

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION:**

### **STANDARDS FOR CLIMATE LABEL FOR FOOD VERSION NO 2009:1,**

#### **Background**

In 2007, KRAV and Swedish Seal (Svenskt Sigill), the two major certification bodies in Sweden, decided to cooperate regarding standards for a climate label. Later, several major food companies joined the project: Milko, Lantmännen, the Federation of Swedish Farmers, Scan and Skånemejerier. During 2007, the project compiled a background of facts, including a report on the state-of-the-art of the activities in the food chain that have impact on climate. The background material, presentations and memoranda are published at [www.klimatmarkningen.se](http://www.klimatmarkningen.se), however, not all in English.

The Expert Panel held their first meeting in December 2007 and the work to produce supporting documents and wording of the standards began in earnest. The first set of standards was circulated for comments in the spring of 2008. Many answers and opinions were received.

There are several different alternative ways to choose when developing standards for climate labelling of food. One alternative is to produce exact calculations of emissions per product. Another way would be to use existing knowledge to create general standards. The first alternative is time consuming, expensive and demands extensive knowledge about the individual product's history. An LCA requires continuous updates due to changes in the production methods and modified emission factors. Another difficulty is that the climate impact of the product varies throughout the season. The message to the consumers is also unclear because different products are not directly comparable from a nutritional point of view.

Another method is to produce standards based on general conclusions from all the assembled knowledge on climate. This can be done by identifying a few single factors that have a large climate impact, such as concentrates based to a large part on soy protein, high consumption of fossil fuels, nitrous oxide emissions from artificial fertilizer production, etc. Standards based on a more complete Life Cycle Analysis for every product would most likely be too time consuming to develop and therefore it is wise to begin with a simpler alternative and then develop and refine standards in a way equivalent to that of KRAV and Swedish Seal have developed their standards throughout the years..

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## Objective and expected effects

*The objective is to reduce climate impact by creating a labelling system for the food chain that will help consumers make a conscious climate choice and businesses to strengthen their competitiveness.*

## Scope

The project will result in a document of facts and standards that in a future can be used by several standard owners and certification bodies. The project will also produce a label. The label may only be used in combination with other specified labels that certify some component of sustainable food production. This is important as sustainable development is more than the climate issue alone. To gain the right to use the label, all standards have to be fulfilled. The label shall guarantee that measures were taken within the food chain to reduce the climate impact.

The project does not intent to build up a new organization to manage the system. When the project is finished, the form of management must be established. Issues that need continuous management are such as documented facts, standards development, the use of the symbol etc. The standards will be based on existing LCA analyses and the assembled knowledge on climate and will be worded as general standards that regulate climate impact activities within food production and transport. The project does not intend to help the consumer to choose between, say, meat or beans, but rather to present a climate friendly alternative within every product category.

## Project organization

The project will use a tested and effective project model with a clear division of the roles. The project organization includes four components: a Steering Group, a Project Group, an Expert Panel and a number of reference groups.

The **Steering group** is comprised of representatives for financiers (partners), and will work according to a special procedure authorized by the Steering group. The Steering Group takes the decision on the project's budget, cooperates to procure necessary resources and have the authority to stop the project. The project manager has the right to be present and speak in the Steering group, yet have no voting rights. It is important to try to keep the groups as small, capable of making decisions, and effective, as possible. Today, the **Steering group** includes:

- Sören Persson, Swedish Seal
- Johan Cejje, KRAV
- Anders Holmestig, LRF (The Federation of Swedish Farmers)
- Kerstin Fredlund, Skånemejerier
- Claes Johansson, Lantmännen
- Inger A Larsson, Milko
- Olov Osmark, Scan
- Ragni Andersson, SJV (the Swedish Board of Agriculture), co-opted member

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The **Project group** is the organization that coordinates and executes much of the work. The project manager staffs the group at the request of the Steering Group. The subproject leaders can be from different organizations and this is positive. The project manager can be seen as the project's CEO and shall thus have the follow-up budget responsibility and can distribute resources including project co-workers' working time, technical support etc. Today (august 2009) the following are included in the Project Group:

- Pernilla Tidåker, Swedish Seal
- Anna Richert, Swedish Seal

The **Expert panel** is comprised of researchers who contribute to the project with their expert knowledge and can be involved in investigative tasks necessary for the work in developing standards. Today the following people are connected to the expert panel:

- Thomas Angervall, SIK (the Swedish Institute for Food and Biotechnology)
- Ulf Sonesson, SIK
- Christel Cederberg, SIK
- Johanna Björklund, SLU (Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences)
- Sverker Molander, Chalmers University of Technology
- Helena Elmquist, Swedish Seal
- Robert Paulsson, SJV (Swedish Board of Agriculture)

The **Reference group** is comprised of stakeholders from different parts of the chain of production including:

- Advisors, authorities, certification bodies, as well as volunteer organizations
- Primary production/farmers
- Trade- and processing businesses
- Packaging and distribution businesses
- Researchers

## **Standards development**

A first version of standards has been published in the summer of 2009. The proposal covers standards for fish and shellfish, fruit and vegetables, feed production (all crop production), milk; mainly products with a low level of processing. During 2009, standards for cattle, swine, poultry, transports, processed products, packaging and imported products will be developed.

A communications plan has been produced. A symbol for additional labelling is being developed during 2009. The issue of a plan for marketing the symbol will be dealt with later in the project.

## **Important collaborators and approval by authorities**

For the marking to have wide impact from the very start, and that the selection of products will be sufficiently large, it is important that many of the different interested parties are involved in the project. This is also central to be able carry on a credible communication. A prerequisite for the success of the climate mark is that representatives from the daily

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commodity chains, researchers, the environmental movement and proactive actors in the food chain are involved in the work. KRAV and Swedish Seal work with standards systems that can be applicable by certification bodies that are accredited according to EN45011 (ISO65). For such a certification bodies to be able to apply the standards within their certification, it is necessary that a national accrediting body (for Sweden: SWEDAC) approve the standards. To avoid the standards acting as a trade barrier, it is necessary that we are in agreement with experts in the trade are, mainly the Swedish Board of Trade.

## **Risk analysis**

- The greatest risk is that we can be severely criticized because the label can be used for climate labelling of meat. To meet this, we shall work further with the idea to start an informational website where one of the messages shall be to change food habits to a more climate-friendly diet. We also explain that our system is based on continuous improvements of the different food chain products, and even the meat production can be improved.
- A critical factor for success can be to reach a consensus decision in certain questions. The project group shall thus be composed of persons who will actively work in the project towards a common goal and who are also looking to go forward in the process.
- Enlisting the support of consumers is very important but can be very difficult. Therefore it is important that the climate label and all of the background information is open and accessible for others to examine.
- Knowledge is lacking in certain partial steps in the chain, the processes, and some of the data that has been the basis from LCA analyses are very uncertain. One example is the portion of the manure dose, methane emissions from cattle, carbon dioxide and nitrous oxide emissions from the soil. To be able to handle these issues, it is very important to engage researchers with the right competence in the expert panel.
- Emissions of climate gases vary depending on the local conditions. Low harvests and production, long distances and colder climate are factors that in many cases demand a greater use of energy which can give a larger climate impact. Therefore, the handling of the variations in climate impact that depend on where production is carried out in the country must be discussed.
- Imported goods are an important part of the food market. How the imported goods shall be handled so that the label is credible but at the time allow a dynamic trade and product development is a problem. The issues must be discussed. The solutions can found with the organic standards and contacts with other climate markers in the world will be of vital importance.

## **Deliverables of the project**

The final product of the project is standards for climate marking of food that will give a substantial reduction of climate impact from the food chain.

## **Timetable**

A timetable has been created according to the project's objectives.

## **Financing**

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The project is financed by the owners in the project. This allows all to have a post in the Steering Group. The financial posts that are expected include consulting, travel time, meeting localities and marketing. The budget is authorized by the Steering Group.

## **Contact information**

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The project's website; <http://www.klimatmarkningen.se>