

# LETTER OF INTENT

BETWEEN

**REGIO FOODVALLEY AND BUSINESS REGION AARHUS**

*TO EMBARK ON A COMMON MISSION*

*TO SECURE A SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEM*



**The Boards of Regio Foodvalley and Business Region Aarhus agree to embark on the following mission and have the intention to operationalize the mission in the following common activities.**

## **1. THE MISSION**

Regio Foodvalley (FV) and Business Region Aarhus (BRA) are two regions with a multitude of actors sharing the mission to make a positive contribution to global food production by securing a sustainable food system. In other words, FV and BRA subscribe to a mutual ambition to transform the food value chain toward sustainability and thereby contribute to the UN Sustainable Development Goals. The activities include fundamental and applied research, education, new technology in primary production, investments, logistics and consumer relations. In these activities, the co-signors of this letter recognize the mutual benefit and fundamental role of continued multi-level cooperation within and between the regions. The challenges facing humanity in these areas are of such a size that cooperation both at national level and international level is necessary.

## **2. COMMON ACTIVITIES**

Regio Foodvalley and Business Region Aarhus have the intention to operationalize the cooperation regarding the following items:

### **a) R&D-collaboration towards a sustainable food system**

Regio Food Valley and Business Region Aarhus will facilitate R&D-collaboration on more sustainable food production methods. It includes an annual top conference on a sustainable food system. A top conference making it clear, that the two regions are taking the MISSION seriously, a top conference binding the two international top universities in food and agriculture research Wageningen University and Aarhus University closer together as central actors, and a top conference presenting the newest knowledge and the best cases for sustainability across the food system. The aim is clear: stimulate innovation and business development regionally and internationally.

2020 will be a year of developing the framework and the format of the top conference, and in 2021 the first top conference will place in either Regio Food Valley or Business Region Aarhus. In 2022 the conference will take place in the other business region. The goal is minimum 500 participants.

The two business regions develop an overview of centers of excellences and share access to these facilities for students, researchers, and companies.

### **b) Co-Learning about Entrepreneurship Ecosystems**

Regio Foodvalley and Business Region Aarhus have, over the years, been experimenting with startup programs, incubators and accelerators within agrifood, as it is well known that startups and SME's located within places serving as incubators for creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship have a greater chance of success. The two regions are committed to build up best practice entrepreneurship

ecosystems, including focus on the social and economic environment affecting local or regional entrepreneurship. Regio Food Valley and Business Region Aarhus will share knowledge, co-learn and invite/stimulate start-ups and SME's to participate in activities taken place in the two regions.

**c) Transition towards sustainable proteins**

The transition towards more sustainable production and uses of proteins is a common challenge in the food value chain. Initiatives are being taken in both regions to contribute to the transition process, such as the use of insects and alternative green proteins in food and feed. Regio Foodvalley and Business Region Aarhus have the intention to exchange information and knowledge and are willing to pursue joint research and projects. The Danish Technological Institute and Regio FoodValley develop a partnership around insect production.

**d) Representation in the European Union**

Regio Foodvalley and Business Region Aarhus both have offices in Brussels with limited staff. Regio Foodvalley and Business Region Aarhus will therefore continue to seek collaboration in Brussels. This includes sharing facilities and mutually represent each other at official meetings and conferences as well as continuously inform each other of relevant policy developments and funding opportunities.

Based on this exchange, joint plans or activities can be prepared or elaborated.

**e) Building a network of food regions**

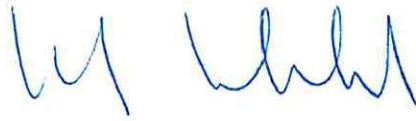
All over Europe there are some food regions which, for various reasons, have a strong interest in supporting the food value chain. Food regions have a common interest in exchanging of information and best practices as well as building common innovation capacity. Furthermore, food regions have common interest in policy developments on European level, not the least the development of the Common Agricultural Policy and the Structural funds.

Representatives of both organizations will evaluate the progress of the agreements annually and discuss new initiatives that contribute to the common goals.

Regio Foodvalley, November 6<sup>th</sup>, 2019



Jan Petersen, Business Region Aarhus



Rene Verhulst, chairman, Regio Food Valley



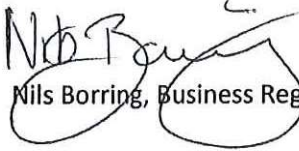
Jacob Bundsgaard, Business Region Aarhus



Ulrik Wilbek, Business Region Aarhus



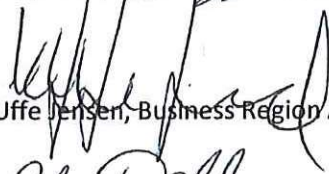
Frands Fischer, Business Region Aarhus



Nils Borring, Business Region Aarhus



Kasper Glyngø, Business Region Aarhus



Uffe Jensen, Business Region Aarhus



Marcel Meijer, Business Region Aarhus



Ole Bollesen, Business Region Aarhus



Peter Sørensen, Business Region Aarhus



Steen Vindum, Business Region Aarhus



Torben Hansen, Business Region Aarhus