

Taste of Fethiye

Integrating local farmers into the
tourism supply chain



theTravel
Foundation



Case Study

Until recently there was limited opportunity for local farmers to sell to hotels, and food was travelling from further afield to reach the plates of tourists



Fethiye, in south-west Turkey, has a rich agricultural and cultural heritage, and the quality and range of its fresh fruit and vegetables are renowned. However, despite also having a well-established tourism sector, very little of this produce was finding its way to the region's hotels.

This project tackled one of the most challenging aspects of destination sustainability: how to integrate small, local producers into a large, mainstream tourism supply chain. The objective was not to attract new "foodie" tourists, but to work with the existing tourism market. The initial focus was on benefiting the farmers and the environment, but as the project developed, wider benefits were realised.

Our initial research showed...

Although there was significant interest from hoteliers and wholesalers in purchasing locally-grown fruit and vegetables, there was no means of verifying the origins of fresh produce available, or of promoting Fethiye crops.

On the supply side there were a number of farming communities interested in selling to the tourism industry, but there was a need for collaboration between producers, better understanding of the quantities and quality of fruit and vegetables hotels would require, and more sustainable production techniques.



Our approach

Our aim was to prove that small, local producers can supply hotels at scale, in a commercially-viable way.

This included helping producers to farm more sustainably, with greater yields and fewer pesticides, and improving their understanding of how to market the produce to hotels and tourism businesses.

As well as making supply-chain linkages, we enabled hotels to verify locally-produced food with a labelling system.

This “Taste of Fethiye” label would also help hotels promote the fresh, local food as a benefit to guests.

Strategic and funding partners:

TUI UK and Ireland
Thomas Cook
The Co-operative Travel

Supporting partners:

Fethiye Tourism, Culture and Environmental Education Foundation (FETAV)
Fethiye Hoteliers Association (FETOB)
Fethiye Chamber of Commerce
Fethiye Chamber of Agriculture
Fethiye Culture Centre
Fethiye Tourism Infrastructure Services Union (FETAB) (2012-2014)
Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs (MARA)
Fethiye’s Chef’s Association (Sef Mavi)
Fethiye’s District Governor
Chamber of Agriculture (FTSO)
FETDER (Environmental NGO)
Fethiye Dairy Products Producers’ Cooperative
Tan Tur
Diana Travel
Turkish Travel Agent’s Association (TURSAB)

Implementing Partners

40 local farmers, across five villages
Fethiye hotels



What we did

"We have been working with the Taste of Fethiye project for 4 years and we are very happy with the progress. After all these years we feel ourselves as a big family with farmers, project manager and hoteliers. We are receiving quality products from the farmers and delivering them to hotels as fresh as possible."

Senay Coskun, owner of the wholesaler in Fethiye

Capacity building with farmers

Focusing on five villages, we made 750 farm visits to improve farming practices and offer guidance on collaboration, marketing and hotel supply needs.

3,000 copies of the Sustainable Agriculture Guidelines were disseminated more widely through the Ministry of Agriculture and other channels to share best practice. When final distribution was complete, an estimated 1 in 6 farmer families in Fethiye had a copy.

Creating a local supply chain

Working with local wholesalers, the Travel Foundation established production agreements with farmers and purchasing agreements with hotels.

Branding and promotion

In collaboration with project stakeholders, we developed a Taste of Fethiye logo to allow hotels to verify the local origins of the produce and promote it to customers.

We helped hotels promote fresh, regional Taste of Fethiye food to customers, raising awareness with leaflets, posters and an award-winning promotional film.

Supporting local traditions, creating food experiences

Tour operator resort teams and hotel staff put on "Local Food Nights" for guests. The Chef's association, Chef Mavi, was an important stakeholder which encouraged its members - many of whom are chefs in hotels - to demand Taste of Fethiye produce. This arrested a previous trend to provide international cuisine for guests which, it was assumed, would most please their palettes.

Chef Mavi also supported a new regional Taste of Fethiye craft and

food fair which not only gave tourists the chance to buy direct from producers, but also promoted the region's culture and traditions.

Extending the benefits to the wider community

The project also encouraged tourists to explore, and spend money in, the rural communities in the Fethiye region. The Travel Foundation developed and disseminated food-themed self-guided driving tours (booklets and a mobile app) to encourage tourists to explore the rural area and spend locally.

The agriculture excursion which was developed took over 1,000 TUI customers to visit a Taste of Fethiye farm in 2015, providing the farmer with additional revenue.

"Our staff have really enjoyed being part of the Taste of Fethiye evenings in the hotels which really bring the Turkish culture to life through local food and drink. It's important that customers have the opportunity to understand that by choosing hotels that stock local produce they're having a positive influence on that local economy."

Jo Baddeley, Thomas Cook



2010



Large tour operators, hotels and agricultural producers **brought together**

Taste of Fethiye **brand developed**



Self-drive 'Explore Fethiye with Village Driving Routes' booklets distributed to **car rental companies and tour operators**

40 local food events held at hotels, as well as the first craft fair to **promote Taste of Fethiye**



Supply of Taste of Fethiye produce to hotels **increased year on year**

Agricultural tourism excursion developed, **including a visit to a Taste of Fethiye farm**



All 16 hotels that procured Taste of Fethiye fresh fruit and vegetables in 2015 have re-committed to **sourcing their produce from Taste of Fethiye producers**

2016

The Benefits

Taste of Fethiye is regularly held up as a best practice example of linking tourism with local food production. The project was a finalist in the UNWTO Ulysses Awards for Innovation in Tourism in 2015

Local economic benefits

The combination of better farming practices and improved market linkages created economic benefits for the farmers. They increased their income both by reducing their input costs (fertiliser etc) and increasing yield per acre by, on average, 30% each.

Between 2012 and 2014 farmers taking part in the project increased their revenue by approximately 24%. Total revenue from Taste of Fethiye sales now exceeds one million US dollars.

Local market linkages

This project proves that it is commercially viable for local small-scale farmers to supply reliable, high quality, competitively priced fresh fruit and vegetables to the tourism industry.

As a result of our work, 24 hotels have purchased Taste of Fethiye produce, and in 2015, 16 hotels sourced on average between 70% and 85% of their entire fresh fruit and vegetable requirements from Taste of Fethiye (437 tonnes).



“This is a project I would like to see continuing forever. It is so important for tourism in this area and an important step in encouraging sustainable and responsible tourism in the area.”

Salih Tasçı, Head of Fethiye's TURSAB (Association of Turkish Travel Agents)



71% of farmers contended that Taste of Fethiye branding helped them achieve better sales and profits.

Approximately 200,000 tourists have enjoyed Taste of Fethiye produce across the five years of the project, and ultimately customers were more satisfied.

62% of those surveyed felt more positive towards their hotel knowing it purchased locally grown, sustainable products

Environmental resource protection

Buying “local” reduces food miles and associated CO2 emissions, and helped some hotels to meet sustainability certification requirements. However, the main environmental impact of the project came from working with the 40 farmers involved to improve their agricultural practices. In particular, the levels of pesticides and artificial fertilisers used was dramatically reduced.

93% of farmers stated they were more aware of the environmental hazards that pesticide, fertilizer

and waste containers, etc. can cause, and had made changes in how they disposed of waste chemical containers in order to decrease pollution levels.

All the farmers said there had been an improvement in quality or yield after being involved

In numbers

**437
tonnes**

TASTE OF FETHIYE
PRODUCE DELIVERED TO
HOTELS IN 2015
(107 TONNES IN 2012)

70-85%

PROPORTION OF
THEIR FRESH FRUIT
AND VEGETABLES
THAT 16 HOTELS
SOURCED FROM
TASTE OF FETHIYE

17%

2012

41%

2015

BY 2015 41% OF ALL
TASTE OF FETHIYE
PRODUCE WAS BEING
BOUGHT BY HOTELS

24%

INCREASE IN FARMERS'
REVENUE AFTER
TAKING PART IN THE
PROJECT

24

HOTELS HAVE
BOUGHT TASTE OF
FETHIYE PRODUCE

200,000

TOURISTS HAVE EATEN TASTE
OF FETHIYE FRESH FRUIT
AND VEGETABLES



"We consider ourselves very lucky being a part of the Taste of Fethiye project. With the help of the project's agricultural advisor we can grow better crops. As a part of the education programme we ran trials with shading nets in a small section of our tomato farm. This showed us how to grow better quality tomatoes and how to extend our harvest season.

I also attended the craft fair that was organised in our village. We had the opportunity to sell our products directly to tourists and local visitors at the fair. We are looking forward to working with Taste of Fethiye over the next year."

Ilknur Arıcan, a farmer from Keçiler Village in Turkey

Wider adoption

95% of the farmers stated that they would keep doing business with Taste of Fethiye wholesalers in the future

2016 and beyond

Taste of Fethiye is now in the process of being handed over to Fethiye Tourism Education, Environment and Cultural Promotion (FETAV), with the continued support of other local stakeholders including Chef Mavi, the wholesaler and the hotels association.

All of the 16 hotels that purchased Taste of Fethiye produce in 2015 committed to sourcing their produce from Taste of Fethiye in 2016, and almost all of the original Taste of Fethiye farmers are still involved. The farm excursion ran in 2016 and, in May, Fethiye Tourism Promotion Cultural Environment and Education Foundation organised another successful craft fair.

Three years on



In the three years since the project ended, a further

1,000 tonnes

of local fruit and vegetables have been sold to hotels and served to tourists.

The success of the project continued into 2018 when

15 hotels

(including three new clients) bought produce from the initiative.



To find out how the Travel Foundation can help you create local supply chain linkages or more sustainable products, contact us at

partnerships@thetravelfoundation.org.uk

or Tel: +44 (0)1179273049 thetravelfoundation.org.uk

