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The use of local farm products as the restaurants` competitive advantage

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Abstract

The research question of this academic writing implies the analysis of sufficiency of using the local farm products by the restaurants as the sustainable competitive advantage. The preliminary research revealed that the market exists and overall interest to healthy lifestyle is increasing. The general idea of cooperation between local farmers and restaurants is not very innovative, however in some areas there is a big space for development. There are a lot of advantages for every side, but the potential obstacles exist too.

The concept of using fresh local farm products is very promising, and the research showed that the demand for such service is growing. Future catering trends are inextricably linked to consumption of farm products among the population, and the developing of farm industry is very perspective for many regions around the world. However, the using of farm products as a sustainable competitive advantage is not enough, due to the increasing number of market participants. Restaurants and gastrobars that focus on healthy food should offer something else to the customers additionally to fresh farm products. Only combination of offering fresh local products with the unique service or creative idea that differ the restaurant from the competitors could create the sustainable competitive advantage.

Contents

1	Introduction	1
2	Industry Overview	2
2.1	Macroenvironmental analysis- PESTLE	4
3	Farming Sector in Russia	6
4	Farm Sector in United States	10
5	The Role of Infrastructure and Logistics	12
6	Gastrobar in Saint-Petersburg as a business idea	16
6.1	Real examples of successful gastrobars and restaurants in Saint-Petersburg that focus on local farm products:	21
7	Promotion and World Future Trends	24
7.1	Future of World Gastronomy: Brazil, Russia and China	26
7.2	The future of flavours: freshness, naturalness, variety of spices.	28
8	Conclusion	29
	References	32
	Appendices	
	Appendix 1. Interview	

1 Introduction

First thing that probably comes to mind when people think about farming and restaurants that offer fresh farm products is healthy lifestyle. This is a big trend nowadays and also a huge field for establishing and developing innovative business projects. The main driving force for the customers is the feeling of belonging to the group of people who care about their health and what they daily eat. The awareness of belonging to such group makes people feel more satisfied, happy and self-confident.

Healthy lifestyle as the system of human behaviour provides people a physical, mental and social well-being in a real environment. There are a lot of advantages of healthy lifestyle and positive outcomes such as better conditions for normal physiological and mental processes, reduction of various diseases and prolongation of human life, the increasing of productivity, positive thinking etc. In addition to mentioned auspicious things related to healthy lifestyle there is also the feeling of following the trend and belonging to privileged group, which helps people to feel them unique and concerned about their health and environment.

As long as there is a demand for healthy food, there should be places which could offer such service in order to satisfy customers` wants. Recently, a huge number of people, especially those who live in the big cities, started to think about their nutrition and the products that they daily purchasing at the grocery stores and order in the restaurants. Places that offer fresh and healthy products are enough demanded now, so there is a space for growth and developing of this business sector.

In order to use the fresh products the restaurants should purchase them from the local farmers. The specifics of purchasing the products from the farmers and the ways of establishing reliable long-term business relationships should be analysed. Opportunities, threats and possible obstacles should be identified for both sides- local farmers and local restaurants. Advantages and disadvantages of the mutual cooperation have to be recognised.

Establishing long-term reliable relationships with the local farmers and offering unique menu items are not enough for successful business operating. Efficient promotion and

effective marketing campaigns are extremely important in order to achieve the main goal and find the market niche.

The task of this paper is describing the idea of farming as the modern business model and analysing the potential cooperation between local restaurants and farmers in order to identify how effective and productive could be this concept. Moreover, another task of this writing is analysing the role of infrastructure in the relationships between farms and restaurants.

The result of recent decades is globalisation which implies the use of standard products. It led to the loss of authentic cuisine and standardisation of dishes that created a deficit of genuine local cuisine and increased the price and demand for it. Currently the offering of such cuisine is becoming popular and profitable. Healthy eating is a trend and consumers are getting more and more conscious about what they eat and how the ingredients of the menu items have been made. Availability of local fresh products is beneficial for each market participant.

2 Industry Overview

Food industry is the sector of the economy, which has specific features and patterns that realised by the functions performed by enterprises - the production stage, sales and consumption. Nowadays food industry is playing an increasingly important role in modern society and in life of every individual. This is achieved primarily by changing food processing technology, the development of communication, means of delivery of products and raw materials and the intensification of many industrial processes.

Among modern top trends could be noted the increased attention to a healthy nutrition and the formation of personal diet with taking into account the state of health of the individual. People pay more and more attention to their health and to the nature of products which they consume. Customers want to eat fresh and healthy food and this trend becomes the theme of the cuisine with the author's approach, using new technologies and local products. It leads to returning to a reasonable consumption of useful seasonal ingredients. There is a great demand for simple but fresh dishes made with

using seasonal local products. The future of the food industry is a healthy diet and the development of social and environmental responsibility for the specialists of catering area as a healthy diet is closely related to food safety and environmental friendliness and responsibility.

Restaurant industry is highly competitive and each restaurant is trying to follow the latest trends and anticipate customers' preferences. Making fresh high-quality food is the top function of each good restaurant in order to reach customers' loyalty and run a successful business. Cooperation between restaurant's representatives and local producers can benefit both parties. However, there are barriers such as limited availability and amount of products producing, difficulties related to searching the reliable and trustful suppliers, specifics of storage conditions, local infrastructure etc.

Marketing is a big issue of the restaurant industry, because this is the main tool for establishing the restaurant's strategy. It should be clearly identified what type of dining experience is going to be provided to the customers. This paper is focusing on a high level of dining experience, which implies not just a motive of a physical survival, but the providing of unique and special experience. Restaurateur should understand why guests are coming to the restaurant and what their motives are. "The change in orientation is the major motivator, and it is why the customer is willing to pay the price"

(Maddock & Fulton 1996:194). This industry is related to creating of feelings and customers are willing to pay for this unique experience. As Maddock and Fulton state: "Whatever the restaurant marketer can do to assist the customer in feeling like a new and different person will build the business, spread good will, and guarantee customer loyalty" (1996:194).

Organisations' success and profitability in this industry usually depend on the quality level of service and satisfaction of customers' needs and wants. In order to stay competitive the restaurant should be able to differentiate itself and one of the possible ways could be offering local farm products. Current research work is focusing on restaurant industry and its interactions with the local farm products suppliers.

First of all the direct competitors should be identified and after analysing personal resources and capabilities, the including of fresh farm products to the menu could be used as a component of competitive advantage. Deep understanding of the industry is

leading to a better formation of the unique idea and as the result the creation of competitive advantage.

Organic products stores and healthy foods restaurants are very popular in Europe and United States, however this business segment is relatively new for Russia and now it is on the stage of development. By reaching a certain level of maturity, both material and financial, people are beginning to think more about what the quality of the products they daily consume. “The growing trend toward a healthy lifestyle is boosting organic farms in Russia that cultivate eco-friendly products. Russians in Moscow and St. Petersburg, particularly, are prepared to pay higher prices for organic produce” Ukolova (2016).

One of the tasks of this paper is observing the concept of a healthy food restaurant (Gastrobar) in Saint-Petersburg as a potential business idea. Analysing and comparing the business model of farms in United States and in Russian market will help to figure out what are the keys of success of farmers in United States and what could be done in Russia in order to improve this business sector and reach the satisfied results.

2.1 Macroenvironmental analysis- PESTLE

The table below shows the Macroenvironmental analysis, which is needed in order to identify the potential external influences on the industry. Quite many external factors have significant influences on the industry.

Political	Economic	Social	Technological	Legal	Ecological
Political Instability (General and local)	Financial Crises and general financial instability	Popularisation of healthy lifestyle	Innovations in the growing process and storage of farm products	Local food regulations	Using eco-friendly fertilizers for the products' growing process

	Costs of growing and keeping farm products	Developing conditions for creating and developing farms as start-ups	Using social media for promotion of certain producers and restaurants	Agreements between local farmers and restaurants	
	Governmental supporting programs		Online services and self-services/ Ability to order fresh farm products online from the restaurants		
	New work placements (In catering industry and farms)				

The table above shows that Microenvironmental analysis is a helpful tool for determination of the relevance of the general idea of using local farm products, because it demonstrates the main potential influences on the industry. There are many factors with significant influence that depend on the location, infrastructure, available resources and capabilities. One of the core things is that the precise analysis could be made only based on the accurate data of particular area, and all internal and external factors that might have influence on the industry, are usually differ and depend on the certain location and available resources.

3 Farming Sector in Russia

“The 1990s witnessed considerable academic attention to the development of the private farming sector, even as the sector faced considerable obstacles and government policy was inconsistent” (Robinson 2012: 121). Starting from this period of time the agrarian sector started to develop and currently the situation is significantly changed.

Nowadays, farming is very dynamically developing part of agricultural industry of Russian Federation. Due to huge territory of Russia there are many opportunities for improvements in farm sector and implementations of innovative ideas and technologies. Based on the climatic characteristics of a particular area there are different available resources and opportunities for farming. However, there are some common problems that have to be solved in order to avoid inhibition of development of each certain area and disclosure of potential of different types of farming. This chapter includes the observing of existing obstacles and major problems of farming industry in Russia and possible prospects for development of this sector.

First problem that farmers face is the lack of unified approach of identification of the farmers` legal status. In fact, the farms exist in various legal forms such as individual entrepreneurship or private company limited by shares etc. The lack of unified legal approach leads to non-availability of accurate rights and information about farming.

“Another significant obstacle to Russians buying organic products is their mistrust of all existing local systems of certification. This stems from the post-perestroika era when more than half the product labels and lists of ingredients did not correspond to the facts”. (Sharova 2013). This barrier still exists, and the majority of customers cannot fully trust the information provided by the farmers and suppliers of fresh products. In that case only personal positive experience matters and generates trust and loyalty.

“Local organic production is still a small niche, there is a lack of knowledge for both farmers and consumers about organic production and certification systems, and the distribution network is not well developed at the moment. In particular, there is no national standard for organic goods in Russia” (Meixner et al.2014:186). Key issue is that “farm products” in Russia do not equal to organic or bio products as in Europe, because there is no unified system of marks and certificates that prove the quality and belonging of the goods to eco products. However, local control under the quality of

produced products is improving, and products that marked as “farm” usually match the high level of quality. This issue refers to producers` responsibility. Moreover, professional chefs take the responsibility too and choose fresh locally grown ingredients based on their personal awareness about the local farms and conditions in which the products have been grown.

“There is a need to develop and legislatively authorise strict regulatory definitions for terms like “organic”, “healthy”, “eco-friendly”, “ecologically clean”, “natural”, etc. used to attract additional customers. The absence of the legislatively imposed definitions for this group of goods remains a huge loophole for unscrupulous producers to exploit by mislabelling standard or substandard food products as “organic” or “ecologically clean” (Sharova 2013). This statement is crucial for the current situation in farming food sector in Russia, because the lack of standardisation of the most important terms on legal level contributes to the spread of poor quality products.

One of the major problems is the lack of governmental support. Receiving the grant or any other financial support is the privilege of a very limited number of entrepreneurs who decided to start the business in farming sector. Regarding to governmental policy only entrepreneurs who will develop their own production will receive some financial support. However, the developing of own production requires some available capital that farmers usually do not have. This dilemma is crucial for the entrepreneurs, because the initial stage of any business assumes a lot of risks and governmental support is needed for running an operational business mechanism.

Nevertheless, some supporting locals programs exist in many areas of the country, but key point is that the effectiveness of such programs directly depends on the quality of work and the level of responsibility of local administration in the regions. In some areas the local government is supporting entrepreneurs, developing programs and control the industry, meanwhile in some other areas the local government is inactive and even prevents the developing of farming. In that case, farmers have to collect numerous papers being insufficiently informed about the correct regulations and laws. The major obstacle is bureaucracy and the huge influence of human factor.

However, comparing to previous decades the current situation is improved and the progress is noticeable. This conclusion was made based on the example of successful business of German investor Stefan Duerr. According to Duerr the supporting pro-

grams of local banks have a significant positive impact: “The technical re-equipment is in full swing. The farmers start to understand that it pays to use efficient and well-powered machinery. It has become possible to buy such machinery thanks to the state’s program of subsidising the interest rates and large credits of the Rosselkhozbank (the Russian Agricultural Bank) and other financial organisations” (Duerr 2016). Obviously, the full re-equipment of old farms will take some time, however the prerequisites for renovation exist.

The lack of detailed business planning leads to uncertain identification of available resources, opportunities and production goals etc. Business plan is needed for creating the realistic view of potential business development. Nowadays, entrepreneurs who decided to start any kind of business pay a lot of attention to business plan, meanwhile farmers that running their production for a long time, could not organise their business in order to find extra financial resources and rebrand the farm and stay competitive. Old farms have to be converted into modern establishments with organised business planning.

Existing logistics problem and high transport costs have a negative impact on the implementation of high-quality and smooth operation of the farms. Fast transportation is really important for the development of farming, as the freshness along with the naturalness are the key components of competitive advantage, that allow the farmers to sell their products for a higher prices than factories and cover the production costs.

In less developed regions of Russia some farms are located far away from the proper roads, so the transportation requires much more effort and costs, and for some farms the transport rental is too expensive service. Such problem refers to a poorly developed infrastructure in the regions, and the possible solution of this problem depends on the local government’s willingness to take effective measures for the infrastructure improvement.

The problem that occurs as soon as the farm’s operating process is well-established, is the searching for reliable and constant sales channels. Distribution channels in this case must be permanent, not adjusted for seasonality or production volume. Large retail stores are not interested in cooperation with local farms, because prices for the fresh products are higher and the volume of purchasing products is not big enough. Therefore, the best option for the local farms is selling the products to the stores spe-

cialised on the healthy food, restaurants and gastrobars that focusing on farm products or to online-stores that are getting very popular.

Online shops that sell farm products are usually running by resellers, because most of the farmers do not have time to constantly control and develop their web page. Moreover, most of the farms produce the limited types of products, and it would not satisfy customers` wants because consumers want to see the full range of all kinds of fresh farm products available in one online shop.

The service of delivery the fresh products is getting very popular and the number of various organisations that can deliver products to customer`s home is increasing. The tendency to opening the business focusing on delivery of a certain type of products such as delivery of only fresh vegetables or dairy products is growing and seems to be quite promising.

Additionally to mentioned obstacles there is a problem related to the lack of technological resources. A lot of existing farms in Russia have to be updated in order to maximise the production, but the costs of new technical equipment is high and most of the farmers cannot afford it without financial support from the government. Modernisation of production facilities could be very helpful, especially for the small farms, in order to increase the production volume. However, as it was mentioned previously, the example of Stefan Duerr shows that there is a positive tendency in developing of financial programs provided by agricultural bank in Russia.

Analysis of the main obstacles in farm sector in Russia demonstrated that the main problems are related to the lack of active participation and supporting the farm industry by the local governments. People are not informed enough about the opportunities and perspectives that entrepreneurship and developing of local farm business can open for them. However, there are a lot of positive tendencies in popularisation of consuming locally produced products in Russia due to sanctions policy of some countries. The limit of import of the foreign products could stimulate a more active development of local enterprises.

At the same time, the major part of farms` success depends on correct management decisions and rational using of available resources. Innovative solutions can be the way out of any financial difficulties that farms could have. Good example of an effective

idea is the development of local tourism in countryside of different regions in Russia. Customers are able to visit farms, spend some time on fresh air and purchase local fresh products. The developing of agro-tourism in Russia could be very beneficial, because as Lars Ryden (2012:130) writes: "Developing the so-called farm tourism became one of the ways to revive rural settlements and maintain an adequate employment level". Farm tourism is advantageous for the state and for the people. It also allows urban citizens to get familiar with the rural customs and increase the level of trust in locally grown fresh products. "Agrotourism is an alternative form of tourism and sustainable way of agriculture at the same time" (Ryden 2012:130).

4 Farm Sector in United States

"After information technology, agriculture is the second most productive sector of the economy in United States" (PBS NewsHour 2016). This sector is well-developed and nowadays United States is the biggest exporter of agricultural products in the world.

The success of the industry is related to the good climate and characteristics of the social and historical development. The fact that United States has a long and great history of farming helps the new generations of farmers to use the expertise of their ancestors and apply the knowledge nowadays. However, some problems exist and the use of two major inputs, land and labour, has decreased over time. This chapter includes the analysis of the main advantages and secrets of success of the farmers in United States.

First thing that should be mentioned is a high level of support of the local farmers by the government. Developing the farms means the creation of new work placements. In recent years in the United States increased the number of small farms across the country, and this is due to growing interest in fresh and healthy food among the population.

Receiving the grant is quite competitive process, but if the farmer is ready to make a sufficient business plan and annually report the financial results of running the farm business. "The government provides grants to farmers throughout the United States. Unlike a loan, a grant does not have to be repaid" (WikiHow 2016). Such government grants are the fair opportunities for the farmers to receive the financial support.

Promotion of farm products has a positive impact on popularisation of healthy lifestyle. There are a lot of festivals and fairs in different regions of United States, where the farmers proudly demonstrate their harvest. Creating the image of a farmer as a reliable and promising profession, successful entrepreneur and a happy person, is the big value for the future of industry and for the country's wellbeing in general.

One of the strengths is a very important aspect such as a high level of competence in using computers and technologies in farm sectors. Farmers in United States are easily adapting to technical innovations and use them in their enterprises. However, many farmers prefer to keep the traditional methods in their work.

Nevertheless, the willingness of farmers to use modern machinery and new development is a big advantage. Interesting example is the innovation that dairy farmer Ron Hurlimann uses in his production. In the article "The Dairy Supply Chain: From Farm to Fridge" (Kroll 2015) examined how Ron Hurlimann recently affixed radio-frequency identification tags to the 100 head of cattle on the dairy farm that he owns. Those tags track when a cow is eating or resting, as well as its health. Tags can signal how the cow is feeling. "The technology is a huge plus," Hurlimann says. "I can tell if cows are sick without scrutinizing them".

Agricultural industry is a huge well-developed business in United States, including farms with a big production volume and small family farms. Nowadays, family farms face some problems in conditions of competitive environment. One of the problems is a criticism of family farms due to possible negative impact on the environment such as using chemicals during the process of growth; meanwhile big corporations declare the better conditions for control and safety of the environment. However, supporters of family farms assert that they have more responsibility for the land that they have and respect of traditions rather than big corporations. Therefore, people still have uncertain opinions about both corporations and family farms related to their possible negative impact on the environment.

Nevertheless, farmers' personal responsibility is playing the major role. Great example is Curtis Stone- Australian celebrity chef. Stone's project "Green City Acres" proves that even with the limited available resources the farmer could produce fresh products and foster the social and environmental change. "Green City Acres is a multi-locational urban farm operating on less than an acre of land. We use front and backyards, rented

from homeowners, to grow vegetables for local distribution” (Green City Acres 2016). Curtis Stones shows that urban farmer is a modern successful entrepreneur, and this understanding could help people to start their business.

The book “The Urban Farmer: Growing Food for Profit on Leased and Borrowed Land” written by Curtis Stone, is a great guide for potential urban farmers. Curtis sees the cooperation between urban farmer and a local restaurant very perspective based on his personal experience. In Curtis Stone`s opinion: “What makes a great farmer for a chef is not being able to show up every now and then with some great-looking products, but being able to work with them every week, to bend and flex to their demands as they change” (2015:45). Flexibility and willingness to establish reliable relationships with the local restaurants is the key for the urban farmer`s success.

To sum up, it should be noted that strengths of farms in United States are the use of highly productive machinery, highly qualified personnel, new technologies, and strong governmental support. Farmers are able to have credits and other financial help from the banks. Moreover, important factor is that farming is a fundamental part of the history of United States and this is something what people can be proud of.

5 The Role of Infrastructure and Logistics

First step of the analysis the meaning of the role of infrastructure and logistics in terms of cooperation between local restaurants and farms is the identification of definition of term “infrastructure” in general. According to Oxford dictionary:“Infrastructure is the basic physical and organisational structures and facilities (e.g. buildings, roads, power supplies) needed for the operation of a society or enterprise”. (Oxford University Press 2016).

In terms of cooperation between restaurants and local farmers, the infrastructure implies the road conditions, reliability of transportation services etc. Additionally, it is highly important to find out how well-organised operational systems in local farms, such as the coordination of production and storage facilities.

Moreover, the farm products have short shelf life, and rational distribution of products based on their special features is crucial. The degree of development of the infrastruc-

ture in the region is directly connected with the level of services provided. However, each region has own individual specifics of the infrastructure based on the available resources, culture and norms of life.

Related to logistics part, there is a difference between retail logistics and farm logistics elements. Probably one of the most expensive things of retail logistics is holding stocks and inventory in warehouses, while one of the key issues for the farmers is the fast distribution and realisation of fresh products. Due to the fact that freshness is the main competitive advantage of the farm local products over the goods that customers can find in the grocery stores, the necessity to quickly deliver the products to the restaurants or to farm stores is one of the core tasks for the farmers.

Restaurants have a direct interest in the effective work of their suppliers. Reliable suppliers are needed in order to provide efficient service and satisfy needs of restaurants or retailers. Any delay or error in suppliers` work will affect the restaurants and as a result the customers` satisfaction.

In order to reveal the main components of logistics management tasks, the Figure 1 demonstrates the elements of “logistics mix”.

Storage Facilities	This element of Logistics Mix implies the warehouses, stock rooms or distribution centres. For retailers this element is very important, due to necessity of quick reaction on demand for products. Retailers manage these facilities to enable them to keep stock in anticipation of demand. In terms of farm logistics, this element is less important, because the key task is quick delivery of products from the local farmers to restaurants and avoiding the long-term storage of products. Both farmers and restaurants are interested in timely delivery of the order.
Inventory	Inventory implies the finished products and/or component parts. Farm inventory

	includes feed, tools and machinery, land and facilities, cattle etc.
Transportation	Most products have to be transported from the place of their production to consumption. This element is extremely important because it involves the time which needed for transportation and the safety of carried products. Transport operation might involve different forms of transport depending on the region, infrastructure and products` features that have to be considered in order to safely carry the products.
Unitisation and Packaging	A lot of customers purchase the products based on the packaging and product looks. However, in terms of farm products, the main aspect is freshness and product looks are not too important. For the restaurants and for the farmers, the most important thing is the quality of packaging that able to keep the products safe and fresh during the transportation. Many restaurants offer to the customers the opportunity to purchase farm products at the restaurant, and usually sell them in glassware or in plastic containers with the label of the restaurant or farm where the product was produced. In that case, the packaging simplicity is more beneficial, because the overall image of farm products implies the simplicity and freshness.
Communications	This element is crucial in terms of necessity of retailers to have an information about the demand and supply and, most importantly, to use that information for implementation more efficient logistics

	operations.
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Figure 1 "Logistics Mix" (Kerstin Gustafsson 2009:42)

Based on the Logistics Mix analysis we can see that all these elements should be inter-linked in order to implement an effective work. Moreover, there are some differences in logistics management task operations of retailers and restaurants that order fresh products from the local farmers.

There are many things that should be taken into consideration in creating the right system such as the distance from the farm to restaurant, because it could imply different conditions of transportations. For instance, if the chef of the restaurant located in Saint-Petersburg decides to make an order of a certain product from the farm located in Moscow, it requires a longer transportation time and probably different conditions for products, while purchasing the products from the farm located in countryside of Saint-Petersburg might allow the selection of various transport forms because the distance is short.

One of the very promising types of business is the organisation of delivery of products to cafes and restaurants. Entrepreneur needs a business plan which includes detailed strategy of providing this service, and then he will need special vehicles equipped with refrigeration units, for the carriage in which the products will remain fresh for a long time. Efficient transportation service is demanded and the interest in such service among the retailers, restaurants and farmers is increasing due to growing trend of farm healthy food.

One of the possible future trends is the developing of eco-friendly transportation of local fresh products. There are a lot of advantages for local entrepreneurs and for the environment that could bring such positive changes and innovations of transportation field. One of the pioneers in the field of eco-friendly food transportation is the Netherlands, where people are concerned not only about the quality of products but also about the way of their delivery.

The main idea of the new project "Foodlogica" is the environmentally friendly transportation of local farm products. Local food system becomes more stable, and CO2 emissions are reduced due to the fact that the products do not have to be delivered for a long distances from other countries. "Foodlogica" implies the transportation directly

from the local farmers to restaurants and cafes of Amsterdam using only eco-friendly transport modes. Firstly, products are loaded onto a large electric boat, which carries them to the capital, and then the products are loaded on electrical trucks, which delivering the goods to local markets, shops, cafes and restaurants in Amsterdam. Another type of delivery is cargo tricycle, which can carry up to 300 kilograms of products. Authors of this idea argue that this method avoids emissions and standing in traffic jams. “Foodlogica lives to elevate the virtuous cycle of food in the urban ecosystem by integrating convenient, zero-emission transport to local businesses” (Foodlogica 2016).

The proposed idea could be implemented in other countries as well, and increasing attention to the safety of the environment likely will stimulate the developing of eco-friendly transportation. The core thing is specifics of each particular area and analysis of region`s potential. Some types of eco-friendly transport modes could not be adapted to current infrastructure of some cities, so it requires time for establishing needed conditions or realisation of other innovative ideas based on the available infrastructure.

6 Gastrobar in Saint-Petersburg as a business idea

The general concept and idea of Gastrobar is relatively new for catering industry in Russian market. The idea of such places implies the business concept halfway between a bar and a restaurant, which is already widely used in many large cities around the world. “Originally, a gastrobar was a hotel establishment that tried to approach haute cuisine, serving innovative tapas at accessible prices. The word was coined and used the first time by journalist José Carlos Capel in July of 2008 (Joselito Lab Blog 2013).

Nowadays in almost every city in the world there are a lot of gastrobars which offer unique dining experience and have something original and innovative for the customers. The concept and main idea of gastrobar implies the offering gastronomy in a bar setting. One of the key things about gastrobar is a rational usage of limited space. Normally, gastrobars are relatively small but with unusual and attractive design. Interior and ratio of affordable prices and quality of food are the key points for successful gastrobar.

However, some gastrobars choose another way of differentiating and offer variety of dishes that could be considered as 'gourmet' and accordingly the prices are higher. Depending on customers' preferences they are able to choose between gastrobars which offer unique dishes "not for everyone" for the higher prices or cheaper type of food but combined with great dine out experience. However, gastrobars that offer even "gourmet" dishes usually have affordable pricing policies comparing to fine cuisine luxurious restaurants.

Due to circumstances of financial crisis restaurateurs have to search new ways and fresh ideas for supporting their businesses. Nowadays customers can see variety of new places that have an additional word "Gastrobar" in their official names. This word is relatively new for consumers, so it catches people who tend to try everything innovative.

In the restaurant industry and the world of gastronomy you should continually reinvent and develop in order to stay relevant. At the initial stage personnel and management staff of each gastrobar establish the main concept and unique idea. It is highly important to identify the competitive advantage which will differentiate your place from competitors.

As a competitive advantage it could be taken the specific type of product, which you can use for making your food and unusual interior design. Entrepreneurs are searching for new more flexible ways to expand the target audience. In terms of high competition, new establishments that do not belong to any food chain, are looking for new ways to attract the customers' attention: choosing innovative and unique location for restaurant opening, the unusual technology for delivery order, food trucks as the restaurants "on wheels" and other high-tech ideas.

Each organisation as well as gastrobars, should clearly identify their resources and core competencies in order to determine its sustainable competitive advantage. If offering farm products is considered as a component of competitive advantage, the core competencies of the restaurant should be the long-term reliable relationships with the farm products suppliers, effective marketing strategy and high-skilled staff.

It is also should be taken into consideration that only well-skilled chefs are able to make high-quality food and maximise the value of fresh farm products. Competitive

advantage sets the organisation apart from the competitors. Confidence of the customers that they are able to enjoy fresh high-quality food is the guarantee that your guests will come back to you again and again.

Saint-Petersburg is one of the most popular touristic destinations in Russian Federation and according to this status; the city is constantly developing in all areas of hospitality industry. Saint-Petersburg is also known as the most innovative city in Russia and of course many developments and innovations also apply to the restaurant business.

Moreover, there is a big demand among local people in Saint-Petersburg for new openings and willingness to visit them. Russian customers tend to visit new places and be aware of new trends related to restaurant industry. Different kinds of events such as opening of a new restaurant are usually very widely publicised. Communication channels such as restaurant blogs, online city guides, Instagram accounts and mass media such as local TV channels always stay focused on hot news and topics related to restaurant industry and grand openings in the city.

In conditions of financial crisis a lot of people still would like to spend their free time at some place where they are able to try well-cooked food, and where guests can enjoy nice interior and atmosphere. The one thing that is changed is unwillingness of people to pay a very high price for such service and more and more consumers now prefer gastrobars and small cafes with attractive design and menus offering simple and fresh food, rather than expensive restaurants. This tendency might be caused by the increasing desire of people to consume more healthy food made with local ingredients, because these products have been grown in countryside not far away from the city. However, this tendency does not mean that people are looking for places with cheap prices, the dining out experience is still equal to certain costs in customers' minds and quite big amount of people visit restaurants only in case of special occasion or for celebrating something.

Russian market of catering industry is very perspective and it is constantly growing, and one of the reasons is the increase of purchasing power of Russians. People are looking for fair ratio of price and quality of the food that they purchase. "The concern for health in particular among Russian consumers can be considered as the main reason for increasing production and consumption of organic products" (Sharova 2013).

The idea of Gastrobar with fresh farm products from customers` point of view:

Young people are prone to visit new places, check-in there and post pictures on social nets. This tendency is one of the driving forces to open creative gastrobars with unique idea which is able to differentiate it from other restaurants. The majority of visitors are young people who pay a lot of attention to other aspects of dining out experience besides the quality of food. The design, location and atmosphere are big parts of the overall expression of the gastrobar.

Many people prefer to visit unique place, which is not belonging to any food chain. It is very popular among young people in Saint-Petersburg to spend a lot of free time, especially starting from Friday evening till Sunday evening at some trendy places of the city. Nowadays, gastrobars are more than just a place where you can have fresh breakfast, lunch or dinner, it is a place that brings together people with the same interests and tastes and creates some kind of community.

Citizens of Saint-Petersburg love their home city, and the understanding that they choose gastrobars where the food is made with the locally grown farm products makes them feel proud of their choice. Supporting of all developing industries in Saint-Petersburg by the locals is very pronounced, because Saint-Petersburg aims to be a leader in many business sectors in Russia and in Europe as well.

Tendency to consume fresh food is increasing and healthy lifestyle is getting very popular, so the idea of using farm local products in the menu is quite perspective in terms of demand.

The idea of Gastrobar with fresh farm products from entrepreneurs` point of view:

Entrepreneur will be able to run own business and implement the concept which he is interested in, avoiding cliché imposed by the chain restaurants. The ability to stay individual could open new opportunities. For instance, running a gastrobar gives an opportunity for entrepreneur and chef to include to the menu those dishes that they really want to. Choosing the specialisation that supervisors like the most gives the gastrobar the ability to find its niche and maximise its potential.

From financial point of view, the purchasing the products from the local producers contributes to developing and supporting of local economy and farm industry in region

generally. Partnership between local farms and gastrobars provides mutual benefits for both parties.

Big advantage is also the ability to change the main concept of gastrobar in short terms, as it does not require the large costs comparing to potential rebranding of a big fine cuisine restaurant. Mobility of gastrobar in terms of changing the style and concept if needed seems to be very advantageous.

Possible obstacles and threats:

Food service Industry needs a very strict control, and some problems might occur at the step of carrying out the mandatory certification of quality of food that restaurants offering to the guests. Necessary control measures must be implemented in all types of catering establishments, such as in small cafes and gastrobars as well as in fashionable fine cuisine restaurants.

First of all, those restaurants that have accepted voluntary certification receive a huge profit and increasing of demand, because the customers are sure about the quality of food and by visiting certain restaurants guests know exactly that all the dishes are made from only fresh and healthy ingredients.

Secondly, the policy of mandatory certification allows the government to attract a large percentage of the population to a healthy lifestyle. Important issue for entrepreneurs is to make sure that purchased from the local farmers products are matching the declared quality. Customers want to see the certificates, marks of quality, sometimes detailed information about the producer and farm, when they buy local products or make an order. Managers of the gastrobars have to be sure that necessarily information is open and available for the guests.

One of the difficulties in Russian market is the incorrect perception of “healthy food” among the people. Quite big amount of customers still associates healthy food with the diets, and it perceives that people who consume healthy food want to lose the weight, or they have any health problems. However, nowadays this conclusion is not totally correct, and healthy food is a big part of a lifestyle and people who follow this trend have different personal goals. Changing of perception of healthy food among the audience is crucial for attracting guests to gastrobars that offer fresh products.

Special attention should be paid to the quality of equipment that used for the processing, storage and cooking in the gastrobars and restaurants. Fresh farm food requires special equipment that ensures gentle attitude in order to keep healthy elements of the products. There is a big variety of this equipment on the market such as special pans, double boilers etc. Purchasing of high-quality and well-functioning equipment is necessary, because cost savings on this might lead to dissatisfied customers and poor service.

Responsible attitude to the way of cooking and storage of the products is one of the basic functions of each successful organisation dealing with food and customer service. In order to avoid any problems related to the quality of food in gastrobar, it is necessarily to monitor and constantly check the equipment.

One of the most important parts is infrastructure of the region. For instance, the condition of the roads is directly connected with the efficiency and delivery time of products produced on the local farms to the restaurants. As it was mentioned previously, Saint-Petersburg aims to the leading positions of each sector, so the current conditions of roads and general infrastructure are satisfying. Advanced technologies are using for improving and developing the infrastructure of the city.

6.1 Real examples of successful gastrobars and restaurants in Saint-Petersburg that focus on local farm products:

The idea to use farm products is not very innovative and competitive market already exists, however there is enough space for new entrants and entrepreneurs with fresh ideas, who ready to introduce something interesting and tempting for potential customers. The examination of the main successful examples of the restaurants offering a farm menu in Saint-Petersburg was based on the actual visits and collecting information from the restaurants` representatives.

One of the key factors of success is the deep understanding of the industry and existing competitors. Identification of direct rivals will help to determine strengths and weaknesses of your organisation on the market. Gastrobars that focused on farm healthy products are already well-known in Saint-Petersburg, and the pioneer is the place called "LavkaLavka" which is the first gastrobar that announced the offering of fresh farm products.

“LavkaLavka” is the gastronomic space, where very often take place different kinds of events, such as late family breakfasts, master classes from the best chefs of Saint-Petersburg etc. Each event is accompanied by tasting of seasonal fresh products. “LavkaLavka” is supporting the using of seasonal ingredients for their freshness, transparency of origin and responsible consumption – these are principles that generate respect and trust. There is an opinion that "farm products always require an individual approach," however despite the possible difficulties and understanding that the specificity of work with fresh products exist too, “LavkaLavka” is a reliable and regular supplier of farm products to many other restaurants in Saint-Petersburg. Being first in the industry usually guarantees an awareness and increased initial interest among the potential customers; however “LavkaLavka” is also able to keeping the target audience and involving new partners for cooperation and exchanging of experience.

Another key of success of “LavkaLavka” is its chef Igor Grischechkin, who is well-known in Saint-Petersburg as a great professional with unique taste. Direction of “LavkaLavka” mostly was determined by Grischechkin. Great skills of the chef combined with the high responsibility and respect to work are necessarily for the long-term success, because the personality of the chef is an important component of competitive advantage.

Strength of “LavkaLavka” is also the well-developed technological side of running a customers` service. “LavkaLavka” has a web page where everyone can get an easy access to the full catalogue of fresh products with their descriptions and make an online order. Such time-saving service makes the purchasing process easier for people who do not have enough time to visit the restaurant and buy farm products there.

Customers can leave their comments about the service, make discussions and share the opinions related to different topics. Website of “LavkaLavka” has a blog format with numerous interesting articles, so it also entertains people. Additionally to all mentioned helpful features of “LavkaLavka”, there is one more very important aspect, such as an eco-friendly policy of the organisation. For instance, “LavkaLavka” accepts the glassware in order to reuse it. Moreover, couriers of “LavkaLavka” are ready to take away customers` used batteries that will be passed to the collection point for hazardous waste.

Restaurant “CoCoCo” is a good example of the place that became popular from the opening caused by the popularity of its owners, which are the leader of famous group “Leningrad” and his wife. When the place is associated with any public and famous person it is also the guarantee of a high interest among the local population. “CoCoCo” is focusing on Russian cuisine and all the dishes are cooked only with local farm products. Menu mostly consists of those products that local farmers and fishers can supply during all seasons. Interesting thing is that chef of “CoCoCo” is Igor Grishechkin who is also the chef of “LavkaLavka”. Moreover, “LavkaLavka” is the supplier of farm products for “CoCoCo”. Minimising the risks by choosing well-qualified chef and reliable supplier is the strategy of restaurant`s management.

Interesting decision is including the farm menu as an alternative as it was made in Italian restaurant “Barbaresco”. Italian chef of “Barbaresco” started to use locally produced farm products for making the dishes of Italian cuisine, and this decision was highly appreciated. Suppliers and products were selected in collaboration with farmers of “LavkaLavka”. The whole farm menu consists of just seven dishes; however it makes them more special. Fresh local products combined with familiar Italian recipes gave the restaurant a special charm.

Using the farm menu is getting very popular, since this is a great decision, which gives an opportunity for the restaurants to open the space for new creative offers. Another example of the well-known restaurant in Saint-Petersburg with a good reputation is “Stroganoff Steak House & Grill”, which is located outside of the city. “Stroganoff” decided to focus on fresh breakfasts and serve “farm breakfasts”. These breakfasts with fresh dairy products from local producers became extremely popular among the local citizens. The opportunity to order take-away breakfast any time of the day attracted a lot of customers, and the possibility to buy fresh farm products in the restaurant opened an additional branch of income.

Another example of the restaurants with local farm products in Saint-Petersburg is “Volna” restaurant. There is no separate menu with farm products in “Volna”, but local farm products are used for a large number of items on the menu as a better and more appropriate to the chef`s requirements. It is very difficult to find long-term stable suppliers during the whole year, so chef in “Volna” purchases some of the products from farms located in Moscow and in Finland. However, “Volna” prefers seasonal products as well and buying them from the local producers. Being quality-oriented is crucial for

the restaurants and gastrobars that position themselves as focusing on healthy lifestyle.

Based on the research, it could be concluded that the general idea of opening gastrobar with fresh farm products in Saint-Petersburg seems to be fairly perspective and demanded despite the existing competition. The competition level is medium due to developing and growing farm industry in Saint-Petersburg. The main obstacle is the finding the local producers that will be able to provide fresh farm products during the year. The establishing of long-term reliable relationships is the key. Furthermore, additionally to healthy food, the gastrobar should offer to the guests the full impression of their visit. The positive impression implies the range of high-quality fresh cuisine, good service, affordable price policy and attracting design of the space. Customers are willing to pay for the unique experience, so the gastrobar's goal is to make the guests want to come back.

7 Promotion and World Future Trends

Due to technological growth the awareness of positive impact of healthy lifestyle is increased. More information is available and easy accessible for people. There are a lot of online articles, motivational Instagram pages and Apps for smartphones, which help people to follow latest news and trends of healthy lifestyle. Since the number of smartphone users is growing, it opens new possibilities for restaurant business operators to attract the target audience.

One of the key figures whose opinion is extremely interesting in terms of world future trends in food industry is Frederic Loeb, who is the French expert and the marketing specialist. During the Sirha Moscow 2014 exhibition he shared his thoughts and predictions related to the new directions and world tendencies in the restaurant industry and at the international World Cuisine Summit conference he identified the most promising trends for the future of global gastronomy.

The main gastronomic trends imply the using of organic products from local producers, the rejection of imported food and industrial processing and cooperation with the local farmers. Industry is expecting the increase in households and different kinds of farms that produce various types of products.

Local farming has a small, but significant competitive force to mass production and wasteful use of resources. In the future, drawing up menus will require fresh, local ingredients, so the chefs need any longer to develop their own vegetable gardens, have homemade products or provide fresh local products through partnerships with local suppliers. The desire to consume fresh and locally produced goods is increasing among the consumers. More and more people are becoming conscious concerning the food that they eat. The overall interest to food is increasing and particularly interest to catering industry.

Based on the Frederic Loeb`s speech there could be made several main predictions and ideas about the world future tendencies:

Fine Cuisine will still stay the way of self-expression and art, however the in the future more demanded will be Quick Service and Fast Casual.”A fast casual restaurant is a type of restaurant, found primarily in the United States, that does not offer full table service, but promises a higher quality of food with fewer frozen or processed ingredients than other fast food restaurants” (Wikipedia 2016).

Social and ecological responsibility is another issue which has a huge impact on the environment and society. Strengthening of social and environmental responsibility in each country is very individual, and outside experts cannot tell what to do in order to solve the problem, however the direction can be given, and another trend is the importance of learning how to use local resources and consume the local food.

It should be taken into consideration that perception of healthy food can differentiate among the countries based on available resources and conditions. In many European countries the national and local cuisines are perceived as something belonging to healthy diet, while in Asia the food contamination and toxicity provoked a strong consumer confidence crisis. Rational using and consumption of local products of a certain area and maximising their using for making traditional food and fresh dishes are the best ways to promote and popularise local cuisine. There is a tendency to returning to forgotten recipes, simple food, farm menu and smaller portions.

Catering industry is now on the way to popularisation of restaurants with healthy food and healthy diet is strongly depended on the qualification of personnel such as chefs. Depending on the chef`s policy the portions of the dishes and choice of the products

are made. The importance of a healthy diet is inevitably linked to the problem of obesity and overweight, which is relevant for all countries of the world. People overeat and eat more than they need to meet the vital needs and this is the chefs` responsibility to make portions smaller and find the best proportion of used products in order to make the food with saved nutrients and qualities.

Obesity is a well-known big problem for many countries, especially for United States. The paradox is that childhood obesity is increasing in those countries, which are considered as areas of healthy food- for example, in the Mediterranean countries. The problem of obesity among adults and children should be solved by the policies of each country for promotion of healthy lifestyle. Since healthy food is a new trend, it should be to easier to convince young people to care of their health.

Focusing on menu for kids is crucial and each restaurant should try to find the balance and solve the problem. Nowadays parents are very concerned about healthy food for their children. The basic approach is to teach children while they are growing to balanced and nutritious diet, sufficient portions in order to avoid overeating and then demonstrate to kids personal positive examples of healthy lifestyle.

7.1 Future of World Gastronomy: Brazil, Russia and China

Related to the future trends Frederic Loeb (РесторановедЪ №5 2013) states:” We believe that the gastronomic future of the planet belongs to Brazil, Russia and China .Of course, we need time, energy, enthusiasm, need bosses and need raw materials - to work! Both in Moscow and in Saint-Petersburg there are several star chefs”.

Brazil, Russia and China are representing the future of world gastronomy, because these are countries with huge areas and the abilities to grow absolutely all kinds of products that lead to a higher probability to develop the catering industry in different directions. According to Frederic Loeb`s opinion based on the surveys and interviews of major experts from different countries- Russia has a lot of perspectives for developing the culture of healthy food and catering industry. The interest in the revival of national cuisine is growing and traditional recipes are already using in many restaurants.

Through different communication channels it is getting possible to distribute and share more cognitive information related to the positive features of traditional cuisine and to tell people about events, which they can visit and try such cuisine. Simple traditional cuisine has many beneficial properties, but in addition to this, it is also the way to get familiar with your culture and roots. Real benefits of healthy eating begin with respect to the food that we eat. Introducing people to traditions of national cuisines and to benefits of local products is the way to teach people be satisfied with the products that they have and increase interest to their culture.

Cultural events include food festivals that getting quite popular among the population of all ages. Food festival is a great opportunity to benefit all involved sides- organisers of the event, invited restaurants and cafes that can provide their food and advertise them as well as visitors, which will be able to spend their free time and enjoy different types of food and cuisines.

One of such food festivals took place in Montreal, Canada in June 2016. "Le Eurofestival de Montreal" was organised by Canadian Media Group, which is one of the leading advertising services in the province of Quebec in Canada. CMG brings together a number of companies operating in different areas of advertising: media print, electronic, radio and television and Internet. CMG is operating in Russian and running its social accounts and pages in Russian, English and French, what helps to share information with a bigger audience speaking different languages.

This festival is a good example of event organised by Russian community that allowed visitors to enjoy the performances of various traditional Russian and European musicians in combination with possibility of tasting different products and food provided by local restaurants and cafes that offer healthy traditional cuisines. One of the goals of this festival was an attempt to bring together in one place the maximum number of representatives of local restaurants and cafes, which offer fresh traditional food of absolutely different countries and cultures.

The interest of customers to themed restaurants and to creative approach of the chef is growing. People pay attention to interior design, atmosphere, the quality of tableware and other things. The general expressions from the dining experience are playing very significant role in choosing the suitable place in customers' minds.

7.2 The future of flavours: freshness, naturalness, variety of spices.

People are getting more interested in new combinations of flavours and new tastes, the desire to try something unusual is increasing and opportunities of new tasting experiences are attracting the customers. However, people will stay loyal to fresh and natural flavours. According to Frederic Loeb, in the future the most commonly used products will be seafood and fish as well as vegetables that will also be highly demanded.

Another trend is increasing interest in exotic cuisine and the rediscovery of local products. As Frederic Loeb (РестрановедЪ №5 2013) said: "For example, in Northern Europe, where the natural food culture is low enough, "fusion" cuisine is developing. In Russia people love Asian food in adopted version for locals. In Asia, people also love "fusion" cuisine: Chinese, for example, easily perceiving French cuisine, while in Japan - Mexican boom. On the other hand, in Southern Europe people are rediscovering local products". The conclusion that could be made based on this research is that there is a big demand and interest in local products.

Big trend that was predicted is the desire to come back to simple but well-cooked cuisine. Demonstration chef`s skills by creating culinary masterpieces based on a limited set of local products will attract people. Fast food chains with a focus on gourmet that require a full range of services and a gourmet restaurant with a small customers flow, will be replaced by restaurants that are able to meet the needs of visitors who want an affordable healthy good quality food . Cooking with fewer ingredients from local producers (especially - the meat and seafood), simple methods of preparation - allows chefs to demonstrate their taste and skills of creating original dishes from simple ingredients that were carefully selected.

In conclusion, it could be mentioned that people became much more conscious about the products that they consume and due to technological growth, the awareness among the population about the healthy lifestyle is increasing. Technological growth allows people easily get an access to information related to any cuisine, ingredients that used in any certain dish, what kinds of awards has any particular restaurant, professional biography of the chef etc. This is a very good sign of people`s awareness which leads to general increase in the standard of living among the population. Tendency to resumption of traditional recipes and using fresh local products, the control of

diets for children and correct composition of balanced menus for kids portend positive outcomes.

8 Conclusion

The goal of this paper was the analysis of using local farm products as a sufficient component of restaurant's competitive advantage. Based on the executed research it could be concluded that the interest in healthy food is increasing in many countries and supporting of local farmers is growing. Consuming healthy food is a big trend nowadays, so restaurants and farmers will cooperate in order to satisfy customers' wants.

The research focused on small local farms, rather than big farms or corporations with huge production volume, because both of these types of farming have different specifics and difficulties. Urban farming is a future sector of development in many regions. In case of potential cooperation between the restaurants and local farms, one of the problems is establishing reliable relationships on regular basis. Transparency and even interactivity is very important in farming.

There is lack of trust between local chefs and farmers, because chefs want to see how the products are producing and only in that case they could believe in freshness and naturalness of the products. Farming as a new trend should be more open for cooperation and aiming to partnerships with local unique projects. In that case, the developing of agro-tourism could be very effective as well.

The production process in farms should be transparent and available for people, so potential consumers and business partner will more likely purchase fresh products. In regard to pricing policy, the core thing is that mostly people are willing to pay a higher price for the farm products, if it is a clear guarantee of a high quality.

The research included the overview of farm sectors in Russia and in United States. The comparison of these two countries it terms of developing the farm industry, demonstrated several most important factors. First of all, the thing that hinders the developing of farming in regions of Russia is the lack of governmental support such as financial

help, credits and grants, stimulating programs etc. Many entrepreneurs are not ready to take risks without supporting of local administration.

Meanwhile, in United States the involvement of the government in developing of farming has a long history. Moreover, farming in United States is a fundamental part of a culture. Farmers in United States are better adapting to innovations and use technologies in production, and in Russia the modernisation of existing machinery is still complicated and costly for the farmers.

Another aspect is the lack of unified standardisation system of farm products. Comparing to Europe, where consumption of organic food has long been an attribute of a certain standard of living, the classification of organic products does not exist in Russia. Core task for the future is the creating of centralised system of governmental certification of fresh farm products. Nevertheless, Russia has a big potential for development of local farming due to natural available resources and increasing living standards of population.

One chapter of the research paper was dedicated to study the gastrobar in Saint-Petersburg as a business idea. Catering industry is well-developed in Saint-Petersburg, and the level of competition is very high. However, different types of gastrobars are very popular among the citizens, and restaurants that offer fresh farm products attract customers` attention.

First difficulty that entrepreneur might face is the dealing with poor quality resellers, which actually are not the organic food stores and they do not have any confirmation of quality of goods that they are selling. The better way is the establishing of direct relationships between restaurant and a farmer with a possibility to visit and control the production process. Additionally, as soon as the restaurant will contract with a farmer, the disruptions of regularity of supplying the products might occur. The seasonality of the products might be a problem for drawing up the menu.

However, the mentioned problems could be solved in the future and the main factor is the increasing demand for local farm products. Using farm products is very beneficial for every market players, but it is not enough for being the competitive advantage. Restaurant or gastrobar should offer something else additionally to offering the farm products. Interview with one of the chefs in Saint-Petersburg (see Appendix 1) showed that

idea of using local fresh products is very promising, but restaurants have to introduce something additional in order to stay competitive and unique.

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Interview

Interviewee: Oleg Pyatakov, the Chef of “Food Park” restaurant which belongs to “Ginza project” restaurant chain. “Ginza Project” is an international restaurant holding with more than hundred restaurants in Saint-Petersburg, Moscow, Rostov-on-Don, Tula, London, New-York and Baku.

Could you identify the main advantages and difficulties in using the fresh farm products in the restaurant?

Obviously, the main advantage is a better quality and taste of the local farm products. All the best restaurants of the world use the products grown in the area where the certain restaurant is located. This means that the chef cares about the quality and there is an opportunity to negotiate with the local farmers the improvement of quality and taste of the products that leads to the customers` satisfaction. Everyone knows that dairy products produced in countryside are always more delicious than those that people can find on the market shelves. Concerning the difficulties, there is another side of the medal which is the product cost, therefore the final price. In order to survive on the market the farmers have to sell their products for a higher price. However the quality is much better as well, so the chef has all rights to be proud of it and announce in the menu that the products are from the local farms. Fresh products are advantage, but with a short shelf life and this is the task for the chef to maximise the rational using of the products.

What is your opinion about the cooperation between restaurants and the local farms on the regular basis? Does it seem to be promising and beneficial solution for both sides?

The partnership between restaurants and local farms seems to be very perspective, because it implies the mutual benefits such as stable income for both sides. Interest to healthy lifestyle is increasing, so there is a demand for fresh products, and restaurants are ready to offer healthy food to the guests. Restaurants are interested in seeking the reliable local suppliers in order to provide high-quality service during the year. Moreover, purchasing the products from local producers is beneficial for the local economy and for developing of household industry of the region.

How do you understand the “fine cuisine” and “casual cuisine”? To which category does your restaurant belong to?

“Fine cuisine” or “haute cuisine” implies the culinary art of fine food and drinks. When customers hear “fine cuisine” they expect to see the great performance of the chef and experience the delightful combinations of tastes. Nowadays, “casual cuisine” is getting extremely popular, and it also implies the gourmet meals with “cost friendly” menu options. “Food Park” belongs to the category of “casual cuisine”, because the main idea of the restaurant is the combination of absolutely different cuisines and types of food in one space. “Food Park” is one of the biggest restaurants of “Ginza Project” chain and there are corner of Italian food, Asian food, Teppanyaki which is a style of Japanese cuisine that uses an iron griddle to cook food in front of the guests, also the variety of street food items.

Do you think that using farm local products is appropriate in both cases mentioned in previous question?

Using farm local products in “fine cuisine” and “casual cuisine” is absolutely appropriate, because the freshness and naturalness of the ingredients used are always a guarantee of a good taste of every dish. Related to “fine cuisine”, the combination of fresh ingredients and more complicated recipes gives a new sound of familiar dishes, as well as the “casual cuisine” tends to be associated with freshness.

Could you give some examples of your favourite dishes made with the farm products in concept of “fine cuisine” and in concept “casual”? What would be the main difference between them?

Due to tendency for consumption of simple food, the favourite dishes of both concepts are those which prepared from fresh fish. Local dairy products that used for making farm breakfasts are very demanded as well. Since “Food Park” is also focusing on street food and this is a big part of the general concept, one of the favourite dishes is wraps made with local vegetables and other fresh ingredients.

How is it possible to make the gourmet dish by using simple farm products?

Farm products accompanied by special spices, sauces and unusual combinations of ingredients could be a great gourmet dish in result. However, the taste is also depends on the chef's skills, and sometimes it is better to avoid the complication of the dish and let the natural tastes play the main role.

We know that the fast food concept is based on the affordable pricing policy; therefore mostly cheap products are used. Farm products have a higher price on the market, so is it possible to adapt somehow farm products to the concept of fast food in order to make this cuisine healthier?

It depends on the willingness of each particular fast food chain to use fresh products of a better quality. It is possible to adapt farm local products to the concept of fast food, but the prices will be increased and there will be the risk to lose a part of target audience.

What is your opinion about the idea of Mikhalkov-Konchalovskiy to create the fast food chain with the Russian character? Which dish would you make "special" inside of this concept?

The idea of fast food chain with Russian character sounds interesting and creative. Due to revival of traditional cuisine that fast food chain could be demanded. The core menu item could be the variety of pancakes with different toppings.

Do you think the idea of using fresh local products is really promising? Also from the point of view of storage of this type of products.

Healthy food and fresh local products are the trend and in order to stay competitive each organisation inside the catering industry should follow the trends. The overall idea of popularisation of farm products among the local people is very promising in terms of developing farm and catering industries in the region and rising of healthy culture among the population. In terms of storage conditions, the core thing is that if the restaurant can afford the purchasing of local fresh products on the regular basis it means that the restaurant can also afford the necessarily equipment and rules for a proper storage will be followed as well.

In your opinion, could be the using of local farm products in the restaurant be the competitive advantage? Or is it not enough?

Using the local farm products is absolutely very strong advantage over the existing competition. However, there should be something else that could attract the customers such as the creative interior design, unusual location or “special” dish that you can try only in one particular restaurant. Great example is “CoCoCo” restaurant that focusing on farm products and its famous dessert “Mom`s favourite flower”, that everyone wants to try and take a photo because it looks very creative. The picture of “Mom`s favourite flower” had one of the leading positions on Russian Instagram when it just appeared on the menu. Creativity and the ability to think outside the box are the key points of successful restaurant.