Values-Based Territorial Food Networks (VTFN): An overarching concept representing the diverse perspectives of sustainable and ethical transitions of Alternative Food Networks – be they Local Food Systems, Civic Food Networks or Short Food Supply Chains.

Keywords:
Values-Based Territorial Food Networks; Comparative literature review; Alternative Food Networks; Local Food Systems; Civic Food Networks; Short Food Supply Chains

Abstract (147 words):
This article proposes a comparative literature review of the concepts Local Food Systems (LFS), Short Food Supply Chains (SFSC), Civic Food Networks (CFN) and Alternative Food Networks (AFN) – converging into the umbrella-term Values-Based Territorial Food Networks (VTFN).

Based on the analysis of the specificities and shortcomings in the four concepts, VTFN aims to enhance conceptual clarity. The current coexistence of the concepts conceals their structural and systemic commonalities – relevant for understanding pathways to ethical and sustainable food system transformations.

Taking a closer look at unsolved issues and ambiguities of AFNs (subdivided into LFS, SFSC and CFNs), VTFN offers a more overarching, and pragmatic, concept. It qualifies the claimed ‘alternativeness’ of AFNs affirmatively through the dimensions of social, economic, environmental and governance ‘sustainability values’ and through varying constellations of ‘territoriality’. Thus, it fosters integrated scientific dialogue about a conceptual determination of emerging networks of food system transitions worldwide.
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Introduction

Outline of the article and methods

Comparative literature review

1. Local Food Systems (LFS)
   Description and context
   Elusiveness of defining localism, without romanticising it
   Place-based values, yet occulting power asymmetries
   In a nutshell

2. Short Food Supply Chains (SFSC)
   Description and context
   Quality conventions
   Performance of shortened food supply chains
   Co-creation of values
   In a nutshell

3. Civic Food Networks (CFN)
   Description and context
   Governance by civic processes
   Focus on processes of negotiation around values more than on the values themselves
   In a nutshell

4. Alternative Food Networks (AFN)
   Description and context
   Integrative values
   Questioning of the dominant system via a socio-cultural exemplification
   In a nutshell

Discussion

Necessary reframing of the umbrella-concept of AFN towards values and territoriality

Impact of sustainability values claimed by the concept AFN
Systematically including a pragmatist approach, focusing on values and on territoriality

Umbrella concept “Values-based Territorial Food Networks” (VTFN)

References