

The Place and Importance of Earth Markets within Scope of Eco- Gastronomy: The Example of Foça Earth Market

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Abstract

Eco-gastronomy can be explained as a process that all social, psychological, cultural and political elements contain production, selling and consumption of agriculture and food. As a project of Slow Food, Earth Markets are international market networks which are suitable for good, clean, fair policy of Slow Food in Earth Markets. Furthermore, attention is paid for the prices will be attainable. Eco-gastronomy supports the production of agriculture and food; prevents the nongenuine production; increases attractiveness; strengthens the local community and local pride; constructs the identity and brand based on food experimentation. Additionally, eco-gastronomy covers the subjects of local food production, keeping alive grocery stores, cherishing the production of home cooking, giving children the flavors education, ensuring the happiness and diversity rights, providing the positive effect of gastronomic tourism on prosperity of the community. Moreover, according to eco-gastronomy, it is important to buy local product, support the local farmers and the stream of the local economy, provide job opportunities, strengthen the relationship between agriculture and tourism empower the local agriculture and food industry, present the local brands and products. As shown, the place of Earth Markets in eco-gastronomy is quite big. This study aims at analyzing the place and importance of the Earth Markets in eco-gastronomy. There are 33 Earth Markets in the world readily and Foça Earth Market is one them. For this reason, Foça Earth Market is exemplified. In the research part of this study, the method will be face to face interviews with the authorities of Foça Earth Market, representatives of Slow Food and local government.

Key Words; Eco-gastronomy, Earth Markets, Slow Food, Local, Foça Earth Market.

1. Introduction

Gastronomy is choosing, combining, preparing, processing, and serving food for human consumption. (Hegarty and Antun; 2007).Gastronomy isn't only a process of preparing, producing and consuming food and drinks. It also found its place in ideological, cultural, economic, social and political structures.(Yurtseven, Kaya;2010) Food and beverage culture can be used in creating and supporting cultural identity (Richards, 2002).

Eco-gastronomy can be explained as a process associated with agriculture and food production, sales and consumption which include all social, psychological, cultural, and political elements (Scarpato; 2002). Eco-gastronomy is producing food in an environmentally sensitive way. Feeding our mind and body from the food prepared and eaten. Eco-gastronomy is not one of the gastro-appeals in a destination. By promoting local agricultural and gastronomic heritage, local tourism develops.

Eco-gastronomy covers the following topics:

- Support production of local food, greengrocer and grocery stores.
- Support homemade cooking.

- Transmit information of the local cuisine to future generations and give flavor education to the children.
- Ensure happiness and diversity right.
- Provide a positive impact community's well-being and tourism's gastronomic authenticity (Scarpato, 2002).

Earth Markets are international network of farmers' market created according to the principles of 'Slow Food'. In these markets, there are producers who sell only their own products. Thus, they have a chance to explain the quality of their products and take responsibility for their own work. Earth markets not only offer a place to buy and sell but also flavor education and seminars. With markets located in international network, they follow a set of mutual rules which provide flexibility to accounts for a variety of common cultural and economic conditions. The products offered in Earth Markets must be local, seasonal, produced using sustainable methods and priced fairly for both producers and consumers.

Firstly the definitions of eco-gastronomy and earth market will be explained and then a qualitative research example Foça Earth Market is given in this study about the importance and place of earth markets in the context of eco-gastronomy. Finally, based on all of these, a conclusion will be reached.

2. Eco-Gastronomy

Eco-gastronomy can be defined as a process associated with agriculture and food production, sales and consumption which include all social, psychological, cultural, and political elements. co-gastronomy reveals that community may develop socially and economically when it bears responsibility of eco-nutrition towards economic, socio-cultural and environmental sustainability and adheres to the most appropriate health standards of community members.

Eco-gastronomy supports agriculture and food production, prevents non-authentic production, increases attractiveness, strengthens the local community and local pride, and creates a brand and identity based on food experience (Telfer and Wall; 1996). In addition to this, it also examines current issues related to gastronomy research; sensitivity to local and specific conditions, locally produced food products, organic farming and products, traditional living culture, traditional food production, attractive, unusual and unknown local cuisine and contributing their destination branding, its contribution to sustainable tourism practices, local restaurants, natural shopping centers and unique historical shops (Scarpato; 2002).

Eco-gastronomy questions the existing sustainability of the global food and beverage systems. These global systems have economic, socio-cultural and environmental problems. Therefore, to reveal the sources of local food and drink is important. Eco-gastronomy supports local production with environmental and socio-cultural reasons. Local eco-gastronomic system provides environmental sustainability, social justice and fair trade. Local properties; creating market places with eco-gastronomy centers, traditional farming and kitchen equipment, wine routes and eco-museums improve local development. Eco-gastronomy not only benefits the producers, but also provides added value to consumers. Consumers can establish a direct and clear relationship with people producing food (Yurtseven, Kaya; 2010).

Eco-gastronomy and tourism strategy have some components (Hall and Wilson, 2009);

- To reduce the economic leakage by using local convertible resources rather than external resources.
- Converting financial resources by purchasing local goods and services within the system.
- Added value to local food before being exported.
- to find local stakeholders, and create trust between institutions and people, establish new connections and more effective changes
- Where appropriate, attracting external sources especially financial, ability and technology.
- Highlighting the local identity and naturalness in branding and promotional strategies.
- Directly selling to consumers via farm shops, internet, product markets, local activities, food and wine festivals.
- To create a bond between consumer and producer.

3. Earth Markets

Earth Market is a farmers market established according to the Slow Food philosophy. These markets are social gathering points. Local producers offer healthy, high quality products to customers directly. They do this with reasonable prices and according to environmental sustainability methods (www.earthmarkets.net).

3. 1. Producers

Producers must prove the suitability before getting a permission to sell in Earth markets. The main focus here is small-scale farmers and tradesmen. This way they will not have to compete with large distribution chains. Small-scale production often has high quality results. Producers sell their products at a fair price and they treat their employees in a fair manner (www.earthmarkets.net).

It is essential that producers sell their own products here. While producers are in the process of directly selling to customers, they also inform customers about their products, process and pricing. Producers must be from the local area suitable to each local Earth market (www.earthmarkets.net).

3. 2. Products

Earth Markets usually consists of a wide range of fresh products. They have a wide range of products consisting of canned food, meat, dairy products, egg, honey, bread, oil and drinks. All these products have to be in accordance with Slow Food's clean-fair-good philosophy's specific criteria (www.earthmarkets.net).

Good: Fresh, seasonal, healthy, delicious and which can satisfy the senses

Clean: The sustainability of agriculture and manufacturing process in an environmentally way, non-GMO seeds, local

Fair: Prices within the reach of customers. Fair income and conditions for producers.

In addition to these, the products market helps protect the society's food culture and contribute to the defense of biodiversity. In Earth market, products offered for sale are labeled indicating their contents. Below is an example of the label (www.earthmarkets.net).

Picture 1. Earth Market Product Label

Earth Markets	
Yeryüzü Pazarı Ürün Etiketi	
Ürünün Adı	
Ürünün Yöresel Adı	
Ürünün Özelliği	
Ürünün Yetiştirildiği Yer	
Ürünün Üreticisi	
Ürünün Yaklaşık Maliyeti	
Ürünün Fiyatı	

Earth market product label;

- 1) Product's name
- 2) Local name of the product
- 3) Properties of the product
- 4) Product's growing place
- 5) Producer of the product
- 6) Approximate cost of the product
- 7) Price of the product

3. 3. Committees

An Earth Market is made up a committee of producers, local authorities, community, Slow Food convivium and restaurants, when a new place to meet producers with customers is set up. An administration made up from the representatives of these groups is responsible for the selection of producers, market support and monitoring all of these. In addition, the committee is responsible for the management of the logistical aspects and minimization of the environmental impact of the market (www.earthmarkets.net).

3. 4. Some Important Dates

The some important dates in establishment and development of the Earth Markets are listed below (www.earthmarkets.net);

- The first trial for Earth Market was established in June 2005 in Montevarchi in Italy.
- The first trials for the Earth Market's regional coordinators took place in October 2007 in Pollenza.
- First international Earth Market was established in November 2007 in El Mira in Lebanon.
- In March 2008 the market Montevarchi became the first Earth Market in Italy
- The first Earth Market in Turkey was established in İzmir Foça in 18 March 2012.

3. 5. Different Sides from Other Markets

An Earth Market is not only a place for buying and selling for food. It is a project built in concept of Slow Food's multi-disciplinary ideal. It is not just a food source but also carries responsibilities like history, culture, health, homeland and future. An Earth Market is a source for reminding us that food is great joy. In an Earth Market, people learn how to give responsibility and satisfaction through tasting, listening and cooking. Earth Markets are places where trust is built. Taste training is fundamental feature of all small or large Slow Food activities and events. Also educational activities are a key feature of Earth Markets (www.earthmarkets.net).

3. 6. Rules of Earth Markets

The rules should be provided for all processes since the foundation of the Earth Market are listed below (www.earthmarkets.net).

- To create an Earth Market project, first a local union must be established.
- This unity must be established in a legal way. In addition, it should be created by Slow Food Italy, producer cooperation and local people.
- Together with a representative from each group, a management committee should be established.
- Earth Markets should be Market of the earth should be performed at regular intervals. Earth Markets must be held at least once a month and always at the same time and same place.
- Producers can only sell their own products.
- Producers guarantee that their products completely fit to good-clean-fair concept.
- Management Committee has the right to remove any producer acting contrary to the rules from the market.
- Slow Food is exclusive trademark owner of Italy Earth Market.
- The goods should reflect the common culture of the people and must be coming from a local place within 40 kilometers distance of Earth Market.
- Under the supervision of Management Committee, non-local products can be allowed according to the principle of good-clean-fair principle.
- GMO use is prohibited at all stages of an Earth Market.
- The prices must be transparent in an Earth Market and must carry fair criteria in terms of customers and vendors. Management committee is responsible for the control of these conditions.

3. 7. Earth Market Guide

There are some rules to open an Earth Markets. These rules are determined by international network. What conditions, and how this should be done that are listed in the following headings (www.earthmarkets.net).

3. 7. 1. The Things That Must Be Completed In Advance

A proposal to open an Earth Market or convert an already existing market can be suggested by a convivium or a group outside of Slow Food. If a proposal to establish an Earth Market is made from a group outside Slow Food, first the regional, local convivium must be contacted. If there is no convivium in the region, it has to be established. A member of regional convivium must be present as a representative of Slow Food. Apart from supporters of Slow Food, it must be supported by local authorities and a group of producers. Slow Food representative evaluates the conditions to establish an Earth Market and supports the link between producers and local authority (www.earthmarkets.net).

3. 7. 2. Verification

If there is no local convivium, application is made directly to the relevant country's national coordinating committee or national associations. If the application is made by a convivium, it should be directly presented to the relevant national coordination committee or national association. If there is no convivium or national associations, applications must be directly made to Presidential Committee of Slow Food International. It is the duty of authorized organization (National association or Presidency of the International Committee) to decide whether how much annual fee will be paid or not to join Earth Market and allow the use of Earth Market trademark logo (www.earthmarkets.net).

Before allowing use of the logo, Slow Food Biodiversity Committee Presidency will consult the following to its legal organization (www.earthmarkets.net);

- Definition of product selection criteria.
- Supervision of Earth Market rules.
- Deal with international communication related to Earth Market. To make sure that the relationship is active, materials used such as brochures should be produced in a design related to Slow Food's image and standard format.
- Supporting the food communities (Terra Madre) to establish an international network and regulate the exchange between producers.
- Earth Market coordinators at regular training activities.
- Contribute to the opening and management costs of Earth Market.

Representatives of non-Slow Food countries directly present their proposals to Slow Food Biodiversity. In this case, organization which works in close collaboration with its international offices takes action. Thus, Slow Food Organization and Terra Madre network can provide support and/or strengthen Earth Market (www.earthmarkets.net).

3. 7. 3. Creating Union and the Managing Committee

When the suitable conditions for the creation of a market are met, a union must be formed which includes both local authorities and Slow Food convivium. Two groups from other associations or organizations that want to share the responsibility can participate. Union is formulated in a manner appropriate to the local situations. The first thing they must do is to determine a market management committee. Management committee must consist of representatives from each group in a union. Producers must be elected in a democratic manner in the management committee and included in management the Earth Market. Producers' representative selection procedures are decided by the union in a free manner. In any case, the producers must have a majority in the management committee. When representatives are appointed, opening of markets and the setup process can begin (www.earthmarkets.net).

3. 7. 4. Selection of Producers

Producers are first identified by local Slow Food network then they are controlled individually to see if they meet the regulations. Eligible producers make an application to join the Earth Market and present their own certifications which guarantees their products' compliance with the rules(www.earthmarkets.net).

3. 7. 5. Earth Market Union

In addition to the assignment of union's management committee, it has certain duties such as the local situation of the market, establishment frequency, formulation of space and economic plans. In addition, it comes together on a regular basis to decide on non-routine administration (www.earthmarkets.net).

3. 7. 6. Management Committee

Management Committee is a guarantor for the producers' participation and their guidance. Thus, it has the power to remove all producers who violates the rules of Earth Market trademark and logo. It is also involved in the routine management of the market. Especially (www.earthmarkets.net):

- Renting or buying something necessary for market
- Market's organization and distribution of positions
- Market's logistics
- Collecting any financial payments from the producers
- If necessary, employing domestic workers for the market.

4. Method

In this study, Earth Market's evaluation of place and importance in the scope of eco-gastronomy was aimed. For the research section, the only active Earth Market in Turkey; "Foça Earth Market" was chosen. In the research, a semi-structured interview form was organized and a face to face interview method was used for Foca Earth Market, Slow Food and local authority officials. To analyze the data obtained from interviews and open-ended questions, qualitative analysis (content analysis) method was used. List of participants is given in chart 1 below:

Chart 1: Participant List:

Name and Surname of the Participant	Sex	Relation with Earth Market
Gül Girişmen	Woman	Leader of Slow Food Foça Zeytindalı Convivium
Ramazan Dağıstanlı	Man	Earth Market Committee member
Sibel Oruç	Woman	Earth Market Trade Officer
Ertan Özer	Man	Foça Earth Market Officer
Ali Akpınar	Man	Municipal Police Officer

All of the participants are officials associated with Earth Market. The first four officers are direct participants in the market and member of Slow Food. The last participant Ali Akpınar is official from municipality concerning the market. He plays an active role in the establishment and functioning of the market.

Foca Earth Market selected as an example:

It is established in May 2011 by Foça Zeytindalı Union as a local bazaar. With the investigations from Slow Food Bio Diversity Foundation, on 18 March 2012, it is approved as Earth Market. Thus, it took the title of Foca Earth Market, becoming the first in Turkey and 22nd Earth Market in the world. As of now, Foca Earth Market is one of the 33 Earth Markets in the world. Foca Earth Market is in service every Sunday between 8.30 and 18.30.

5. Results and Interpretation

During the interviews with participants are asked open-ended questions which measures eco-gastronomy's social, cultural, economic, food and beverage aspects and if it meets these criteria.

When we consider food and beverage aspect, the answers of questions which addresses participants' products' specifications and the method they use are given below in chart 2.

Chart 2: Product Specifications:

Product Specifications	Being Local		Non-GMO		Contribution to biodiversity		Be supervised natural		Products directly reach consumers with no any mediators		Usage of traditional agriculture methods in cultivation	
	Participants	agree	disagree	agree	disagree	agree	disagree	agree	disagree	agree	disagree	
Gül Girişmen		*		*		*		*		*		*
Ramazan Dağıstan		*		*		*		*		*		*
Sibel Oruç		*		*		*		*		*		*
Ertan Özer		*		*		*		*		*		*
Ali Akpınar		*		*		*		*		*		*

As can be seen from the chart, all the products sold at Earth Market exactly suits to the product criteria of eco-gastronomy. All the products are supervised and natural. The reason for the lack of organic products is the difficulty of obtaining organic certification as a producer. Because of this, the products are checked by committee to see if they are suitable before they are bought and sold in the market. Thus the officials of Foça Earth Market label their products as supervised-natural. Earth Market contributes to bio-diversity in two ways. It helps the sustainability of products which are left to be forgotten. Apart from that, the committee exercises seed exchange. Therefore, it helps new products to be cultivated. Foça Earth Market also has a project to open a seed garden. With this project, they aim to directly contribute to biodiversity.

If we are to evaluate Earth Market economically, below are the Earth Market's benefits to the local economy and producers and consumers.

Chart 3. Benefits to Local Economy of Earth Markets

Greatly beneficial to public welfare
Positive impact on local employment
Fair price policy is exercised.

Participant Ali Akpınar stated Earth Market's benefits to the welfare of society as follows: *'Producers are making money, people are fed healthily and natural products can be bought with fair prices. According to Slow Food's one of main principles fair price, consumers can buy quality products with reasonable prices. At the same time producers get what they deserve.'*

If we consider the cultural aspects of the Earth Market, following benefits were determined by the interviews made with participants.

- To ensure the transfer of local food and drinks to future generations
- To reflect the traditional life culture

Activities related with the first one are carried out regularly. For example, 'Çekme Makarna' is a dish that was used a lot in the past in Foça. However, it is left to be forgotten and new generation almost doesn't know about it. To not make it forgotten, officials of Earth Market prepared a Çekme Makarna event in which all people could participate in all the stages of production. Therefore, production of a forgotten dish is revived. Reflecting the traditional life culture via these events and activities also has an active role.

Participant Ramazan Dağistanlı expressed the environmental sensitivity of Earth Market as follows: *'We are about to achieve usage of paper bags instead of plastic in the sales of products. Also next to every counter there is a trash can and producers clean their own areas after every Earth Market. As the sales of fruits peaks during summer, we put a big trash can in the middle and consumers, who come to Earth Market, throw the left overs of fruits and their seeds to this trash can. In addition, during the production, producers have to be careful. For example, pesticide use is not permitted.'*

To examine the social aspect of Earth Market, participants were first asked 'What kind of connection is there between producers and consumer and what should be done to improve this connection?'. According to the answers, there is an unmediated direct communication between producers and consumers. Also when selling products, the producer has to provide information and, if necessary let the consumers taste. On this subject, Gül Girişmen used the idiom: *'Know the producer, use local products' which is Slow Food philosophy.* Secondly, within the aspect of socio-culture; 'can Earth Markets be considered as places for leisure time' is asked. According to the responses received, it is concluded that Earth Market is definitely a socio-cultural leisure place. If we sort the reasons for this matter:

- Everybody that comes to Earth Market is seen as customers and is treated accordingly.
- Various events are held continuously in the market and people show intense interest in these.
- Presentations for various products are carried out at a predetermined time.

In addition to these, the answers when asked 'What are the strengths of Earth Market in terms of eco-gastronomy?' are given below as a list:

Chart 4. In Terms of Eco-Gastronomy Strengths of Earth Market

Supports local
Supervised Natural
Without a mediator/ Direct
Protects biodiversity
Supports small scale producers

6. Conclusion

As people are social beings, eating is not just a biological need but also a social requirement in which they mingle and chat, have fun, share their joy and sadness, celebrate. Different societies have different cultures. Therefore, each community has a distinct cultural difference in their cuisine. It is an art which is developed with people's tastes from ages past to present and supported by scientific contributions (Ciğerim, 2001).

Gastronomy can be defined as a scientific discipline which covers all the artistic and scientific aspects of food and drink. It covers all the features of food and drink in detailed beginning with the historical their development. It includes studies about the understanding, practice, development and adaptation of food and drink to present. Gastronomy is the food order and system which is healthy, well-organized, pleasant and delicious. The process of bringing a meal to the table with the aim of enjoying the taste and delighting the eye, the preparation stage of all edible substances which may be hygienic but not necessarily appropriate way to health is included in Gastronomy (Baysal, Küçükarslan; 2003).

Eco-gastronomy can be defined as a process which is related with social, psychological, and cultural elements of agriculture, food production and its sales and consumption (Yurtseven, Kaya; 2010). Eco-gastronomy brings a new perspective to gastronomy in a sense. In addition to gastronomy, eco-gastronomy emphasizes sustainability and especially locality. According to eco-gastronomy, buying local products has the following meanings:

- Support the flow of local economy and local farmers.
- Support the creation of jobs.
- Strengthen the link between agriculture and tourism.
- Strengthen local agriculture and food sector.
- Promote local brands and products.

Tourists having an interest in local food and beverages are not only useful for biodiversity but also may increase individual and social pride (Nummedal; Hall, 2006). Local food production provides employment, business sustainability, supports local services and increases the income of local communities (Hall and Wilson, 2009).

Earth Market is farmers market established according to the slow food philosophy. These markets are social gathering points. Here, producers offer healthy, quality products directly to consumers without mediators and they do this with reasonable prices and with environmental sustainability methods.

Slow Food movement offers a quality definition that relies on shared experiences and three points: good, clean and fair (Petrini, 2007). The meaning of good is that the food is tasty and gives us pleasure. Clean means that the techniques used in the production is not harmful to environment, animal and human health. Fair means the producers are not exploited and receive the fruits of their labor (Günerham, Erdem, Generham; 2010).

In this study, the Earth Markets' role and importance is emphasized in the context of eco-gastronomy. With the qualitative research involving interviews with Foca Earth Market and local government officials, Earth Markets are evaluated if they meet all the aspects of eco-gastronomy. At the end of this study it is concluded that Earth markets are closely related to all aspects of eco-gastronomy and literally meet them. Earth markets play important role in region's social, cultural, economic and environmental development. Because, as stated before, Earth Markets are not only a farmers market for the sales of products but also a social market network which educates consumers. In addition to selling natural products it also has other missions such as boosting local economy, sustaining local products, establishing a connection without mediators between producers and consumers and strengthening it and contributing to bio diversity.

Earth Markets have an important role in fully understanding eco-gastronomy and its sustainability. For this reason, the promotion of Earth Markets must be done more and more people both local and all across the country must be informed about Earth Markets. Currently, Foca Earth Market is the only one in Turkey.

There are plans to open second one in Gökçeada in April 2014. For now however, this number is small. By taking these markets as models and further promoting them, local products, local culture should be revitalized.

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