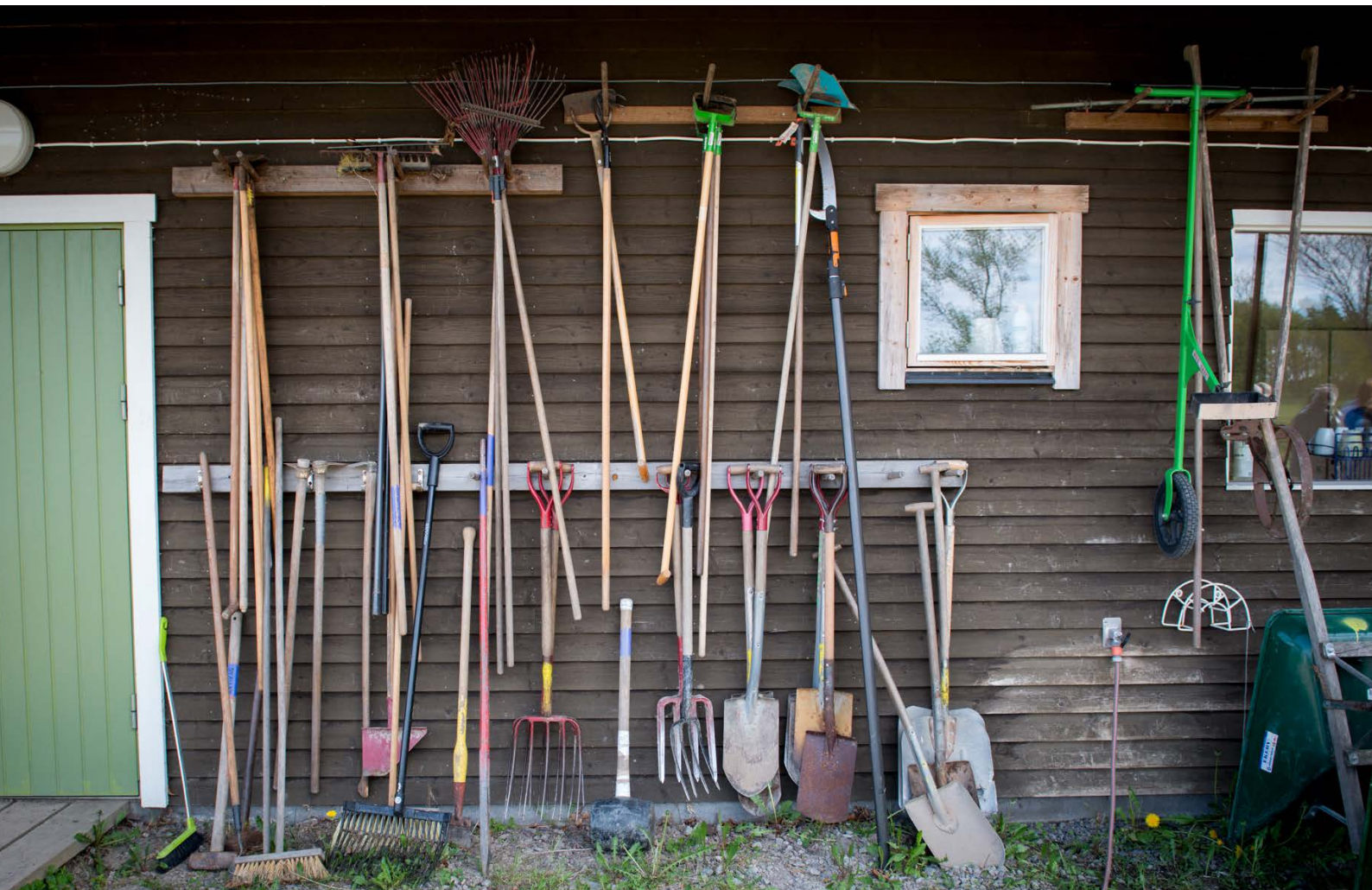


Feasibility Study

Municipal Farming and Food Arena

A model for collaboration with the food sector



Executive summary

Södertälje municipality's intersectional perspective on the food sector provides a unique opportunity to take a comprehensive approach to labor supply, social integration through green rehabilitation and strengthened food security. Södertälje's farming and food arena is a model for collaboration with the following goals:

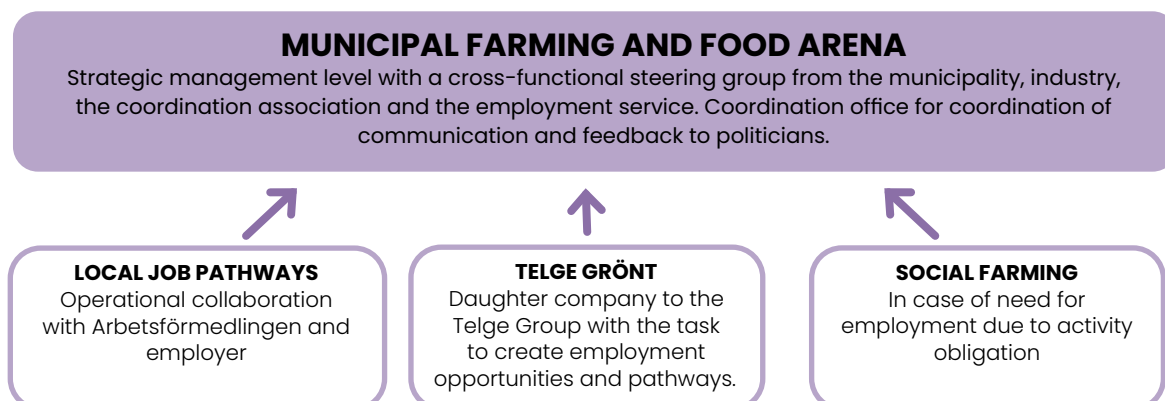
- The Employment and Enterprise Committee should have the political responsibility for the arena.
- Activities should be coordinated by a coordination office under Matlust.
- A cross-functional steering group with representatives from SBK, SK and UK, the Employment Service, the farming and food industry and the Coordination Association should guide the work.
- Local job tracks should be developed to meet the labor needs of the industry.
- A company with a mission to create employment and skills supply in the horticultural and food industry should be established as a subsidiary of the Telge Group.
- Recreation farming can be organized as a way to create employment for people on income support.

This report explores the current conditions and opportunities there are for running a municipal farming and food arena that combines the need for increased sustainable food production, employment, rehabilitation and education. The arena is based on several of Södertälje municipality's strategic documents such as the Farming Strategy and the Food Supply Strategy. The strategies, together with the municipality's diet policy and initiatives within Matlust, provide a unique opportunity to work actively to strengthen the entire food sector, from paddock to plate.

A farming and food arena is expected to help address labor shortages in the sector, while bringing more people closer to the labor market, with benefits for both the individual and the municipality. It will also help to strengthen the food sector as a whole, helping to secure the municipality's food supply in times of crisis. The municipality's own kitchens, with their wide range of activities, play a key role in this work, both as employers and purchasers.

The individuals in the target group are unemployed for various reasons. The group consists largely of newly arrived migrants and refugees, long-term unemployed and people with disabilities. It is worthwhile for the municipality to invest in activities that closer the distance to work and self-sufficiency. Just as individuals' circumstances differ, so too must the interventions be flexible and adaptable.

The feasibility study therefore proposes working in two parallel tracks under a common umbrella. The farming and food arena is the umbrella. The operational collaboration should put the individual's needs at the center and create a coherent process for the individual's path to work and self-sufficiency. Below is an illustration of a model for collaboration that can be used for further processing.



The feasibility study proposes that the Employment and Economic Development Committee should have the main responsibility for the farming and food arena and that a coordination office should be set up under Matlust/Enterprise Department/KSK. The task of the coordination office is to be responsible for coordinating communication with stakeholders within and outside the municipality and with representatives of the industries concerned. In addition, the coordination office is responsible for providing feedback to politicians. A strategic steering group with representatives of SBK, SK and UK, the Public Employment Service, the industry and the Coordination Association is linked to the arena.

For individuals who can be matched to the labor market, local job tracks are proposed as a model for the arena. In the municipality, there are established routines for developing job tracks together with the Public Employment Service and employers.

For individuals who are not ready to be matched to the labour market through job tracks, the feasibility study describes four options for how a rehabilitative activity can be organized. Of the various options, an offensive model is advocated that better than the others responds to the need to strengthen food supply in times of crisis and actively work to strengthen the industry, here called Telge Grönt. It is proposed that the business be organized as a subsidiary of the Telge Group with the task of creating employment and skills supply in the gardening and food industry. The development of this model can advantageously start through projects under municipal auspices and thus be built in several stages. An alternative to this model is to create a business more focused on rehabilitation in collaboration with an existing actor with expertise in the field.

The feasibility study also outlines a scenario where an activity obligation for people on income support is introduced and where employment must be organized within municipal activities, here called "social farming". Recreational farming is in line with the municipality's farming strategy.

The farming and food arena requires cross-functional collaboration at a strategic level with the participation of several of the municipality's committees/offices/departments/units in order to function in the long term. In addition, it is proposed that the Coordination Association, the Public Employment Service, the business community and civil society be involved in the collaboration.



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Introduction

The feasibility study will answer what conditions and opportunities exist for running a municipal farming and food arena that combines the need for increased sustainable food production, employment, rehabilitation and education in the green industries, food processing and distribution. The assignment also includes drawing conclusions about why the association Eko-odlarna i Telge went bankrupt.

The assignment is based on several of the municipality's strategy documents, the farming strategy, which aims to show how the municipality, based on its various roles and functions, will promote local farming and protect the cultivable land farming strategy¹ and the food supply strategy, which aims to highlight food supply as an essential social interest². The municipality's dietary policy and experiences from Matlust are also taken into account in the feasibility study.

The mission statement presents a need to develop proposals on how the municipality can conduct long-term sustainable activities that help to solve the problem of skills supply in the horticultural and food industry, a need for job training and rehabilitation and educational activities. In order to answer the study's questions, the author of the report has conducted several interviews. Working methods and practices from similar activities have been studied, as well as reports on the needs of the sector from other public actors.

Document structure

The feasibility report begins with in-depth chapters on the individuals in the target group and on the varying needs of the sector. This is followed by a summary of the experiences of the Eko-odlarna i Telge and what went wrong. In the feasibility study, we directly answer the question of how an operation similar to the organic farmers in Telje could be organized, with a couple of different options for action that also include the food industry. But the report also points to other options that could complement such an operation, drawing on experience from successful approaches elsewhere in the country and also abroad.

1 Farming strategy Södertälje municipality 2018-2030 (KS 18/165)
2 Food Supply Strategy 2022-2030, Municipality of Södertälje (2022/000158)

Target group with various needs

Based on the overall objective of contributing both to the supply of skills in the identified sectors and to offering opportunities for rehabilitation and educational activities, there is reason to diversify the initiatives based on the conditions and needs of the target group. The common factor for the individuals in the target group is that they are far from the labor market for various reasons. The group consists largely of new arrivals and individuals who arrived in Sweden late in life, the long-term unemployed, both young and old, and people with varying degrees of disability, among others. Some receive activity support from the Social Insurance Agency, some receive income support from the municipality and are subject to social services interventions.

Just as individuals' circumstances differ, interventions must also be adapted. There is no one-size-fits-all solution. The study therefore proposes working in two parallel tracks under a common umbrella. The preliminary study also highlights a third track that may become relevant depending on the outcome of the inquiry appointed by the government to review the requirement for participation in full-time activities in municipal activities. Such a change places increased demands on the municipality to be able to offer employment to people on income support. The content of the inquiry is not yet known, but in conversations with people close to the inquiry it has emerged that it is likely that activities for these individuals will have to be arranged within the municipality; it will not be possible to buy services from municipal or private companies. However, it should be noted that the issue is currently being investigated. The investigation must be presented to the government by April 5, 2024

Sectors with varying conditions

The mission statement for this feasibility study shows that the farming and food arena is aimed at farming, processing and distribution. These are industries with partly different conditions but where all have major challenges with a shortage of labor. In further work, it is important to deepen the insights into the specific needs and conditions of the various industries for a farming and food arena to work as well as possible.

When "sectors" are mentioned in the report below, they refer to these sectors, without going into the specific needs of each sector.

Existing collaboration and local job tracks

Since 2015, Södertälje municipality has had a signed agreement on collaboration with the Swedish Public Employment Service. Since 2022, it has been written into the Swedish Public Employment Service's instructions that the authority must collaborate with municipalities in order to both provide individual jobseekers with appropriate support and, at an overall level, facilitate the planning, coordination and design of support for jobseekers. The local agreement is the responsibility of the labor market unit under the Employment and Enterprise Committee.

One concrete tool in the collaboration has been to develop local job tracks. A local job track is a defined chain of measures for individuals, developed on the basis of employers' needs, offered by the Public Employment Service and the municipality in collaboration.³ A job track should aim for employment with a designated employer and employers should be involved early in the work to describe skills requirements and select participants. The measures that lead to jobs should be flexible and as short as possible. The employment service and the municipality combine training and measures that correspond to the skills needs of the employer and provide individuals with the support they need to complete the job track.

A job track often includes municipal adult education in the form of single courses, vocational packages or language-integrated training, labor market training through the Public Employment Service and internships. There are several examples of local job tracks aimed at companies in the horticultural industry and in food processing. In Södertälje, there are several examples of local job tracks that have been very successful in finding work for people far from the labor market, including bus drivers, grocery retailers and in cooperation with Scania. Appendix 2 describes a job trail from Motala involving Hermelins Grönsaker, among others, which has created many jobs in the horticultural sector. Building on existing collaboration is natural and local job tracks are proposed to be the model used by the farming and food arena to meet the labor shortage in the identified industries.

Eko-odlarna i Telge - lessons learned

Appendix I contains an in-depth analysis of what led to the bankruptcy of Eko-odlarna. The work is based on interviews with participants and officials in the municipality and the coordination association, etc. The conclusion is that there were three main reasons why the business went bankrupt, namely that farming and the work of establishing an infrastructure took too much time and resources, that organization and collaboration, both on site and with public actors, were not optimal, and that financial management was inadequate and profitability from the sale of vegetables was insufficient .4

- The purpose of Eko-odlarna was, according to its statutes, to provide job training. Vegetable growing was thus a means rather than an end of the activity. According to the interviewees, for activities with a similar purpose to work in the long term, the following is required:
- A comprehensive plan with clear organization, objectives and responsibilities for implementation, not least from the public actors expected to contribute resources and participants.
- The plan should be anchored in an inclusive process in the municipality's relevant committees, offices/departments/units and with others who are supposed to be involved in the arena, such as the Coordination Association, the region, the Public Employment Service, business and civil society
- There needs to be sufficient and right skills for the job training. This can include the challenges of building trust and security, language development and, not least, a good overview and understanding of the need for an individual plan and follow-up for step-by-step progress towards work. Not all skills need to be in-house, but it should be clear from the start how this support can be offered to participants from the beginning.

Based on previous experiences from Eko-odlarna, reflections based on the outlook made in connection with this feasibility study and with a bearing on the more comprehensive initiative for a municipal farming and food arena, we outline here four different approaches for an activity similar to Eko-odlarna. Each approach has its strengths and weaknesses, and the choice of approach needs to be weighed up politically and in collaboration with the industry. Input values for all four approaches are that:

- Activities should complement, not replace, cooperation with existing employers.
- The primary mission of the business is to equip individuals far from the labor market
- The municipality, or the entities that are the main providers, are prepared to invest in infrastructure and equipment, and have a long-term financial commitment.

4 These reasons are described in more detail in Annex.

Discussions on the right pathway forward

The arrangements presented below are all based on the target group being individuals in need of rehabilitation. The goal of the activities is not for the individual to get an education or training that can lead to work, but it is about a step-by-step movement so that the individual will eventually be relevant for efforts that can lead to work. The approaches above are based on the fact that the assignment is primarily aimed at the horticultural sector. It would be possible to develop these concepts to include activities in more branches of the food sector.

Later in the report, we justify why the farming and food arena should consist of several components, of which a rehabilitative activity is one.

The latter pathway, where green rehabilitation is organized through an existing health care provider, is likely to be the solution with the shortest start-up time, provided that such an actor exists locally. Pathway 2, where the work is organized as a subsidiary of the Telge Group, is much more extensive, requires greater investment in infrastructure, but could also be a strategically important investment for the municipality's goals within the aforementioned strategies. This approach also broadens the work to not only be about rehabilitation but also to actively work with skills supply to the business community. For this reason, in the final analysis, this feasibility study will advocate this approach

Pathway 1: Community garden

An option that is close to the work-integrating social enterprise Eko-odlarna is to place the business directly under a municipal administration – see for example Mouans-Sartoux in Annex 2. The mission would then be focused on rehabilitation, but the municipality could take greater responsibility for overall structure, follow-up, financial control and leadership.

One risk with this approach is that the commitment of the enthusiasts would fade if the sense of ownership from the participants were to decrease. At the same time, the sense of ownership from the municipality would increase, which would ensure a more long-term approach and that the municipality can more directly benefit from the obvious synergies that a farming and food arena has for sustainability in the ecological, economic and social fields. In addition, there are educational, training and communication opportunities.

Pathway 2: Telge Group

The business is run as a subsidiary of the municipally owned Telge Group. The mission of the owner (the municipality) is to:

- Creating employment and rehabilitation for individuals far from the labor market
- Contribute to the supply of skills in the green industries by training and actively moving staff out of the business and into employment.
- Equip for improved self-sufficiency of vegetables in the municipality

This activity could also be further developed to solve more problems for the sector and the municipality, for example by hiring out staff and supervisors for short or long term assignments with professional farmers. The same service could be offered to farmers in the form of relief workers during holidays, vacation or illness. The hiring out of machinery could also be a service that enables growers who want to scale up their business but are unable to make all the investments.

Its mission to ensure food security could be achieved in two ways. Firstly, by acting as a logistics center for other local producers who have contracts to sell their products to the municipality. Secondly, its own farms contribute to supplying the municipality's needs, albeit only on a small scale. However, there may be value in setting aside more land than is used in peacetime to easily scale up operations during a social crisis. Irrigation, storage and other infrastructure should therefore be sized for a larger scale than needed in a normal year.

The advantages of being part of the Telge Group are that there is established competence and existing support for financial management and leadership. A disadvantage of this arrangement may be that the operations become too extensive and cost-driving.

An activity such as the one described above is best started under municipal auspices in project form to establish structures and facilitate external funding. However, the project design should already include a long-term plan for the location and organizational form of the activity to ensure its survival after the project has ended.

Pathway 3: Work-integrating social enterprise

The business would be run in a similar way to Eko-odlarna, as an independent non-profit or economic association, or alternatively as a foundation or limited company with limited profit interest.⁵ In order to distinguish this option from the first, we outline an economic association run by enthusiasts in the business. As mentioned in the evaluation of the organic farmers, a new start would require some structural changes:

- A long-term cooperation agreement with the municipality where the municipality takes on a responsibility to support the association and its participants.
- A start-up capital that makes it possible to employ or hire the necessary financial, managerial and farming skills.
- The municipality as landowner needs to take responsibility for the infrastructure on the site so that the business can be run without too many logistical obstacles. Choose the best location and invest in infrastructure before starting operations.
- Clear expectations and long-term goals. For example, toning down expectations that the business will be able to become profitable on the sale of its own products.

An activity of this nature would have a narrower remit than that described in approach two. The focus would be on rehabilitation rather than on skills provision. The advantage of this approach is that the experience of Eko-odlarna i Telge shows that there is interest and support for this type of activity. However, a well-functioning vegetable farm requires major investments, not only in infrastructure. The plan for these investments needs to be ready before the business starts.

Possible activities include the Emyhemmet Foundation <https://stiftelsenemyhemmet.se/> (the Emyhemmet Foundation currently has no activities) and the variety of social therapeutic / LSS accommodation available in Järna.

Pathway 4: Green rehabilitation at existing care provider

A fourth option, where greater emphasis is placed on rehabilitation, is to cooperate with existing actors in rehabilitation and care. An example of such activities is highlighted in Annex 2, where the Stora Sköndal Foundation ran the project "Green Rehabilitation - Green Establishment" together with the Coordination Association, the City of Stockholm and the Public Employment Service. The working methods in the project are scientifically proven and the project has been evaluated by accompanying researchers from Ersta Skönda Bräcke University⁶. The project produced a method manual for green establishment.

An activity such as this can act as a stepping stone towards employment and self-sufficiency. The preliminary study has not investigated any local actor with the right skills that could host such an activity. Organizing the activity together with an existing actor ensures better conditions for good financial management and the right skills in the activity. The scientifically based approach to rehabilitation could also be used to advantage in the three previously mentioned approaches.

⁵ The Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth has a publication on choosing a company form for work-integrating social enterprises, "Choosing a company form for work-integrating social enterprises".

⁶ <https://samordningstockholm.se/insatser/gron-etablering/>

Choice of location

The choice of location depends to a large extent on the scale and mission of the operation. An operation that is to have the conditions to conduct rational vegetable farming on a larger scale requires completely different conditions than if the operation is to have a primary focus on rehabilitation. In the latter case, an excessively large farming area can actually have a negative impact on the work.

What is considered suitable land for vegetable farming has been described in detail in a previous assignment for Södertälje municipality, carried out by Wijnand Koker in 2018. In summary, it is the land with the best production conditions that is suitable for vegetable farming.

In a feasibility study for the establishment of a large vegetable farm in Lina, an analysis of the municipality's need for premises was presented. See Annex 3. The feasibility study addresses the need for greenhouses for plant propagation, staff facilities, business premises, warehouses, etc.

Sites mentioned during the feasibility study as provisionally suitable for establishment are Farsta gård, Tvetaberg and Östra Almnäs. At the former site, much of the necessary infrastructure is already in place, but the suitability of the site for vegetable farming in particular has not been further investigated.

Sustainability criteria

The feasibility study has identified four prerequisites for the sustainability of activities in the agri-food arena.

1. A well-anchored and clear governance model with a political mandate
2. Well-developed cooperation between the actors involved
3. The right economic conditions
4. Broad representation in the arena steering group

The agri-food arena involves several councils and municipal offices. It is therefore important that each committee/office/department is involved in the collaboration and allocates the necessary resources for the activities to function optimally.

Ownership & management

Which municipal actors should own the arena?

The municipality has several roles in this work. On the one hand, it is responsible for adult education and Sfi and thus has important tools to equip individuals with the skills that employers demand. The municipality also has a responsibility linked to civil defense, where it has identified the need to promote primary production of food in the local area. Furthermore, the municipality also has an interest in reducing the number of individuals dependent on income support and more profitable businesses with the power to create more jobs in the municipality. All these elements come together in a farming and food arena. It is therefore important that several of the municipality's administrations/offices participate in the collaboration. Responsibility is also shared across several different committees. Particularly important in this work are the Employment and Enterprise Committee, the Social Welfare Committee, the Care Committee and the Urban Planning Committee. The main responsibility should be taken by the Employment and Enterprise Committee as the focus is still on the supply of skills to designated sectors.

Given the thematic focus of the arena, it is proposed that Matlust/Business Department/KSK coordinates the arena and is responsible for a coordination office.

Representatives from SBK, SK and UK should be included in the steering group together with Matlust. Below is a brief description of these municipal actors:

Municipal actors

Social security office (sk)

The social services department is responsible for labor market issues and adults with mental disabilities, among other things. These are two key competencies in order to achieve a collaboration where the individual's path to work is in focus. Both the department for work and livelihood and the adult unit should be represented.

Public Works Department (sbk)

The Public Works Department, which is responsible, among other things, for the farming strategy and for the use of municipal land, should be included in the collaboration with this key competence.

Education Office / Adult Education (uk)

The department responsible for adult education within the Education Office can contribute with the tools available in this area.

Matlust (Department of Economic Affairs/Ksk)

Matlust has accumulated expertise, a network and trust with employers, which is an important strategic part of the collaboration.

Other local and national actors

Below are suggestions for other local and national actors that may be relevant:

Telge Group

Especially if it wants to proceed with the incorporation track

Samordningsförbundet

Should be part of the management structures for planning and coordination of activities.

Other essential actors

A farming and food arena includes a variety of activities such as growing itself with machine operation and planning, storage (dry, refrigerated, frozen), processing, transportation/logistics, buying and selling, marketing, meal planning, cooking, serving, processing, reduction/management of food waste.

Below is an overview of key actors that should be involved in a farming and food arena.

The Employment Service (arbetsförmedlingen)

The Swedish Public Employment Service is responsible for labor market policy and has many of the tools to equip jobseekers to match the needs of employers, including labor market training. The agency's instructions state, among other things, that the agency is to cooperate with municipalities in order to both provide individual jobseekers with appropriate support and, at an overall level, facilitate the planning, coordination and design of support for jobseekers.

Arbetsförmedlingen has a signed agreement with Södertälje municipality. Existing collaboration between Södertälje municipality and the Public Employment Service is described in more detail on page 6

Farming and food industry stakeholders and employers

Involving the business community is important in order to match the efforts with the skills needs of the employing companies. Local industry players that could be involved in the work on farming are LRF Sörmland and Ekologiska Lantbrukarna Sörmland. In terms of food, actors from the hospitality industry (restaurants, public catering, hotels, conferences, tourism, mills, bakeries, confectionery and milk) could be involved. The municipality is a key actor, with activities throughout the chain from purchasing to a food waste reduction strategy. For example, job training in food could be one of the 90 municipal kitchens. The municipality also has many food companies that should be contacted to explore the need for skills provision.

Local job tracks, where the municipality and the employment service can work together to match individuals far from the labor market with employers, would be a good model for building up the farming and food arena. Not least because there are established methods for organizing the work, such as agreements with potential employers. In the development of local job tracks, individual employers in the sectors should be involved early in the process.

In further work on designing the model for the agriculture and food arena, there is reason to further study the results of previously completed projects and surveys regarding skills needs and employers' conditions. Here is a brief account of some of these tracks:

More food - more jobs

The More Food - More Jobs project was a collaboration between LRF, Livsmedelsföretagen, Arbetsförmedlingen and Krinova. The project was funded by the European Social Fund (ESF) and ran between 2019 and 2022. The aim of the project was to increase Swedish food production by strengthening companies and employees, while offering job seekers and career changers a path into an exciting future industry.⁷ The project presents key insights into the supply of skills in agricultural businesses as well as in food businesses. The project has also conducted a sub-study looking at the need for an intermediary, an intermediary who takes on recruitment and/or employer responsibilities on behalf of agricultural and horticultural businesses.

Life-essential skills

The Stockholm County Administrative Board carried out a feasibility study on the supply of skills in Stockholm County's food processing industry called Livs-viktig kompetens⁸. The study draws conclusions in the following areas, among others: ongoing efforts and collaboration, training provision for occupations in food processing, employment in food processing and companies' skills needs. The conclusions of the project can be of great importance if the focus is to be placed on food processing companies.

Stockholm Region

Under the Regional Development Act, the regions are responsible for setting objectives and priorities for regional skills supply work and providing assessments of the county's skills needs in the public and private sectors in the short and long term. Region Stockholm, to which Södertälje belongs, runs, among other things, Kompetensarena Stockholm. Among other things, a survey was presented in 2021 of the Stockholm region's forums where organizations continuously engage in dialogue on skills supply⁹. One of the forums mentioned has some connection with the farming and food arena, namely a regional skills council for the hospitality industry - restaurant, food, hotel, conference, tourism, bakery and confectionery. The purpose of this forum is to strengthen the quality of training that leads to employability in the industry and to increase the attractiveness of training and establishing oneself in the industry. The council includes Visita, Sweden's bakers & confectioners, Member companies Visita and Sweden's bakers and confectioners, Municipalities in Stockholm County - initially Stockholm City and Nacka Municipality, the Swedish Public Employment Service, HRF Stockholm, Stor sthlm. (City of Stockholm convener).

The knowledge gained from the region's work can be valuable in planning the agriculture and food arena.

Training and upskilling

Below are examples of local training and upskilling locations.

Vackstanäsgymnasiet.

Among other things, programs on nature use, gardening, cook, baker, confectioner, only upper secondary education. <https://vackstanas.se/> Vackstanäsgymnasiet is an independent upper secondary school with national intake.

Järna Naturbruksgymnasium

Organic farming and animal husbandry <https://www.jarnanaturbruksgymnasium.se/> "Järna Naturbruksgymnasium offers the Agriculture program with a focus on agriculture. With us, you get both a professional degree and full university entrance qualifications! Upper secondary education only.

⁷ <https://www.lrf.se/las-mer/mer-mat-fler-jobb/>

⁸ Report 2022:7, Stockholm County Administrative Board <https://www.lansstyrelsen.se/stockholm/om-oss/vara-tjanster/publikationer/2022/livs-viktig-kompetens--en-forstudie-om-kompetensforsorjning-i-stockholms-lans-livsmedelsforadling.html>

⁹ https://www.regionstockholm.se/globalassets/4.-regional-utveckling/arbetsmarknad-och-kompetens/kartlaggning-kompetensforsorjningsforum_2021.pdf

Skillebyholm, Education

YH/yrkesvux, garden, restaurant, farm shop, conference <https://www.skillebyholm.com/> "Skillebyholm is a meeting place, a center for biodynamic farming, education and sustainable development."

Vårdinge Folk High School

Eco-vegetarian kitchen, organic farming and gardening, <https://vardinge.fhsk.se/> The school offers general and profile courses both on site and at a distance.

Cultural center in Ytterjärna

Conferences, seminars and exhibitions on sustainable agriculture and food culture. The site includes a hotel and hostel, a garden and garden park. <https://www.ytterjarna.se/guide/kulturcentrum-jarna>

Beras International Foundation.

Training Diet for a Green Planet, strategic leadership and organizational development, lectures on food and the food system <https://www.berasinternational.se>

Komvux Folkuniversitetet in Södertälje.

Courses, restaurant, Swedish as a second language. <https://www.folkuniversitetet.se/vara-skolor/komvux/komvux-sodertalje/>

Berga Naturbruksgymnasium

<https://www.bergagymnasium.se/> The school has a fully functioning farm with associated stables, barn, riding house and boarding school.

Öknaskolans Naturbruksgymnasium

<https://oknaskolan.se/>. The school offers courses in nature tourism, animal care, agriculture and horse husbandry.

Långbro Gård in Mölnbo

<https://langbrogard.se/>. Here you can meet the farm's animals, eat good food, take courses and experience Sörmland's beautiful nature, both the cultivated nature around the farm and the wilder nature in miles of forests with the Sörmland Trail and a variety of sparkling forest lakes.

Hvilan utbildning (Hvilan Education)

Provides labor market training, vocational training and higher vocational education in horticulture. The Hushållningssällskapet is the principal for training that is carried out in three locations in the country, including Stockholm. <https://www.hvilanutbildning.se/>

Examples from other municipalities

This section provides an overview examples from other municipalities and some from other countries. Annex 2 provides more information on some of the examples.

Samordningsbron 2.0 and the European Social Fund (ESF) and the project Samordningsbron and Insteget in Östergötland

The project's target group consists of people who are far from the labor market such as young people, long-term unemployed, newly arrived immigrants, people with reduced working capacity due to disability and sick leave.

The starting point is a model called the Bridge Model, which is based on five different foundations: health, theory, trust, practice and networks. Opportunities for personal development and well-being (health) and the chance to gain new knowledge (theory) that can be directly translated into practical skills (practice)

Inspiration

- Extensive work on models for collaboration,
- Inclusion of various relevant initiatives,
- Organization of work,
- There are good and accurate reports from the work we can learn from.

Challenges

- From the Final Evaluation Report of Serus AB: "From an ownership perspective, I think there simply hasn't been enough will to get all the way there, and so the project hasn't been able to fully realize that goal either."

Motala "Hermelins Gård"

In Motala, the municipality and the Public Employment Service have cooperated under an agreement and designed a local job track for recruiting staff to the horticultural sector. In the first year, a handful of employees were hired during the season. After a few years, some 20 employees are now hired through the local job track annually and more employers have been added.

Inspiration

- Local job tracks are a proven model used in many industries with proven results.
- The work is carried out with existing resources within the municipality and the Public Employment Service, which reduces the need to add resources through project funding. Ensures that the operation also works in the long term.
- Local job paths are based on employers' skills needs, ensuring longer-term results for individuals.

Challenges

- Requires good cooperation between the municipality and the Public Employment Service, when cooperation fails, the work collapses.
- Individuals must be registered with the employment service to be offered help

Stora Sköndal Foundation - Green rehabilitation

<https://www.storaskondal.se/>

Stora Sköndal is in the Sköndal district of Stockholm and comprises several buildings and land. It has its activities in support, care, education and research. The target group for care is new arrivals with mental illness linked to migration/refuge with a need for work-oriented rehabilitation.

Inspiration

- Research-based and a collaboration with the City of Stockholm, Samsordningsförbundet and Arbetsförmedlingen
- Uses a variety of activities such as therapies, gardening and growing and being in nature

Challenges

- Recruitment process
- Unclear objective and content
- Planning ahead for participants

Boodla

<https://boodla.se/>

Boodla works innovatively to harness and develop the green values of cities. It started in 2012 with urban farming as a tool to create security in neighborhoods and spread knowledge about biodiversity, farming and sustainable food systems. Today, Boodla has evolved to work broadly with many new ideas to make available and activate green spaces in the city.

Inspiration

- Low-threshold offer in the local area "building up your own local area"
- Already available in Södertälje municipality
- Safety and security

Yalla Nyköping

<https://www.yallanykoping.se/>

Yalla Nyköping is a work-integrated social enterprise run by foreign-born women. It offers lunch service, catering and cleaning to associations and companies. They have their eatery at Östra Kyrkogatan 30 in Nyköping.

Logistics center in Sandviken

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zR0Oh9coSuM>

Sandviken has its own distribution center to which local suppliers can deliver. They also work with several educational initiatives in schools and preschools and with long-term work to reduce food waste and much more.

Ullandhaug Organic Farm Foundation in Stavanger, Norway

<https://www.ullandhaug-gard.no/>

Established in 1997, the foundation is run on a municipal basis and has crops, a shop, social and educational activities. In collaboration with the municipality of Stavanger, the farm provides job training for people with mental health challenges. The goal is step-by-step movement towards the labor market.

Inspiration

- Good anchoring with decisions in the municipal board and participation from the management in the departments of Parks and Sports, Agriculture and Culture, the Region and the University of Stavanger
- Diversified operation with professional business, educational, cultural and social activities.
- It is noteworthy that the activity has been going on with the same focus since 1997.

Challenges

- Finances for the rehabilitation of farm buildings

Mouans- Sartoux in France

Mouans-Sartoux is a small town in the south of France. Södertälje municipality has collaborated with the city through EU projects and several in the municipality have been visiting.

Mouans - Sartoux has 100% organic food in the school kitchens and 1200 meals every school day. In 2010, they established a community garden on municipal land, about 4 ha. This is to grow vegetables, as an educational, cultural and social initiative. There are 3 people all year round working in the orchard. All are employed by the municipality's Environment Department. There are a total of 20 people in the Environment Department and if necessary, several of them can help in the farming.

Inspiration

- The initiative comes from the municipality and is anchored in the municipal management and relevant departments such as Environment, Technical and Education
- The initiative is an integral part of the organic school food initiative and a successful "Center for Sustainability" in France (similar to MatLust/the food unit in Södertälje)
- It is important that it is a professional grower.
- These are regular deliveries to the municipality
- 3 workers all employed by the municipality

Finding a suitable site

A municipal food and farming arena is more than a place, it is a holistic approach and flexible concept. Many sites can be considered, both municipal and in cooperation with private actors.

For the arena, there can thus be several different locations for the work training in both the farming and food sectors. Participants in the scheme may therefore be spread over many locations for periods of time.

A common meeting place for the arena can be established, for example in a room adjacent to the dietary unit at Moraberg where there is a school kitchen and food service.

Of the possible sites listed above as possible locations for farming activities, Farsta Gård has a very good infrastructure with various farm buildings and a conference center. At Farsta Gård can be arranged for work training in both farming and many work elements for food.

Roles and responsibilities of the organization

It is proposed that Matlust/Näringslivsavdelningen/KSK coordinates the arena. This means, among other things, leading a steering group with representatives of SBK, SK and UK. In addition, Matlust/Näringslivsavdelningen/KSK leads a coordination office. The task of the coordination office would be to be responsible for coordinating communication with stakeholders within and outside the municipality and with representatives of the relevant industries. In addition, the coordination office is responsible for providing feedback to politicians. The function of the coordination office is described in more detail in the organizational model under the chapter Growing and food arena, a model for collaboration.

Basic economic conditions for the start-up and operation of the arena

It is difficult in the feasibility study to give an adequate estimate of the financial conditions for the operation, as this is largely determined by the type of organization Södertälje municipality chooses to build. However, what has emerged from the feasibility study is that a long-term plan for financing needs to be secured from the outset and that it is not realistic, for example, that the farming can generate a surplus, nor cover all operating costs. A further analysis of the economic conditions for the business could also include a socio-economic cost analysis that also takes into account what society gains from more people getting jobs and strengthening social cohesion in the local community.

General observations

Based on labor market needs

Efforts to get more people into work must be based on the employers who will employ the people. If the goal, as described in the mission, is to create a long-term sustainable model, it must be based on the fact that we basically have profitable companies that can afford to hire. Whether the company that then hires is a social enterprise, a professional grower, a food processor or the municipality is less relevant.

Education, training and communication

A farming and food arena should be organized across sectors and in collaboration with others to focus on the individual, through education, training and rehabilitation to achieve a step change closer to work and self-sufficiency. Efforts should be combined to directly meet employers' needs for skills.

The value of social action

It pays for the municipality to invest in activities that move people closer to work and self-sufficiency. A lifelong exclusion for an individual can cost society between SEK 10–15 million¹⁰. The Institute for Labor Market and Education Policy Evaluation writes in a report¹¹ that:

"...Long periods of financial assistance contribute to increased risks of, among other things, ill health and social exclusion, which further hinders the individual's ability to reach the labor market, become self-sufficient and participate in society. Children growing up in families with long-term social assistance have an increased risk of ill health and social vulnerability, a risk that persists into adulthood"

In other words, there are good reasons for Södertälje municipality to invest in rehabilitative activities that move participants closer to the labor market. But for these activities to be successful, they need to:

The activity should be a stepping stone, a first step for people who are not yet ready to work for a professional grower or in the food industry. The purpose of participation must be clear to the participant. For some, the purpose may be to get out of the apartment and the goal is not to become employable through the activity (but to get closer to the labour market). For others, it may be to actually take a first step towards working with the goal of later being able to move on to an internship or employment with another employer.

Make reasonable demands on the business when it comes to growing. Whether the business is run as a social enterprise or as a purely municipal business, the expectation should not be that it will make ends meet by selling vegetables. Instead, the focus should be on giving individuals the best conditions to grow as individuals with an individualized step-by-step plan.

¹⁰ Social investments around children and young people, Ingvar Nilsson, Scandia Ideas for Life, 2012
¹¹ Report 2015:13

A wider perspective on professional farming

The impact of interventions in the arena targeting primary producers will be greater if efforts are made to work together with existing employers. But we also see challenges. If we look at the professional horticulture sector.

Profitability in these businesses is generally low, farms can be difficult to access collectively and many professional growers have neither the time nor the skills to work on rehabilitation and job training. The proposal in LRF's feasibility study for an intermediary is interesting in this context. At the same time, the horticultural industry's challenges are greater than just difficulties with the supply of skills. The industry has low profitability and there are significant thresholds for scaling up operations to the level that would be required to supply the municipality's food needs.

Professional farming has also been highly dependent on foreign labor as it has been difficult to recruit labor within the country. With the proposed changes in the labor immigration framework, the challenges of skills supply may increase further. The proposed Farming and Food Arena can help to strengthen the sector by facilitating the supply of skills but does not solve the major challenges in the sector.

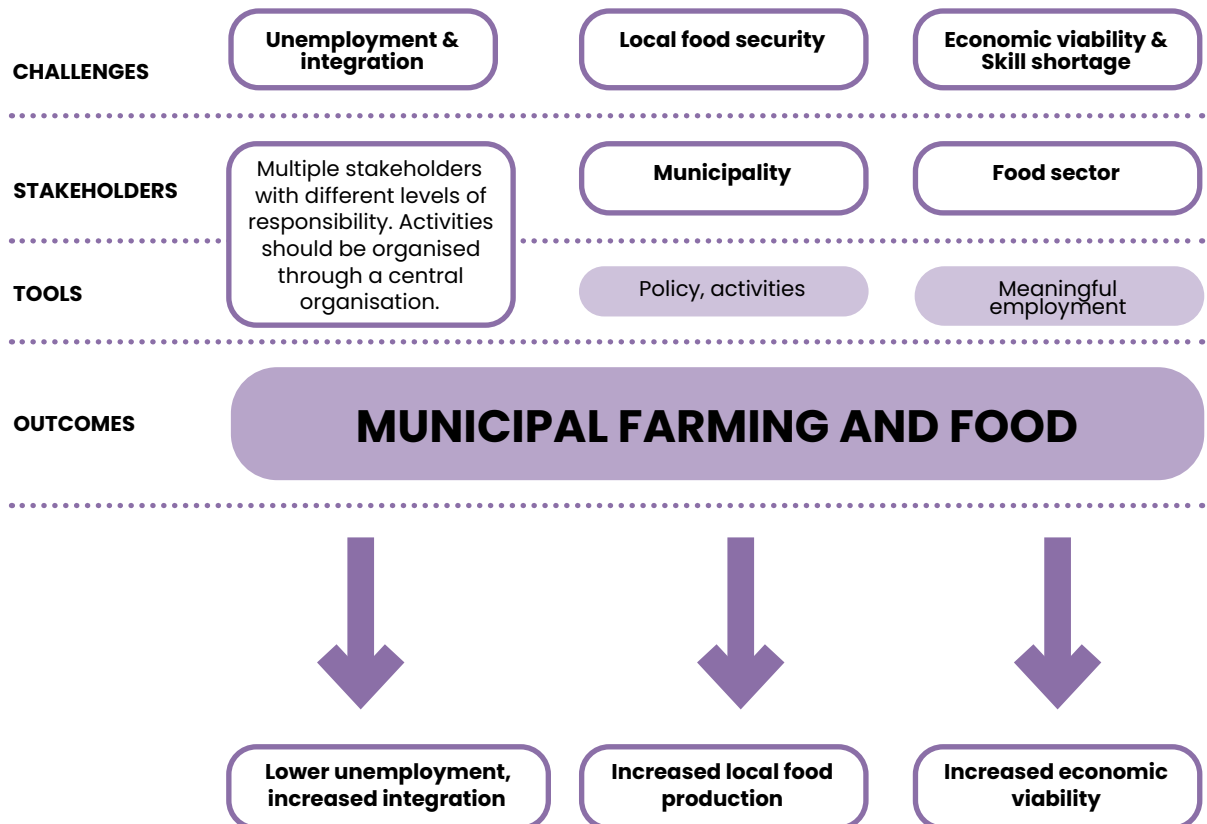
Farming and food arena – a model for collaboration

On the basis of what has been presented above, a municipal farming and food arena is expected to contribute solutions to several needs identified by the municipality. In short, to secure long-term local/regional access to food and to reduce the number of people in need of income support from the municipality. The arena is proposed to be organized in collaboration with several of the municipality’s committees as well as with other relevant actors. An account of other actors that are relevant to the collaboration model and their motives or missions is presented below.

Activities aimed at reducing unemployment and bringing people closer to the labor market should be based on the labor needs of the sector targeted by the activity. For the agriculture and food arena, this would mean a shift in perspective from focusing on how the municipality can create employment to how the municipality and partners can contribute to solving the skills needs of the sector.

The Public Employment Service is a given party in the collaboration to create long-term sustainable structures. In addition, the model presupposes close cooperation with the employers who have a skills supply need.

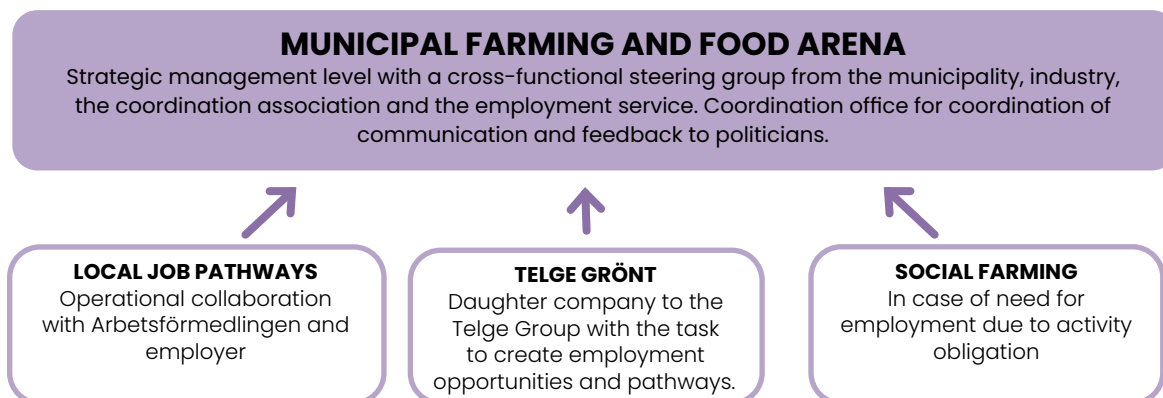
The collaboration model could be schematically described as follows:



The model shows that the farming and food arena requires action from more than just the municipality. The benefits that can come out of such work also benefit more than the municipality.

Organization

The decision on which modules a full-scale farming and food arena should contain is ultimately a political decision and before the decision, the model needs to be anchored with collaborative partners and with companies in the industry. However, a conceptual model is presented below that can be used for further processing. The proposal is based on conclusions drawn in this feasibility study.



The organization above separates the work of providing skills to companies from the municipally owned farming activities, which in the organizational chart are called Telge Grönt (see page 9).

The third module of the “Social Farming” arena responds to the needs that could arise if the proposal for a mandatory activity were to be implemented. It is proposed that the activities would focus on neighborhood farms and the like. The participants in this activity do not participate primarily because they want to work in these industries, but the value of these individuals participating in activities close to where they live can contribute to stronger social cohesion. In conversations with the Coordination Association in Södertälje, an initiative to “build up their local area” was suggested. Having low-threshold arrangements in residential areas with groups that take on simple activities with farming. There are many examples of urban farming /Urban farming/ eatable cities etc. Being able to work in your local area as a first step can be a safety factor. For more on this, see Boodla, which operates in Botkyrka, Salem, Nykvarn and Södertälje. Urban leisure farming is identified as a strategic area to develop in the municipal farming strategy.

The farming and food arena, as described above, requires cross-functional collaboration at a strategic level with the active participation of several of the municipality’s committees/offices/departments/units in order to function in the long term. In addition, an inclusive process is needed with the Coordination Association, the Public Employment Service, the business community and civil society. The role of the Coordination Association is particularly important at the strategic level for insight into the target group and coordination of efforts.

The strategic level of collaboration addresses the perspectives, needs and expectations of different sectors as a basis for an inclusive holistic approach to competence sharing/development, organization for practical implementation with criteria for goal achievement and follow-up. This level of governance should include secretarial resources for coordinating the work, communicating with partners and the sector, providing feedback and following up on the achievement of objectives to the political level and operational cooperation on individuals.

One of the municipality's committees should be given overall responsibility for the Farming and Food Arena. The council then gives a clear mandate with concrete objectives, terms of reference and budget limits to the Office/Department/Unit that will coordinate the arena.

The operational collaboration around the individuals should put the individual's needs at the center and create a coherent process for the individual's path to work and self-sufficiency. For individuals who can be matched to the labor market, local job tracks are proposed as a model for the work. Read more about local job tracks under the heading Existing collaboration (page 6) and in Appendix 2. An operational collaboration group with representatives of the municipality's departments for the labor market, education, social services and business should be included in the operational collaboration together with representatives of the Public Employment Service. The forms of this cooperation are not described in this feasibility study.

Individuals who are not deemed ready to enter the labor market, and thus primarily in need of support from the municipality, are supported through a special track where rehabilitation can be offered within the sectors covered by the arena. Activities aimed at these individuals are thus not aimed at getting the person into work, but at getting the person to take a first step closer to the labor market. Places for rehabilitation could be arranged in what is referred to above as Telge Grönt.

An important perspective in the work is that the municipality can also be a potential employer for individuals in this target group, both in the municipality's dietary unit and in park management. The municipality's own labor needs can also be met through local job tracks

Thematically, the arena is focused on farming and food. With food at the center, there can be various internships for farming and for the activities of the food chain with, among others, the following activities:

- Storage
- Sales and marketing
- Processing
- Transport/logistics/ordering
- Menu planning
- Preparation
- Serving
- Food waste

On the issue of places, the ESF project "Samordningsbron" in Östergötland is interesting. There were a total of 8 different places for practical learning, social rehabilitation, language development and skills enhancement and several with a focus on food. It is important that the places for practical learning are "real", i.e. that the basis is professional activity in a business-like environment.

Thus, for the arena, several different locations can be set up for the job training. It is proposed that a common meeting place be established for the arena. One possibility is in the premises of the dietary unit at Moraberg, where there is a school kitchen and food service.



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