Milk: From a healthy drink to a climate threat and back again.
The media story

- A text analysis of how Swedish newspapers have framed aspects of milk between 2012 and 2017

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Abstract

Media is a powerful agent within society, that works as a gatekeeper for the media arena and therefore decides what topics are discussed and which are not (Pinto et al., 2016; Anderson, 2009) By setting the agenda and by framing messages, media can influence the public perception and therefore also the culture within society. However, it is said that media will reflect the most dominant culture within society, it is therefore of interest to see how the Swedish media portray and frame Swedish milk and the milk industry, that on hand is argued to be a threat towards the climate but on the other hand has a long history of being connected to the Swedish culture.

When studying the four most read newspapers in Sweden published between 2012 and 2017 we found that even if the Swedish milk and the milk industry was questioned for being unhealthy or argued for being an environmental threat, the positive framing of milk was always more visible. Environmental impacts of milk and the milk industry was repeatedly downsized and even spoken for in opposite direction, that the Swedish milk and the Swedish milk industry is good for the environment. This would suggest that the strong position of milk within the Swedish society have the ability to undermine any threat, it is therefor of interest to further study the culture aspects of media framing not at least connected to products that is in many studies argued for being an environmental threat. Due to impact media may have on the society, how media frame and portray sustainability and sustainable products is of high interest for further research. More research is also needed to understand who gets to use the media arena to convey their messages, not at least within the topic of sustainability.

Keywords: Framing; Agenda setting; Mediatization; Swedish milk; Swedish media
# Table of content

- A text analysis of how Swedish newspapers have framed aspects of milk between 2012 and 2017 ................................................................. 1

1 Introduction ............................................................................................................. 1  
1.1 Media framing and society impact ................................................................ 1  
1.2 The case of Milk in Sweden ........................................................................ 2  
1.3 Problematization ............................................................................................ 3  
1.4 Research outline .............................................................................................. 3

2 Theoretical framework ........................................................................................ 4  
2.1 Mediatization – how media work within the society ...................................... 4  
2.2 Influencing media ............................................................................................ 5  
2.3 Setting the agenda in media ........................................................................... 6  
2.4 Framing ............................................................................................................ 7  
2.5 Summery theoretical framework .................................................................... 9

3 Our worldview and research design ................................................................. 10  
3.1 Ontological stands .......................................................................................... 10  
3.2 Inquiry used in this study ............................................................................... 11  
3.3 Research design ............................................................................................... 11  
3.4 Data collection ................................................................................................. 11  
3.5 Data analysis .................................................................................................... 12

4 Presentation of data ............................................................................................ 14  
4.1 Texts published between 2012 and 2017 ......................................................... 14  
4.2 Framing of media texts between 2012 and 2017 .......................................... 15  
4.3 Aspects of milk published in the Swedish newspapers during 2012 and 2017 15

5 Discussion ............................................................................................................ 26  
5.1 Framing ............................................................................................................ 26  
5.2 Lobbying and media capture ......................................................................... 28

6 Final discussion and conclusion ........................................................................ 30  
6.1 Limitations .................................................................................................... 31  
6.2 Further research ........................................................................................... 31

References ............................................................................................................. xxxii  
Additional sources ............................................................................................... xxxvi
1 Introduction

1.1 Media framing and society impact

Media is an actor that controls the central arena for communicating happenings and issues within modern societies (Hepp, et al., 2015). The process of media influencing the society has gained increased amount of attention throughout recent years under the name mediatization (ibid). Media is the gatekeeper for the widespread distribution of information, something that affects individuals in their daily life. Media can influence what is discussed by the dinner table by choosing what to publish in the news (ibid). By deciding which news is important and which are not, media has the power to set the agenda of what people talk about (Pinto et al., 2016). The purpose of setting the agenda on a particular topic of discussion is to impose its point of view to as many social agents possible (ibid). Media can by framing a topic guide the reader in how to perceive that topic, however, media is said to keep and reflect the dominant culture within society (Pinto et al., 2016; Anderson, 2009). It is also argued that by setting the agenda and by using framing, media can change the perception of an issue and thereby influence the culture and society (Hepp et al., 2015). News media is a highly influential actor within societies around the world, and by promoting or diminish aspects of a certain situation media can construct the reality, and by framing the message, define what the public should perceive as important (ibid).

Due to the power of media, previous research has studied media’s way of framing specific topics. Jönsson (2011) studied how Swedish media framed the environmental risks connected to the Baltic Sea, in order to understand the governance and development of environmental policies for the Baltic Sea. Further, multiple studies have focused on how environmental issues overall as well as how the word sustainability has been framed and discussed in media over time (Castrechini et al., 2014; Huang, 2016; Anderson, 2009; Holt and Barkemeyer, 2012). Other studies have focused on how media has framed environmental issues connected to the agriculture industry (Poláková, 2018). Additionally, Asplund et al. (2013) studied how specialized magazines in Sweden, directed towards farmers, framed environmental issues connected to or caused by the agriculture industry.

Although previous studies have acknowledged the importance of the media framing of environmental issues, we see that there is a lack of connection between the culture and media and how that affect the framing of specific issue. Pinto et al. (2016) as well as Anderson (2009) stress the dominant culture of society will be reflected in how media portray and frame an issue. Therefore, we find it interesting to see how a product that has cultural connection as well as being connected to environmental devastation is framed in media.
The dairy industry is being questioned for its unhealthiest as well as pinpointed as a major cause for greenhouse emissions, land degradation and water pollution (Tilman and Clark, 2014; Jacobson, 2006; Oppenlander, 2013). It has also been stated from the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCC) that it is necessary to stop the growth of greenhouse gas emissions until 2020, as well as lowering the greenhouse gas emissions with 60% by 2050 compared to 2010. This needs to be done in order to reach the goal for the global warming being below two degrees Celsius (European Commission, 2017), a goal that is directly related to lowering the greenhouse gas emissions from the meat–and dairy industry. However, in Sweden, the product milk have had, and still has, a strong position in the Swedish society, with a long history of being seen as the national beverage, milk has deep ties to the Swedish culture (Valence, 2011; Williams, 2015).

1.2 The case of Milk in Sweden

Milk has been seen as healthy, safe and good nourishment for about hundred years, ever since the process of pasteurization was invented (Valenze, 2011). Before this invention, milk was seen as dangerous and even repulsive to drink (ibid). However, after the invention of pasteurization, with the voices of medical experts, milk was soon to become a product of culture, especially in the case of Sweden (ibid). In 1923, milk farmers together with politicians, medical experts and authorities started an organization called “The Milk Propaganda”, with the goal to increase the milk consumption in Sweden (Williams, 2015). The Milk Propaganda became a major movement and was visible all over Sweden in the form of posters, school campaigns and ‘milk bars’ (Marttin, 2010).

The Milk Propaganda is an example of how politicians and industries cooperated in the beginning of the 1900th century in order to build the Swedish welfare state (Marttin, 2010). In the case of milk, it was seen as an economic support for the rural areas as well as a way to better the public health (ibid). The marketing efforts were a combination of ‘objective information’ and pronounced ambitions to support the farming economy. In the 1920’ and 30’s the consumers were told to increase their consumption of dairy products in order to reduce the heavy surplus, while the farmers were recommended to produce even more milk (Marttin, 2010).

The Milk Propaganda spread their message across Sweden and milk was portrayed as white, clean and healthy as well as something typically Swedish. It was stressed that drinking milk was saving the countryside and our children’s health, and soon it became a national duty to consume milk (Marttin, 2010).

Apart from the posters, the Milk Propaganda also published their own magazine in which they reported about their marketing campaigns, often as a total success (Marttin, 2010). At times, readers could come across more pessimistic texts about farmers’ struggles and the dark future for the countryside (Marttin, 2010). In order to encourage the milk producers, as well as draw attention to the marketing projects diplomas
was awarded to milk producers with the highest quality of milk, something that emphasised the important mission of the dairy production in Sweden (ibid).

However, after the Second World War, the name Milk Propaganda was changed and its marketing efforts toned down. Today, the organization works under the name ‘LRF Mjölk’ (The Swedish Dairy Association), and is still considered to be a strong lobby organization in Sweden (Stenholtz, 2015). Martiin (2010) argue that fragments of the Milk Propaganda still remains, partly in the form of promotional messages on milk cartons, but also in form of milk diplomas and medals to milk farmers given for excellent milk, something that is today distributed by the Royal family in Sweden (Martiin, 2010).

1.3 Problematization

The product of milk as well as the dairy industry as a whole is being questioned for being un-sustainable and the cause for major environmental impacts (Tilman and Clark, 2014; Jacobson, 2006; Oppenlander, 2013). Meanwhile, milk and the dairy industry has a long history of being part of the Swedish society and its culture, milk is even named “the national drink” in Sweden (Martiin, 2010; Stenholtz, 2015; Va- lence, 2011; Williams, 2015).

Media can be used to convey political messages and values as well as diminish others (Ashuri, 2012), media also have the power to change individuals’ perception and thereby have the power to change the culture within a society (Hepp et al., 2015). It is therefore of interest to see how Swedish media chose to frame milk and the dairy industry in a time when the product of milk is discussed as a climate villain as well as one major cause for greenhouse gas emissions, land degradation and water scarcity (Tilman and Clark, 2014; Jacobson, 2006; Oppenlander, 2013).

To guide our research we have chosen to focus on the following research question:

- Which aspects of the Swedish milk and milk industry has been portrayed in Swedish media during 2012 and 2017 and how has these aspects been framed?

1.4 Research outline

This thesis is divided into six chapters, the introduction will be followed by the theoretical framework chosen for this study; Mediatization, Agenda Setting, Public Relations, Lobbying and Framing. After the theoretical framework our ontological stands, research design and research analysis will be explained, followed by a presentation of our empirical data based on four Swedish newspapers between the years 2012 and 2017. In the fifth chapter we analyze our empirical data with the help of our theoretical framework and in our last chapter we present our final discussion and conclusions made from this study.
2 Theoretical framework

With the background of milk's connection to the Swedish culture, we also need to understand media's place in the society and therefore the concepts of mediatization, public relation and lobbying will be explained. Further, in order to recognize how media influence attitudes and values we have chosen to go deeper into the concepts of agenda setting and framing.

2.1 Mediatization – how media work within the society

According to Hepp et al. (2015), mediatization is a concept that is used to explain the relationship between media’s influence on culture and society. Strömbäck (2008), on the other hand argue that mediatization is a concept to explain how media and politics are interconnected and dependent on each other. Mediatization is not a new concept, even though the word itself originates from the beginning of the 21st century. Earlier the concept was depicted with the words medialization and mediation (Couldry and Hepp, 2013). Nevertheless, the essence of the concept has always been to capture the process where media has a direct impact on the everyday life, including social, political, cultural, and economic aspects (ibid). Today, the high consumption of media, the availability and non-stop access to newspapers and other news sources has an increasing effect on cultures and societies as a whole (Couldry and Hepp, 2013; Hepp et al., 2015).

Mediatization can be defined differently depending on which perspective is chosen (Hepp et al., 2015). The most often used perspective is the institutional perspective, where media institutions affect or are affected by other institutions such as organizations or political parties. Couldry and Hepp (2013) explains that media should be seen as an independent institution with its own set of rules, culture and interests which are used to influence its surroundings. This process is called media logic. Additionally, due to the rapid increase of media consumption, Couldry and Hepp (2013) argue that media logic influences and challenges other sets of logics to a large extent. Media logic explains what and how media communicate, and more importantly what is not communicated. Individuals’ typically turn to their media outlets to get information of current events in society, leading to media receiving the means to persuade and shape the public opinion on all aspects of society (Couldry and Hepp, 2013). Strömbäck (2008) reason for that media logic is often used to convey political messages. Meanwhile, Couldry and Hepp (2013) argue that media logic is not primarily a political force, but is rather driven by news value. Nevertheless, media is influential enough to change and shape individuals’ perceptions of reality and also have the power to guide their readers towards media’s perception of what is right or wrong (Stömbäck, 2008; Couldry and Hepp, 2013).
Tesar and Doppen (2006) suggests that media have the means to both influence and define what is considered a social norm within specific groups, but also define social norms within the society as a whole (ibid). However, when connecting the theory of social constructivism with the media effect, Scheufele (1999) found that media generally has a strong effect on individuals perceptions of issues, however media is only one of many pieces used by individuals when constructing meaning (ibid).

In combination with media’s potential to influence individual’s perception of reality (Strömbäck, 2008), Ashuri (2012) argues that media seldom follows the “media ideal”. This ideal is defined as when journalists and news organizations portray and report an objective picture of an event. Ashuri (2012) argue that most of what is being published or reported is subjective and filled with values. This shift from objective to subjective media has incrementally increased over time (ibid). According to Ashuri (2012), this is connected to an increasing level of social activism within different societies. These social activists or agents actively work to enhance, change or diminish social norms and cultures in favour of others (ibid).

2.2 Influencing media

One theory, which is commonly used in order to understand organizational influence on its surroundings, is public relations (PR). PR is a collective name for activities deployed by organizations that are trying to influence the policy environment, civil society and the politically appointed decision makers, in ways that benefits the organizations own interests (Davidson, 2014). However, Fredriksson and Pallas (2013) describes PR as a practise of a certain set of governing mechanisms, norms, rules, activities and ideas that are taken for granted within society. While, Harris and Moss (2001) as well as Miller and Harkins (2010) conclude that there is no precise definition of what PR includes from a scientific perspective, however the proposed definition of PR says that it is a management of a broad range of relationships with different sorts of stakeholders. It is further argued that lobbying is a strategy or tool within the sphere of PR used to sway both public and political opinion in a more favourable direction from the organizations perspective (Harris and Moss, 2001; Miller and Harkins, 2010).

Dinan and Miller (2007) as well as Stauber and Rampton (1995) argue that organizations and individuals can use PR and lobbying to hinder implementations of environmental politics, such as environmental legislations in society. This is also supported by Anderson (2009), who claim that PR play a significant role in the climate change debate where ‘claim-makers’ are using sophisticated strategies to target media in order to get their point of view heard. Through PR and lobbying, corporations can affect the public opinion and undermine politics working for the legislations (ibid). McGrath (2007) argues that it is important to analyse the language used in PR and by lobbyists in order to understand the discourse. Additionally, Miller and Harkins (2010) expand this notion further by concluding that lobbying within the
sphere of PR is used to cover four strategic areas of society, which are scientific capture, civil society capture, media capture and policy capture.

Scientific capture is when an organization or industry, manages to influence the scientific sphere in order to positively impact the organizations or industry’s own interests (Holden and Lee, 2009). An example of this is the tobacco industry which where able to down size the health risks associated with smoking for over 20 years by using biased research and slandering opponents within the scientific communities (Holden and Lee, 2009). Additionally, Anderson (2009) argue that several scholars have noted how powerful industry groups, special interest lobbies and PR companies have manipulated scientific claims and with these claims exploited the news media.

Civil society capturing is when organizations are involved in non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other social movements, which are not directly or obviously connected to the purpose of their own interests and agenda, however it can serve as an method to further the reputation of the organization. Media capture, however, is when an organization manages to capture media coverage, and steering the agenda in a favourable direction. The purpose of this tactic is often used to influence public opinion or to marginalize critics and the opposition (Holden and Lee, 2009).

The primary goal of steering the agenda, influence the scientific sphere or better the reputation is to influence policy capture, which means influence the policy decision-making (Holden and Lee, 2009). Miller and Harkins (2010) found in their study that when the Food and Drink Federation in the United Kingdom decided to change the recommended daily intake of salt for the UK citizens, the fast food industry managed to capture the media, leading to a massive media coverage of how the new recommendation would negatively affect the industry and all who worked in it. This media capture pushed the Food and Drink Federation to withdraw their recommendation of lower salt intake (Miller and Harkins, 2010). Additionally, Miller and Harkins (2010) conclude that these sorts of PR strategies are an important piece of the policy process within the western world.

De Lange and Linders (2006) describe PR as a playground for the construction of social reality, where media gets input from society in form of PR and lobbying and then construct a reality that the public as well as the politicians are dependent on (De Lange and Linders, 2006; Harris and Moss, 2001). Godwin et al. (2012) explain that with different interest groups competing to get their voice heard in media, it will rarely be a fair distribution of space, leading to some groups gets more spotlight than others. However, it is stressed that there is no evidence that interest groups with more resources have more influence in policy battles or the media arena (ibid).

2.3 Setting the agenda in media

Agenda setting is according to Weaver (2007) generally defined as medias capacity to shape and define the agenda within the society, by telling the public what issues
are important and which are not. “The press may not be successful much of the time in telling people what to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think about” (Cohen, 1963, in Weimann, 2000 p. 33). Argued by Hopmann et al. (2012) the agenda setting in media have a profound impact on political issues by telling the public what to recognise as important.

Funk and McCombs (2015) have found that there is a top-down effect in the transnational media agenda, where larger media organizations with a wide reader base set the agenda that is then influencing the agenda portrayed by smaller news organizations. Additionally, Cui and Wu (2017) argue that only a few international news actors set the global agenda. These actors are exclusively found in western countries, and with recourses and strong brand recognition, they are highly influential in setting the global agenda (ibid). However, small, local news media are usually more concerned with local issues connected to the local community, and thereby seldom follow the international or even the national agenda, unless it is relevant on a local level (Funk and McCombs, 2015). Yet, Anderson (2009) found that there was a lack of media coverage of climate change and other environmental issues in development countries, even though these countries are likely to suffer the worst effects from these issues. Further, Anderson (2009) argue that any issue can gain fervent interest in media as long as it’s dramatic and has an affect on the public.

2.4 Framing

In news media the term frame is referring to which words, images, phrases and presentation style are used to provide the public with information (Chong and Druckman, 2007a). The chosen frames reveals what media sees as relevant to the topic at hand, and also show what the reader should think of and what to dismiss (ibid). The term frame also refers to the frame in thought, i.e. the individual frame that is connected to an individual’s cognitive understanding of a given situation. Chong and Druckman (2007b) describe the frame of thought as being what the readers believe to be the most relevant aspect of an issue, while the media frame guide the reader towards what is the most relevant aspect of an issue.

The concept of framing is used to show how media affect surrounding actors and the society (Scheufele, 1999). Weaver (2007) states that framing is defining a problem, show how it should be interpreted, and who to blame, and recommend a solution to the problem. Depending on how the problem is defined the obvious solution will differ (Entman, 1993). Entman, (1993) define framing as “to frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described.” (p. 52)

McCombs and Shaw (1972) argue that by choosing what do display in the news, journalists and editors play an important part in shaping the political reality. Media do not only provide readers with a relevant issue, but also tells them how much im-
portance to attach to that issue (ibid). By choosing how much information is included in the news story, how it is positioned and what frame is used, media has an impact on the public opinion (McCombs and Shaw, 1972). Additionally, Anderson (2009) highlight that “the media play a crucial role in framing scientific, economic, social and political dimensions through giving voice to some viewpoints while suppressing others, and legitimating certain truth-claims as reasonable and credible” (p. 1)

Bobo and Chakraborty (2015) argue that framing statements or news as positive or negative has an effect on the perception and judgements of the reader. According to prospect theory, individuals react differently to the same information depending on whether the message is framed with highlighting the advantages (gain frame) or disadvantages (loss frame) (ibid). Therefore message-framing is one of the most commonly manipulating features influencing attitudes and behaviours (Chang et al., 2015). Additionally, the effects of positive or negative framing also depend on the temporal focus of the message. Were Chang et al. (2015) argue that people are more receptive to a loss-frame with a focus on the present, then on a gain-frame with a focus on the future.

The strength of the frame is said to increase when it comes from a credible source that have clear values and do not contradict the individual’s prior strong beliefs (Chong and Druckman, 2007a). On the other hand, individuals are assumed not to evaluate the strength consciously, but to embrace the frame they are most used to see or hear (ibid). Behr and Iyengar (1985) argue that changes in the public agenda are caused by changes in the media agenda. The amount of media attention devoted to particular issue determines the degree of public concern for that issue (Chong and Druckman (2007a; Chong and Druckman, 2007b; Behr and Iyengar, 1985).

However, little research has been focused on framing in competitive environments, where individuals receive multiple frames representing alternative or even opposite positions on an issue with varying quantities and strengths of the frames (Chong and Druckman, 2007b). In a competitive environment, so far two possible outcomes are argued for. Either the loudest frame that is repeated more frequently would have the greatest influence on individuals’ opinion, or the strongest frame, meaning that the frame set by the most credible source will have the greatest influence on public opinion, regardless of repetition (ibid).

According to Cacciatore, Scheufele and Iyenger (2016) the current knowledge of framing was developed in the 1980’s and 1990’s and may not be accurate on today’s mass media climate, where the number of media outlets has increases drastically in recent years. It is argued that the public will now search for media that correspond and validate their pre-determined mind-set (ibid).
2.5 Summery theoretical framework

Mediatization gives an overview of the relationship between media and the society (Couldry and Hepp, 2013; Hepp et al., 2015; Strömbäck 2008). Where media is argued for changing and shaping individuals’ perception of reality and thereby have massive power within society. Even if medias’ main goal is not to be a political force it acts as an arena for policy making (Couldry and Hepp, 2013; Hepp et al., 2015). Organizations, individuals as well as industries use lobbying and PR and try to achieve scientific capture, civil society capture and media capture in order to gain access to the media arena. With access to the media arena they can steer media into a specific topic, the angle of that topic as well as pushing for certain voices to get heard instead of others (Miller and Harkins, 2010). The goal for the usage of PR and lobbying is to use the media arena in order to change the public opinion, that in the end could lead to altered policies and legislations within the society (Miller and Harkins, 2010). This way of using the media arena is an important piece of the policy process within the western world (ibid).

Media to tell the public what topics to care about then uses the agenda setting and what not to care about. The framing of these topics then tells the public how to care about it, which view the topic should have. What is the issue, who is responsible, what emotional concerns does it include and how should the issue be solved (Weaver, 2007; Hopmann et al., 2012; Chong and Druckman, 2007a; Behr and Iyengar, 1985; McCombs and Shaw, 1972).

The overall concept of mediatization will be the ground for the continuing of this study, and the agenda setting and framing and lobbying as well as PR will guide us in our empirical work in the following chapters.
3 Our worldview and research design

3.1 Ontological stands

The division between objectivism and subjectivism is an aspect of ontology. Where in most quantitative research it is assumed that the social world exists as a distinctive, separate and objective reality for everyone (Eriksson and Kovalainen, 2016). In subjectivism or constructionism, the reality is not disconnected from social reality of interactions but rather dependent on it (ibid). Eriksson and Kovalainen (2016) stress that a focal point in the social constructionist view is that reality does not exist outside individuals and that ‘reality’ is always about individuals’ and groups’ interpretations.

This study is conducted with a subjective worldview, meaning there is no absolute truth, only different perceptions of knowledge (Saunders et al., 2009). With a subjective view of the world, the limitation of knowledge is that the interpretations made in this context can differ in another context or even by people’s different interpretations within the same context (Eriksson and Kovalainen, 2016). The subjective worldview is not a choice made for this study alone, but rather the way the researchers view the world outside academia and therefore, will have a natural place in the research conducted.

Textual data is relevant and useful in a qualitative research (Eriksson and Kovalainen, 2016). Jönsson (2011) used news media in order to understand the process of risk governance for the Baltic Sea. “…How risks and uncertainties are framed, assessed and communicated [in media], is of utmost importance for researchers...” (Jönsson, 2011 p.1). Texts are suitable objects for analysis because texts have the ability to tell us about the social entities and the issues that they represent (Eriksson and Kovalainen, 2016). There are several ways to understand texts (Eriksson and Kovalainen, 2016), although in qualitative research texts are mostly understood as artefacts. Which means that our texts are gathered and related to a specific topic for a specific reason.

With our research we want to understand how media portrays and frames their stories about milk and the milk industry during a specific time, and to do so we need to make our own interpretations of the news texts. When not looking at social entities as disconnected from society, but as a result of society, we are open for interconnections, which are vital to answer our research question. We are interested in not only the content of our empirical data, but also how meaning is created through use of language and pictures and therefore we work within interpretivism (Eriksson and Kovalainen, 2016). The most used form of interpretative research is social constructionism (ibid), which seeks to understand how something seemingly “objective” or taken for granted is established by subjective meanings.
3.2 Inquiry used in this study

It is common to use both induction and deduction in different phases of the research (Eriksson and Kovalainen, 2016). Going back and forth between theory and empirical data is referred to as an abductive approach (ibid), and it has been used throughout this research. In some cases, we have started with a theory for which we seek support for in our empirical data, while in others, we have searched for theories that support our empirical data.

3.3 Research design

A longitudinal research design is suitable due to the specific timeframe for our study. A timeline between 2012 and 2017 was chosen because we wanted to see the development of the topic over time. Additionally, in 2014 a Swedish oat milk producer by the name of Oatly started a marketing campaign and was sued by the Swedish Dairy Association for discrediting milk (Nylund, 2014). Oatly lost the case in 2015 and was prohibited to use any phrases that discredited milk or milk producers in any way (Marknadsdomstolen 2015, p.18). Something we believe could have an impact on how cow milk is portrayed and framed in Swedish media. In order to have rich data we decided to choose two years before the legal case between the Swedish Dairy Association and Oatly and as many years following as possible, thereby the natural delimitation for this study became 2017.

According to Creswell (2014) a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches to data will provide a more complete understanding of a research problem than either approach alone. In this study we have chosen to use a combination of quantitative and qualitative approach, something referred to as mixed methods (Creswell, 2014). The quantitative data was used as a guide towards the qualitative data, as well as delimitation. Both methods were necessary for this study. Using the quantitative data alone would not have provided sufficient data to answer our research question, as well as only using a qualitative data would not have been feasible during this timeframe due to the amount of data we collected.

3.4 Data collection

Our empirical data consists of news articles, discussion articles, chronicles, letter to editors, however we have not assign any type of text a greater value than another, they are all viewed as “news texts”. Even though media texts are often referred to as secondary data, they do provide significant opportunities for qualitative research (Eriksson and Kovalainen, 2016). The news texts were selected from four different newspapers in Sweden: Dagens Nyheter (DN), Aftonbladet (AB), Expressen (Exp) and Svenska Dagbladet (Svd). The newspapers chosen are the four most read newspapers in Sweden (IDG, 2017; Dagens Analys, 2016). We therefore decided to consider all four newspapers in our study in order to diversify our data.
All material from newspapers was collected from a media database (Retriever Research) using the keywords; “milk”, “milk industry”, “Oatly” “milk substitute”, “the milk war”, “soymilk”, “oat milk”, “milk farmers”, “almond milk”, “the milk lobby”, although all searchers were made in Swedish. The search process was divided in three parts. In the first search the keywords “milk”, “milk industry”, “milk substitute” and “Oatly” was used. Second search; “soymilk”, “oat milk”, “almond milk” and third; “milk war”, “milk farmers”, “the milk lobby”.

3.5 Data analysis

In this research both quantitative and qualitative analyses have been used to serve different purposes. The quantitative analysis of data has been used in order to illustrate a connection or lack thereof between the lawsuit concerning the Swedish Dairy Association and Oatly as well as how many times environmental issues was mentioned connected to milk or the milk industry.

According to Eriksson and Kovalainen (2016), a categorization by themes can give a more holistic view of the phenomenon under study, and it is helpful in describing the content. In order to ensure the quality and reliability of the analysis (ibid), a coding scheme including all categories has been developed. Even though we are conducting a qualitative content analysis, categorizing the content is useful and sometimes needed to get an overview of the material (Eriksson and Kovalainen, 2016); a matter we considered necessary due to the amount of data.

The qualitative analysis was done to explore the themes and framing within each text. In order to produce a coherent set of interpretations of the qualitative data, the researchers discussed each text together after first making interpretations separately: a form of triangulation (Denzin, 1978). After the qualitative data was interpreted and categorized under themes dependent on the topic they covered, an interpretation of the combined quantitative and qualitative data was conducted in order to produce a coherent interpretation (Champion et al., 2016).

The collection of material from the four different newspapers was done in different steps. First, all texts with one or more of the keywords were chosen. The texts were in this step only skimmed through and sometimes only chosen because of the title, leaving us with a sample of 553 texts. All collected texts were sorted under year and name of newspaper. The second step was to read the material more thoroughly to become familiar with the data. After reading and re-reading the texts more carefully
our sample was reduced to a number of 443 texts. Texts that were excluded from the second step were texts that used milk to describe an everyday event, disconnected from the milk industry, milk farmers, Oatly and environmental issues connected to the milk industry. We also chose to exclude recipes from this study.

In order to keep track of the texts, we gave every text a name for example AB 2012-A and Svd 2015-A2, the names given are not connected to dates, they are only used as referencing tools. The following step was to place the texts from all four newspapers in a chronological order. This was done in order to find themes and the development of the themes over time. The interest for us lies in the amount of times the different themes are mentioned, but also how they are mentioned. According to Eriksson and Kovalainen (2016) it is favourably to be flexible when categorizing in order to generate new categories and themes and to be able to revise the original once when it’s necessary. While reading we divided the texts according to themes and the specific topic they were referring to as well as marked them with negative or positive framing towards milk. This was necessary in order to analyse the data further.

A positive frame of milk is defined as the heading or text favourably referring to milk as healthy “eco-milk is rich in omega-3” (SVD, 2014-A), or if it portrays milk as apart of the Swedish heritage as in “Do we really want to shut down Swedish agriculture?” (DN, 2016-E) where the importance of cows are argued through their ability of keeping the landscape open. Another positive framing is rallying for support like “The milk farmers facing bankruptcy” (DN, 2012-I). Also questioning of other alternative products credibility, health claims and if it really is more environmentally friendly in relation to milk is interpreted as positive framing of milk.

Negative media framing can by default be defined as the opposite. When milk as a product is questioned like in “Milk is connected to a early death” (SVD, 2014-L) or the industry behind the milk is questioned, like in “Breeding of calves is a hidden animal offense” (DN, 2012-D). Also when positive aspects of other products are highlighted is presented as negative framing of milk, like in “21 steps to decease your environmental footprint” (SVD, 2014-L), where it is explicitly stated that changing from cow milk to oat based milk you will decease the environmental footprint with 1 ton per year. Another negative framing is when milk as a product of heritage is questioned which also can be found in “Breeding of calves is a hidden animal offense” (DN, 2012-D), where the text says that; “I don’t think that Swedish dairy farmers are bad, the farmers and the public are just blinded by traditions.”
4 Presentation of data

In this chapter we will present our findings, starting with an overview of number of texts published between 2012 and 2017. Further on we will present the most highlighted topics discussed during these years as well as show how they been presented. All quantitative data from the newspapers are collected using the keywords mentioned in chapter 3.

4.1 Texts published between 2012 and 2017

Figure 1

Under 2012 total amount of published texts including one or more keywords were 78. From these 78 texts 23 were published in Aftonbladet, 26 in Dagens Nyheter, 13 in Expressen and 16 in Svenska Dagbladet. During 2013 Aftonbladet published 11 texts, Dagens Nyheter 9, Expressen 11 and Svenska Dagbladet 13 of the total 44 texts. In 2014 Aftonbladet published 8 texts, Dagens Nyheter 16, Expressen 12 and Svenska Dagbladet 16 texts, the total amount of texts were 52.

In 2015 the amount of texts published increased to a number of 126 texts. In 2015 Aftonbladet published 18 texts, Dagens Nyheter 47, Expressen 26 and Svenska Dagbladet 35 texts. During 2016 the amount of texts published decreased from the recent year to 81 texts were Aftonbladet published 15, Dagens Nyheter 20, Expressen 19 and Svenska Dagbladet 27 texts. In the last full year, (2017) Aftonbladet published 16 texts, Dagens Nyheter 22, Expressen 13 and Svenska Dagbladet 11, making the total amount of published texts 62.
4.2 Framing of media texts between 2012 and 2017

With our interpretations of the texts as positive and negative, it is clear that milk and the milk industry in Sweden generally have a positive framing rather than negative. Figure 2 show that the positive framing is increasing rapidly in 2015 and is decreasing again the following years, even if the positive framing of milk and the milk industry always is higher than the negative framing. The negative framing of milk and the milk industry do not make any vast turns, but stays in within the amounts of 10-25 texts per year.

Further on, we will present the media texts published between 2012 and 2017 in order to understand the underlying reason for this framing in the Swedish media to present, which topics were in focus, and how media presented them.

4.3 Aspects of milk published in the Swedish newspapers during 2012 and 2017

The milk war

In the beginning of 2012 media published news of an event where farmers sold unpasteurized milk, which was the start of an three year long debate between milk farmers and the Swedish Food Administry (Livsmedelsverket). Milk farmers in the north of Sweden decided to sell unpasteurized milk outside a grocery store, something that has been illegal in Sweden since 1937. “We don’t believe that we have done anything illegal. According to EU, farmers have permission to sell smaller
amounts of milk directly from the facility” (DN, 2012-E). In another text the case was referred to as “the milk war in the mountains” (Svd, 2012-K) “Farmers are now risking fines for breaking the Swedish Food Law, but the farmers wont give up and are planning to sell the milk again during the summer… ‘If we wont manage to sell our milk the agriculture in rural areas could disappear’…” (Svd, 2014-K).

“There are many people who wish to buy milk that have not been pasteurized…A lot of people have done their research and know that there are some risks but also many advantages [with unpasteurized milk] ” (Exp, 2012-D) However, the Swedish Food Administry said that “the milk is being pasteurized in order to not spread bacteria that could lead to kidney failure and even death” (Svd, 2012-D). In media the milk farmers also questioned the law for unpasteurized milk in Sweden “The farmers behind the selling has turned to the Swedish Food Administry in order to get the basis of the decision that the milk is dangerous enough to be forbidden, so far no answer has been given. Instead the Swedish Food Administry are turning to the public and gives out another warning about the unpasteurized milk” (Svd, 2012-D). Referencing to research was also found in the texts “A French study suggests that children that are growing up on farms and drinking unpasteurized milk face less trouble with allergies and asthma” (Svd, 2012-K).

In 2013 the Swedish Food Administry urged for a national ban of the unpasteurized milk, even on milk farms. This started a new debate, about the Swedish cheesecake. “A ban threatens the cheese cake” (DN, 2013-F) “We have strong connections to our old cheese” (DN, 2013-G). In the southern parts of Sweden the unpasteurized milk is used to make a special cheese cake “that is connected to the culture of småland” (DN, 2013-F) A year later the ban was dismissed “The milk ban abolished – new rules” (DN, 2014-L). “The Swedish Food Administry are backing down from their earlier ban for selling unpasteurized milk. Now new rules are made for farmers who wish to sell their milk unpasteurized” (DN, 2014-L).

Milk crisis
Another theme that started in 2012 and has been visible throughout the selected years of the study is a theme named the milk crisis. The first milk crisis started in 2012 due to a long dry period, resulting in a bad harvest and therefore an increased price of crops. Something that resulted in higher business costs for the milk farmers in Sweden. The first milk crisis was reported in media between 2012 until the end of 2013. However in mid 2014, a new milk crisis started to be reported in media. This time due to a massive surplus of milk which resulted in a decreasing price of milk. The theme milk crisis was given the most space in media between 2012 and 2017, with its high point during 2015, resulting in what you can see in figure 2. We selected some media texts that we believe represent how the topic has been presented in media.
Milk farmers
Texts that described the struggling life of the milk farmers and how to save them were recurring. “The question is: do you want us to survive?” (AB, 2012-S) The headline reached over a two pages spread with four pictures of a family of farmers. The family, consisting of one mom, one dad, one son and one daughter look sad in all the pictures. In the first photo they are all standing next to their cows, looking at them without smiles on their faces. The second picture is outside with cows grazing in the grass behind them, while the family stare straight at the camera. No smiles. The third picture is only of the daughter sitting in the cow house surrounded by cows eating hay, she looks at the cows with shining eyes. In the last picture the whole family is standing in the cow house, the children closest to the camera and the parents behind them, holding on to each other, all looking straight at the camera with a serious expression. A text in a larger size under all the pictures says “The Swedish milk farmers are down on their knees to survive, and their only hope lies on you – the consumer” (AB, 2012-S).

In 2013, the milk crisis continues and the milk farmers are portrayed in similar matters “Our daughter cried when we had to send the animals away” (Exp, 2013-J) describes how a family could not survive the low milk price anymore and was forced to close down their business (Exp, 2013-J). “Markus and Monia Eriksson looks at the stalls where 65 cows were living only a few months back. The eyes are shiny” (Exp, 2013-J). A life on the countryside with grazing cows, open landscapes and a happy family was the dream and the couple saved money for years to be able to buy the farm in 2010. However, soon the milk crises started and price of milk kept decreasing, and after some time it just wasn’t possible to survive as milk farmers anymore (Exp, 2013-J).

“The milk has to be able to be profitable” (DN, 2015-H) argues that the milk crisis, hits hardest against new milk farmers that are making the industry better (DN, 2015-H). The younger milk farmers that have invested a lot of money in new machines and bigger housing for cows, it is them who had to take big loans in order to make the industry better, that are now risking bankruptcy. “The old farmer's with lower debt are relatively safe, but what happens when they retire in a couple of years?” (DN, 2015-H). “The milk farmers are down on their knees” (Exp, 2015-C). Multiple farmers are dissatisfied with Arla, the price the farmers get for their milk is almost lower than in the 80s.

What is behind the milk crisis
The low price of Swedish milk is often argued for being connected to large food chains that are purchasing cheaper milk from abroad, pressuring the Swedish milk farmers “soon there is no more Swedish milk farmers” (DN, 2015-B). The Swedish milk farmers cannot compete with lower prices due to the Swedish Animal Protection Law, which in several occasions have been lifted as a hinder for Swedish milk
farmers “Solve the acute milk crisis, the Swedish farmers have a competitive disad-
vantage, due to the Swedish regulations. It needs to be modernised in order for us to
keep our milk farmers in Sweden” (Svd, 2015-B2).

The consumers are also targeted for not choosing to pay for the Swedish milk
“Why aren't we willing to pay 40 Swedish kronor for a litre of Swedish milk when we
can pay 20 kronor for bottle of water?” (DN, 2013-A).

The effects of the milk crisis
The low profitability for milk farmers was argued for being the cause of bad animal
welfare “more and more cattle are neglected in Sweden, and the cause of this is the
low profitability for the milk industry as well as worn out farmers” (AB, 2012-G). The
connection between low profitability and animal welfare is also raised in 2013, however this time the Swedish Animal Protection Law is at focus where it is argued
that the strict animal law has made it harder for the Swedish milk farmers to
compete on the international market (AB, 2013-F). The Swedish Animal Protection law is
also argued for being one of the reasons why Sweden is the country has the lowest
rate of self-sufficiency. We are importing 50 % of the food we consume, “It is hy-
pocrisy to speak well about the Swedish Animal Protection Law and then buy half of
the consumed food from other countries” (EXP 2013-G). The Animal Protection
Law is also used to highlight the quality of Swedish milk “If we want to have food
that is produced with care for the animals and the environment, then it is time to do
something about it” (Exp, 2015-H). “Producing your own food is part of the civil
defence” (Svd, 2016-Z). That the Swedish milk is part of the civil defence is high-
lighted as one important reason for why the Swedish milk needs to be saved “In oth-
er countries such as Norway, the government is protecting the domestic dairy indu-
stry in order to maintain a civil defence, and for this reason the consumers in Norway
now the importance of purchasing national produced goods and is also willing to
pay up to 50 % more for their milk” (DN, 2013-A).

Encouraging consumers to buy Swedish milk, with the arguments that without our
milk farmers, the open landscape and biodiversity would disappear is often used “We
seem to think that open fields and grazing animals are an unchanging picture of the
countryside even if we buy products from other places.” (DN, 2013-C). “Don’t you
want open landscapes anymore? Sweden will just become a massive forest without
milk farmers” (Exp, 2015-G). ”If we would lose our milk production hundred of
thousands jobs will disappear, as well as our open landscapes” (AB, 2012-G). “If we
pay 2 kronor more for the milk then we don’t have to drink milk from other countries,
support the Swedish farmers before it is too late” (AB, 2012-N).

Solutions for the milk crisis
Who should solve the milk crisis is argued to be the government “The government
should immediately give subsidies to the farmers until a long-term solution is found,
otherwise farmers will have to close their business or go into bankruptcy” (DN, 2015-B). “Help the Swedish farmers with money, otherwise the Swedish milk will disappear” (AB, 2012-H). “When the milk machines go silent, what do we do then? A country without any food production is what is closing in on us. To save the Swedish food producers, we need support from the government” (Exp, 2015-H).

However, it is also news texts about how campaigns are done to save the struggling milk farmers with the help of the public A campaign named “Donate one krona per litre of milk” was started by the Swedish Dairy Association and Ica got some media coverage and was reported as a success “The consumers are responding very good to this initiative, it shows that people wants to buy Swedish milk” (Svd, 2015-O).

In 2017 when the milk crisis had come to an end “It’s getting better for the milk farmers” (Svd, 2017-D) “The farmers' cheers - the milk price rises” (Exp, 2017-F) “Good times for Swedish farmers” (Exp, 2017-G), after governmental support “The farmers gets cheaper diesel” (Svd, 2015-K) and initiatives from the food industries as well as local stores.

In the middle of the milk crisis other topics came into focus in media, most of which was connected to released research that questioned the healthiness of milk or highlighted the environmental impacts of the dairy industry.

Research in media
Media published news about research saying that ecological produced milk is healthier and better for the environment than conventional milk caused a reaction in media “Swedish eco-labelled milk is good environmental friendly choice, but so is ordinary Swedish milk” (AB, 2013-F) as well as “it is irresponsible to persuade the citizens of Sweden that eco-labelled milk is the best choice for the environment when all Swedish milk is environmentally friendly” (AB, 2013-F).

In 2013 a Swedish research suggested that dairy and beef is causing massive environmental damage and we therefore need to change our eating behavior in order to reach the climate goals for 2050, something that was reported as “Beef is the biggest villain for our climate” (Svd, 2013-D). In a small paragraph in the bottom of the text it says that the research show that we need to lower our intake of both beef and dairy products in order to reach the climate goals for 2050. A response to this text, others were written claiming the opposite. “Our cows refine what human beings cannot eat, both into milk and meat as well as recycle valuable organic fertilizers” (Svd, 2013-E). It is also argued that cows are part of a natural cycle and to lower the environmental impact of food we should let them be in their natural cycle. If we eat food from a closed ecological cycle the cows have no impact on the environment and therefor we should focus on making all dairy – and meat farms organic in order to close the loop (Svd, 2013-E). These arguments were also used in another text “if you chose to buy the right meat and dairy you can even help to bind coal in the soil” (Exp, 2014-A).
In 2013 the Swedish Food Administration published a report about climate, milk, beef and eggs, something only mentioned in one text. The report showed that beef have the most impact on the climate, followed by lamb and cheese, and pork on forth place (Svd, 2013-G).

Multiple texts defending the Swedish milk production were published in 2014, such as “Stop talking negatively about the Swedish agriculture” (Svd, 2014-H). The text argue that the Swedish agriculture has the worlds most strict animal and environmental protection laws (Svd, 2014-H), and by buying products produced in Sweden you contribute to closing the loop and to a biodiversity and can at the same time be confident that the animals had a good life. “Unfortunately the Swedish milk- and meat production have been decreasing in recent years. The import has at the same time increased and now stands for 50 % of the food we consume in Sweden” (Svd, 2014-H). Another text argues that milk and meat is not at all bad for the environment “I do not object that people eat vegetarian food. What is disturbing me is that it is marketed as if you do an effort for the environment” (Exp, 2014-C). Further it is argued that animals do not have any climate impact at all, they at part of the carbon cycle and therefore do not release any net emissions.

The arguments for that cows are part of the natural cycle is used repeatedly “everyone who took biology in school knows how the cycles in nature work. Grass accumulates carbon dioxide from the air in order to grow. Cows graze the grass and convert this into nourishment that they need to live, grow, produce milk and give birth to a calf. Approximately 50 % of the grass they cow needs for itself, 25 % turns to food and the rest comes out as carbon dioxide and methane. This carbon dioxide and methane, (after 10-15 years when it has become carbon dioxide and water), is once again obtained by the grass. This is how a cycle works” (Exp, 2014-C).

However, in 2015 an increasing number of texts published question the dairy industry’s climate impact. For instance “The milk lobby are disregarding the climate impact” (AB, 2015-K) an text explaining that the milk industry is using their own science to support the claim that milk is not bad for the environment or health “…the milk lobby is trying to create a picture of that milk contributes to a better environment” (AB, 2015-K).

Another research that gained space in media was referred to as “New eating behavior can save the planet” (DN, 2015-O2) In order to save the climate we need to change our habits and lower our intake of meat- and dairy products. “The big villain is the greenhouse gas methane that is created in the stomach of grazing animals” (DN, 2015-O2). Our food is responsible for around one fourth of the global emissions of greenhouse gas. “To reach the climate goals, people in the west need to change their eating behavior, something stated of the UN Climate Panel” (DN, 2015-O2).

However, opposite claims was also raised in media “Better for the climate with more grazing animals” (Svd, 2017-I). A text that is referring to a different study that proof
that pasture ground has the ability to bind more coal then we thought, if it taken care of in the right way. And therefore the scientists are “convinced that these new findings will change how we look at food from our ruminant animals. The best alternative for the environment is to intensify milk production, not to drink oat milk or soda, it is grazing based milk that is the solution” (Svd, 2017-I). And also “Sweden needs more cows- for the environment” (AB, 2017-H) “Without our cows, our nature is threatened, during the last ten years, 50 000 hectare of open landscapes has been lost. Without our grazing cows, endangered birds and butterflies will die” (AB, 2017-H).

A news text titled “No- the Swedish Dairy Association, your suggestion does not benefit the environment” (AB, 2017-I) is questioning how much the cows in Sweden is grazing “Of course we need more cows to take care of our landscape, however the intense milk production the Swedish Dairy Association advocates has little to with that. Most of our milking cows requires nutrient-rich feed and therefore rarely grazes the fields filled with the delicate fauna. Today’s high-performance cows eat soy, crops and raps-seed cakes and only use grazing for exercise purposes in a pasture near the farm. If we go for grass-based milk production with twice as many cows we can achieve, binding of coal, open landscapes, and a better health for the cows and humans” (AB, 2017-I).

The last texts responding to the study was “Yes, milk cows are important for the open landscapes” (AB, 2017-J) “It is not true that the Swedish cows only eat soy, they eat mostly grass and the amount of soy in Swedish milk production has decreased with 54 per cent during the past five years. The soy is replaced with Swedish gown crops such as field beans. It is fun that we are many people engaged in a sustainable food production” (AB, 2017-J).

Another research, that was given a lot of place in media, stating that a high consumption of milk increases the risk of bone fractures and is also connected to a premature death. Headlines used for this news were “No- milk will not give strong bones” (AB, 2014-E), “The new alarm – about milk” (Exp, 2014-J), “Milk can increase the risk for bone fractures” (DN, 2014-D) as well as “Researchers are questioning milk” (Svd, 2014-Q). The study made of Swedish researchers, based on 110 000 people and published in British Medical Journal, show that people, foremost women, who have a high consumption of milk face a higher risk for bone fractures but also a premature death (Svd, 2014-Q). “One explanation could be the lactose, that has been proved in animal testing have connection to early aging and death” (Svd, 2014-Q).

However, the Swedish Dairy Association do not see any reason for changing the recommendations regarding milk consumption, “because it is impossible to prove that it is in fact the milk that is behind the cause for a premature death” (Svd, 2014-Q). Nor did The Swedish Food Administry see any reason for changing the recommendation about dairy intake. “People should eat and drink approximately 0,5 deciliter dairy products a day in order to obtain the amount of calcium needed” (DN, 2014-D).
“This is only an observation-study that do not explain the cause to why people who drink more milk has a higher risk of a premature death” (DN, 2014-D).

One month later another study was highlighted in media, this time “less lactose can lower the risk of cancer” (Svd, 2014-M), “Lactose free food, gives a lower risk of cancer” (DN, 2014-J). “A high consumption of dairy products in North America and Western Europe has during some time being suspected of being connected to the high rate of breast-and ovarian cancer in these areas. Now scientists can draw the conclusion that a lactose free diet can lower the risk of cancer” (DN, 2014-J).

Nevertheless, in 2015 the Swedish Food Administry released a suggestion for new food recommendation that caused a heated debate between the Swedish Dairy Association, the dairy Arla and the Swedish Food Administration. The news was reported with headlines such as “Dietary advice on milk denounced by dairies” (Svd, 2015-A), “Suggested dietary advice upsets milk farmers” (Svd, 2015-B), “The Swedish Food Administry rejecting milk criticism” (Svd, 2015-E) “Environmental profits with locally grown is being questioned” (Svd, 2015-F) and “Contradictory advice about the milk” (Svd, 2015-I). The new suggestion was that the consumption of milk and other dairy products should be in the limit of 2,5 deciliter to 5 deciliter each day in order to decrease the green house gas emissions. However, the advise got heavily criticized by the Swedish Dairy Association and Arla who says “it is unacceptable to limit the milk consumption without providing information for how the consumers in the future should contain enough calcium to avoid malnutrition” (Svd, 2015-B). “It is sad times for the Swedish milk farmers who are already pressured by the low market price” (Svd, 2015-B).

It was reported that the Swedish Dairy Association had posted a response where they had calculated that a grown man need to eat 500-gram kale or 900-gram spinach each day to cover the need of calcium when the intake of dairy has decreased. “We have asked to see the calculations behind the recommendations, but gotten the response that they are producing them now. This make us worried that there is no stable scientific ground, and the consumer risk not to reach the recommendation for multiple nutrients... And this is advice directed towards children from two years” (Svd, 2015-B). It is also reported that the Swedish Food Administry, motivates the advice with that cows release methane gas, an aggressive climate gas and also point out that the animal production, looking at a global perspective, lower the biodiversity and increases the use of protectants when growing soy for cattle food (Svd, 2015-B). The last word is given to the Swedish Dairy Association, “the soy is being phased out and grazing animals contributes to other climate goals, such as open landscapes” (Svd, 2015-B).

In “The Swedish Food Administry rejects milk criticism” (Svd, 2015-E) the Swedish Food Administry provide their own response and says that this new advice doesn’t mean any large adjustments to the diet, most Swedish people already consume within the proposed frame. "Thereby the criticism that our new recommendations would
lead to a completely different diet is not true” (Svd, 2015-E). However, also stated in the text is “we agree that the milk is important and our intention is not to limit the consumption. Our focus is still on choosing low-fat dairy products as well as keeping a balanced diet” (Svd, 2015-E).

In the text titled “Contradictory advice regarding the milk” (Svd, 2015-I) you can read a text about three worried researchers: “we are worried that the Swedish Food Administration’s suggested recommendations regarding milk consumption will strike wrong. We assert with determination - on a factual basis - that the production of milk should increase in Sweden” (Svd, 2015-I) “Dairy products are part of those animal-based products with low climate impact as well as environmental impact” (Svd, 2015-I). The milk production gives not only milk but also meat, which is one of the most environmentally friendly beef we can eat. “Greenhouse gas emissions needs to be calculated in relation to the amount of nutrition one kilogram contains. If you do it like the Swedish Food Administry, measure the emissions of one kilogram product to another kilogram product you will compare apples with pears” (Svd, 2015-I).

“The milk production in Sweden should increase because it leads to more jobs in the rural areas and a chance for export for refined products as well as all the perks with grazing animals” (Svd, 2015-I).

In 2017, a follow up study on how milk is a cause for premature death gained media coverage. The study showed that three glasses of milk or more every day, increase the risk of a premature death with three times (AB, 2017-D). Lactose free products do not help to decrease the risk, however, eating more vegetables will. However, the Swedish Food Administry responded that “If you follow the Swedish Food Administry of a balanced diet with five portions of fruits and vegetables each day the risk will decrease” (AB, 2017-D).

“The research group from Uppsala University strikes again, and this time published an additional study proving a connection between a premature death and a high consumption of milk. Where people who drinks three glasses of milk per day tend to live shorter than those who drink less milk or no milk at all. The first time the researcher published a study about milk and weak bones as well as milk and premature death was three years ago in the British Medical journal, something that raised heated discussions” (DN, 2017-G). “People living in the countryside became furious and said it was a knockdown punch for the already hard pressured milk farmers” (DN, 2017-G). However, “the method used for the study has been criticized and it is true that a survey-based study never can fully measure all parameters and see the causation, only that their is a connection but not why. It is thereby a bit dangerous to post headlines such as ‘A lot of milk will shorten your life’ something many media run with” (DN, 2017-G). The research, however, clearly show that drinking milk is not a way to increase strong bones and therefore “the authorities as well as the Swedish Dairy Association needs to stop using these phrases immediately” (DN, 2017-G).
In other texts it was urged that the research was taken seriously “It is time to take the milk alarm seriously” (Svd, 2017-A). “Not enough focus on the health aspect, is milk really that healthy to consume?” (Svd, 2017-A). “The fact is that even in this milk loving country we need to take the milk alarms seriously” (Svd, 2017-A).

Nevertheless, the last thing mentioned in the debate was given the headline “Too soon to determine if the milk is bad for the health” (DN, 2017-K). It is stated that the study show risks for adults and not for children, the research is also being criticized for being based on self-reported intake of food, something that is known to be problematic because people forget or lies about what they eat. “The study only show a connection, but cannot prove that milk leads to an early death” (DN, 2017-K). “Is milk dangerous? Well, it is hard to say looking at this study alone. However, many other studies point in the other direction, that milk is healthy” (DN, 2017-K). “The one who likes to drink a glass or two every once in a while should not worry too much at this stage. Today we know that there is nothing better than a balanced intake of food containing a lot of fruit and vegetables” (DN, 2017-K).

Oatly versus the Swedish Dairy Association

In November 2014, the oat milk company Oalty got sued by the Swedish Dairy Association for discrediting milk, this topic was given little space in media overall only 6 texts of 383 mentioned the lawsuit or later in 2015 the verdict.

“The milks position under threat” (DN, 2014-H), the sales of milk are steadily decreasing while the plant-based products are increasing. The milk industry is now going to counterattack by accusing the oat milk company Oalty for running with false advertisement (DM, 2014-H). “The milks unique position is on its way to disappear, its now starting to become like any product of the food industry” (DN, 2014-H). The fact that the Swedish Dairy Association is accusing Oalty for discrediting milk in its marketing must be more of a reflex. “They should instead do what they did during the 1920th instead of defending a position they do not have anymore” (DN, 2014-H).

The case between Oalty and the Swedish Dairy Association was given little space in media during 2015, however when the court released its verdict it was reported about in three texts with the headlines “Oat milk last the milk battle” (AB, 2015-Q), “Swedish milk won against Oalty” (DN, 2015-H2) and “Misleading advertising” (Svd, 2015-S). In all texts it is reported that Oalty are now forbidden by the market court, to use any statements that in any way is discrediting against milk, Oalty is also forbidden to use any arguments indicating that oat milk is healthier or a wiser choice than milk (AB, 2015-Q; DN, 2015-H2; Svd, 2015-S).
Summery of empirical data

During the years between 2012 and 2017 we have collected 443 media texts from four different newspapers in Sweden. The topic mostly discussed during these years have been the milk war, were the selling of unpasteurized milk was up for debate from 2012 and resulted in the Swedish Food Administration removed the ban of selling the milk in 2014.

Two different milk crisis developed during the selected time of the study and was the topic most discussed in media between 2012 and 2017, which also resulted in focus on the milk farmers as well as the reason for the milk crisis, and how to stop it.

Research in areas such as environmental impact and human health resulted in debates in media regarding the good or bad of milk production as well as the debate regarding the healthiness – or un-healthiness of milk.

In 2014 the Swedish Dairy Association sued the oat milk company Oatly for their advertisement and in 2015 Oatly was forbidden to discredit milk in any way, or suggesting that oat milk is in any way, a wiser choice than cow milk. This topic was only given limited space in media, however it was mentioned in all newspapers.
5 Discussion

In this chapter we will discuss our findings in regards to our theoretical framework. We have decided to lift part of the theoretical framework that we found supported or did not support how media in Sweden discuss the topic of milk and the milk industry. Starting with positive and negative framing, overall framing of topics followed lobbying and media capture.

5.1 Framing

Our empirical data show that the Swedish newspapers tend to frame milk with a positive frame rather than negative, the most common portrayal is that Swedish milk is something good and worth fighting for, “The Swedish milk farmers are down on their knees to survive, and their only hope lies on you – the consumer”, “Producing your own food is part of the civil defence” (Svd, 2016-Z), however, a loss-frame is used to describe what will happen if we don’t save the Swedish milk and milk farmers "Help the Swedish farmers with money, otherwise the Swedish milk will disappear" (AB, 2012-H). “Don’t you want open landscapes anymore? Sweden will just become a massive forest without milk farmers” (Exp, 2015-G). "If we would lose our milk production hundred thousands of jobs would disappear, as well as our open landscapes” (AB, 2012-G). "If we pay 2 kronor more for the milk then we don’t have to drink milk from other countries, support the Swedish farmers before it is too late” (AB, 2012-N). According to Bobo and Chakraborty (2015), framing the news with a positive or negative frame has an effect on how the reader judge and perceive the text. If the message is frame with a loss-frame and focused on the present, people will be more receptive than with a gain frame that is focused on future gains (Chang et al., 2016). Druckman (2007) argue that individuals are assumed not to evaluate the frames, but rather embrace the frame that they are most use to see or hear. In the case of Swedish milk and the milk industry this would mean that the readers would perceive milk as something that is important for the Swedish society and something that is needed for our biodiversity as well as open landscapes.

Further, Chong and Druckman (2007a) as well as Behr and Iyengar (1985) that the amount of media attention devoted to a particular issue determines the degree of public interest for the same issue. In Swedish newspapers the most media attention was given to the struggling farmers due to the milk crisis. Entman (1993) describe framing as portraying a particular problem and to also provide moral evaluation of how the problem should be interpreted. “Markus and Monia Eriksson looks at the stalls where 65 cows were living only a few months back. The eyes are shiny” (Exp, 2013-J) is an example of how media use framing in a way to guide the reader in their interpretation of the problem. The family has to close down the farm and now they have no cows anymore, something that is framed as a tragedy, a pleas and a warning
of what will happen if the consumers of dairy products does not choose Swedish dairy products.

Framing can also be done with pictures (Chong and Druckman, 2007b), which has been used in order to portray the sad struggling farmers, for example in AB, 2012-S, pictures of a family of farmers was standing next to their cows, looking into the camera with sad facial expression under the headline “The question is: do you want us to survive?” (AB, 2012-S), do not only provide a text that is framed with a loss frame but also a whole family that are about to disappear, we get a face of those who’s lives are about to be destroyed, because Swedish consumers are not buying their milk.

Entman, (1993) define framing as “to frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described.” (p. 52)

McCombs and Shaw (1972) argue that by choosing what do display in the news, journalists and editors play an important part in shaping the political reality. Media do not only provide readers with a relevant issue, but also tells them how much importance to attach to that issue (ibid). In the legal case between Oalty and the Swedish Dairy Association, only a few, short, texts mentioned this, and no text is writing only about the Swedish oat-milk company Oatly. At the same time multiple texts described the struggling farmers and the crisis within the milk industry. This would show that the agenda primarily is set on the milk crisis and how to solve it rather than something that is questioning the milk or providing an alternative to the milk industry.

Additionally, Anderson (2009) highlight that “the media play a crucial role in framing scientific, economic, social and political dimensions through giving voice to some viewpoints while suppressing others, and legitimating certain truth-claims as reasonable and credible” (p. 1). What we discovered is that as soon as a news text is criticizing milk for being unhealthy or for not being environmentally friendly, more media space is given to defend the milk and milk industry. In 2017 one article was published that encouraged a decreased intake of beef and dairy products in order to lower the greenhouse gas emissions, something that was argued necessary for the climate and planet. As a response to this one article, multiple texts were published that raised the opposite opinion. Using statements such as “it is better for the climate with more grazing animals” (Svd, 2017-I), with argumentation like “we are convinced that these new findings will change how we look at food from our ruminant animals. The best alternative for the environment is to intensify milk production, not to drink oat milk or soda, it is grazing based milk that is the solution” (Svd, 2017-I). Additionally the texts “Sweden needs more cows- for the environment” (AB, 2017-H) and “Without our cows, our nature is threatened, during the last ten years, 50 000 hectare of open landscapes has been lost. Without our grazing cows, endangered
birds and butterflies will die” (AB, 2017-H) argue the importance of keeping our milk production. However in this debate, a text titled “No the Swedish Dairy Association, your suggestion does not benefit the environment” (AB, 2017-I), seems to be of opposite opinion in this debate, but it is not, only the headline is making it look like giving an opposite opinion and thereby creating a debate. Nevertheless, within the text one can read; “Of course we need more cows to take care of our landscape, however the intense milk production the Swedish Dairy Association advocates has little to do with that. Most of our milking cows requires nutrient-rich feed and therefore rarely grazes the fields filled with the delicate fauna. Today’s high-performance cows eat soy, crops and raps-seed cakes and only use grazing for exercise purposes in a pasture near the farm. If we go for grass-based milk production with twice as many cows we can achieve, binding of coal, open landscapes, and a better health for the cows and humans” (AB, 2017-I). As a response to this text, and as final word in the debate the text “Yes, milk cows are important for the open landscapes” (AB, 2017-J) was posted. Which cleared the Swedish milk industry from using soy “It is not true that the Swedish cows only eat soy, they eat mostly grass and the amount of soy in Swedish milk production has decreased with 54 per cent during the past five years. The soy is replaced with Swedish gown crops such as field beans. It is great that we are many people engaged in a sustainable food production” (AB, 2017-J).

This debate, show that even if it all stared with a questioning of the environmental impact of milk, it ended with milk and milk production is a good solution to tackle the impacts of climate change.

By posting more texts that are referring to the positive side of milk, and that is arguing for milk products being good for the environment, media is suppressing clams of the opposite opinion, (Anderson, 2009), and thereby provide a picture that may not be a reflection of what is concluded in the fields of research. Druckman and Chong, (2007a) argue that in a competitive environment, where people receive different frames with opposite positions, the loudest frame that is repeated more frequently would have the greatest influence on individuals’ opinion. In the framing of milk as a climate villain and a climate hero, the latter frame is repeated the most, which would, according to Druckman and Chong (2007b) suggest that individuals reading the newspapers will perceive milk as environmentally friendly rather than a climate threat. Also Behr and Iyenger (1985) argue that the amount of media attention devoted to a particular issue determines the degree of public concern for that issue, this would explain the amount of debate articles about milk published between 2012 and 2017. Media is giving the issue of milk crisis a lot of space, which is followed by letter to editors as well as debate articles in the same topic.

5.2 Lobbying and media capture

In 2012 a well-published debate regarding the selling of unpasteurized milk blossomed. Even though the Swedish Food Administry came out with a warning (Svd, 2012-D). More texts were published arguing for that the unpasteurized milk should
be legal to sell, and to forbid it would even be threat against the Swedish culture (DN, 2013-F). According to Dinan and Miller (2007) as well as Stauber and Rampton (1995) organizations as well as individuals can use lobbying in order to hinder implementations of policies in society. Looking at the overall debate between 2012 and 2014, it may have had an impact on the regulation of unpasteurized milk, were then ban for selling it was lifted in 2014 (DN, 2014-L).

Also the news texts about the Swedish Animal Protection Law, could be seen as a way to undermine the law and even to remove it completely. The law is often described as an obstacle for the Swedish development or more specific - the law is hindering the Swedish milk farmers to compete in a global market and in texts arguments like “It is hypocrisy to speak well about the Swedish Animal Protection Law and then buy half of the consumed food from other countries” (Exp, 2013-G) as well as “Solve the acute milk crisis, the Swedish farmers have a competitive disadvantage, due to the Swedish regulations. It needs to be modernised in order for us to keep our milk farmers in Sweden” is used. It is also argued that Sweden's stricter animal protection law is hindering the Swedish agricultural sector to develop, a sector that is argued to be the engine of the Swedish economy (Svd, 2016-J).

In 2015 when the Food Administry released their suggestion for new food recommendation the Swedish Dairy Association, Arla, the Swedish Agriculture department as well as three scientists who were against the new food suggestion was given more space in media than the Swedish Food Administration. When the Swedish Dairy Association was given the place to give large critique to the Food Administry, as well as talking down their calculations as well as provide their own calculations of what was necessary to eat in order to obtain the needed calcium for one day, it shows a typical example of media capture (Holden and Lee, 2009) By managing to capture the media coverage, the Swedish Dairy Association could steer the agenda in a more favourable direction -the nutritious milk (Svd, 2015-A) instead of the real reason behind the food recommendation - to eat more climate friendly food and therefore lower the intake of milk and other dairy products due to the high emissions of greenhouse gas connected to the products (Svd, 2015-B).

Media capture is used in other debates as well, for instance when a study was published in 2014 showing that milk did not give strong bones and that it also had a connection to a premature death- the Swedish Dairy Association as well as the Swedish Food Administration was there to make statements and was able to disregard the study as “only an observation-study that do not explain the cause to why people who drink more milk has a higher risk of a premature death” (DN, 2014-D).

However, when another study month later was highlighted in media, this time “less lactose can lower the risk of cancer” (Svd, 2014-M), “Lactose free food, gives a lower risk of cancer” (DN, 2014-J) the Swedish Dairy Association was quit.
6 Final discussion and conclusion

The agenda setting in Swedish media is favorable towards milk and milk farmers. And even though there are companies like Oatly (Swedish) who provide environmental friendly alternative for milk, Oatly is only discussed in connection to the lawsuit and not as an environmentally friendly alternative or healthier option. If milk is under threat, the media agenda turns into pro milk or at least giving pro-milk organizations a place to speak. This is visible in figure 2 when the amount of positive framing increased in 2015 due to the milk crisis and studies stating that milk is not good for the environment and that we need to lower our intake of milk in order to reach the climate goals for 2050, as well as studies showing that milk is unhealthy and can even lead to death. The amount of news texts published in the topic of milk and the milk industry decrease again in 2017, when the milk crisis has come to an end. We believe that this decrease in positive framing, and the overall amount of published texts about milk and the milk industry have to do with the milk crisis being over and the milk industry therefore no longer had the need to fight for their financial survival. The negative framing did not increase or decrease in any large amounts, leaving it to be lost in times when the positive framing increased vastly. Leading the public to read more texts about saving the farmers finances than about the environmental impacts the milk causes, and what individuals need to do in order to live a sustainable life and work against climate change.

The Swedish milk industry was able to use media capture every time the product of milk of the milk industry was under threat. The Swedish Dairy Association was always given a place to respond to critique as well as sometimes even given the space to steer the debate in a totally different direction as in 2015 when the Swedish Food Administry suggested new environmentally friendly dietary advice (Svd, 2015-A) and the Swedish Dairy Association was given the place to change the topic into being about the amount of calcium people need.

Why the Swedish milk industry gets this favorable position is media can be connected to the long cultural history the milk has in Sweden (Williams, 2015). Looking at our empirical data, it seems like the “Milk Propaganda” (Martii, 2010) still has a stronghold in Sweden and are able to undermine any scientific data or questioning of the milk by taking control of the media arena with media capture and scientific capture as well as political capture.

This study show that the milk lobby in Sweden still has a strong position and access to the media arena, where they undermine competitors access to the media arena. Thereby the competitors are not able to raise their opinion or convey their message in the media arena. This is of course beneficial for the milk industry, however, by using the media arena to undermine any threat directed towards milk, issues connected to
environmental impacts as well as personal health may be overlooked for the purpose of preserving the position of milk in the Swedish society. In a time when our planet urge for change in how we produce, consume and live, the media’s role and power needs to be taken into account because “The press may not be successful much of the time in telling people what to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think about” (Cohen, 1963, in Weimann, 2000 p. 33). Maybe it is time that the media tells us to think about the planet and people living here.

6.1 Limitations

Even though we gathered a large sample (n=553) using our keywords, we are aware that other keywords may have accounted for another sample, resulting in a different interpretation of the study. However, we do not claim that using our keywords make up for an absolute truth nor would other keywords. We provide one truth among others, and even with the same sample at hand, another interpretation can give an alternative truth not more or less true than the interpretations and conclusion made in this study.

The researchers struggled with finding the right translation for some Swedish words that were used in the news texts, sometimes the translation to English did no provide the exact same meaning or feeling like the Swedish word. For example the authors was not able to translate the humoristic features that was visible in the Swedish news texts such as “Muu-ntra nyheter för mjölkbönder”, therefore the humoristic features are not visible in this study even if present in the studied media texts.

6.2 Further research

Our empirical data is built on news texts from Swedish, a country that has a long history connected to milk and the agriculture society. It is of interest to see how products connected to environmental degradation and have a culture connection is framed in other media outlets and in other countries. We believe that in this time when sustainability is needed all over the world, we need to study how media is using its power to portray these issues, but also understand the underlying battle of who gets to use the media arena to convey their message.

To build on this study it would also be suggested to combine data from news media with material provided from the largest stakeholders mentioned in this study in order to understand the lobbying and PR aspect more, as well as using social media channel in order to follow the impact of the framing and portrayal of Swedish milk in media.
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DN, 2014-P "Bönder vill ha stöd när mjölkpriset sjunker" (Ström Melin, A., 2014-12-12)
DN, 2014-Q "21 tips för att få ner dina klimatutsläpp" (Gunther, M., 2014-04-06)
DN, 2014-R "Hur många arter åter du till frukost?" (Bojs, K., 2014-03-30)

xxxi
DN, 2015-A ”Mjölkjätten hoppas på framtidens medelklass” (Forsberg, B., 2015-01-17)
DN, 2015-B ”Snart har vi inga svenska bönder mer” (Friberg, B., 2015-01-27)
DN, 2015-C ”Vi vill att allt blit ursprungsmärkt” (2015-02-03)
DN, 2015-D ”It takes brains to be stupid” (2015-08-15)
DN, 2015-E ”Centern vill se stödköp av mejerivaror” (Petersen, L., 2015-08-14)
DN, 2015-F ”Nostalgi med mjölksmak” (Wiking, P., 2015-02-05)
DN, 2015-G ”Inga löften till oroliga mjölkbönder” (2015-02-19)
DN, 2015-H ”Mjölken måste få bli lönsam” (Jewert, J., 2015-03-10)
DN, 2015-I ”2,82 kronor kommer arla betala” (2015-03-26)
DN, 2015-K ”Jag vill ha svensk mjölk” (2015-03-31)
DN, 2015-L ”Hon skapar nya trendrycken” (José Iragorri, J., 2015-03-29)
DN, 2015-M ”Statlig garanti till bönderna” (Lundberg, A., 2015-05-23)
DN, 2015-N ”Arla, bonden och framtid” (Jewert, J., 2015-05-29)
DN, 2015-O ”Arla hämtar all mjölk” (Gunnarson, H., 2015-06-02)
DN, 2015-P ”Prispress hotar slå ut svenska mjölkbönder” (2015-07-13)
DN, 2015-Q ”Höjt mjölkpris omtvistad lösning” (Nilsson-Rönnqvist, Å., 2015-08-03)
DN, 2015-R ”Kedjor skeptiska till dyrare mjölk” (2015-08-03)
DN, 2015-S ”Rädda mamma mu” (2015-08-16)
DN, 2015-T ”Hur tänker sig Arla mjölkböndernas framtid?” (Forsberg, H., 2015-08-15)
DN, 2015-U ”Här köper kunderna sin mjölk av bonden” (2015-09-07)
DN, 2015-V ”Mjölkbönder får stöd av matkedjor” (Sprängs, T., 2015-09-12)
DN, 2015-W ”Arla anmäls till KKV” (2015-09-25)
DN, 2015-X ”Klart med pengar till mjölkbönder” (2015-10-16)
DN, 2015-Y ”Lokala mejerier får stöd mot Arla” (Sprängs, T., 2015-10-17)
DN, 2015-Z ”Spelet om mjölken” (Jewert, J., 2015-09-29)
DN, 2015-A2 ”Mer pengar till mjölkbönderna” (Sprängs, T., 2015-10-24)
DN, 2015-B2 ”Klimatbodeoffer” (Thörnqvist, O., 2015-11-30)
DN, 2015-C2 ”Prisfall sätter press på arla” (2015-11-11)
DN, 2015-D2 ”Mejeri falls för mjöllögn” (2015-12-23)
DN, 2015-E2 ”Mjölkbönder går ihop för att kräva mer betalt” (Petersen, L., 2015-08-19)
DN, 2015-F2 ”Extra miljoner ska lindra mjöllkrisen” (Ström Melin, A., 2015-08-30)
DN, 2015-G2 ”Veganer borde äta oprocessed mat och skippa låtsasköttet” (Slinger, D., 2015-10-30)
DN, 2015-H2 ”Svensk Mjök vann mot Oalty” (2015-11-20)
DN, 2015-I2 ”LRF varnar för mjöllkris” (2015-12-11)
DN, 2015-J ”Även nötkött och mjölk innehåller transfetter” (Lilijestråle, A., 2015-04-10)
DN, 2015-K2 ”Gårdens räddning: Att sälja mjölken själv” (Kihlberg, J., 2015-09-07)
DN, 2015-L2 "Så ska den svenska mjölken räddas" (Lundberg, A, 2015-05-22)
DN, 2015-M2 "Så ska mjölkkrisen lösas – S öppnar för sänkt dieselskatt" (DN, Kihlberg, J. and Stenberg, E., 2015-02-17)
DN, 2015-N2 "Släpp kossera loss det är vår!" (2015-05-04)
DN-2015-O2 "Nya matvanor kan rädda planeten" (Kihlberg, J., 2015-11-08)
DN, 2015-P2 "Svårt att få bukt med gasen från idisslande kor" (Gunther, M., 2015-11-08)
DN, 2015-Q2 "Avreglera – eller låt den svenska mjölken försvinna" (Iwarson, T. and Wålsten, L., 2015-03-26)
DN, 2015-R2 "Billigare diesel ska stötta bönder" (Kihlberg, J., 2015-08-30)
DN, 2015-S2 "Pressat pris slår hart mot mjölkbönder” (Sprängs, T., 2015-07-13)
DN, 2015-T2 "Både faran och nytta överdrivs" (Gunther, M., 2015-11-08)
DN, 2015-U2 "Sverige vill inte se höjt lägstapris inom EU” (Ström Melin, A., 2015-09-07)
DN, 2015-V2 "Våg av protester har svept over EU under sommaren” (Ström Melin, A., 2015-08-30)
DN, 2016-A "Sänkt ersättning till mjölkbönder” (2016-01-28)
DN, 2016-B "Minskad ersättning för mjölken slår mot bönder” (2016-04-25)
DN, 2016-C "Nu måste de odugliga topparna på Arla bort” (Lanestrand, R., 2016-02-05)
DN, 2016-D "Vi behöver ett högre mjölkpris” (Högblad, J., 2016-02-07)
DN, 2016-E "Att äta kött är inte neutral – det är ett ställningstagande” (Strindlöv, J., 2016-02-12)
DN, 2016-F "Mer mjölk ska D-vitamin berikas” (2016-07-24)
DN, 2016-G "Vill vi verkligen lägga ned svenskt jordbruk?” (Wikström, I., 2016-02-15)
DN, 2016-H "Slaktavfall i gödsel för eko-havre” (DN H, 2016-03-22)
DN, 2016-I "Stötta bönderna- tänk på vilken sorts mjölk du köper” (Uhlen, M-L., 2016-08-24)
DN, 2016-J "Arla satsar på cheddar i USA” (2016-03-24)
DN, 2016-K "Nya märkning för svenska livsmedel” (Kihlberg, J., 2016-04-20)
DN, 2016-L "Krisen fortsätter för mjölkbönderna” (Lucas, D., 2016-05-13)
DN, 2016-M "Dags att förbjuda sexuella övergrepp mot djur på riktigt” (DN, Jande, P-A. and Rolke, D., 2016-05-20)
DN, 2016-N "Så hittar vi ett nytt sätt att leva bland midsommarängens hemligheter” (Edman, S., 2016-06-26)
DN, 2016-O "Ett proffs skriver om nyttig mat” (Bojs, K., 2016-09-11)
DN, 2016-P "Agnes Wold får pris för sitt arbete om mjölk” (Tumble, A., 2016-10-22)
DN, 2016-Q "Festivalerna har gått från hedonism till idealism” (Dahlström, M., 2016-08-07)
DN, 2016-R "Nya matvanor krävs för att nå klimatmål” (Kihlberg, J., 2016-11-06)
DN, 2016-S "Skyddet för miljö och djur är på väg att försvagas” (Sandahl, J., 2016-03-22)
Exp, 2012-J ”Ko-troligt bra mjölknyhet” (Eslander, J., 2012-10-03)
Exp, 2012-K ”Mjölkpriset är påväg upp” (Myresten, I., 2012-10-12)
Exp, 2012-L “Testa själv om du lider av mjölkmage” (2012-10-12)
Exp, 2012-M “Nu separeras mjölken från kooperationen” (Sjöhult, F., 2012-01-14)
Exp, 2013-A ”Centern har övergivit oss på landsbygden” (Hammarström, T., 2013-01-07)
Exp, 2013-B ”Mjölk stärker... Nobelprisodds” (2013-01-16)
Exp, 2013-C ”Bonden får valuta för sitt slit” (2013-02-21)
Exp, 2013-D ”Oroar du dig för gift i maten?” (2013-05-01)
Exp, 2013-E ”Billig mjölk dyrt i längden” (Waldvik, P., 2013-11-06)
Exp, 2013-F ”Förbjud lättmargarin i skola och äldrevård” (Gadderyd, G., 2013-08-07)
Exp, 2013-G ”Aj, aj, aj Astrid” (Hammarström, T., 2013-09-02)
Exp, 2013-H ”Fram för riktig mjölk med smak” (Johansson, L. B., 2013-10-26)
Exp, 2014-A ”Att äta rätt kött kan vara bra för klimatet” (Wangsten, J., 2014-02-03)
Exp, 2014-B ”Mindre men bättre kött i skolan” (Holm V. J., 2014-02-04)
Exp, 2014-C ”Vi måste sluta skuldbelägga bönder som har kor och får” (Wangsten, J., 2014-02-10)
Exp, 2014-D ”Kan Al Gore kan även du” (Norberg, J., 2014-03-14)
Exp, 2014-E ”Matnationalism, ja tack” (Lanestrand, R., 2014-04-22)
Exp, 2014-G ”Mjölkproduktionen ökar” (2014-05-09)
Exp, 2014-F ”Tydliga trender som bönderna känner av” (Långbergs, M., 2014-09-18)
Exp, 2014-I ”Laktos ökar risken för cancer” (2014-10-29)
Exp, 2014-J ”Nya larmet – om mjölk” (Brander, M., 2014-10-29)
Exp, 2014-L ”Jag fortsätter dricka kaffe med mjölk tills riskerna är bevisade” (Bäsén, A., 2014-10-29)
Exp, 2014-K ”Är eko reko?” (2014-11-17)
Exp, 2015-A ”Få bukt på mjölkkrisen, Bucht” (Erlandsson, E., 2015-02-03)
Exp, 2015-B ”I hundra år har Arla mjölkat oss på pengar” (Wiberg, J., 2015-03-20)
Exp, 2015-C ”Sveriges mjölkbönder går på knäna” (Nilsson, M., 2015-05-20)
Exp, 2015-D ”Skampriset på mjölk förintar produktionen” (2015-05-22)
Exp, 2015-E ”Arlas girighet slår ut Sveriges mjölkbönder” (Gustavsson, S., 2015-07-24)
Exp, 2015-F ”Bönderna utnyttjas” (Lärkert, U., 2015-08-13)
Exp, 2015-G ”Vi mjölkbönder går på knäna” (West, P., 2015-07-26)
Exp, 2015-H "När mjölkmaskinerna tystnar, vad gör vi då?" (Karlsson, J., 2015-08-02)
Exp, 2015-I "Ica-butik tar bort egna grädden" (Larsson, S., 2015-08-05)
Exp, 2015-J "Böndernas ilska mot mjölkpriset" (Sandberg, M., 2015-08-06)
Exp, 2015-K "Bönderna brukade få betalt" (Gröning, L, 2015-08-07)
Exp, 2015-L "Mjölkböndernas kris förvärras av regeringen" (Erlandsson, E., 2015-08-09)
Exp, 2015-M "Lantbruket har många sorgeber" (Wetterberg, G., 2015-08-10)
Exp, 2015-N "Way out west" (2015-08-16)
Exp, 2015-O "Du tog inte namnlistorna" (Svensson, A., 2015-09-09)
Exp, 2015-P "Ko-lugna mjölkar bäst" (2015-07-17)
Exp, 2015-Q "Mjölk ska inte köpas för skattepengar" (Björklund, J., 2015-10-07)
Exp, 2015-R "Bonde-Monicas mejeri gör succé" (Abrahmsson, A., 2015-11-09)
Exp, 2015-S "Succé för dyrare mjölk" (Lyrheden, F., 2015-12-11)
Exp, 2015-T "Landsbygden tvingas betala storstadsnotan" (Lööf, A., 2015-04-12)
Exp, 2015-U "Oppna landskap kan inte importeras" (2015-08-27)
Exp, 2015-V "Ett högre mjölkpris radar inte bönderna" (Wålsten, L, 2015-08-31)
Exp, 2016-A "Dags att lämna Arla" (2016-02-08)
Exp, 2016-B "Köp den svenska mjölkens" (Åkesson, E., 2016-02-12)
Exp, 2016-C "Minister i köttbråk" (Lindqvist, J., 2016-02-09)
Exp, 2016-D "Umeå-ilskan mot Ikeas Skåne-mjölk" (Rydhagen, M., 2016-04-07)
Exp, 2016-E "Ny Arlaledning behövd" (Lanestrand, R., 2016-02-09)
Exp, 2016-F "Arla är visst en utsugande kossa" (2016-02-22)
Exp, 2016-G "Därför har debatten om svensk mjölk surnat" (Sandberg, M., 2015-08-14)
Exp, 2016-H "Mjölkboänder rasar mot Arla" (Emanuelsson, E., 2016-04-27)
Exp, 2016-I "Korna kan få gå på ört-diet" (Rogsten, I., 2016-04-30)
Exp, 2016-J "Arla sänker mjölkpris – igen" (Lundberg Andersson, H., 2016-05-30)
Exp, 2016-K "Skola måste spara – drar in på mjölkens" (Kjellden, J., 2016-06-02)
Exp, 2016-L "Köp mjölk som för" (Göthlin, E., 2016-06-02)
Exp, 2016-M "Det är en skam, Arla" (Grapenskog, B., 2016-06-05)
Exp, 2016-N "Böndernas ilska mot mjölkpriset igen" (Lundberg Andersson, H., 2016-06-17)
Exp, 2016-O "Kolsyrad mjölk kan snart vara här" (Boström, T., 2016-09-01)
Exp, 2016-P "Vi måste på producera mjölk, EU" (Nilsson, R., 2016-09-06)
Exp, 2016-Q "Svenska mjölkpriset stiger" (Hagnedstad, R., 2016-10-25)
Exp, 2016-R "Mjölkbönder får mer betalt i norr" (Liden, E., 2016-12-21)
Svd, 2013-E "Byta nötkött mot svin och kyckling vore katastrof" (Granstedt, A., 2013-05-07)
Svd, 2013-F "360 jobb hotas när Arla stuvar om" (Bursell, J., 2013-10-10)
Svd, 2013-G "Världen behöver inte fler köttätare" (Carling, M., 2013-11-04)
Svd, 2013-H "Mjölkbönderna blir allt färre" (2013-11-18)
Svd, 2013-I "2013- ett dåligt år för lantbrukare" (2013-12-06)
Svd, 2013-J "Matpriset kan vända nedåt" (Gustafsson, S., 2013-11-19)
Svd, 2013-K "Rekommendationer om mat kolliderar" (Ennart, H., 2013-11-20)
Svd, 2014-A "Ekomjölk rik källa till omega-3" (Ennart, H., 2014-01-14)
Svd, 2014-B "Kommer du att välja ekomjölk oftare?" (Stensson, C. and Bilkenroth, C-J., 2014-01-15)
Svd, 2014-C "Kött fyrfaldigar risk för cancer" (Ennart, H., 2014-03-15)
Svd, 2014-D "Kosten måste anpassas till var vi är i livet" (Ennart, H., 2014-03-15)
Svd, 2014-F "Alla ropar efter eko" (Nilsson, M-E., 2014-04-06)
Svd, 2014-G "Coca-Cola satsar på dyr mjölk" (2014-11-27)
Svd, 2014-J "Jordbruket får nytt gårdsstöd" (2014-06-21)
Svd, 2014-K "Laktosfria varor en miljardindustri" (Remius, T., 2014-07-20)
Svd, 2014-L "Mjölk kopplas till för tidig död" (2014-10-30)
Svd, 2014-M "Mindre laktos kan minska risk för cancer" (2014-11-05)
Svd, 2014-N "Köttätandet som omedvetet trossystem" (Björek, A., 2014-08-12)
Svd, 2015-A "Kostråd om mjölk sågas" (Ennart, H., 2015-02-05)
Svd, 2015-B "'Extrapris' på åländsk mjölk" (Ennart, H., 2015-02-05)
Svd, 2015-C "Kostnad på åländsk mjölk" (2015-02-07)
Svd, 2015-D "12-åring tipsade Löfven om mjölk" (2015-06-12)
Svd, 2015-E "Livsmedelsverket avvisar mjölk-kritik" (Ennart, H., 2015-02-06)
Svd, 2015-F "Miljövinster med närodlat ifrågasätts" (Ennart, H., 2015-02-08)
Svd, 2015-G "Bönderna rasar mot lågprismjölk" (Sundkvist, F., 2015-02-19)
Svd, 2015-H "Minskad törst" (2015-06-17)
Svd, 2015-I "Motsägelsefulla råd om mjölken" (Emanuelson, M., Bertilson, J. and Gustafsson A H, 2015-03-06)
Svd, 2015-J "Bönderna vill öka skattelättnad" (2015-08-31)
Svd, 2015-K "Bönderna får billigare diesel" (2015-08-31)
Svd, 2015-L "M vill stödköpa mjölk – regeringen är emot" (Larsson, L., 2015-09-05)
Svd, 2015-M "Arla: Mjölkböndernas tuffaste år någonsin" (Nygårds, O., 2015-08-03)
Svd, 2015-N "Mjölkuppror" (2015-08-20)
Svd, 2015-O "Skänk en krona per liter" (Källström, A. and Svensson, A., 2015-09-11)
Svd, 2016-R "EU vill premiere strypt spene” (Larsson, L., 2016-07-18)
Svd, 2016-S "Mindre mjölk ger mer pengar” (2016-08-30)
Svd, 2016-T ”Rokordstort prisgap på mjölk” (2016-09-03)
Svd, 206-U ”50 öre” (2016-12-26)
Svd, 2016-V ”Ge mjölkbönderna rätt betalt ”(Ohlström, T., 2016-11-12)
Svd, 2016-W ”Ingen risk att barn får för lite” (Ennart, H., 2016-12-26)
Svd, 2016-X ”Grönsaker en allt viktigare del av den svenska kosten” (2016-12-26)
Svd, 2016-Y ”Kon står mitt i klimatstriden” (Ennart, H., 2016-12-26)
Svd, 2016-Z ”Egen mat är en del av försvaret” (Jonsson, H. and Lindgren, S., 2016-01-09)
Svd, 2016-A2 ”Helt fel att beskriva kor som klimatbovar” (Sylwan, P., 2016-12-24)
Svd, 2016-B2 ”Kor kan få pruttkudde i framtiden” (Frykholm, G., et al., 2016-08-30)
Svd, 2017-A ”Dags att ta mjöklarm på allvar” (Ennart, H., 2017-02-17)
Svd, 2017-B ”Bönder ser ljus framtid” (2017-05-25)
Svd, 2017-C ”38 procent mer betalt får mjölkbönderna” (2017-09-22)
Svd, 2017-D ”Bättre för mjölkbönderna” (2017-08-26)
Svd, 2017-E ”Medierna ger ensidigt stöd åt ekojordbruket” (Sundström, J. and Fagerström, T. 2017-05-31)
Svd, 2017-F ”Prisrace på smör” (Nygårds, O., 2017-06-24)
Svd, 2017-G ”Mjölkbönder får mer betalt” (2017-06-26)
Svd, 2017-H ”Mjölkbönder får mer” (2017-07-25)
Svd, 2017-I ”Bättre för klimatet med fler betesdjur” (Rundgren, G. and Meyer von Bremen, A-H., 2017-08-10)
Svd, 2017-J ”Folk tror de är hälsomedvetna när de väljer laktosfritt” (Ekman, M., 2017-11-19)