



## Rural-Urban Outlooks: Unlocking Synergies (ROBUST)

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## Snapshot: Expressions of Urban – Peri-Urban – Rural Relationships

### Punt de Sabor (Flavour Point)

Valencian Community, Spain

#### 1. Brief Description

Punt de sabor<sup>1</sup> has several particularities. It is based in short chains dealing mainly with organic agri-food, with direct and online sale, counting with a stable network of suppliers from mainly peri-urban and intermediate rural areas, and in a lesser extent, from remote ones. Finally, the initiative is especially interesting since it comes, is supported and managed by a farmer organisation, being this last aspect exceptional in a context in which many initiatives of organic or local agri-food products are growing up during the last decade (private ones or within the cooperative sector).

Punt de sabor is a small company dedicated to direct sales without intermediaries between consumers and producers, mainly of local organic fruit and vegetables from about 30 suppliers from the region of Valencia (although most of them are located in or close to the Metropolitan area of Valencia). "Punt de sabor" is a company founded by "La Unió", a farmers' organisation from the region of Valencia. From "Punt de sabor" different sales formats have been made from certified facilities located in the heart of the Valencian orchard. The logistics centre is located about 20 km from the city of Valencia (municipality of El Puig). In addition to the logistics centre, the company has several physical shops located in the city of Valencia.

#### 2. Questions and/or Challenges

The "Punt de sabor" initiative aims to sell quality organic products, bringing farmers and consumers together without intermediaries from two distribution points. The first is located on the 50 Ha farm in the marshland area called "dels Moros" (Sagunto, 30 km away) in a natural protected area of the Natura 2000 Network. The second distribution point belongs to a wide network of producers scattered across the region, from the inland rural areas to orchard areas within the Metropolitan Area of Valencia (which concentrate the majority of them). This offers a local food network approach, that is, short chains of consumption of

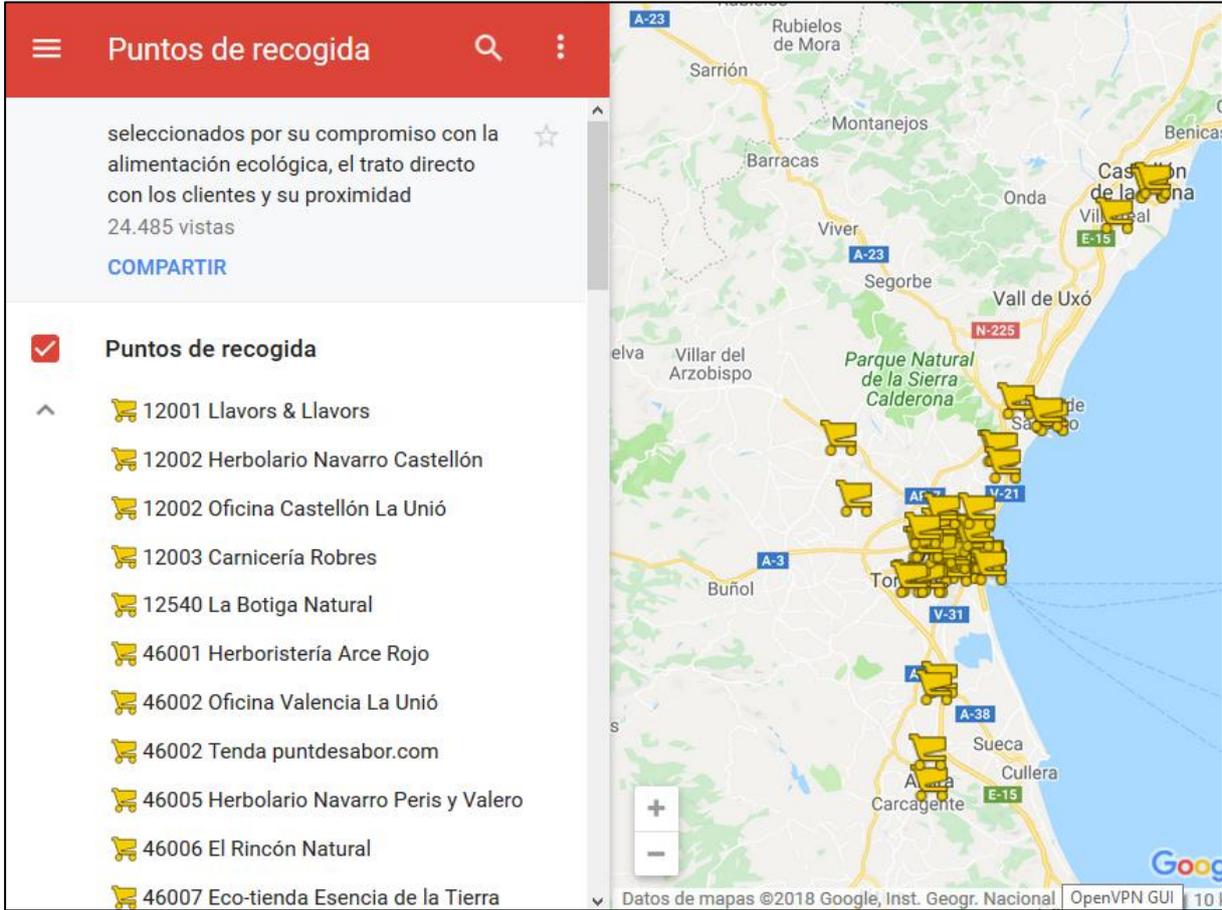
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<sup>1</sup> [puntdesabor.com](http://puntdesabor.com)

seasonal and autochthonous food certified by the European regulation of ecological production.

In addition to the physical stores where the products are sold, the company also has an online<sup>2</sup> store that operates through collection points (Figure 1).

Map of the "Punt de Sabor" network



Source: [pundesabor.com](https://pundesabor.com)

### 3. Main Insights

#### 3.1. Indications of the application of the new concept of 'New Localities'

The promotion of local food products enhances social and commercial relations, creating synergies between rural and urban areas. The promotion of quality food (including organic production) is associated with the preservation and maintenance of cultural landscapes (Huerta of Valencia Plan, Huerta of Valencia Law), where FAO is also expected to have in Valencia the World Centre for Sustainable Food. Therefore, Valencia is in a promising context, the boom in demand for organic food is building a growing food market and that the region of Valencia can find an important niche market. Initiatives such as "Punt de Sabor" are often well accepted by consumers as they are often sold through short food

<sup>2</sup> <https://tienda.pundesabor.com/>

supply chains, such as local markets, and are often characterized by a high degree of integration (Sage, 2003). Spatial relationships highlight the construction of identities; both rooted in place (between consumers and local means of production) and in external relations (related to consumption outside the region where it is produced, which may be on a national and international scale).

The limiting factors that we can find in these initiatives are related to the consumer's lack of knowledge when considering these types of products. In addition, there is also a bottleneck in the role of the administration when it comes to promoting these food products. Although, as mentioned above, Valencia in recent years is trying to promote the production of the Huerta de Valencia through mechanisms such as the "Law of the Huerta". However, this regulation would only cover the vicinity of the city of Valencia (peri-urban areas within the Metropolitan Area), but not reaching intermediate or remote rural areas.

Other initiatives have similarities to "Punt de Sabor", such as Som Alimentació<sup>3</sup>, a very young cooperative of producers and consumers that also operates in the city of Valencia and has suppliers (members of the cooperative) from peri-urban, intermediate and some remote rural areas<sup>3</sup>.

### 3.2. Insights related to the broad area of 'Smart Development'

The implementation of agri-food initiatives can contribute to the generation of networks of producers and businesses, to cooperation or rooting mechanisms in local and extra-local spaces, where they can play a key role in strategies, as well as to some processes of development and the improvement of sustainability of remote rural areas (Esparcia, 2010:223). This is why there is a great potential for the mainly urban and peri-urban emerging market and this potential is being built from personal networks, both in innovation and transmission of knowledge in agricultural practices, as in the configuration of social groups (both producers and consumers). Therefore, the sustainable food market has to be oriented from different spheres, such as education, research and institutions, and some steps are being done in this way. Therefore, here we refer to smart growth as a form of multi-level governance that transcends urban-rural dimensions. It is therefore an issue of establishing long-term planning, taking into account market currents and the endogenous possibilities of rural space in interaction with urban space.

### 3.3. Other insights that could be relevant for further work

For future work, it would be important to establish different ways of analysis, from interrelations, interactions, encounters, mutualities between actors, resources, sectors and places. It is necessary to take into account the interconnections established through agri-food plans, new business models, food systems, environmental sustainability and

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<sup>3</sup> <https://somalimentacio.com/>

territorial culture. They would allow a dynamic understanding of rural heterogeneity and its activities (van der Ploeg and Marsden, 2008; Horlings and Marsden, 2014).

#### 4. Data Sources and Indicators

The farmers' organisation managing the initiative is part of the Valencian Living Lab. Qualitative information may come from all the actors involved, from the generation of the idea until its development and sustainability. They will facilitate the information related to the territorial scope of the initiative, suppliers, sales, market performance and changes.

Table 1 Data / Indicators for Example 1

Data / Indicator	Source
Number of producers and typology (agriculture, livestock and fishing). Ecological and conventional.	<a href="http://pundesabor.com/">http://pundesabor.com/</a> ; management team of punt de sabor
Geographical distribution of producers (suppliers)	<a href="http://pundesabor.com/">http://pundesabor.com/</a> ; management team of punt de sabor. Possibility of interviews and / or surveys to suppliers
Number, type and geographical distribution of clients (restaurants, hotels, free consumers)	<a href="http://pundesabor.com/">http://pundesabor.com/</a> ; management team of punt de sabor. Possibility of interviews and / or surveys to clients
Other distribution channels (online and offline)	<a href="http://pundesabor.com/">http://pundesabor.com/</a> ; management team of punt de sabor
Eventos y ferias (type, place, results, etc.)	<a href="http://pundesabor.com/">http://pundesabor.com/</a> ; management team of punt de sabor
Events and fairs (type, location, results, etc.)	<a href="http://pundesabor.com/">http://pundesabor.com/</a> ; management team of punt de sabor

#### 5. Critical Appraisal of Data Use

Direct contact with those in charge of the company will allow us not only to know the indicators mentioned above, but also to analyse how food services directly connect with an interesting emerging labour market. As an approach to a Living Lab, it will be of special interest to address these and related of issues.

#### 6. References

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