

84. Internationale Grüne Woche in Berlin
18.-27. Januar 2019

SLC's President Mats Nylund's speech at the Finnish press conference at the International Green Week on 17 January 2019 at 15.00, Messe Berlin, Hall 10.2

Representatives of the media, ladies and gentlemen. Grüsse aus der Wildnis!

- Let me introduce myself: I am a farmer, Member of Parliament, and Chairman of SLC, the central union of Swedish-speaking agricultural producers. We are very proud to be here in Germany to show Finnish food and our food production. On our family-run farm, we focus especially on cereal production and caraway farming. Although Finland is a relatively small country, we are, nevertheless, one of the leading caraway producers in the world. About one-third of caraway seeds in the world come from Finland, and the caraway is known for its cleanliness and its rich aroma created from Finland's long, light summer nights.
- Finland is the northernmost country in the world engaging in diversified farming. Due to our northern location, we can only produce plants with a short growing cycle, and the crops do not always have enough time to grow as high as in the southernmost countries. The growing season cannot start until the snow has melted and the daily average temperature is permanently above 5° C. In Southern Finland this will be at the end of April and in Enontekiö in Lapland one month later. In Enontekiö, the growing season ends in mid-September and in the South-West archipelago at the turn of October–November.
- However, our northern location has its advantages. The long and light days in the summer speed up plant development and give many berries and vegetables their unique, delicious flavour. In addition, the cold winter cleanses the soil and reduces the occurrence of plant diseases and pests.
- Ladies and gentlemen. Finnish consumers are extremely interested in the origin of food and the methods of food production. We believe that the origin of food and the production methods are also increasingly interesting to consumers in Germany and elsewhere in the world.
- The saying "from the farm to the table" is often used with respect to Finnish food. It reflects well the cooperation of the Finnish food supply chain and the traceability of food. Thanks to our short food supply chain, the majority of all Finnish raw materials can be traced all the way to the farm. This is a trump card for the entire food supply chain, and it also builds trust between farmers and consumers. We want to bring that trust here to German consumers and to give Finnish food its wild face.
- We want to promote every consumer's right to know the origin of food and give the farmers a face. This requires both legislation and marketing.
- Ladies and gentlemen. In Finland, we are currently replacing our already strict animal protection law with new legislation on animal welfare. The law determines the minimum level of animal welfare, but, in addition to this, we promote animal welfare with voluntary measures.
- We are offering, for example, pork from pigs with intact tails at the Finnish pavilion and in the opening party. We are truly proud of this, because the tail of a pig is an important sign of the animal's welfare. By investing in production conditions for animals, for example, by giving animals more freedom of movement and enrichment and by making efforts to improve animal health, we can guarantee that pigs can keep their tails and production birds can have their beaks.

- Finally, I'd like to point out that in order to export these top Finnish products to other countries in the world and also here in Germany, it must be possible to practise farming in a sustainable way throughout the European Union also in the future. Finland has high-level expertise, and we are happy to be involved in sharing that expertise elsewhere in the world. Please join us at the Finnish pavilion to take a bite of the wild! Thank you.