and interests. Then, they use this information to relate it to their own business and their staff. This side of the marketing communication can, from a logical point of view, be better than promotion in terms of the desire of the product and the customer satisfaction. (ibid.)

Word of Mouth is interpersonal communication concerning commercial matters (Kirby & Marsden, 2006). The definition that follows was developed in the US:

“Oral, person-to-person communication between a receiver and a communicator whom the receiver perceives as non-commercial, concerning a brand, a product or a service.” (Kirby & Marsden, 2006, p.164).

The definition interprets that mass communication from companies or impersonal channels are not present (Kirby & Marsden, 2006). It also stresses that the language used in this type of advertising is verbal, the information is not imitated or non-verbal. From a marketing perspective, the term Word of Mouth is advertising, but the communicators are not actively promoting the service or product as an employee. They talk about the product or service freely with their own will. (ibid.)

It can also be about the ownership or place (Gremler, Gwinner & Brown, 2001). A recommendation from someone is sometimes enough to get another person to try something

new. Word of Mouth can have a positive influence when a relationship is being built between a customer and an individual seller. An interpersonal relationship between the customer and the seller helps increasing the positive Word of Mouth. It is a good tool to promote the product or place and it is seen as more effective than the company's own promotions. (ibid.) For services, Word of Mouth is important (Haywood, 1989), but for local farm shops it is even more important (Dougherty & Green, 2011). It is the most important way the buyer meets the seller, and vice versa. Local farm shops must consider Word of Mouth when promoting their business. (ibid.)

2.4 The five I:s of green marketing

The five I:s of green marketing, originally developed by John Grant (2007) in his book *The Green Marketing Manifesto*, explains how to succeed in green marketing. They consist of the terms *intuitive*, *integrative*, *innovative*, *inviting* and *informed* (ibid.).

Intuitive explains that it can be harder to find organic or sustainable products than traditional products (Líšková et al., 2016). Therefore, it is important that the green company's marketing staff make these products more accessible and as easy to find as the traditional ones (ibid.). Green products are supposed to be seen as the normal product and should be more easily accessed (Grant, 2007).

Integrative describes that green marketing should include the environmental efforts in all the stages, from production to sale (Líšková et al., 2016). The produced product should be sustainable and improve life quality (Grant, 2007).

Innovative explains that new and innovated products should be created in order to accomplish the green marketing (Líšková et al., 2016). Today, more and more people are using the term *g-commerce*, which means green commerce, which indicates that a green strategy also can generate revenue and brand (Grant, 2007). This, by creating both new lifecycles and new products (ibid.).

Inviting describes the importance of highlighting the benefits of green products in order to make customers want to buy those (Líšková et al., 2016). Green products are often better and healthier than non-green products (Grant, 2007). To create a more inviting attitude towards green

products there is a need to create positive myths and spread the positive effects of green consuming instead of the negative (ibid.).

Informed indicates that people prefer to buy well-known brands (Líšková et al., 2016). Therefore, it is important to spread information about green products to make people aware of these products (ibid.). A branded product is often a safer choice for customers than an unknown brand and therefore more information needs to be spread (Grant, 2007). Also, green companies must educate customers about the positive aspect about green products to gain a more sustainable culture (ibid.).

2.5 Choosing green marketing strategies

Four different kinds of green marketing strategies exist, that handles different elements and combinations of the marketing mix; *lean green*, *defensive green*, *shaded green* and *extreme green* (Ginsberg & Bloom, 2004).

A company that is considered as *lean green* in their green marketing focus only on the product when working with green marketing (Ginsberg & Bloom, 2004). This strategy shows that the company is not interested in marketing the company's green actions. Instead, they are interested in reducing costs and being efficient. They see this as a cost competitive advantage. They are seeking long-term pre-emptive solutions and do not see the benefits of green products or marketing. (ibid.)

When a company belongs to the green marketing level *defensive green*, they are using green marketing in a crisis or to respond to competitors' actions (Ginsberg & Bloom, 2004). They focus on using product and promotion in their marketing strategy. They want to improve their brand image and sees green marketing as a good marketing tool. Though, they only use this temporary because they cannot differentiate themselves from competitors when it comes to being green. They use marketing and sometimes also sponsor smaller green events. (ibid.)

Shaded green marketing is when a company focuses on product, promotion and price in their green marketing (Ginsberg & Bloom, 2004). In this strategy, the company invests long-term and with planned actions. They believe that being green will target certain customers' needs

and it will create a competitive advantage. They can differentiate themselves as being green, but choose not to do it because they can make more money on other attributes. (ibid.)

Extreme green marketing is when the company is focusing on all the four P:s in the marketing mix: product, promotion, price and place (Ginsberg & Bloom, 2004). Environmentally issues are integrated through the whole business process (from manufacturing to marketing) and life-cycle process. They have these incentives from the beginning and they are present on a niche market. They often sell their products or services through small shops or specialty channels. (ibid.)

2.6 Green marketing from the customer perspective

Customers can be divided into different generations of green marketing (Líšková et al., 2016). In green marketing, people can be categorised into groups, depending on when they were born. Depending on which decade they were born in, they grew up with different values and attitudes towards green products and that affects their habits and willingness to buy green product. (ibid.)

People born between 1946 and 1964 are seen as the first green generation, called *Baby Boomers* (Líšková et al., 2016; Williams & Page, 2011). About half of this generation prefers green products over regular products (Líšková et al., 2016).

The second generation is called *Generation X* (Líšková et al., 2016; Williams & Page, 2011). In this group, we find people who are born between 1965 and 1977 (ibid.). They are also called *Eyes of the World* (Líšková et al., 2016). They can see the environmental problems in today's society as an important problem (ibid.).

Generation Y contains people who are born in between 1978 and 1994 (Líšková et al., 2016; Williams & Page, 2011). These people are experienced users of technology and social media and can see the environmental issues as a global phenomenon (Líšková et al., 2016).

The final group is *Generation Z* and these are the youngest people, born after 1994 (Líšková et al., 2016; Williams & Page, 2011). For them the environmental issue is a natural part of their everyday life (Líšková et al., 2016). For example, the issue is being discussed in school and they are used to see green products and their parents often use these products (ibid.).

Also, there are different levels of green customers (Grant, 2008). Companies that are offering an eco-advantage over other competitors are considered as green brands. This is most appealing to customers that are eco-friendly and to those that prioritise the green aspect. From the customer side, there are different levels of green lifestyles that determine how green the customers are considered to be. About eight to ten percent of people are considered living a *dark green lifestyle*, which means that they, in their daily life, are composting and living after a micro-generation. *Light green changes* constitute about 20-40 percent of people. What specifies these people are that they for instance use smaller cars and they do not fly as much as the average people. The final group is called *the no-brainers* and constitutes between 60-80 percent of people. This group of people saves money by turning down their thermostats to save energy and thereby get lower bills. (ibid.)

3. Methodology

This chapter aims to inform the reader how the study is made, choice of methods, choice of companies, ethical considerations and delimitations.

This thesis consists of both a qualitative and a quantitative research. Qualitative research is necessary when making a deep understanding within a topic, while a quantitative research often is used when asking a large number of people about their opinion (Flick, 2014). Here, qualitative research is used when interviewing the companies that are participating in this study to receive broader knowledge about their marketing strategies. The quantitative research is made from questionnaires regarding the customers' behaviour and it is given to the customers that are visiting the farm shops to get their perspective.

When deciding which way to collect the necessary data, both time and money needs to be considered (Andersson, 2005). An interview is often more time consuming and more expensive than a questionnaire. On the other hand, a questionnaire needs more time afterwards when analysing the data. It needs to be considered which method can give the interviewer the best information. Another aspect to consider when choosing the method to collect data is how many people that need to be involved in the process. If there is a need for answers from many people, then a questionnaire is better because it is less time consuming to collect information through questionnaires than from interviews. If there are needed answers from only a few people, then interviews are better because they give deeper information. A questionnaire gives the interviewer information on the surface, while an interview gives more deep answers and information. (ibid.) According to DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree (2006) it is good to use a mix of a qualitative and a quantitative method when gathering data in order to get a study that is comprehensive, useful and trustworthy.

Flick (2014) argues that by linking a qualitative and quantitative method, the authors can;

“obtain knowledge about the issue of the study which is broader than the single approach provided” (Flick, 2014, p.33).

This, because information will be provided both from the company and the customer perspective regarding green marketing strategies. By using this approach in a research, the results can support or confirm similar conclusions (Flick, 2014). It can also complement each

other in a question that has different aspects (ibid.), in this case the company and customer perspective. Therefore, both methods will be used, to interview the companies' owners and hand out a questionnaire to the customers in order to get both parties' point of view of how small green companies are working with green marketing and how it perceives by the receiver.

In this thesis, case studies will be used to compare how small green farm shops are working with the marketing mix. Case studies are valuable when composing comparisons (Yin, 2009). While doing a case study, the control of the opportunity is limited (Kuivalainen, Puumalainen, Sintonen & Kyläheiko, 2010). The reason for doing a case study is, according to Pettus (2001), that it gives an indication of how, what and why different situations occurs.

This thesis will focus on a cross case study to explain the marketing strategies regarding two farm shops, Gudmundsgården and Skrea Ost, located near Falkenberg, Sweden, and why customers choose to buy from them. Because of the linkage between the contexts, this study will provide a deep understanding (Laamanen & Wallin, 2009).

3.1 Data collection

3.1.1 Choice of companies

To choose the participants in the study, a number of criteria will be set up. Out of these criteria, companies that fit will be selected (Polkinghorne, 2005) which helps to maximise the amount of data that can be collected (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). The companies in this thesis are chosen with the criteria of being a local green farm shop producing or farming its own products at the farm, with a limitation to the food industry near Halmstad, Sweden, and have no more than 25 employees. With these criteria, the farm shops Gudmundsgården and Skrea Ost were chosen. A comparison will be made between the two companies to see if there are similarities or differences between the marketing strategies and outcomes.

The reason why it was chosen to have two farm shops in this study was due to lack of time or interest from other farm shops. Though, two farm shops showed interest in participating in this study. Since questionnaires also were handed out to the farm shops' customers, a quantitative research could also be made with this amount of participating farm shops.

3.1.2 Data and information collection

The theoretical framework and literature review used in this study are mainly based on secondary information. The theory consists of both scientific articles and literature, which have been collected through Google Scholar, Halmstad University's database Summon and Halmstad University's library. Keywords that are used in the search are *green marketing, green company, green consumer, green customer, environmentally friendly, farm, food, farm shops, marketing mix, market communication, word of mouth*. If a scientific article contained valuable information, the references from the reference list of the scientific article were used to search for deeper information within the topic. The collected secondary data are analysed with the primary data from interviews and questionnaires.

For the empirical part of this thesis, mostly primary data is being used. That information is collected from the in-depth-interviews. Also, some complementing information from secondary data is used in the empirical part, for example the farm shop's own webpages and newspaper articles.

3.1.2.1 Qualitative interviews

Semi-structured, in-depth responsive interviews are made with the owners of Gudmundsgården and Skrea Ost. Semi-structured, in-depth interviews are scheduled in advance at a certain time and place and it lasts from 30 minutes up to several hours (Andersson, 2005). The interview consists of open-ended questions where the interviewee gets the chance to answer with his or her own words in order to give the interviewer the right information of the marketing strategies they are using. (ibid.) By formulating and designing the questions in advance, an interview guide is made based on the theoretical framework, which allows the interviewer to get the right kind of deep and detailed response from the interviewee (Flick, 2014), which can be visualised in Appendix 1. A semi-structured interview allows the interviewee to talk freely about topics inspired from the interview guide (Flick, 2014) because of the open-ended questions that does not control the answers (Andersson, 2005). The interviewee gets the opportunity to answer from his or her point of view and does not get influenced by controlled alternatives (ibid.). It is also important for the interviewer not to interrupt the interviewee at the wrong time to get the deep understanding required in the study (Flick, 2014).

The interview is considered as a responsive interview, where gain and give trust to the interviewee is important, because it allows the interview to be more friendly and flexible (Flick,

2014). DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree (2006) and Flick (2014) points out that this kind of interview is used to learn more about experiences and perspectives of a certain topic, which in our case is small green companies' marketing strategies.

Several things can affect the outcome of an interview. The spoken language and the body language are some of the things to consider (Andersson, 2005). If the interviewers are acting strange, not having eye contact with the interviewee or sounding uninterested in the voice, this can have a negative effect on the interviewee where he or she does not trust the interviewer or feel like telling much. Regarding the interviewee, the body language and the eyes can tell if the interviewee really means what he or she says. (ibid.)

Another thing that can affect the result of the interview is the time (Andersson, 2005). The interviews were scheduled in advance and each participant were asked when they had time for an interview. Andersson (2005) stresses that it is important to not schedule an interview where one of the participants are in a hurry. This can lower the quality of the given answers. Also, the place influences the interview. (ibid.) The interviews will take place at the farm shops for the comfortability of the interviewee. Andersson (2005) stresses that the interview should be held in a place the interviewee is familiar with, since it will make him or her feel more comfortable. Also, if other persons (of different relations to the interviewee) are present during the interview, it can affect the interviewee's answers. (ibid.)

Each interview lasted for 30-45 minutes and information were collected about the structure of the company, their valuation, philosophy, promotion, marketing strategies and marketing mix structures. The interviews were recorded after asking the interviewee for permission. Andersson (2005) says it is good to record the interview because the interviewer will be able to go back and analyse the answers after the interview have been done (Andersson, 2005; DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). Though, Andersson (2005) warns that it can feel uncomfortable for the interviewee since all his or her words will be recorded and that it could lead to that the interviewer will be sparer of information. Both interviewees accepted being recorded and did not feel uncomfortable with it, since they knew the recording would only be used by the interviewers if they needed to re-listen to the interview again in order to retell the correct information.

3.1.2.2 Quantitative questionnaires

After the interviews with the companies, a questionnaire for the farm shops' customers were left at the front desk and shared on the farm shops' Facebook pages by the owners to collect the customers' point of view of the green companies. It is necessary to have both the farm shops' and the customers' perspective to broaden the knowledge about green marketing. Andersson (2005) says that a questionnaire is a common form to use when trying to understand people's attitude toward something. When questions about attitudes are being asked, it is necessary to use more than one question in order to understand the person (ibid.). The questionnaire contains of 13 questions about customers' point of view of local farm shops and their attitude toward green food and can be visualised in Appendix 2.

In the questionnaire, the participants will have alternatives to choose between which have already been decided in advance. When people are being asked about their attitudes and behaviours, they can unconsciously give a wrong answer because they are not totally aware of how they are acting and why they acting the way they do (Bertrand & Mullainathan, 2001).

Before designing a questionnaire, it is important to know exactly what is being investigated in order to ask the right questions (Del Greco & Walop, 1987). When designing the questions, technical terms that not everyone is familiar with should be avoided. It is necessary to consider that the participants have to understand the meaning of the questions. (ibid.) The questions should not be too long since long questions make it hard to understand the core of the question (Jenn, 2006). The authors must make sure that the questions are clear for the respondents (ibid).

Before the questionnaires were handed out to the participants, it was tested by people who did not have any previous marketing knowledge in order to see that there were no misunderstandings. Andersson (2005) explains that it is good to have the questionnaire tested before, because some questions can be clear for the one who wrote them but not for the ones who must answer them. The questions should be asked in a logical order, start with the simple ones and afterwards move on towards the more complex ones (Jenn, 2006). A questionnaire can consist of open-ended questions, where the participant answers the questions freely with his own words, or closed-ended questions, where the participant must choose by already pre-decided answers (Del Greco & Walop, 1987. The available options of the pre-decided answers should be as exhaustive as possible, therefore semi-closed questions can be used (Jenn, 2016). It is a closed-ended question supplemented with the optional answer *other*, where the participant

must specify himself in case the other options do not fit what he wants to answer (Del Greco & Walop, 1987).

When questions are being asked about factual knowledge, Jenn (2006) stresses that it is necessary to include *do not know* as one of the pre-decided answers to not force the respondent to guess an answer if he does not know the answer to the question. Jenn (2006) also points out that when asking about someone's attitude or opinion, it is better to use a scale of 1-5 instead of yes/no answers. This gives the authors the possibility to measure the strength of the participants' attitudes or beliefs (ibid.).

In total, 245 questionnaires were answered, whereof 167 were from Gudmundsgården's customers and 78 were from Skrea Ost's customers. The remarkable difference of number of respondents from each farm shop may be due to that Gudmundsgården is a bigger farm shop (in number of turnover and likes on Facebook).

3.2 Data analysis

Case studies are difficult to analyse, therefore Eisenhardt (1989) writes how to overcome these obstacles. By analysing the case within different contexts separately at first, a comparison can be made (ibid.). This study will examine Gudmundsgården's and Skrea Ost's green farm shops and present a cross-case perspective. By doing the analysis this way, a thorough analysis is made to notice differences and similarities between the two studied contexts (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007). To show the differences and similarities clearly, a summarised table of the two farm shops' marketing strategies will be presented. While doing case studies, generalisations are difficult to make (Flick, 2014).

When the cases are being analysed, the *validity* will be considered of the given answers from the interviews and questionnaires. The validity is if people give the right answer to the interview or do they lie because the truth would be bad for them (Andersson, 2005). The validity in this study is seen as high, because of the broad perspective and many participants. The *reliability* of this study aims to be high, so that a similar study with the same conditions will lead to a similar result (Andersson, 2005). Many farm shops rejected the opportunity to participate in the study when they were asked. This is not good for the study (Andersson, 2005). There is a risk that the ones who are saying no to participate in the study would have a significant different

opinion in comparison to the others that accepts to participate in the study. Therefore, a study should aim toward having a small number of rejections, because often the participants have been chosen out of specific criteria. (ibid.)

3.3 Ethical considerations

This thesis does not contain any sensitive topics and therefore it cannot harm the interviewees (Bryman & Bell, 2007). The interviews with the farm shops' owners were voluntary. They were asked if they wanted to participate in this study where their company information is being used for the empirical data, and they freely accepted it.

The collected information from the questionnaires cannot contribute to any harm to the participants (Bryman & Bell, 2007). The participation was voluntary and the participants' answers are anonymous where no personal information is required. Therefore, no invasion of privacy has been made (ibid.). The most personal information that is required is their age range. Out of this information, the participants cannot be tracked. It was asked due to find support to an existing theory that is used in this thesis.

3.4 Delimitations

In this study, there are two companies, located in a specific area, used to compare and draw conclusions about the similarities and differences. This makes it a qualitative study that is specified to a particular kind of company in Sweden. To make a fair comparison about small green companies' marketing activities, the chosen companies are limited to local farm shops so that they are both present in the same industry. Also, the chosen farm shops are limited to be in Halland, a small area in southern Sweden. For the questionnaires, the participants are limited to customers that are visiting the selected farm shops during a chosen week when the questionnaires were available for the customers, both at the farm shop and on their Facebook page. The questions are asked in a way that general information can be collected to get an overall picture about the customers' attitudes towards green marketing. Not to describe in detail who the customers are or to identify a new type of customer group.

4. Empirical Findings

This chapter presents the case studies, Gudmundsgården and Skrea Ost, separately. The interviews are made with the owner of the farm shop. In the end, the result of the questionnaire is presented question by question and with visual figures to show it clearly for the reader.

The chosen farm shops that participate in this study are Gudmundsgården and Skrea Ost. Also, their customers were asked to participate by answering a questionnaire about small green farm shops.

4.1 Gudmundsgården

In 1998, Gudmundsgården was founded (Gudmundsgården, 2017a). It is a family farm shop located just outside Slöinge, between Halmstad and Falkenberg in Sweden (ibid.). The farm shop is open Monday to Saturday and closed on Sundays (Gudmundsgården, 2017d).

Ralf Tebaay (R. Tebaay, personal communication, 9th of March 2017) and his wife are the owners of Gudmundsgården, and they own 50 percent of the business each. 20 years ago, they decided to open a farm shop with German charcuterie in Sweden. Gudmundsgården was the first farm shop in Sweden that sold German charcuteries and now, 20 years later, it is still the only one in Sweden that sells specifically German charcuteries. They have 20 employees, whereof 13 of them are working full time. (ibid.) In 2015, Gudmundsgården had a turnover of almost 12 million SEK and a profit of almost 70 000 SEK (Gudmundsgården, 2016).

4.1.1 Gudmundsgården's products

Gudmundsgården is a small green company and Ralf Tebaay, the owner, is passionate about having a green company (R. Tebaay, personal communication, 9th of March 2017). He has an education within agriculture and cares about the environment and animals (ibid.). Right from the start, Gudmundsgården followed the term *Reinheitsgebot*, which means purity (Gudmundsgården, 2017a). They do not use additives, preservative, milk products, flour or stabilisers to enhance the flavour in their meat. They only use meat, some salt, spices and love. The pigs that live on the farm only eat the farm's own, or nearby grown, feed components based on peas, beans and other grains. They do not give the animals any antibiotics or hormones in their food. The animals also have freely access to pasture and straw. (ibid.)

Gudmundsgården sells over 140 different products and all of them are natural and contains no additives or chemicals (R. Tebaay, personal communication, 9th of March 2017) and it is both traditional charcuteries and typical products of Halland (Äkta vara, n.d.). They are using old recipes and homemade spices when they are making their products, which they make by using old traditional methods (R. Tebaay, personal communication, 11th of April 2017; Region Halland, n.d.). Every week Gudmundsgården introduce new products (R. Tebaay, personal communication, 9th of March 2017). Tebaay says that they do not have any specific product that is more popular than the rest of them, but their German specialties are popular among their customers (ibid.).

Besides charcuteries, Gudmundsgården have their own restaurant at the farm shop, catering and seminars (R. Tebaay, personal communication, 9th of March 2017). They offer cramming, beer seminars and historic seminars. It is Tebaay's personal interests and he believes it is important to use all talents and interests in order to keep the customers happy and interested in the business. The seminars are appreciated by their customers and they are fully booked a time forward. About 20-30 percent of the people who are attending to the courses are new customers. (ibid.)

4.1.2 Competitors and customers

Tebaay does not see any other farm shops as pure competitors even though some farm shops are trying to copy their concept (R. Tebaay, personal communication, 9th of March 2017). As Tebaay says *“There is only one real Rolex, the rest is fake. You can always spot the fake one”*. Though, he sees himself as his biggest competitor since he is daily questioning what he is doing in order to keep the business as good as possible. He is confident in his products and concept because it reflects his values and what he believes in. It is all about being true to the customers and maintain a good relationship with them. (ibid.)

Gudmundsgården has mostly regular customers, whereof 80 percent of the customers live close to Falkenberg and Halmstad (R. Tebaay, personal communication, 9th of March 2017). Ten percent of the customer comes from the north part of Halland, Varberg, and the remaining ten percent comes from the south part of Halland. Also, they have customers who originally come from Stockholm and other cities in Sweden but have a connection to Halland, like a summer holiday house. The customers that come to Gudmundsgården know what the farm shop offers and stands for, and Tebaay says they have a personal relation to all of them. They know the

customers since they have been shopping there for many years and often the whole family buys their products from Gudmundsgården. The families' children usually continue to buy at Gudmundsgården when they get older too. Thereby, it is not a typical *customer-and-seller* relationship they have, but more like a family relationship which is one of the benefits the customers gets from buying their products at Gudmundsgården. (ibid.)

In 2013, after the big scandal of horse meat in regular products at supermarkets, Gudmundsgården sold more of their meat (Grankvist, 2013, 23rd of February). They noticed how people became more aware of where the meat came from and that it was without any additives (ibid.). The customers can be sure that the quality of the products is what Gudmundsgården promise, since they care highly about their customers and they know that one little mistake can jeopardise their whole reputation among their customers (R. Tebaay, personal communication, 9th of March 2017). *Trust* is the most important word for Gudmundsgården when it comes to the relationship with their customers (ibid.).

4.1.3 Gudmundsgården's promotion strategies

When it comes to communication, Gudmundsgården uses mostly Word of Mouth, but also some Facebook updates, street markets and other events like seminars (R. Tebaay, personal communication, 9th of March 2017). They are not communicating so much that they are a green company more than the information they have on their website. The customers that are buying the products at the farm shop see that it is a farm and that the products come from there. Tebaay is happy with how the promotion is going and that he does not think that it needs any improvements right now. Maintaining the contact with the customers is important and if they discover that something does not work as it is meant to do, they will try to fix the problem. (ibid.)

In 2013, Gudmundsgården participated in a TV show on Swedish television, called *Sveriges Skönaste Gårdar* (Svensson, 2013, 15th of August). Local food producers were competing about who produces the best and the most unique product (Köket, 1997-2007b). The product had to be made at the farm shop (Svensson, 2013, 15th of August). Gudmundsgården's result out of this was a chocolate and chili sausage (Köket, 1997-2007a).

4.1.4 Gudmundsgården's pricing strategy

When Gudmundsgården is pricing their products, they do it in consultation with their customers (R. Tebaay, personal communication, 9th of March 2017). They see what the customers are willing to pay for the products. Tebaay compares their price level to supermarkets' premium prices, which means that the price will be at the same price level as the big supermarkets are selling their finest meat (compared to supermarkets' lower price levels), but for this price level at Gudmundsgården, the customers get quality meat and they know where the meat comes from, that it is locally produced and that it does not contain any chemicals or additives. Tebaay stresses that it is more important to do a living out of your hobbies and interests than try to maximise the profit, which is not important for him. He adds that 99 out of 100 times, there is never a price discussion with the customers. They are willing to pay premium prices for their meat because the customers care about knowing where the meat comes from, that the animals had a good life and that the meat is organic. Tebaay points out that 20 percent of the people (the inhabitants, not the customers) are willing to pay more to get higher quality because they appreciate food with high quality. (ibid.)

4.1.5 Gudmundsgården's place

When it comes to the location of the farm shop, Tebaay says that the ideal would be to have a store in the centre of a big city, but that is not where a farm shop should be located (R. Tebaay, personal communication, 9th of March 2017). A farm shop is supposed to be located in the countryside, and consider the conditions, Tebaay is happy with their location at the West coast in Sweden. He also believes that people in the countryside are more grateful and more willing to buy local. They are faithful customers. Another thing that Tebaay also sees as positive, is that they are the only farm shop in their area, which supports that the customers are faithful towards them. (ibid.)

The location of Gudmundsgården requires the customers to have cars in order to get there (R. Tebaay, personal communication, 9th of March 2017). No busses pass by and have not done it in over 30 years. Though, a few customers that live close can reach them by bicycle. To reach out to more customers, Gudmundsgården are represented in the centre of Halmstad and Varberg. (ibid.) In Halmstad, they have a small shop (ibid.) and in Varberg, Gudmundsgården participate at the marketplace every Saturday and during the summer they are there on Wednesdays too (Gudmundsgården, 2017c). They see it as their social responsible that those who cannot come to their farm shop also should be able to buy their products (R. Tebaay,

personal communication, 9th of March 2017). Often it is elderly people who buy from these places. Even if these places do not contribute with any profit to Gudmundsgården, they just carry their costs (go +/- 0), Gudmundsgården is happy and feel good about providing all their customers with their products. (ibid.)

4.1.6 Gudmundsgården's other green actions

Gudmundsgården is trying to be environmentally friendly in all possible aspects (R. Tebaay, personal communication, 9th of March 2017). Even though they have to use a lot of hot water and electricity to run their business they are trying to have as little negative effect on the environment as possible by using renewable energy for example. When they are transporting their products from the slaughterhouse they are using a car that runs on biogas. Though, when they are transporting their products to their smaller shops that are centrally located, they are using a car that runs on fuel. The positive in this part is that they only need to use one small car to transport their products because all products that have to be transported to their smaller shops fit there. (ibid.)

4.1.7 Summary of Gudmundsgården

Gudmundsgården is a small green company and are considering their environmentally effects and they care about maintaining a good personal relationship with their customers (R. Tebaay, personal communication, 9th of March 2017). They are offering quality, personal service and seminars to their customers. Their promotion consists mostly of Word of Mouth, but they also participate at some events. For Gudmundsgården, trust is the most important thing towards their customers and the owners are passionate about their job and contribution to the customers. (ibid.)

4.2 Skrea Ost

Skrea Ost is a farm dairy shop located south of Falkenberg in Southern Sweden (Skrea Ost, 2017). The company was founded in 2013. Monica Bondeson and her neighbours at Kullsgårde own 50 percent each of Skrea Ost, but it is Bondeson that is the CEO of the company (M. Bondeson, personal communication, 16th of March 2017). Skrea Ost has no other employees that work in the farm shop, it is just the owners of the company that are working there. The farm has no own animals. The milk they use for producing the cheese is bought from the neighbouring farm close by (ibid.), it is only 600 meters apart and they have to use 600 litres of

milk each week for the cheese production at the dairy (Goth, 2015). Since the company started in 2013, Skrea Ost has become a local success and the demand for KRAV-labelled products has increased in the area both for private customers at the farm shop and restaurants (ibid.). Food with this label certifies that the crops have been grown organic and that the animals the meat comes from have been bred organic too (NE, 2017). Bondeson says that she wants to invest fully into Skrea Ost because her love for it and the high interest of her products, and quit her part time job (Goth, 2015). During 2015, Skrea Ost had a turnover of almost 700 000 SEK and a profit of almost 2 649 SEK (Skrea Ost, 2016).

4.2.1 Skrea Ost's products

The farm's own dairy products are being sold in the farm shop (Skrea Ost, 2017). The products that consist of different kinds of cheeses, milk and yoghurt are made at the farm shop's own dairy. All products are considered being green products. Beyond these products, the farm shop even sells products from other nearby farm shops. The farm shop is opened Thursdays to Saturdays. (ibid.) The customers' wish that the farm shop would be open more days, but that would require the farm shop to hire people which would lead to higher costs for them (M. Bondeson, personal communication, 16th of March 2017). Though, during the summer Skrea Ost is open more days (ibid.).

Monica Bondeson (personal communication, 16th of March 2017) is considering Skrea Ost as a green company because of the ecological milk they are using to produce the cheese, which is labelled according to KRAV. Bondeson also believes that being a green company means that the products are locally produced and that they do not use chemicals or additives in the production. *"Green is always a good alternative to non-green products and there is always a demand."*, Bondeson says. Bondeson describes her cheeses as luxury cheese, the type of cheeses that are not eaten every day but more on the weekend when you want something special to eat. The bestselling, and most expensive, product in Skrea Ost is the cheese, but the milk and yoghurt are also good sellers. (ibid.)

4.2.2 Skrea Ost's competitors and customers

Bondeson does not believe she has any specific competitors, because of the uniqueness of her products (personal communication, 16th of March 2017). Also, because there are no other dairy farm shops nearby. The owner is considering the farm shop as a meeting place for people where

they can enjoy the experience, which is a part of the marketing strategy. The owner also believes that personal meetings are important for her company. The visit to Skrea Ost is supposed to be an exotic experience which is fun and it is easy for people to find their way to Skrea Ost. Skrea Ost is the only farm shop within the dairy production in the area which makes it hard to have competitors. (ibid.)

4.2.3 Skrea Ost's place

Skrea Ost has many new customers that pass by, especially during the summer season when many tourists are in Halland (M. Bondeson, personal communication, 16th of March 2017). During the winter season, it is mostly regular customers that are coming to Skrea Ost. The shop is located in Skrea, 6 km from Falkenberg in Halland, very close to the highway. Therefore, many people pass by the farm shop every day and stops on their way to or home from work. A bicycle path to Falkenberg is located close to the farm shop that makes it easy for cyclists to stop by the shop as well. It is also possible to take the bus to the farm shop because of the bus stops close by. (ibid.)

4.2.3.1 Collaborations with other farms

Skrea Ost has many collaborations with other farming companies (M. Bondeson, personal communication, 16th of March 2017). Skrea Ost and other local farms that do not have their own farm shops, are working together to sell each other's products, like other cheeses, marmalade and cider. These products are being sold in the farm shop together with Skrea Ost's own products. Thuressons Gårdsbutik and Suseå Choklad are two farm shops where Skrea Ost's cheeses are being sold, since Skrea Ost is not opened every day. Skrea Ost also has collaboration with Olsegården, a wholesaler in Tvååker. The collaboration works as a transportation help for Skrea Ost to transport the products to other shops or restaurants. Since they are passing by the farm shop anyway, it is easy for them to stop and bring some of Skrea Ost's products too. This means that Skrea Ost does not have to transport the products themselves and thereby save both time and energy for the company. If Bondeson has to transport the products herself, using the car is the most common way. (ibid.)

4.2.4 Skrea Ost's promotion strategies

When it comes to promote the company, Bondeson usually has commercials in the local newspapers Hallandsposten, Hallands Nyheter and Falkenbergsposten in the summer and

around Christmas, but those advertisements are spontaneous and not planned (M. Bondeson, 16th of March 2017). Around Christmas time, Skrea Ost usually participates in different street markets, mostly in Halland, but sometimes, also in Gothenburg. Also, at other occasions they are participating in street markets and other food events close by Halland in order to promote themselves. (ibid.)

Skrea Ost uses Facebook as their main marketing communication channel where they post news about the farm shop (M. Bondeson, personal communication, 16th March 2017). They are trying to broadcast live on Facebook at least once a week to connect with the customers. Once, Skrea Ost was on Swedish television in a reportage that reached out to the whole country. It was someone who had heard about the cheese called *Dyngrakan* (which means very drunk in Swedish) and wanted to spread it out, and this contributed to that people far away knew who Bondeson and Skrea Ost were. This, to be seen on TV, Bondeson believes is the best promotion for them. Skrea Ost wants to improve their marketing communication in terms of using social media, which includes Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and even TripAdvisor. They rely highly on Word of Mouth as a communication channel since Bondeson believes that spreading the word is the best way to reach out to new customers. (ibid.)

4.2.5 Skrea Ost's pricing strategy

When it comes to the price level of the products Skrea Ost is selling, the average price of the cheese is about 360 SEK per kilogramme (M. Bondeson, personal communication, 16th March 2017). Because of the production place, Bondeson cannot produce much cheese at a time, which makes the prices rise at the same time as quality is higher than in a mass production company. It is important that the company can survive on selling their products and therefore the price is based on production quantity and time. Her customers have different reaction to the price, some say they are so expensive and others say they are cheap considering the quality. (ibid.)

4.2.6 Skrea Ost's other green actions

Monica Bondeson's (personal communication, 16th of March 2017) plans for the future is to put in solar energy to the farm shop so it becomes even more environmentally friendly as they are today when they are powered by energy from Vattenfall. Though, it will cost lots of money which makes her uncertain about the decision right now. (ibid.)

4.2.7 Summary of Skrea Ost

To summarise the farm shop Skrea Ost, it is a small green dairy company that cares about maintaining good relationships with the customers (M. Bondeson, personal communication, 16th March 2017). They are offering high quality products and personal service. Their marketing communication consists mostly of Word of Mouth, but they also have live streams on Facebook and participate at some events and markets. For Skrea Ost, the uniqueness of the products and the collaborations with other companies are the most important aspects. (ibid.)

4.3 Customers' point of view of local farm shops

The customers at Gudmundsgården and Skrea Ost were asked to answer a questionnaire about their point of view of green food and farm shops. 167 people out of Gudmundsgården's customer and 78 people out of Skrea Ost's customers answered the questionnaire, which gives a total of 245 participants.

4.3.1 What year are you born?

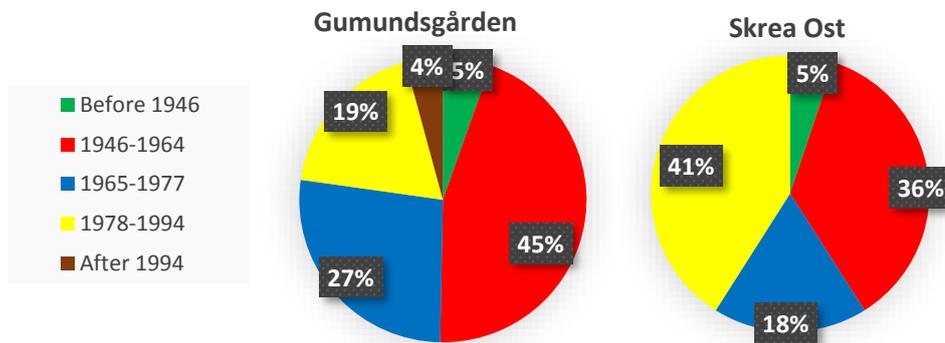


Figure 2. The percentage of Gudmundsgården's and Skrea Ost's customers' answers to question 1

The majority of the customers at Gudmundsgården are born between 1946 and 1964. The second and third biggest groups are the ones who are born between 1965 and 1977 respective 1978 and 1994. The smallest two groups of customers are the ones who are born before 1946 and after 1994.

The majority of Skrea Ost's customers are born 1978 to 1994. The second biggest customer groups are born between 1946 and 1964. The two smallest groups are the ones who are born between 1965 and 1977 and before 1946. No one born after 1994 answered the questionnaire at Skrea Ost.

4.3.2 How often do you buy green food?

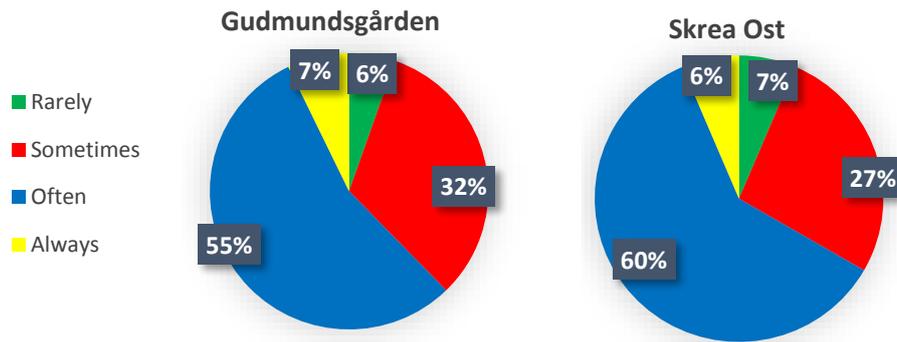


Figure 3. The percentage of Gudmundsgården's and Skrea Ost's customers' answers to question 2

The majority of the customers at Gudmundsgården buy green food often, while some of the customers buy it sometimes. Not many of the customers buy green food always or rarely.

The majority of Skrea Ost's customers buy green food often. A big part of the customers buy green food sometimes. A few of their customers buy green food always or rarely.

4.3.3 I buy green food because...

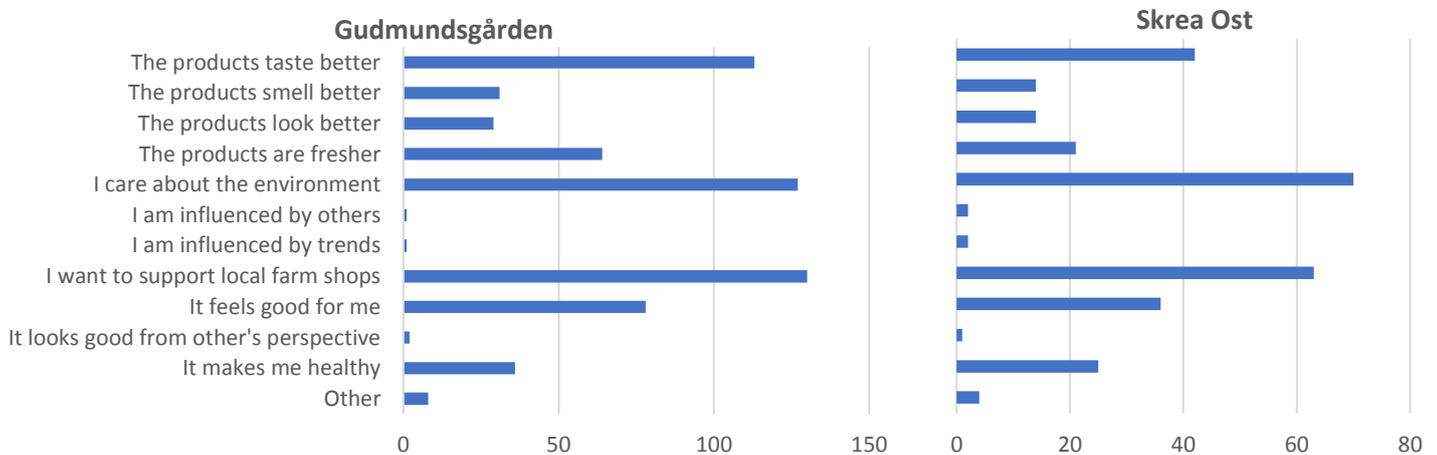


Figure 4. The answers from Gudmundsgården's and Skrea Ost's customers to question 3

For this question, the participants were allowed to mark as many of the alternatives as they felt were true about why they are buying green food.

Almost all of the participants from Gudmundsgården answered that they bought green food because they wanted to support local farm shops. The majority also answered that they buy

green food because they care about the environment and they think green food tastes better than non-green food. Almost half of the participants answered that it feels good for them to buy green food and that they see green food as fresher than non-green food. Some of the customers believes green food smells and looks better. Almost no one answered that they buy green food because it looks good from other people’s perspective or that they do it because they are influenced by trends or others. The ones who answered *other reasons* said “*I think it is good with a living countryside*”, “*It only contains natural ingredients*”, “*I care about the animals*”, “*It feels naturally and pure*”, “*I basically got rid of my psoriasis, and that probably says everything :)*” “*I buy meat products close to us as much as possible*”, “*It is a bit fun and I like to favour those who strive for this*”, “*It is a nice excursion*”.

From Skrea Ost’s customers, most of the participants answered that they buy green food because they care about the environment, and also that they want to support local farm shops. About half of the participants answered that they buy green food because they think it tastes better, it feels good for them to buy green food and it makes them healthier. Some of the participants said they buy green food because it is fresher, smells better and looks better than non-green food. Almost no one answered that they buy green food because it looks good from other’s perspective or that they do it because they are influenced by trends or others. The ones who answered *other reasons* said “*I want my family to eat better*”, “*It is better for the animal keeping*”, “*It is fun to visit farm shops*”, “*I can ask about the product*”.

4.3.4 Besides buying green food, I make an effort for the environment by...

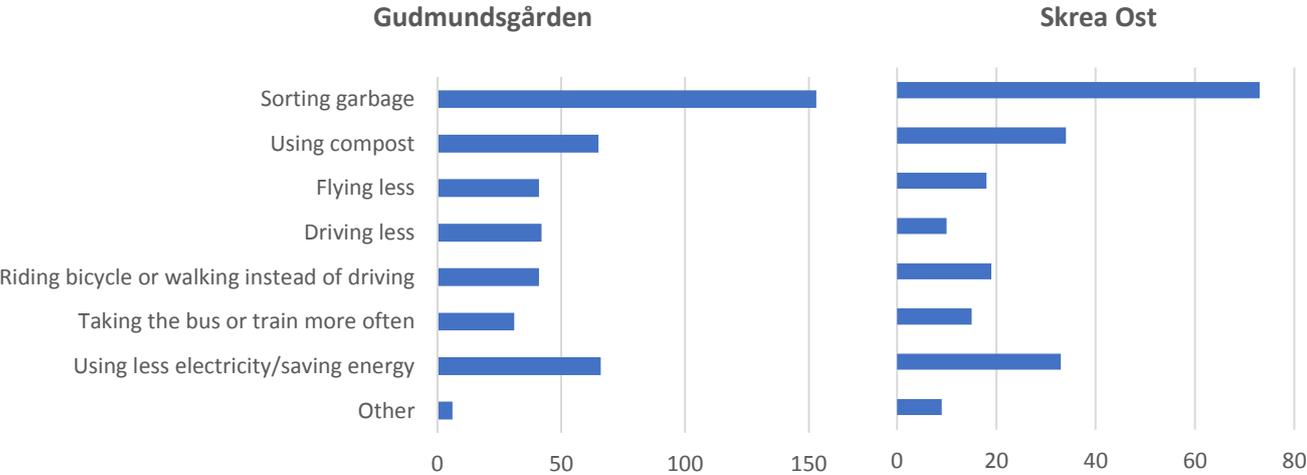


Figure 5. The answers from Gudmundsgården’s and Skrea Ost’s customers to question 4

For this question, the participants were allowed to mark as many of the alternatives they felt were true about which efforts they are making for the environment.

The majority of the participants from Gudmundsgården answered that they are sorting garbage. About half of them are using less electricity/saving energy and using compost. A quarter answered that they are flying less, driving less and riding the bicycle or walking instead of taking the bus. Some of the participants are taking the bus or train instead of the car. The ones who answered *other* said: *“I buy as much Swedish, local, and season based products as possible and do not buy products with palm-oil”, “Driving electric car”, “Growing own food”, “Just living well”, “Bought a gas car instead of a petrol car”, “Eating less red meat”*.

Almost every one of the participants from Skrea Ost answered that they are sorting garbage. About half of the participants said that they are using less electricity/saving energy and using compost. A quarter of the participants are walking or riding the bicycle instead of taking the car and they are flying less. Some of the participants are taking the bus or train instead of driving and they are driving the car less. The ones who answered *other reasons* said: *“Cut down on chemical and technical products, both in the household and for the body”, “I am thinking of the amount of water I am using and I recycle plastic bags/packaging”, “Eating vegetarian food and driving environmentally friendly car”, “A car is necessary when living on the countryside, but I walk or ride the bicycle whenever I can”, “Buying second-hand”, “Picking up junk, at least one junk a day”, “Using ecological textiles”, “Shopping ecological clothes, driving electric hybrid car”*.

4.3.5 Which food product do you consider is the most important to buy green?

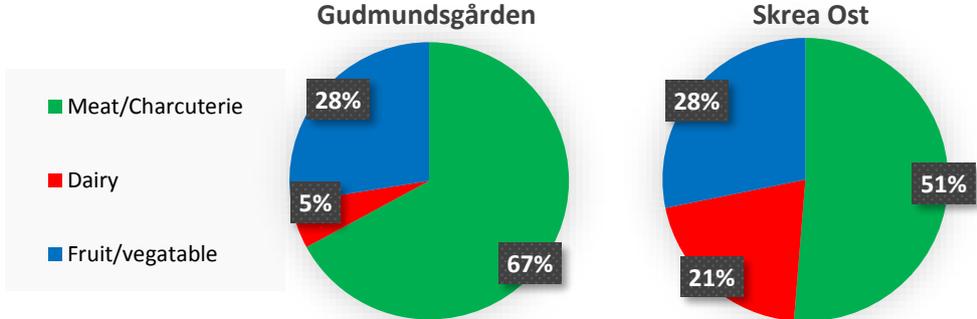


Figure 6. The percentage of Gudmundsgården’s and Skrea Ost’s customers’ answers to question 5

Some of the participants made comments in the paper questionnaires that they think all type of products are important to buy green. Since they only got to choose one option, this is how the final answers were.

The majority of the participants from Gudmundsgården say meat and charcuteries are the most important food product to buy green. About a quarter of the participants answered fruit and vegetables and just a few answered that dairy products are the most important food product to buy green.

About half of the participants from Skrea Ost answered that meat and charcuteries are the most important food product to buy green and about a quarter said fruit and vegetables are the most important. A fifth said dairy products are the most important food product to buy green.

4.3.6 Do you buy food in many different farm shops?

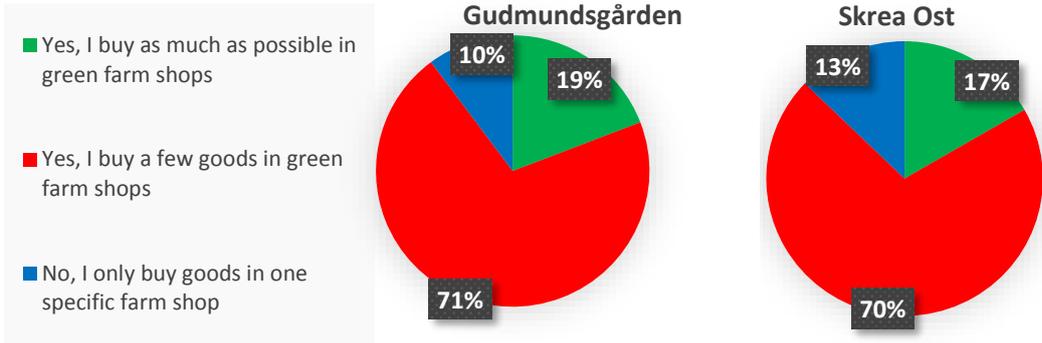


Figure 7. The percentage of Gudmundsgården's and Skrea Ost's customers' answers to question 6

The majority of the participants from Gudmundsgården answered that they buy a few food products at green farm shops. A fifth of the participants buy as much of the food as possible from green farm shops and a tenth of the participants only buy food from one green farm shop.

The majority of the participants from Skrea Ost answered that they buy a few food products from green farm shops. Almost a fifth buy as much as possible from green farm shops and the rest of the participants only buy food from one green farm shop.

4.3.7 How did you start to buy from the farm shops?

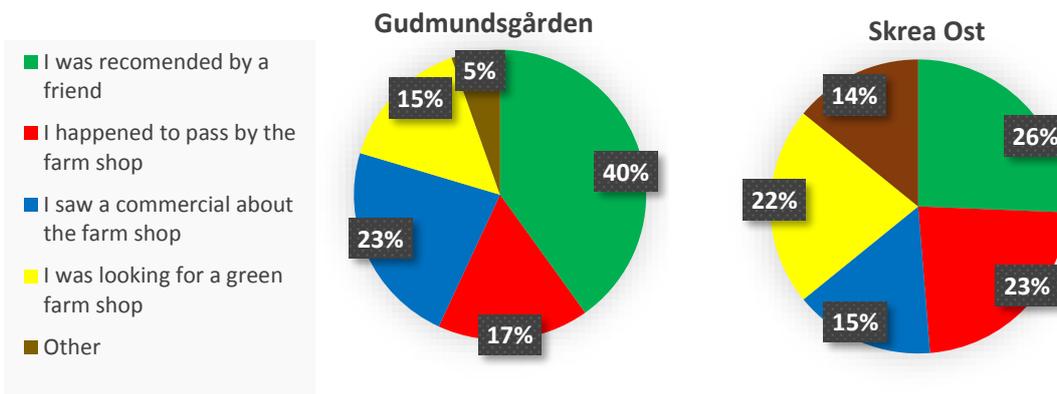


Figure 8. The percentage of Gudmundsgården's and Skrea Ost's customers' answers to question 7

Nearly half of the participants from Gudmundsgården answered that they started to buy from the farm shop because they got recommended by friends. About a fifth of the participants answered that they saw commercials about the farm shop and therefore started to buy from them. Some of the participants answered that they happened to pass by the farm shop or that they were looking for a green farm shop. A few participants answered *other*, and gave the following reasons: *"I know the owners"*, *"I think sustainability is important"*, *Due to environmental reasons, by own choice"*, *"Growing by myself, to sell in farm shops"*, *"Always been important with locally produced in the right way and gladly crude junk items and dairy products and meat from 100 % grass pastures"*, *"I live close by two favourites"*, *"I have different farm shops close by where I live and I care about favour what is close by"*.

A quarter of the participants from Skrea Ost answered that they started to buy at farm shops because they got recommended buy a friend. Almost as many answered that they happened to pass buy the farm shop. About a fifth of the participants said that they were looking for a green farm shop. Some of the participants said that they saw commercials. The ones who answered *other*, gave reasons as: *"I tasted products from there and got curious"*, *"Since the 1970's. Started with potatoes and vegetables from Bjärehalvön"*, *"From acquaints"*, *"Working for a company that produces green products"*, *"Locally"*, *"I was looking for a green farm shop and I saw commercials"*, *"The brochure: Kulinarisk Resa"*.

4.3.8 Do you think there are enough farm shops in Halland?

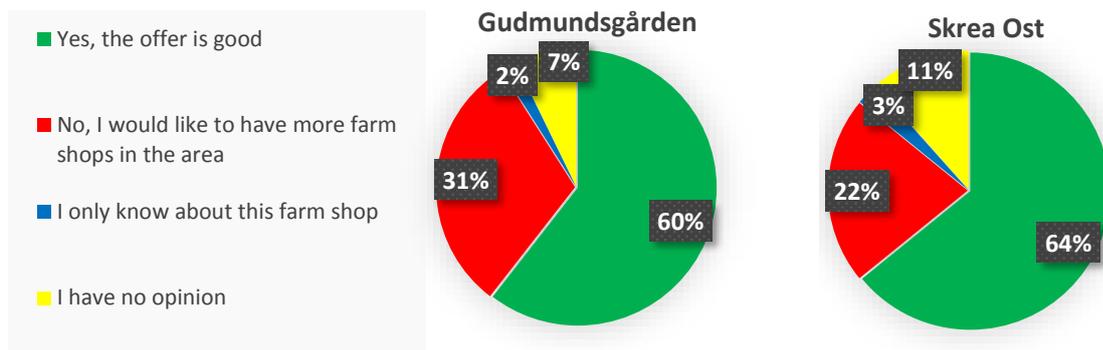


Figure 9. The percentage of Gudmundsgården's and Skrea Ost's customers' answers to question 8

The majority of the participant from Gudmundsgården answered that they think it is enough farm shops in Halland. Almost a third said that they would like to have more farm shops in Halland. A few of the participants only knew about Gudmundsgården, and the rest of the participants did not have any opinion about this question.

The majority of the participants from Skrea Ost answered that they think that it is enough farm shops in Halland is good. About a fifth answered that they would like to have more farm shops in this area, while a few said that they only knew about Skrea Ost. A tenth of the participants did not have any opinion about this question.

4.3.9 Do you think farm shops are easily available?

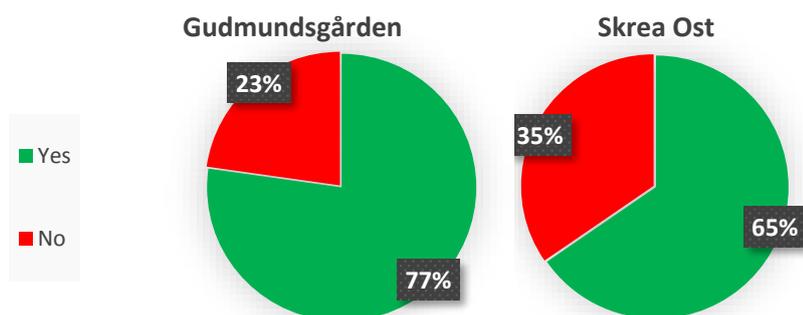


Figure 10. The percentage of Gudmundsgården's and Skrea Ost's customers' answers to question 9

The majority of the participants from Gudmundsgården said that they think farm shops are easily available while just over a fifth of the participants said that they do not think farm shops are available.

The majority of the participants from Skrea Ost answered that they think farm shops are easily available and about a third of the participants answered that they do not think farm shops are not easily available.

4.3.10 Does the availability of farm shops influence your choice of green consuming?

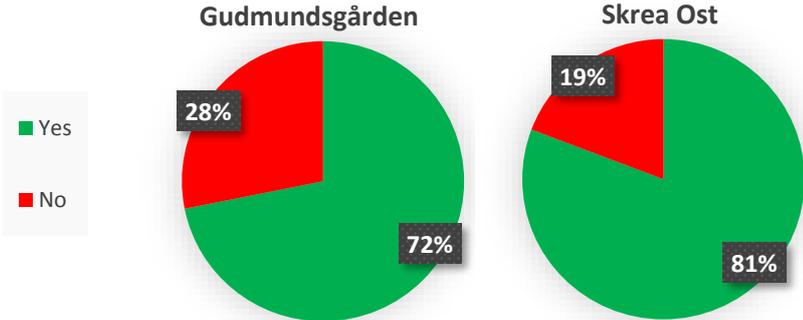


Figure 11. The percentage of Gudmundsgården’s and Skrea Ost’s customers’ answers to question 10

The majority of the participants from Gudmundsgården answered that the availability does influence their choice of green consuming, while almost a third answered that it does not influence their choice.

The majority of the participants from Skrea Ost answered that the availability of farm shops influence their choice of green consuming while a fifth of the participants answered that the availability does not affect their choice of green consuming.

4.3.11 Do you think a farm shop can be considered green if customers need a car to get there?

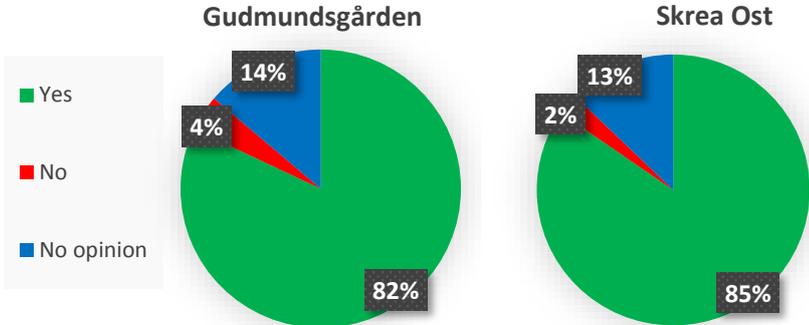


Figure 12. The percentage of Gudmundsgården’s and Skrea Ost’s customers’ answers to question 11

The majority of the participants from Gudmundsgården answered that even if a car is needed to get to the farm shop, it can be considered as green. Only a twentieth answered that it cannot in that case be considered as green. Some participants did not have any opinion in this question.

The majority of the participants from Skrea Ost said that a farm shop can be considered green even if a car is needed to get there. Just a few said it cannot be considered as green in that case. Some participants did not have any opinion in this question.

4.3.12 How do you think farm shops opening-hours are in general?

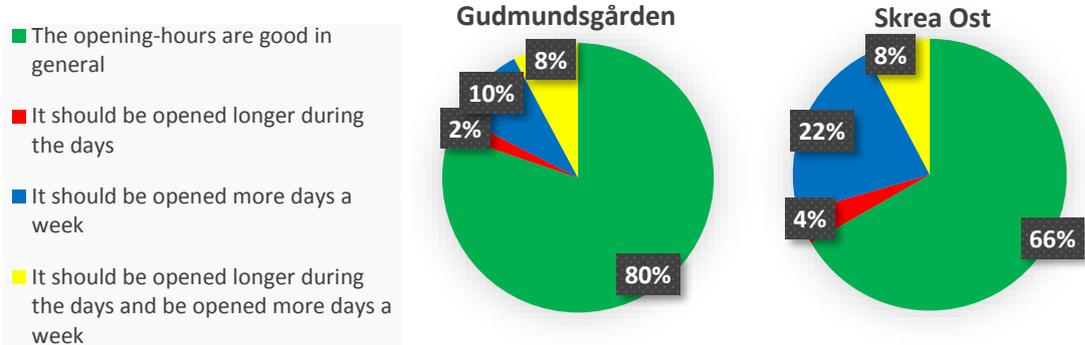


Figure 13. The percentage of Gudmundsgården's and Skrea Ost's customers' answers to question 12

The majority of the participants from Gudmundsgården said they think farm shop's opening-hours are good in general. A fifth of the participants answered that they think farm shops should be opened longer during the days, more days a week or both.

More than half of the participants from Skrea Ost answered that they think farm shop's opening-hours are good in general. A third of the participants answered that they think farm shops should be opened longer during the days, more days a week or both.

4.3.13 To which extent do you agree with these statements?

The participants were asked to give an answer to which extent they agreed to the following statements. The scale is graded 1-5, where 1 means *I do not agree* and 5 means *I completely agree*.

4.3.13a It is important to buy green food

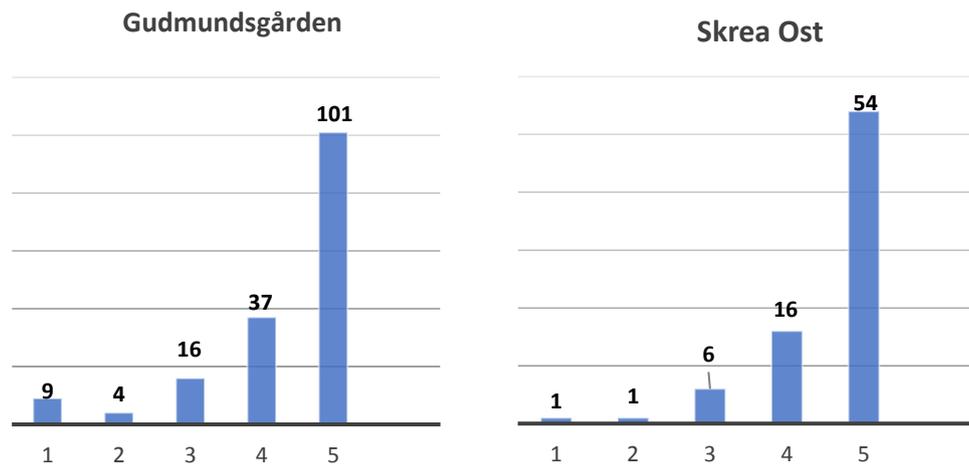


Figure 14. The answers from Gudmundsgården's and Skrea Ost's customers to question 13a

The majority of the participants from Gudmundsgården agree or completely agree that it is important to buy green food. Just a few of the participants do not agree at all with this statement.

The majority of the participants from Skrea Ost completely agree that it is important to buy green food. Many of the participants agree as well. Only a few do not agree with this statement.

4.3.13b I think green food is easily accessible

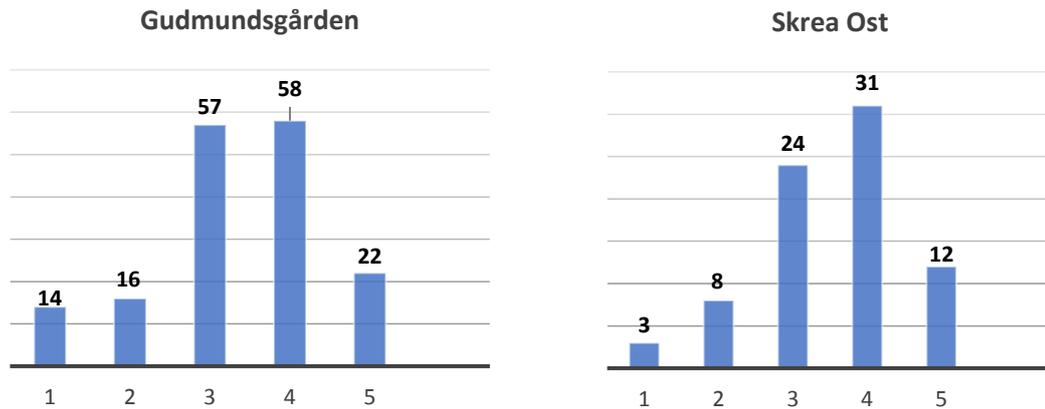


Figure 15. The answers from Gudmundsgården's and Skrea Ost's customers to question 13b

About a tenth of the participants from Gudmundsgården answered that they completely agree that it green food is easily accessible. A third answered that they agree with this statement. Another third answered that they are neutral to the statement. About a third did not agree or not agree at all to this statement.

About a seventh of the participants answered that they completely agree that green food is easily accessible. Barely half of the participants said they agree with the statement. A little more than a third said they are neutral to the statement. The rest of the participants do not agree or do not agree at all with the statement.

4.3.13c I consider the prices of green food as reasonable

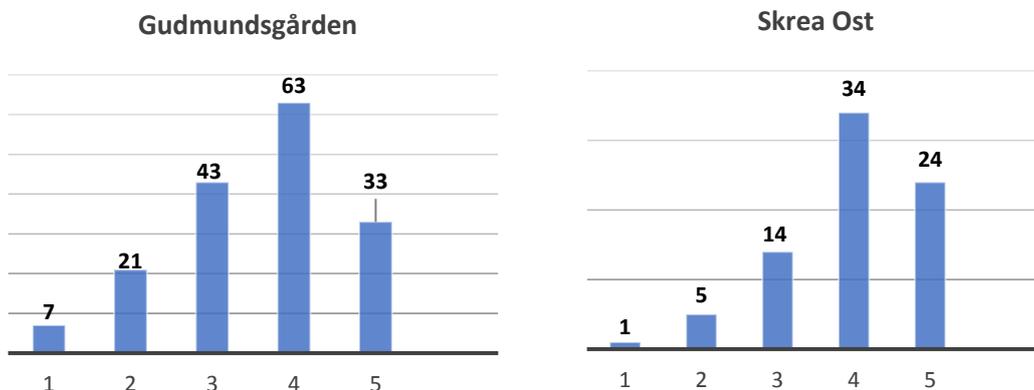


Figure 15. The answers from Gudmundsgården's and Skrea Ost's customers to question 13c

About a fifth of the participants from Gudmundsgården answered that they completely agree that the prices of green food are reasonable. More than half of the participants agree with the statement and a quarter of the participants are neutral to the statement. About a seventh do not agree or do not agree at all with this statement.

Almost a third of the participants from Skrea Ost completely agree with that the prices of green food are reasonable. More than a third agree with the statement and barely a fifth of the participants are neutral to the statement. A thirteenth do not agree or do not agree at all with this statement.

5. Analysis

In this chapter, the empirical findings will be put together with the theoretical framework in order to be able to draw conclusions in the next chapter. The analysis consists of a cross-case analysis of the two farm shops and after that, an analysis of the questionnaire from the customers will be presented.

5.1 Cross-case analysis of Gudmundsgården and Skrea Ost

5.1.1 Product

A product is a good and/or a service that the farm shop is offering to their customers (Kotler & Armstrong). Gudmundsgården offer over 140 types of homemade charcuteries, made from old recipes (R. Tebaay, personal communication, 9th of March 2017). It is the only farm shop in Sweden that sells German charcuteries (ibid.). To be successful as a green company, Líšková et al. (2016) argue that the farm shop has to create new and innovated products. Every week Gudmundsgården introduces new products (R. Tebaay, personal communication, 9th of March 2017), for example a chocolate and chili sausage (Köket, 1997-2007a). Skrea Ost is not expanding its range on a regular basis, it is selling cheeses of a more luxurious kind, along with milk and yoghurt (M. Bondeson, personal communication, 16th of March 2017). What the customers are experiencing at farm shops considering the product, can for instance consist of variety, quality, design, brand name, services and packaging of a product (Kotler & Armstrong, 2010). Benefits for the customers are fresh and tasty food (ibid.).

Besides the charcuteries, Gudmundsgården also have a restaurant, catering and seminars for their customers (R. Tebaay, personal communication, 9th of March 2017). A good or service can consist of many different parts combined according to Kotler & Armstrong (2010). Bondeson believes that Skrea Ost is considered a fun and exotic meeting place, where people they can enjoy the experience, which also is a part of their marketing strategy (M. Bondeson, personal communication, 16th of March 2017). Alonso and O’Niell (2011) argue that visiting a farm shop can be seen as an experience. Grant (2007) points out that green companies have to inform customers about the importance of green products and to make people aware of these products. Since both Gudmundsgården and Skrea Ost have direct contact with customers, it allows them to receive feedback and create personal relationships with the customers, which is seen as value-added features (Alonso & O’Neill, 2011).

For Monica Bondeson (personal communication, 16th of March 2017), a green company means that the products are locally produced and that no chemicals or additives are used in the production. Gudmundsgården have similar thoughts regarding green companies (R. Tebaay, personal communication, 9th of March 2017). Integrative, that is one part of the Five I:s of Green Marketing, describes that green marketing should include the environmental efforts in all the stages from production to sale (Lišková et al., 2016), which in Skrea Ost's case is the production of the cheese that only consists of ecological ingredients, and that they produce and sell the finished product at the same place (M. Bondeson, personal communication, 16th of March 2017). It is the same for Gudmundsgården, and their customers are aware of the quality of their meat, that it does not contain any chemicals or additives and that it is produced at the farm (R. Tebaay, personal communication, 9th of March 2017).

It is important that green companies are highlighting the benefits of their products (Lišková et al., 2016). Green products are seen as healthier than non-green products and this must be informed to customers (Grant, 2007). Gudmundsgården is careful of what ingredients they are using when producing their food (Gudmundsgården, 2017a). They do not use any chemicals or additives (R. Tebaay, personal communication, 9th of March 2017). The animals on the farm are not being fed with any hormones or antibiotics, and the food they are eating are based on peas, beans and other grains (Gudmundsgården, 2017a). Products that are considered as green, have a low negative impact on the environment throughout the whole business process (Liu & Wu, 2009), and use different combinations of marketing practices (Fuentes, 2015). When supermarkets in Sweden were hit by the big horse-meat scandal, Gudmundsgården sold more of their meat and they notice that customers were more aware of where the meat came from (Grankvist, 2013, 23rd of February). For Gudmundsgården, *trust* is the most important word when it comes to their customers (R. Tebaay, personal communication, 9th of March 2017).

The definition used in this thesis of green marketing is that all activities should have minimal impact on the environment and that the actions are designed to satisfy human needs and wants (Polonsky, 1994). Grant (2007) stresses that customers should be informed that green products is a healthier choice than non-green products. Bondeson (personal communication, 16th of March 2017) also says that “*Green is always a good alternative to non-green products and there is always a demand*”. Skrea Ost is only using ecological KRAV-labelled milk to produce the cheese and yoghurt that they are selling in the farm shop (M. Bondeson, personal communication, 16th of March 2017). Polonsky (1994) points out that green marketing is not

about eliminating all environmental harm, but to minimise it. According to Grant (2007), what should be considered as the normal product is the green one and the green products should also improve life quality and be sustainable.

5.1.2 Place

Skrea Ost is located south of Falkenberg with good bicycle and bus connections (Skrea Ost, 2017), while Gudmundsgården is located on the countryside, just outside of Slöinge in Halland (Gudmundsgården, 2017a), with no close bus stops, so the customers have to reach the farm shop using a car or bicycle if they live close by (R. Tebaay, personal communication, 9th of March 2017). The farm shop is opened Mondays to Saturdays (Gudmundsgården, 2017d) and has 20 employees (R. Tebaay, personal communication, 9th of March 2017). At Skrea Ost, only the owners are working in the farm shop and the farm shop is open Thursdays to Saturdays (M. Bondeson, personal communication, 16th of March 2017). The location of companies matters (Porter & Kramer, 2011). The location implies how the company operates to be available for the targeted customer (Kotler & Armstrong, 2010). Because it is harder to find green products than non-green products, Grant (2007) and Líšková et al. (2016) stress that green companies must make these products more accessible for people.

Since many customers pass by Skrea Ost, they easily have access to Skrea Ost's products in the production facility as well, which means that some finished products do not have to be transported at all (M. Bondeson, personal communication, 16th of March 2017). This saves time, money and energy for the company (ibid.). Being a green farm shop means that they must have as little negative effect on the environment as possible (Líšková et al., 2016; Liu & Wu, 2009) and consider the environmental effect in every stage of the business process (Líšková et al., 2016). Líšková et al. (2016) argue that organic sustainable products can be hard to find. Gudmundsgården is located further away on the countryside, where most of the customers need a car to get there (R. Tebaay, personal communication, 9th of March 2017). To reach more customers, Gudmundsgården have a small shop in the city centre of Halmstad and they have a market stall in the city centre of Varberg, which are two nearby cities. The small shop in Halmstad and the market stall in Varberg do not contribute much to Gudmundsgården's profit, but it is the willing of doing well for their customers that is the reason why Gudmundsgården have these places. (ibid.) Companies have realised that the social responsibility is more important than making money out of green marketing (Polonsky, 1994).

The company that transports Skrea Ost's products keeps the fuel, transaction and management cost minimal, which keep the prices for the final customer lower (Porter & Kramer, 2011). Locally produced products are not affected by transportation costs (ibid.). Gudmundsgården are using a car that runs on biogas when transporting their products from the slaughterhouse, but they even have a car that runs on fuel when they are transporting their products to the small shops (R. Tebaay, personal communication, 9th of March 2017). They are not eliminating it all, but they are minimising the environmental harm (Polonsky, 1994). If necessary, Bondeson transports some of the products by herself using a car (M. Bondeson, personal communication, 16th of March 2017). The closer the final customer, the better, both for environmental effects and cost (Porter & Kramer, 2011).

Skrea Ost produces and manufactures the farm's own green dairy products that are being sold in the farm shop (M. Bondeson, personal communication, 16th March 2017). Skrea Ost also sells products from other nearby farms and has collaborations with other farms close by (ibid.). By producing the products at the same place, or nearby, the place they are being sold causes less harm on the environment (Porter & Kramer, 2011).

The milk Skrea Ost are using for producing their products are bought from the neighbouring farm (M. Bondeson, personal communication, 16th of March 2017), which can lead to decreased transportation costs and lower the costs for the final customer (Porter & Kramer, 2011). Food that is locally produced, that are being sold in farm shops, have benefits for both the customer and the seller (Alonso & O'Niell, 2011). It means higher returns and bigger market parts for the seller, because of the value-added products that can increase the sales. Because of the lack of any middle men, both Skrea Ost and Gudmundsgården can get higher profits of selling directly to customers. (ibid.)

5.1.3 Price

Price is what the final customer is paying to buy the product (Kotler & Armstrong, 2010). The price level of Skrea Ost's is quite high, where a cheese costs around 360 SEK per kilogram (M. Bondeson, personal communication, 16th March 2017). The customers have split opinions about this, but the ones who think the prices are good consider the quality of these cheeses (ibid.). Gudmundsgården is pricing their products in consultation with their customers and the price level is in line with supermarkets premium prices, which means that their products are not much more expensive than in supermarkets (R. Tebaay, personal communication, 9th of March 2017).

At Gudmundsgården, the customers are willing to pay this price because of the quality of the products. The owner of Gudmundsgården stresses the importance of doing what you love and have happy customers instead of maximise the profit. (ibid.) Skrea Ost cannot produce large amount of cheese, which makes the prices rise and the quality high (M. Bondeson, personal communication, 16th of March 2017). Though, the placement of the production place and its accessibility to customers makes other costs decrease, like transportation costs (Porter & Kramer, 2011) and the lack of other employees except for the owners (M. Bondeson, personal communication, 16th of March 2017). The final price for cheese at Skrea Ost is based on production quantity and time, and so the company can survive (ibid.).

If a company has long transportation distance, it will lead to higher costs of the final product (Porter & Kramer, 2011). Skrea Ost both manufactures and sells the products in the same facility, and even buys the milk from the neighbouring farm (M. Bondeson. personal communication, 16th March 2017), which according to Porter and Kramer (2011) indicates that the locally produced products are not affected by the transportation issue since they are produced and sold in the same place. In terms of environmental effects and costs for the company, it is better to produce the products close to the customers (ibid.), which also Gudmundsgården does, except for the transportations to the slaughterhouse (R. Tebaay, personal communication, 9th of March 2017). Skrea Ost also has many collaborations with other companies, which allows them to keep some costs down, which can keep the prices low even though the prices are high to start with because of the limited amount of produced cheese (M. Bondeson, personal communication, 16th of March 2017).

Though Gudmundsgården have to use a lot of water and energy for their production, they are considering their environmental harm by using renewable energy (R. Tebaay, personal communication, 9th of March 2017). These actions can lead to cost savings and make it cheaper for the farm shop to produce their products (Peattie & Crane, 2005; Polonsky, 1994). Solar energy is future plans at Skrea Ost, to decrease the impact on the environment and use renewable energy (M. Bondeson, personal communication, 16th of March 2017). Porter and Kramer (2011) argue that one part of cost savings includes energy savings, which Bondeson can achieve with solar energy in the long run (M. Bondeson, personal communication, 16th of March 2017). According to Polonsky (1994), companies can decrease costs this way, but still remain the premium price because of the positive environmental impact. But, financial reasons

should not be the only incitement for green marketing, social environmental responsibility is as important and this, many companies are starting to realise (ibid.).

5.1.4 Promotion

The owner of Gudmundsgården does not see other farm shops as competitors, they are confident in the uniqueness of their products and concept (R. Tebaay, personal communication, 9th of March 2017), and so is Skrea Ost (M. Bondeson, personal communication, 16th of March 2017). Gudmundsgården is the only farm shop in Sweden with German charcuteries (R. Tebaay, personal communication, 9th of March 2017) and Skrea Ost is the only dairy farm shop in Skrea, (Bondeson, personal communication, 16th of March 2017).

Promotion indicates what the company does to communicate with their customers (Kotler & Armstrong, 2010). Communication is necessary while building relationships to the customers (Varey, 2002). Gudmundsgården knows who their customers are (R. Tebaay, personal communication, 9th of March 2017). The customers are mostly regulars and 80 percent of them live nearby. They have been buying their meat there for many years and their family often buys their meat there too. (ibid). Skrea Ost has both regular and new customers that visit the farm shop (M. Bondeson, personal communication, 16th of March 2017).

Both Gudmundsgården and Skrea Ost are using Facebook to communicate and promote themselves (R. Tebaay, personal communication, 9th of March 2017; M. Bondeson, personal communication, 16th of March 2017). They also participate in street markets on a regular basis and rely on Word of Mouth (ibid.). Beyond this, Gudmundsgården have their seminars (R. Tebaay, personal communication, 9th of March 2017) and they have participated in a Swedish TV show (Svensson, 2013, 15th of August). Word of Mouth is important regarding company services (Haywood, 1989), and Dougherty and Green (2011) stresses that Word of Mouth must be considered by farm shops when promoting their business. It is more effective when customers are recommending the company to other friends, than if the company would do any advertising (ibid.). Bondeson believes that personal meetings and Word of Mouth are important for Skrea Ost (M. Bondeson, personal communication, 16th of March 2017). Skrea Ost uses both the offer and inquiry side of the marketing communication theory (Varey, 2002). Neither Gudmundsgården or Skrea Ost are actively communicating that they are a green farm shop more than the information they have on their website and signs outside the shops (R. Tebaay, personal communication, 9th of March 2017; M. Bondeson, personal communication, 16th of

March 2017). Ginsberg and Bloom (2004) argues that a company is being considered as extreme green if it is using all elements of the marketing mix.

For Gudmundsgården, Word of mouth is also the most important communication strategy (R. Tebaay, personal communication, 9th of March 2017). Almost all customers have a personal relationship with the owner of the company (ibid.). Varey (2002) indicates that communication is important when building relationships with a company's customers, and that the business profit comes from the people, not the produced product. Inquire is used when relying on Word of Mouth (ibid.), that is customers talking about the company without company's influence and with free will (Kirby & Marsden, 2006). The inquiry of the marketing communication indicates that the learning process, value and interests of others are important to use in the business to relate to (Varey, 2002). Ralf Tebaay (Personal communication, 9th of March 2017) believes that personal relationships with the customers are important and works as a benefit for the company since the customers become loyal customers for many years, and even different generations of a family becomes loyal over time. Varey (2002) believes that this type of relationship based communication is from a logically perspective more efficient than the offer side of marketing communication.

5.1.5 Green actions

Skrea Ost is mainly focusing on the products they are selling in the farm shop (M, Bondeson, personal communication, 16th of March 2017). According to Ginsberg and Bloom (2004), a lean green company only has the product in mind while working with green marketing, and this because of the interest of reducing costs and increase efficiency. Bondeson (M, Bondeson, personal communication, 16th of March 2017) says that they use the KRAV-labelled milk from Kullsgårde to produce the milk, and thereby the cheese is labelled likewise, which interprets that no other green actions are considered in the production or business process is mentioned besides Skrea Ost's future plans of solar energy.

Ginsberg & Bloom (2004) says that a company that is considered as extreme green, is focusing on every part of the marketing mix. The owner of Gudmundsgården cares about the environment and from the start, they have considered being environmental friendly and integrated this in every business process (R. Tebaay, personal communication, 9th of March 2017). From the beginning, Gudmundsgården followed the term *Reinheitsgebot*, which means purity, they do not use any additives (Gudmundsgården 2017a). They care about the animals'

well-being (ibid.). Ginsberg and Bloom (2004) argues that environmentally issues should incorporate the whole business, and Gudmundsgården take into consideration how their production affects the environment (R. Tebaay, personal communication, 9th of March 2017). Often these types of companies are selling their products in small shops (Ginsberg & Bloom, 2004), which also is in line with Gudmundsgården's farm shop is Slöinge, but also Halmstad and Varberg (R, Tebaay, personal communication, 9th of March 2017).

	GUDMUNDSGÅRDEN	SKREA OST
PRODUCT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • German charcuteries • No chemicals or additives • Restaurant • Catering • Seminars 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Luxury cheeses • Milk • Yoghurt • No chemicals or additives
PLACE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On the countryside, close to Slöinge. No bus connections, quite hard to reach without a car. • Open Monday to Saturday • Small store in Halmstad and a market stall in Varberg (two nearby cities). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Falkenberg, close to the highway. • Existing bus connections and reachable by bicycle. • Open Thursday to Saturday • Collaborations with nearby farms/farm shops.
PRICE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Supermarket premium price” • Most customers are willing to pay this price. • Rather working with the hobby and keeping the customers satisfied than trying to maximise the profit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average price: 360 SEK per kilo • Split opinions by the customers regarding the price. • Needs to consider the produced quantity when pricing the products.
PROMOTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facebook • Seminars • Street markets • Swedish TV program • Word of Mouth • Do not see other farm shops as competitors due to their uniqueness of being the only farm shop selling German charcuteries. • Mostly regular customers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facebook • Instagram • Street markets • Swedish TV • Word of Mouth • Do not see the nearby farm shops as competitors, because this is the only one selling cheeses close by Skrea/Falkenberg • Both new and regular customers
OTHER GREEN ACTIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using car that runs on biogas • Using renewable energy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning to install solar energy in the future

Table 1. Concluding table of the farm shops

5.2 Customers' point of view of local farm shops

According to the questionnaires from both of the farm shops, the majority of the customers believe it is very important to buy green food. Líšková et al. (2016) and Williams and Page (2011) argue that it depends on which generation the customers are born if they think it is important buying green or not. Most of Gudmundsgården's customers are born between 1946 and 1964, and Líšková et al. (2016) and Williams and Page (2011) argue that this is the first generation, also known as the baby boomers. In this generation about half of the people prefer buying green products (Líšková et al., 2016). In Skrea Ost most customers are born between 1978 and 1994, which according to Líšková et al. (2016) and Williams and Page (2011) belongs to generation Y. They are known for their technological knowledge and use it to strive for a better environment. Both Gudmundsgården and Skrea Ost have few customers that are born before 1946 and after 1994. Green customers are born after 1946, according to Líšková et al. (2016) and Williams and Page (2011). Generation Z is people born after 1994 and they are considered as the youngest green customers (ibid.). They are common users of green products and it is a part of their everyday life (Líšková et al, 2016). Generation X, people that are born between 1965-1977 (Líšková et al 2016; Williams & Page, 2011), constitutes of 27 percent at Gudmundsgården, and 18 percent at Skrea Ost. The environmental issue is important for them (Líšková et al., 2016).

According to the questionnaires, 87 percent of the customers at both Gudmundsgården and Skrea Ost buy green products often or sometimes, while the rest of them, 13 percent, buy green products rarely or always. Grant (2007) argues that what should be considered as the normal product is the green one. The ones that use green products regularly are often people who have environmental concerns (Líšková et al 2016; Williams & Page, 2011).

Both in Gudmundsgården and Skrea Ost, there are many similarities regarding why they buy green food, where environmental concerns and the will of supporting local farm shops are most answered. Alonso and O'Niell (2011) argue that it is a major reason why people decide to buy local food products. According to the questionnaire, even the products themselves are a common reason why the customers buy green food at both of the farm shops, like freshness, taste, smell, look and the healthy aspect. Customers associate green local food with positive attributes like better taste and freshness (Alonso & O'Niell, 2011; Bavorova et al., 2016). Alonso and O'Niell (2011) add that customer see locally produced food as more high quality products than the products in the supermarket. A few or no participants of the questionnaire

answered that they buy green product because of trends, other people's influence or opinions. One participant had his own reason for buying green locally produced food, which is that he can ask about the product. Alonso and O'Niell (2011) say that many customers are interested in deeper information about the products they are buying, and this they can get at local farm shops.

Besides buying green food, over 90 percent of Gudmundsgården's and Skrea Ost's customers make an effort for the environment by sorting garbage and using compost in their daily life. This is according to Grant (2008), about eight to ten percent of people, and it is called living a Dark green lifestyle. Another group of the people is called Light green changes, which consist of 20 to 40 percent of the population (Grant, 2008). In the case of Gudmundsgården, flying less and driving less consists of almost 25 percent of the participants. At Skrea Ost, on the other hand, driving less only consist of about 13 percent of the participants in the questionnaire, while flying less consist of 23 percent of the participants. The No-brainers, that in theory consist of 60 to 80 percent of the population that save energy, did constitute of 39,5 percent from Gudmundsgården's and 42 percent of Skrea Ost's participants in this study. Taking the bus, train, bicycle or walk was likewise among the both farm shops' customers.

The question that concerns what product is the most important to buy green, Gudmundsgården's and Skrea Ost's customers had similar opinions but in different extents. 67 percent of Gudmundsgården's customers believe that meat and charcuterie are the most important ones to buy green, while only 51 percent of Skrea Ost's customers thought likewise. At Gudmundsgården, only five percent thought that dairy products are the most important to buy green, while at Skrea Ost, 21 percent of the customers think that dairy products are the most important ones. Fruit and vegetables constitutes of 28 percent for both farm shops. If the participants from both farm shops were able to choose more than one option - which they were not - many would have said that they are all important to buy green. For them, it is important that the products do not cause too much harm on the environment (Liu & Wu, 2009) and that they are better and healthier than non-green products (Grant, 2007).

According to Gudmundsgården's and Skrea Ost's participants in the questionnaire, 70 to 71 percent buys a few products in green farm shops. To buy as much as possible and only buying green products in one farm shop, the result was also likewise between the farm shops. Around 20 percent said they are trying to buy everything from green farm shops and around ten percent

said they are only buying from one green farm shop. Líšková et al. (2016) argue that green products are harder to find and Grant (2007) adds that green products need to be more easily accessed for customers.

About half of the participants consider that green food is accessible and Líšková et al. (2016) stress the importance of that green food must be more accessible for the customers. 77 percent of the participants from Gudmundsgården answered that they think farm shops are available while only 65 percent of the participants from Skrea Ost said the same thing. At the same time, 72 percent of Gudmundsgården's customers answered that the availability affects their choice of buying green products and 81 percent from Skrea Ost's participants also thinks the availability affects it. Even though if a car is needed to get to the green farm shop, the majority of the customers at both the farm shops thinks it is okay and does not affect their view of it being a green farm shop.

The most common way the participants of the questionnaire started to buy at the farm shops, were that they were recommended by a friend. It is not the majority though, since 40 percent of Gudmundsgården's participants and 26 percent of Skrea Ost's participants answered this. A recommendation from a friend is more effectively than companies' own promotions (Gremler et al., 2001). For Gudmundsgården's customers, the second and third most common way was that they saw commercials and happened to pass buy. For Skrea Ost's customers it was more common that the customers happened to pass by than that they saw commercials about them. This can be explained by the fact that Skrea Ost is located more accessible and close to the highway (M. Bondeson, personal communication, 16th of March 2017) than Gudmundsgården, that is located more distant from the bigger roads (R. Tebaay, personal communication, 9th of March 2017). Five to 14 percent of the participants from Gudmundsgården and Skrea Ost answered that they started to buy from the farm shops due to other reasons than the alternatives.

For the question if there is enough of farm shops in Halland, 60 percent of the participants from Gudmundsgården answered that it is enough and 31 percent said that they would like to have more farm shops in this area. A few of the participants only knew Gudmundsgården as the only farm shop in this area and some did not have any opinion in this question. For Skrea Ost's customers the result was similar, with just a small difference in the percentages. Alonso and O'Niell (2011) found out that in Germany, some people wanted to have more vendors that sell

green products. Grant (2007) argues that farm shops need to be more available with their green products.

The majority of the customers at both Gudmundsgården and Skrea Ost agree that the opening-hours at the farm shops are good. Just like Alonso and O’Niell (2011) said, there are though some customers that would like to have either longer opening-hours a day and/or a week. The prices of green food are seen as reasonable from some of the participants, while around ten percent of the participants believe the price of green food is not reasonable. Alonso and O’Niell’s (2011) study also concluded that some customers believe the price for green food is too high.

6. Discussion and conclusion

In this chapter, the analysis will be discussed and will lead to conclusions and findings from this study. Later, the limitations of this study will be presented and suggestions for further research as well.

6.1 Discussion of Gudmundsgården and Skrea Ost

6.1.1 Product

The two green farm shops participating in this study are selling different kinds of green food. Gudmundsgården is selling meat and charcuterie among with having a restaurant, catering and seminars which complete the whole farm shop experience. Skrea Ost is selling their own dairy products along with different products from nearby farms, but they offer no other special activities like Gudmundsgården does. This can make Gudmundsgården a more customer friendly environment where they involve the customers in more than one way by integrating the food selling with other activities. This might be a reason for Gudmundsgården's 90 percent regular customers to come back on a regular basis, to experience more than just buying food they take home to cook. The whole visit can contribute to a more giving experience with the different activities, which makes the customers want to come back again.

Gudmundsgården also tries to develop new products in order to grow the company and give the customers more choices. Skrea Ost is producing the products that the customers want and increase their production in the summer when the demand for the products is higher. Skrea Ost thereby works more towards satisfying customers' needs and wants for the already existing products and adapts the production rate to the current demand. These ways make the two farm shops differ in strategy. By introducing new products to customers on a regular basis, like Gudmundsgården does, the interest from the customers can remain and maybe even develop. This can contribute to that customers want to come back to the farm shop in the future to see and experience the new range of products. Skrea Ost does not develop or invent new types of cheeses in their farm shop on a regular basis. They produce the products there is a demand for and that is well known for the customers.

What is similar for both of the farm shops is that both Gudmundsgården and Skrea Ost consider small green companies as locally producing companies that do not use any additives in the production. Even though Gudmundsgården and Skrea Ost work with different types of food -

charcuteries versus dairy product - they have the same philosophy and way of thinking regarding green food.

What is interesting is that Tebaay and Bondeson have similar thought about green companies, but they work with it in different ways and have different approaches to create the green product. While Gudmundsgården is putting all effort on being a green farm shop, Skrea Ost buys milk labelled according to KRAV and uses no additives in the production, which make the cheeses labelled according to KRAV as well. Because of this, they are selling green products, but do not put much efforts into keeping the surrounding activities green, like Gudmundsgården does with their own animals, production and own energy usage. This makes Gudmundsgården a more environmentally friendly company that have the whole business process in mind regarding the environmental issues, while Skrea Ost focus mainly on the product and the ingredients itself, but not about the surrounding activities and how it is produced.

The main result regarding the products that these two green farm shops are selling is that the product often is important for the producer. Both Gudmundsgården and Skrea Ost care about the green products and show this to the customers in their farm shops.

6.1.2 Place

Gudmundsgården is located on the countryside, where no busses pass by, while Skrea Ost is located along the highway with bus stops and bicycle paths close by. This can explain why Gudmundsgården's customers consist of 90 percent regular customers that visit the farm shop on a regular basis and not many new customers come by. This, while Skrea Ost has more impulsive customers that happen to pass by the farm shop. To reach more customers, the differences in accessibility shows that Skrea Ost is more depended on impulsive customers that pass by the shop, while Gudmundsgården can rely on their regular customers that keeps coming back to the farm shop, despite the countryside location.

The important part for Skrea Ost and having the farm shop located in Skrea is because of the near and close partnership with Kullsgårde where they buy the ecological milk. By this, Skrea Ost can produce their green products and thereby reduce the transportation costs for the company. The location along the highway is also important to get impulsive customers that otherwise would not search or look for the shop.

Gudmundsgården has a small shop located in Halmstad, and have a market stall in the centre of Varberg. By having these locations as well, Gudmundsgården can reach a larger amount of people and maybe connect more people to visit their farm shop located in Slöinge. This allows more people to access the green products that Gudmundsgården are offering, and makes locally produced products more accessible for people as long as there is a demand for it. Though, the main reason for Gudmundsgården to use these other locations is to reach out to more people, not to gain more profit. This is interesting since most companies expand their businesses to gain profit and grow. Gudmundsgården argues that it feels good to help more people to buy green food and that is why they do it, just as Polonsky (1994) argues that companies' social responsibility is more important than gaining profit nowadays. Skrea Ost also sells some of their products in other locations than in the farm shop. The street markets they attend to, make more people consider buying green and locally produced products. These two actions make Skrea Ost's products more accessible for people who otherwise would not visit the farm shop located in Skrea, or during those days the farm shop is closed.

Gudmundsgården is opened six days a week, while Skrea Ost is only opened three days a week. This can be explained by that Gudmundsgården has 20 employees that work in the farm shop and in Skrea Ost only the owners are working in the farm shop. The fact that Gudmundsgården also have a larger profit than Skrea Ost indicates that Gudmundsgården and Skrea Ost are of different sizes and sells different kinds of products to different amounts of customers. Thereby, they can produce different volumes of products and have the shops opened at different times, which can explain why Gudmundsgården is opened more days a week and have more employees. They are a larger company with more customers.

Neither Gudmundsgården nor Skrea Ost have large transportation costs and that is positive for the environment. This leads to a more environmentally friendly business and the locally producing aspect can be used to affect the customer choices, but also the prices of the products.

Both Gudmundsgården and Skrea Ost use their location to sell green food and give the customers a well-remembered experience. Gudmundsgården does this with their extra products and services at the farm shop and Skrea Ost by giving the customers an exotic visit.

6.1.3 Price

The pricing strategy differs a lot between the two farm shops. Gudmundsgården's price level is similar to supermarkets' premium prices, while Skrea Ost is using a more exclusive and luxury price level. This can be because Gudmundsgården's philosophy consists of doing what you love and have happy customers instead of taking into consideration maximising the profit out of the produced quantity and the time it takes to produce, like Skrea Ost does. The reason for the different pricing strategies is that Gudmundsgården can price their products without questions or protests from the customers. This means that most of Gudmundsgården's customers are happy or acceptance with the prices of the products. Skrea Ost offers the customers higher prices for the products. This, because the cheese production is time consuming and they can only produce a certain amount. Therefore, they must take a higher price so that the company can stay in business.

The prices in the farm shops can be highly connected to the location in both cases. None of the participating farm shops have long transportation costs that can lead to a higher price for the final customer. This, because their main selling location is in the farm shops or shops and street markets located nearby. Due to the locally and more environmentally friendly aspect, a higher price can be charged. If both companies had multiple shops and high transportation costs, the prices would probably rise and more customers would perhaps protest or find a substitute.

Despite that, Gudmundsgården still had 70 000 SEK in profit 2015 compared to Skrea Ost's profit in 2015 that consisted of 2 649 SEK. This means that Skrea Ost just have enough money to stay in business while Gudmundsgården has a larger profit they can use to expand and develop the business. This can be one reason why Gudmundsgården can afford to experiment with new innovative products and introduce new products on a regular basis, while Skrea Ost has no new inventive products planned in the near future. The price Skrea Ost has is to make the business survive and the farm shop cannot afford to experiment with products or ingredients.

Also, the many collaboration Skrea Ost has with nearby farms can keep the costs down as Skrea Ost does not have to transport or sell all products in the farm shop. This way, Skrea Ost can be able to expand the business and reach a broader segment. Thereby, the products can be spread and more accessible, which is also a way for Skrea Ost to grow.

6.1.4 Promotion

When it comes to promoting the farm shops, there are similarities between the companies. Both Gudmundsgården and Skrea Ost are using their Facebook pages as their main communication channel and they both also rely highly on Word of Mouth. In the cases of Gudmundsgården and Skrea Ost, the usage of social media is successful and works as a great alternative for other promotional communication channels that cost money, like newspaper and other physical commercials. One negative aspect about this is that the customers must actively search for and follow the farm shops on social media, which makes it hard for the farm shops to reach out to new customers this way. This option is only effective when communicating with already existing customers that are active and follow the farm shops on social media as well.

Sometimes both farm shops are participating in street markets and events to promote themselves and meet new potential customers. This is especially important for Gudmundsgården since not many new customers pass by the farm shop on a regular basis, as they pass by Skrea Ost's farm shop. Gudmundsgården rely on personal relationships with their customers since they are regular customers that visit the farm shop more often, also called inquire in the theory of marketing communication. Skrea Ost on the other hand, believes more in the offer strategy when it comes to marketing communication, which can prove why they promote themselves in newspapers more often than Gudmundsgården does.

Otherwise, both farm shops promotional activities are similar. Neither Gudmundsgården nor Skrea Ost are actively communicating that they are green farm shops. They have this information on their website and on signs inside the farm shops, but anywhere else than that they do not promote the green aspect of their farm shop.

Gudmundsgården have regular customers that visit the farm shop often, and thereby Gudmundsgården makes profit and is in no need for extra promotional activities to attract more people, even though it would not hurt the business. Skrea Ost's location makes it less necessary for them to promote themselves because they are already visible for people that pass by often. Promotion is an important act for companies to communicate with customers, but it is seen that these farm shops makes it without regular promotional activities.

6.2 The customers

What kind of product the customers consider as the most important to buy green is the same between the two farm shops, but differs in the percentage. It depends on who is being asked. What can be added here is if the customers could choose which products they considered as important to buy green, instead of which product they consider as the most important to buy green, many of the customers would say that they think all of them are important. This is known from comments from the participants that were added on the paper questionnaires.

Tebaay says that their customers often stay for generations which is supported by the fact that most of their customers are born between 1946 to 1964, which could be because they have been regular customers for many years. Skrea Ost, that is a newer established company have more young customers that are born between 1964 to 1978. This can be explained because the customers have not had time to develop a long-term relationship that last for generations. This can also be why Skrea Ost has more new customers since people are still learning and creating new relationships with them that are not established yet. Both Gudmundsgården and Skrea Ost have five percent of their customers that are born before 1946, which according to Líšková et al. (2016) and Williams and Page (2011) are not even considered as green customer since the first green generation is born after 1946.

The majority of the customers buy green products sometimes or often. The least amount of people buy green products rarely or always. This can be connected to the availability of the farm shops in these cases. In general, the customers believe that the opening hours are good at both farm shops. Neither Gudmundsgården nor Skrea Ost are located close to residential areas which can contribute to why customers do not always buy green products. By making green products more accessible for people, they would probably try to always buy green products since they answered in the questionnaires that they believe buying green products is important. A third of the participants express that they would like to have more farm shops available in the area. About half of the participants in the farm shops think that green food is easily accessible. At the same time, the majority of the participants believe that farm shops are available, which is important while choosing to buy green and locally produced food. A few customers answered that they only know about one specific farm shop, which can indicate that farm shops must communicate their presence more if they want to increase the awareness for the customers. If the farm shops were located in or more close to cities, they would be competing more with other supermarkets. It would also probably lead to that customers buy a bigger range of products

in the farm shops. An advantage farm shops have compared to supermarkets is that the customers can get more detailed information about how the products are produced and what it consists of but also tips for how to prepare and cook it. Also, many of the customers wants to support local farm shops, which could be a reason for why many of them are driving a long way to the countryside to buy green food. People buy green products because of their own sake, but there are a few exceptions who buy green products because of influence of others. Due to this information, it can be seen that green consuming is important in today's society for green customers.

Many of the customers that buy green food also make other environmentally friendly actions. The most common ones are sorting garbage and using compost according to the questionnaire. Even other actions that benefit the environment by reducing the pollution are common among the participants. These actions show that green customers are concerned about the environment and its effects and not only buying green food for self-interest.

Most of the participants of the questionnaire answered that a friend recommended the farm shops to them, which supports the importance of Word of Mouth for green farm shops. At Gudmundsgården the second most common way was commercial and third that they passed by. At Skrea Ost it was the other way around. This can also be connected to the location of the farm shops since Skrea Ost is located in an area with more traffic and people passing by, while Gudmundsgården is harder to reach and visit without having access to a car. Five to 14 percent of the participants from Gudmundsgården and Skrea Ost answered that they started to buy from the farm shops due to other reasons than the alternatives, but the given answers from these participants can be sorted into the alternatives anyway since they are similar to the given alternatives.

Regarding the farm shops' prices, the customers have split opinions. Some of the customers think the prices are too high, while others believe the prices are reasonable because of the quality of the products. People that believe that the prices of the products are too high, may search for another substitute with a, according to them, more reasonable price, which can in the long term decrease the farm shops sales. This can lead to even higher prices in the farm shops in the future.

6.3 Conclusion

This thesis aims to answer the following research questions:

- *How and why do small green farm shops within the food industry use the green marketing mix to interact with customers?*
- *Why do green customers buy from small green farm shops?*

Small green farm shops are companies that locally produce their products without any additives. To which extent they are considering environmental issues, depends on the owners' interest. The products are the main focus in a small green company. For small green farm shops, the products themselves and surrounding activities at the farm shop are important for keeping the customers interested and coming back on a regular basis. Also, by introducing new products on a regular basis, it keeps the customers curious and want to come back again, which can result in more regular customers. The size of the farm shops can affect how the farm shops are working with products, and why some of them are limited to produce after customer demand.

The location of the farm shops is important for the availability and to attract new customers. Often, farm shops are located outside the city centre. People do not always know about the farm shops in the area, therefore farm shops must find a way to communicate that they exist. If they do this, more people could have the opportunity to buy green products. If a farm shop is located with good road access it is more likely that new customers stop by, than if the shop is located more off on the countryside. Then, the farm shop must rely more on regular customers that are aware of the offside location. To increase the availability and keep the costs down for customers, farm shops can choose to have collaborations with other companies. Another way to increase the availability is to expand the business with more accessible shops.

The prices small green farm shops offer can depend on the size of the company and the produced quantity, but also the price mark-up and what the goals of the business are, for example social responsibility instead of maximising the profit.

Personal relationships with customers can be seen as the most important part within promotional activities for small green farm shops, which can lead to customers spreading the word about the farm shops, commonly known as Word of mouth. This was also confirmed by

the customers that answered that they initially were recommended to visit the farm shop. Moreover, social media can be the cheapest way to promote the company but still reach the right and potential customers if the customers follow them. Though, it is difficult to reach new customers this way. Instead, to reach new customers, street markets and other events can be recommended.

Depending on how green farm shops use the marketing mix in the company, they are seen as different levels of green. Though, it can be hard to categorise them fully since they are often a mix between at least two of the elements.

Most of the customers that are buying from local farm shop believe that all types of food are important to buy green. Green customers are not affected by age or generation. It is their own interest that decides the consuming behaviour. Most of the customers try to buy most of their green food in local farm shops, but the availability and opening hours sometimes complicate this, which can lead to why customers only buy green food often or sometimes. Furthermore, farm shops are not always known by people in the nearby area, which also stresses the importance of promotional activities from the farm shops to create more awareness.

Creating awareness is important for the farm shops, since most customers are willing to drive further to buy food of better quality. They do not care about the actual location but they do care about buying green products and to support local green farm shops. Why green customers buy from local green farm shops is not only because of the actual product, but also that they care about the environment since many of them make other environmental friendly actions daily.

What attracts customers about buying green products is that the customers know what the products consist of, how it is produced and that it does not harm the environment as much since it is locally produced. The customers that really care about the environment do not care as much about the prices of the green products, since the high quality and the low environmental effects are what they are striving for.

The results from this study are in many terms similar to the studies made in Germany and USA (Alonso et al., 2011; Bavorova et al., 2016). All these studies could conclude that the personal relationships farm shops can develop with their customers are important for the business. From the customers' point of view, the quality of the product is important along with the service and

experience a farm shop contributes with. All studies could even conclude that some customers thought the prices were too high and there is a need for more farm shops and longer opening hours.

6.4 Practical implications of this thesis

Based on this study and the conclusion of it, some recommendations can be made for small green companies. These practical implications will be presented for each part of the marketing mix.

Green marketing approach has been successful for small green farm shops. It is shown to be important to have surrounding activities in the farm shop to attract and keep customers interested to wanting to come back on a regular basis. It can work as a compensation for the location the farm shop has if it is not easily accessible.

Furthermore, selling products in more than one place increases the availability and may attract more people that are not actively searching for small green farm shops. The fully green customers will visit the farm shops during any circumstances, while the others need the easy access to buy green products.

The price does not matter much for green customers. These customers care about the quality of the product, what the product contains and that it has low environmental harm. They are willing to pay extra to buy these kinds of products.

The most important practical implication this study can provide, is the personal relationship small green farm shops must have with customers to stay in business. Without them, they would most likely not survive the competition from other supermarkets. Also, Word of Mouth can help farm shops to remain regular customers. Furthermore, the usage of internet and social media to inform customers are good ways to remain contact with customers, even though no physical contact or verbal communication is made. Based on the results above, a recommendation is that small green farm shops should try to create personal relationships with customers to make the company grow and expand. Customers can provide much knowledge, which can be used to improve the business.

Small green farm shops must communicate more about their existing in order to create awareness about themselves. If they did, more people would know about them and they would probably have more customers.

6.5 Limitations and Further Research

This study is limited to two small green farm shops. These are considered as typical farm shops and they have contributed with deep information which makes this study trustworthy. In addition to the interviews, questionnaires to customers were handed out in order to complete the study with extra information from another perspective. Due to these factors, this study can be generalised.

Therefore, a suggestion for future research is doing (1) a study that includes more than two companies in the study, (2) a more quantitative study based from the company perspective and give a more country specific outcome for green farm shops nationally, (3) a multiple cross-case analysis for an international point of view that takes several companies across borders into account and (4) do in-depth interviews with customers that buy green food in order to get a deeper understanding about who the customers are, why they are buying green food and what expectations they have from green farm shops.

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Appendix

Appendix 1: Interview guide (Swedish)

Om företaget

1. Vad har du för position i företaget?
2. Har ni några anställda inom företaget?
 - a) Hur många anställda har ni?
3. Vad är eran vision och affärsidé i företaget?
4. Vilka av era produkter säljer bäst?
5. Vilka anser ni vara era konkurrenter och hur ser ni på dem?

Marknadsföringsstrategi och kunder

1. Anser ni er vara ett grönt företag?
 - a) På vilket sätt anser ni er vara det?
 - b) Vad innebär det för er att vara ett grönt företag?
 - c) Marknadsför ni det på något sätt?
2. Varför handlar era kunder hos just er?
 - a) Vad är det som gör ert företag unikt gentemot era konkurrenter?
 - i. Vad erbjuder ni som inte era konkurrenter gör?
 - ii. Har ni någon upplevelse/kringprodukt som utmärker sig?
 - iii. Tillverkar/odlar ni era produkter på något speciellt vis som ingen annan gör? Eller säljer ni något som konkurrenterna inte gör?
3. Vilka kunder har ni i nuläget?
 - a) Vilken kundkrets?
 - b) Stamkunder?
 - c) Många nya kunder?
 - d) Vilka kunder vill ni nå ut till i framtiden?
4. Hur hör era nya kunder talas om er?
5. När ni kommunicerar med era kunder i nuläget, använder ni er av massmarknadsföring (samma marknadsföring till alla) eller relationsmarknadsföring (lär känna konsumenternas intressen och värderingar)?
6. Hur marknadsför ni er?
 - a) Fungerar det? Varför/varför inte?

7. Har ni någon personlig relation med era kunder?
8. Har ni någon marknadsföringsplan vad gäller hur ni marknadsför er? Är det spontant eller planerade aktiviteter?
9. Vad tycker ni att ni behöver förbättra angående er kommunikation med konsumenter?
 - a) Varför/varför inte?
10. Hur sätter ni era priser?
 - a) Är det något speciellt som ni tar hänsyn till när priset sätts?

Tillgänglighet (plats)

1. Anser ni att tillgängligheten för er butik är bra?
 - a) Är infrastrukturen i närområdet bra?
 - b) Finns det några nära bussförbindelser?
 - c) Är det cykelavstånd till butiken från närmsta stad?
2. Vad skulle kunna förbättras inom detta område?
3. Är butiken lätt att hitta till för utomstående?
4. Deltar ni i olika event eller marknader?
5. Har ni försäljning utanför gårdsbutiken? I så fall, vart?
6. Om ni har försäljning på annat ställe än på gårdsbutiken, hur transporterar ni varorna då? Tänker ni på att det ska vara miljövänligt för att spegla att ni är ett grönt företag?

Appendix 2: Interview guide (translated into English)

About the company

1. What is your position in the company?
2. Do you have any employees within the company?
 - a) How many employees do you have?
3. What is the company's vision and business concept?
4. Which product sells the most?
5. Who do you consider as your competitors and what do you think of them?

Marketing strategy and customers

1. Do you consider your company as green?
 - a) In what way do you consider it to be green?
 - b) What does it mean for you to be a green company?
 - c) Do you market it in any way?
2. Why do customers choose to buy from your farm shop?
 - a) What makes your farm shop unique in comparison to your competitors?
 - i. What do you offer that your competitors do not?
 - ii. Do you have any activities / surrounding products at the farm shop?
 - iii. Do you produce / grow your products in a certain way that no other farm shop does? Or do you sell something that your competitors do not?
3. Which customers do you have?
 - a) Which clientele?
 - b) Regular customers?
 - c) Many new customers?
 - d) What customers do you want to reach out to in the future?
4. How do new customers find out about your farm shop?
5. When you communicate with your customers, do you use offer (same promotion to all) or inquiry (get to know the interests and values of consumers) marketing communication?
6. How are you marketing your farm shop?
 - a) Does it work? Why / why not?
7. Do you have any personal relations to your customers?
8. Do you have a marketing plan? Are these spontaneous or planned activities?
9. What do you think you need to improve regarding your communication with customers?
 - a) Why / why not?

10. How do you price your products?

- a) Is there something special you take into account when you are pricing your products?

Availability (place)

1. Do you think the availability of your farm shop is good?

- a) The infrastructure nearby the farm shop, is it good?
- b) Are there any bus stops close by the farm shop?
- c) Is it possible to ride a bike from the nearest city to the farm shop?

2. What could be improved in this area?

3. Is the farm shop easy to find for the customers?

4. Do you participate in different events or markets?

5. Do you sell your products in any other places, except from farm shop? In that case, where?

6. If you have sales elsewhere than just at the farm shop, how do you transport the products?

Do you consider the transportation to be environmentally friendly in order to reflect that it is a green company?

Appendix 3: Questionnaire (Swedish)

Hur ser Du på gröna gårdsbutiker?

Genom att svara på denna enkät hjälper Ni två högskolestudenter med deras masteruppsats som handlar om lokala gårdsbutiker som säljer gröna livsmedelsprodukter och deras marknadskommunikation. Enkäten består av 13 korta frågor och tar max två minuter att svara på.

Termen *gröna livsmedelsprodukter* innebär att maten är närproducerad och att miljön har tagits hänsyn till när det producerades samt att livsmedelsprodukterna inte är besprutade.

Grön butik innebär att gårdsbutiken säljer gröna livsmedelsprodukter och att de tar hänsyn till miljön när de driver företaget.

1.. Vilket år är du född?

- Innan 1946
- 1946-1964
- 1965-1977

- 1978-1994
- Efter 1994

2. Hur ofta handlar du grönt producerade livsmedelsprodukter?

- Sällan
- Ibland
- Ofta
- Alltid

3. Jag handlar gröna livsmedelsprodukter eftersom; (det är okej att välja flera alternativ)

- Produkterna smakar godare
- Produkterna doftar bättre
- Produkterna ser godare ut
- Produkterna är fräschare
- Jag bryr mig om miljön
- Jag påverkas av andra
- Jag påverkas av trender
- Jag vill stödja lokala gårdsbutiker
- Det känns bra för mig
- Det ser bra ut i andras ögon
- Det gör mig mer hälsosam/friskare
- Annat: _____

4. Utöver att handla grönt producerade livsmedel, så gör jag även en insats för miljön genom att; (det är okej att välja flera alternativ)

- Sopsortera
- Använda kompost
- Flyga mindre
- Köra mindre bil
- Ta cykeln eller gå istället för att ta bilen
- Åka mer kommunalt (buss/tåg)
- Använda mindre el/spara energi
- Annat: _____

5. Vilken sorts livsmedelsprodukt anser du är viktigast att köpa grönt?

- Kött/charkuteri
- Mejeri
- Frukt & grönt

6. Handlar du i många olika gröna gårdsbutiker?

- Ja, köper så mycket som möjligt i gröna gårdsbutiker
- Ja, köper en del varor i gröna gårdsbutiker
- Nej, köper bara gröna produkter i en specifik gårdsbutik

7. Hur började du handla i de gårdsbutiker du handlar i idag?

- Blev rekommenderad av en vän
- Råkade passera gårdsbutikerna
- Såg reklam om gårdsbutikerna
- Letade efter en grön gårdsbutik
- Annat: _____

8. Tycker du att det är ett bra utbud av gårdsbutiker i Halland?

- Ja, utbudet är bra
- Nej, hade velat att det fanns fler gårdsbutiker i närheten
- Jag känner bara till den här gårdsbutiken
- Har ingen åsikt i denna fråga

9. Tycker du att gårdsbutiker är lättillgängliga?

- Ja
- Nej

10. Påverkar tillgängligheten av gårdsbutiker ditt val av att handla grönt?

- Ja
- Nej

11. Tycker du att ett företag kan anses vara grönt om det krävs bil för att ta sig dit?

- Ja
- Nej

- Ingen åsikt

12. Hur tycker du generellt sett att gårdsbutikers öppettider är?

- Öppettiderna är generellt sett bra
- Det borde vara längre öppettider på dagarna
- Det borde vara öppet fler dagar i veckan
- Det borde vara längre öppettider på dagarna samt vara öppet fler dagar i veckan

13. I vilken utsträckning håller du med i dessa påståenden på en skala mellan 1 och 5, där 1 betyder att du inte håller med och 5 betyder att du håller med helt?

a). Det är viktigt att köpa gröna livsmedelsprodukter i dagens samhälle

<input type="radio"/>				
1	2	3	4	5

b) Grönt producerade livsmedelsprodukter tycker jag finns lättillgängligt

<input type="radio"/>				
1	2	3	4	5

c) Priserna på grönt producerade livsmedelsprodukter anser jag vara rimliga

<input type="radio"/>				
1	2	3	4	5

Tack så mycket för Er medverkan!

Appendix 4: Questionnaire (translated into English)

How do you consider green companies?

By answering this questionnaire, you will help two university students with their master thesis regarding local farm shops, that are selling green food products, and their marketing communication. The survey consists of 13 short questions and will take maximum two minutes to answer.

The term *green food products* means that the food is locally produced and that the environment has been taken into consideration when it was produced and that the food products does not contain any additives.

Green farm shop means that the farm shop sells green food products, and that they consider the environment while operating the company.

1. What year are you born?

- Before 1946
- 1946-1964
- 1965-1977
- 1978-1994
- After 1994

2. How often do you buy green food?

- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Always

3. I buy green food because...

- The products taste better
- The products smell better
- The products look better
- The products are fresher
- I care about the environment
- I am influenced by others

- I am influenced by trends
- I want to support local farm shops
- It feels good for me
- It looks good from other's perspective
- It makes me healthy
- Other: _____

4. Besides buying green food, I make an effort for the environment by...

- Sorting garbage
- Using compost
- Flying less
- Driving less
- Riding bicycle or walking instead of driving
- Taking the bus or train more often
- Using less electricity/saving energy
- Other: _____

5. Which food product do you consider is the most important to buy green?

- Meat/charcuterie
- Dairy
- Fruit/vegetables

6. Do you buy food in many different farm shops?

- Yes, I buy as much as possible in green farm shops
- Yes, I buy a few goods in green farm shops
- No, I only buy goods in one specific farm shop

7. How did you start to buy from the farm shops?

- I was recommended by a friend
- I happened to pass by the farm shop
- I saw a commercial about the farm shop
- I was looking for a green farm shop
- Other: _____

8. Do you think there are enough farm shops in Halland?

- Yes, the offer is good
- No, I would like to have more farm shops in the area
- I only know about this farm shop
- I have no opinion

9. Do you think farm shops are easily available?

- Yes
- No

10. Does the availability of farm shops influence your choice of green consuming?

- Yes
- No

11. Do you think a farm shop can be considered green if customers need a car to get there?

- Yes
- No
- No opinion

12. How do you think farm shops' opening-hours are in general?

- The opening-hours are good in general
- It should be opened longer during the days
- It should be opened more days a week
- It should be opened longer during the days and be opened more days a week

13. To which extent do you agree with these statements? The scale is graded 1 to 5, where 1 means I do not agree, and 5 means I completely agree.

a) It is important to buy green food

- | | | | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

b) I think green food is easily accessible

<input type="radio"/>				
1	2	3	4	5

c) I consider the prices on green food as reasonable

<input type="radio"/>				
1	2	3	4	5

Thank you for your participation!

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