

# Grøn omsørg i Norge

Norwegian National Report and PACO analysis for the  
New Nordic Nature Based Service Models -project

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- This is a report on the development and present-day status of Care Farming in Norway for the New Nordic nature-based Service models project.
- It provides background and understanding of how the sector arose and developed in Norway and provides something of a snap-shot of how the sector is currently doing.
- It includes a PACO analysis of the sector so that others can learn from its strengths and weaknesses.

# The story....

- Relatively a lot has been written about the establishment of the Green Care services sector in Norway as it was developed relatively early and had considerable initial success.
- Initially the impetus to develop Green Care services was the result of a cadre of potential service providers – often retiring teachers/social workers/care therapists – in cooperation with existing farmers, combined with a desire to create alternative rural employment on the part of the government
- So from the beginning, Care Farming was seen as a way to increase rural employment through farm multifunctionality.

- As a result of the policy intention to increase farm multifunctionality, development funds were made available through Innovation Norge and other programmes to support the conversion of small farmsteads for Green Care services provision.
- These policies were implemented in the mid 2000s, with a result that the agricultural census of 2010 indicated that up to 1100 Care Farms were operating in Norway.
- That number has declined, partly as a result of retirements, to approximately 450 - 500 Care Farms in 2020, although there are also data issues around those numbers.

- Currently (2020) however, the sector remains very active and Care Farming ('Grøn omsørg') is an important farm multifunction activity and is supported by most actors within the farm/agriculture sector in Norway.
- The sector focuses primarily on three types of activities:
  - Education and pedagogics (i.e. kindergartens)
  - Provision of work to those at risk of unemployment through handicap or lifestyle challenges
  - Delivery of quality of life enhancement for those in care – including those in permanent care due to physical or mental handicap, and increasingly, the to elderly and those with dementia.

# Sector structure

- National – passes legislation
- County – implements legislation
- Municipality – manages and pays for delivery
  - NAV also operates at the municipal level to buy services

# Structure of the sector

- Terminology
  - Clients or 'Service users' – those who receive the benefits through activities on farms
  - Service Buyers – those who purchase and pay for the services delivered to clients
  - Service Providers – those who deliver services. These may be farmers, or partners with specific professional qualifications relative to the client group.
- Generally, services are provided in a partnership between a farmer and a professional therapist, under contract to the municipality.

# Structure of the sector

- Types of farms used
  - A wide range of types of farms can be used in Norsk Care Farming, including:
    - Horse farms
    - Horticultural production
    - Market gardening
    - Mixed farming
    - Animal production
- Generally, Care Farming takes place on relatively small farms and not on the most production-focused industrial farms.

# Structure of the sector

- Regulation and participation of the norsk Grøn omsørg sector is complex.
- Other green services (outdoor recreation, etc) are structured separately, often under tourism services, or riding services, etc.
- In Green Care there are multiple actors
  - Starting with the clients or service users, who are recipients of the service provision and have little input into selection of services.
  - Then the service buyers – who are generally the municipalities (they create individual contracts with the providers – the Care Farms), but also include NAV – the Norwegian agency responsible for employment and participation.
  - Then the policy implementers – the national parliament and the Counties who are responsible for implementing national laws

# Terminology

A report from Rogaland County in 2009 identifies four categories of actors:

“A nationwide offer like Inn på tunet involves many different people. Both those who use the offer, those who order it and others. Here are the most important categories of actors:

[*Service*] **Users:** those who receive and / or participate in the Inn på tunet offer and their families and or relatives.

[*Service*] **Providers:** Farmers who offer Inn på tunet services and are approved

[*Service*] **Buyers:** those who order the service, such as NAV and various municipal commissioners

**Approvals:** Matmerk, which approves the farm as Inn på tunet

# Sector structure- Grøn omsørg

- There are the regulators:
  - Matilsynet/Matmerk – manage the national quality standards for agriculture, in particular the adaptation and quality of premises, as well as animal welfare and food quality. Matmerk awards ‘Inn på tunet’ status to those farms having fulfilled its quality standards.
  - There are the academic (i.e. social work, physiotherapy etc) and professional authorities (i.e. giving equine assisted therapy qualification certificates) who grant certificates and degrees regulating the health practices.
- Then there are the ‘trade associations’
  - Inn på tunet -- organized as regional member associations (although not mandatory, membership is effectively so, as Inn på tunet is the national legal format for delivering Care Farming in Norway)
  - The Farming Unions also have an active say in the sector.

# Sector structure

- Then there are the intermediaries -- the 'brokers'
  - In many cases these 'brokers' are small private businesses who connect service providers with service buyers, and who manage the contract details, etc, for a small percentage fee.
  - Brokers are especially active in linking NAV with service providers.
  - Not all providers use such services -- some will contract directly with a kommune, but this requires considerable effort, both at start up, and on-going, so increasingly, specialist brokers who manage the contracts are employed.

# Sector structure

- Other actors include:
  - Farmers unions (Bondelaget, Små brukslaget) who insist that the provider must be a farmer within their definition of farming
  - Inn på tunet norge – a national association of member associations
    - Small coverage at this point (5 regional Ipt associations)
    - Working to deliver a single ‘voice’ at a national level and to support the efforts of both the regional Ipt associations and individual service providers
  - Innovation Norge
    - Innovation Norge was involved in creating the initial legislation which founded Inn på tunet as the means for delivering Care Farming
    - New starts or expansion plans often referring to Innovation norge for start-up funding

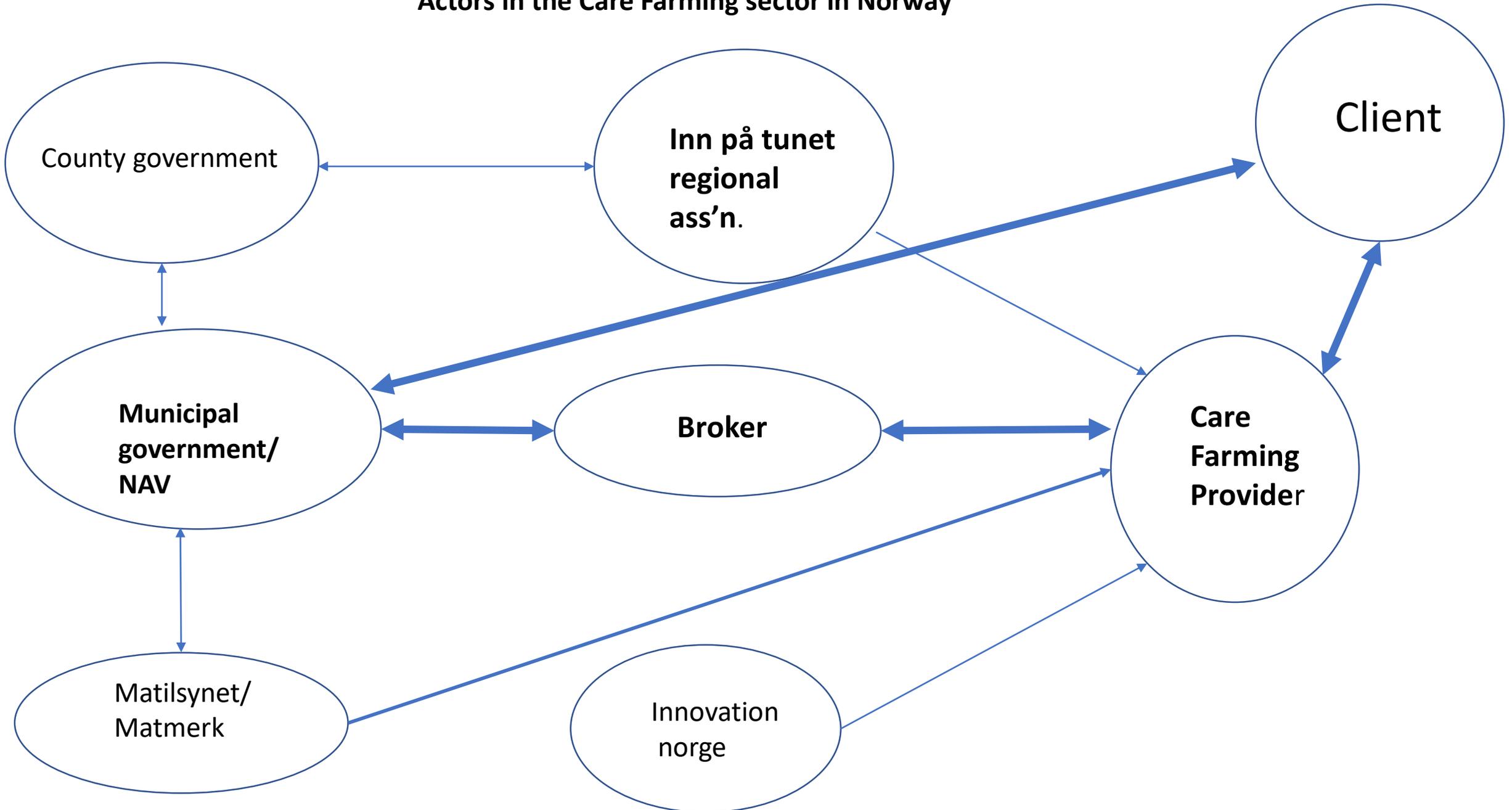
# Sector structure

- Even more actors!
  - National associations of members delivering specific health interventions (i.e. heste og helse norge, physiotherapy associations, etc.)
  - Universities and Colleges delivering training and professional qualifications
  - The regional Health Boards responsible for hospitals, acute care and in a few cases, chronic care

# The Health sector

- Generally, health care provision is divided between the regional Health Trusts, who run the hospitals, giving Acute care, and the municipalities who are responsible for primary and long-term care.
- There are exceptions to this, however, particularly within the Health Trusts, where individuals within the system have started, for example, special care facilities for post-operative therapy, or therapy for the blind.

# Actors in the Care Farming sector in Norway



- So, providers face a complicated challenge in getting established
  - First they must prove their competence
    - Acquiring academic and professional qualifications
    - Adapting the Farm and its built environment to purpose
    - Gaining Matmerk approval for those adaptations
    - Planning and creating a programme of service delivery
    - Acquiring capital to invest in the above processes
  - Then, they can go looking for contracts with the local service buyers

- Numbers in Norway

- 2010 – 1100 farms (Norwegian Mins of Food & Agriculture, Local Government & Regional Development)
  - (Although different sources indicate differing numbers, from 450 in 2009, to this number. There is speculation that the larger number includes green care services not registered to Inn på tunet)
- 2019 – just over 450 farms with annual increases. (Inn på tunet Norge )
- This is partly the result of retirements from the first cohort of care farming providers
- And perhaps partly due to the challenges of entering a complex system with complex regulation

## **Example: Approval scheme organised by the Norwegian Agricultural Quality System and Food Branding Foundation (Matmerk)**

### **Description of routine:**

1. The provider contacts the Norwegian Agricultural Quality System and Food Branding Foundation (Matmerk) to be approved as a Green care provider
2. The Norwegian Agricultural Quality System and Food Branding Foundation informs the potential provider about approval requirements. The definition of Green care is an important part of this information.
3. The Norwegian Agricultural Quality System and Food Branding Foundation (Matmerk) selects an auditor to conduct the "approval audit".
4. The auditor follows regular auditing procedures and completes the Green care audit. This audit results in a report that is submitted to the provider and to the Norwegian Agricultural Quality System and Food Branding Foundation.
5. If the auditing report is "blank", or in other words shows no deviations, the Norwegian Agricultural Quality System and Food Branding Foundation approves the provider as a "Green care farmer". The approval is thus complete, and the farmer may use the Green care logo and sell his or her services. However, if deviations are identified, the farm cannot be approved and the procedure continues.
6. The provider is told which deviations have been identified, and must correct these before s/he can be approved. If the provider thinks this will be too complicated/costly, the procedure stops and the provider is not approved. If the provider wishes to correct the deviations, an agreement is made regarding the schedule for corrections and when a new approval audit can be conducted.
7. The Norwegian Agricultural Quality System and Food Branding Foundation identifies an auditor for a new approval audit (generally the same auditor as for the first audit). The procedure proceeds from step 4.

# Historical challenges (from 2012)

- Difficulties with accepting *private businesses* into Norwegian health care system
- Lack of appropriate research and documentation/measures of success.
- Clarifying and documenting *public benefit*.
- Setting *priorities* with and within the health care sector to include grøn omsørg
- Improving *dialogue* across all actors in the system
- The need to create *longer term contracts* for providers

*These challenges remain in 2019*

- The following focus areas were outlined for future development (2012):
  - (1) Increased and targeted knowledge, especially research;
  - (2) competency development/training, etc.;
  - (3) communication, for example related to quality assurance systems; dialogue between providers and purchasers;
  - (4) coordination, roles, responsibilities: clarifying the division of tasks and decision making authority within the national focus on Green care;
  - (5) regulations in which quality assurance and approval schemes are central;
  - (6) economic measures, primarily looking at the use of agricultural funds under schemes such as the Green care promotion initiative and rural development funds.

# Inn på tunet norge SA

- A new innovation – a national organisation made up of members who are the regional Inn på tunet associations
- A membership organisation
  - Attempting to form practical organisation dealing with issues important to Ipt practitioners
  - Takes a prominent role in publicizing, advocated, giving input to national standards, etc.
  - Beginning to look at discharging the ‘broker’ function

- Ipt Norge Samarbeidspartnere (key partners in setting up Ipt Norge)
  - Norges Bondelag (Farmer's Union)
  - Norsk Bonde- og Småbrukarlag (Small Farm Union)
  - Matmerk (National Food Quality Organisation)
  - Norsk Landbruksrådgiving -- (Farm Advice outreach and assistance)
  - Gjensidige Forsikring ASA – (Cooperative Insurance provider)
  - Samvirkesenteret – (Community Development Centre)

# PACO analysis

- Finally, we use a 'PACO' analysis rather than a SWOT analysis.
- It covers the same territory, but is less negative, and organised to lead to a more positive conclusion (see next slide)
- Was developed for the community development sector in Scotland but has gained increasing acceptance more widely in the last 5 years.

# PACO Analysis

Problems

Advantages

Challenges

Opportunities

# Problems

- Barriers to entry include a complicated approval procedure requiring certification from multiple actors (Matmerk, Inn på tunet, etc.). This requires significant investment before contracts can be signed.
- The diverse nature of the registration process means there are no single actors covering the whole scene, and only recently has a new member organisation that represents the concerns of the whole sector been formed.

# Problems

- Complex field with multiple actors, accessing multiple budgets – risks ‘silo-ization’.
- There is some distance between the formal Health Trusts, and Green Care service providers
- Although Inn på tunet is nationally recognized as the vehicle for Green Care and other nature-based services, it is a series of regional membership organizations, not a national certifier and/or deliverer of services, meaning that if a provider can gain a contract to deliver services to a municipality without membership, that is allowed. As a result, it is hard to discover, at a national level, how much service is being delivered

# Advantages

- There is a fairly long history of provision of green services in Norway.
- The 'certification' process, though complex does guarantee well adapted farm spaces which are safe.
- The complexities of the structure support delivery of appropriate local services
- Movement between professional spheres such as teaching, physiotherapy, etc. and the Green Care sector is not uncommon, bringing latest practice to the field. This is facilitated by the individual nature of each contract between service provider and service buyer.
- The presence of a general acceptance in norsk society of the value and benefit of outdoor activity is beneficial for the sector and its potential growth.

# Advantages

- Innovation in the sector responds to challenges with constant new initiatives.
  - The recent creation of Inn på tunet norge as a member organisation of the regional member organisations, to have a national voice for the sector
  - The recent rise of 'brokers' who connect providers with buyer demand. Increasingly, these brokers also stand between service buyers and service providers, managing official paperwork, etc., in return for a percentage fee.
  - Growth in new activities such as service for elders with dementia

# Challenges

- Pioneer cohort from 2000s nearing retirement, and barriers to entry may limit new uptake.
- Complex set of regulations and actors require providers to be expert in fields outside of either giving social care, or farming (i.e. bureaucratic reporting).
- Lack of long term contracts puts off some potential entries, plus creates stress for existing service providers.

# Challenges

- Regional diversity, whilst good at the local level, limits the ability of this 'community of actors' to act collectively at a national level.
- Regional diversity results in access to Grøn omsørg being somewhat of a post-code lottery – i.e. provision is very uneven geographically
- Overlapping jurisdictions ('silo-ization'), particularly around social care and health create competition between sectors and can interfere with provision to both an individual service user, and at the level of service providers.

# Opportunities

- Demand is increasing
- Further growth will counter post-code lottery status nationally
- Increasing opportunities to learn how as teaching is developed in supplementary health care fields such as physiotherapy, equine-assisted activities and therapy (EAAT), etc.
- Inn på turet løftet 2 – new tranche of development funds given to County governments to stimulate new provision, especially in terms of opening up new sub-sectors such as elders and dementia.

# Opportunities

- Creation, and growth of *Inn på tunet norge* as a national body representing all regions of Inn på tunet will expose the sector and its issues to national attention.
- Growth of 'brokers' to expertly handle paperwork and accounts, leaving providers to concentrate on their expertise.
- Increasing research is beginning to deliver better evidence-based results, making the field more attractive both to participate in, and to prescribe.
- Norwegian health policies (i.e. 'samhandlingsreforma 2016') devolving responsibility to local levels and place new emphasis on 'well-being' rather than illness, creating new potential opportunities for nature-based services

# Opportunities

- New fields of care are emerging (such as dementia care on farms, and the role of nature-based solutions for successful integration) from research, creating new opportunities for providers.

# Summary

- The Norwegian sector has a strong history of development and sense of identity.
- The complex way the system is organised optimises diversity of service provision, especially in response to both local needs, and local providers
- That same complexity can create problems in terms of ease of entry.
- New initiatives (Inn på tunet norge S.A.; increased activity in Equine Assisted Activities and Therapy; the rise of experts to help providers with paperwork and regulations) should ease entry to the field and offer more provision to service users.

# Summary

A strong presence in education, social care, and health and wellbeing mean that the sector has strong foundations. Continued passion not only keeps providers active but keeps them innovating new services. At the same time, national attention means that, in general, Nature-based services are well thought of, and this positive reputation will support further development of the field.