

“Regionalmarke Eifel” [regional brand] – Eifel, Germany

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Aims of the “Regionalmarke Eifel” initiative and members

“Regionalmarke Eifel” has been the first German regional brand.

It stands for quality products originating in the Eifel region. The main aim of the regional brand is to generate a higher added value for producers and for the whole region, thereby strengthening the region’s agriculture and forestry as well as the quality-oriented regional SMEs. It is expected that this would then also contribute to the further development of the quality of life in the region.



The logo with an “e” on a 4-colour-background symbolises the diversity of quality products from agriculture, forestry, handicraft and tourism.

The Eifel is located in the German federal states of Rhineland-Palatinate and North Rhine-Westphalia close to Belgium and Luxemburg. **The regional brand “Eifel” comprises a total area of 600.000 ha**, whereof 245.000 ha are agriculturally used. The region has 685.700 inhabitants and is highly attractive for tourism.

Table 1: Economic development of “Regionalmarke Eifel” in figures

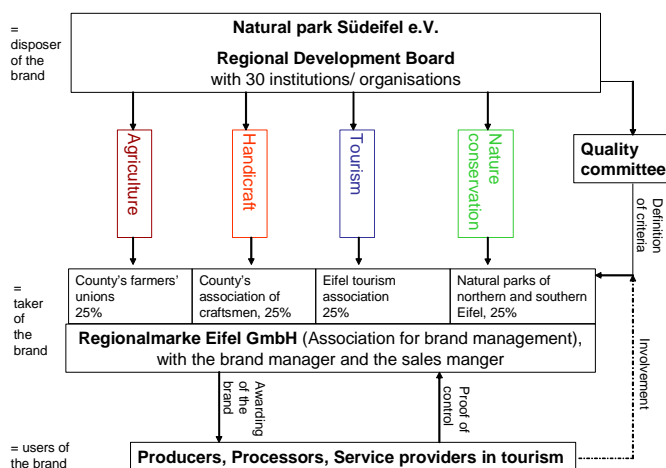
	March 2005	March 2007
Selling points	31	160
Producers	10	60
Gastronomy businesses	24	30
Holiday homes	36	70
Products	approx. 20	approx. 200

The products covered by “Regionalmarke Eifel” include pork, beef, lamb, sausages and ham, fruit, juice and spirits from traditionally managed orchards, berries and grapes, cheese, honey, eggs, wine, wood, heating wood and furniture and services in tourism.

Today there are 165 users of the brand, thereof 60 producers, 30 hotel and gastronomy businesses and 75 bed & breakfast pensions; overall there are approx. 180 products.

The initiative’s main activities

- (1) supporting the joint marketing of regional products:** all producers and processors of agricultural and forestry products as well as service providers in tourism located in the Eifel can apply for a use of the logo
- (2) ensuring the quality of all products and services:** the initiative has common quality criteria; the logo is assigned only if a controlled quality and a guaranteed origin from the Eifel area are transparently proven; compliance with quality criteria is controlled by independent inspectors
- (3) representing the interests of its members in different arenas and networks:** lobbying related to regional marketing in political arenas, often in cooperation with partners from other networks and regions
- (4) providing information** on regional marketing via regional journals, information stands at trade fairs, conferences and meetings; training courses for participating farmers and service providers in order to acquaint them with the quality criteria



The particular strengths of the initiative

- (1) Effective minimization of transaction costs** at the cooperative level through a competent and efficient press management
- (2) Active creation of synergies** between different activities and continuous exploration of alternative marketing channels
- (3) Political support for regional marketing and short chains;** the federal level “Regional Action” programme that started in 2001 explicitly supported such initiatives. Close cooperation of initiative with state and district council administrations further reinforces the cooperation. More recently there is substantial interest in higher value added chains

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