

Abstract

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M.Sc. Environmental Protection and Agricultural Food Production

Analysing social and community supported agroforestry systems through the lens of food commons - A comparative study of emerging agroforestry CSA in Germany

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Current industrial agri-food systems have shown to inflict both environmental damage and social issues regarding food justice or health. In contrast to that, alternative food networks attempt to reconnect producers and consumers, for instance through community supported agriculture (CSA). On the other hand, agroforestry offers manifold ecological benefits and ecosystem services but has not been studied so far with regards to territorial food systems. To investigate in how far the best of both worlds can be combined, this thesis identified seven young case studies of Community Supported Agroforestry Systems (CSAFS) in Germany by means of qualitative interviews and a cross-case comparison. The multi-dimensional model of food as commons by José Vivero-Pol served as theoretical framework for analysis, embedded in a story-line of food utopia that focuses on critique, experimentation and processes of alternative endeavours. Results demonstrated how food as commons emerges through commoning practices, based on collective learning and re-naturing. From a variety of starting points, possible transition paths towards CSAFS are sketched. To ensure economic viability, more supportive policies that remunerate the value added and positive externalities provided by CSAFS and an even stronger focus on inclusiveness are required for food sovereignty in the long term.

Keywords: food utopia, agroforestry, community supported agriculture CSA, food as commons, food justice, alternative territorial food systems, resilience