

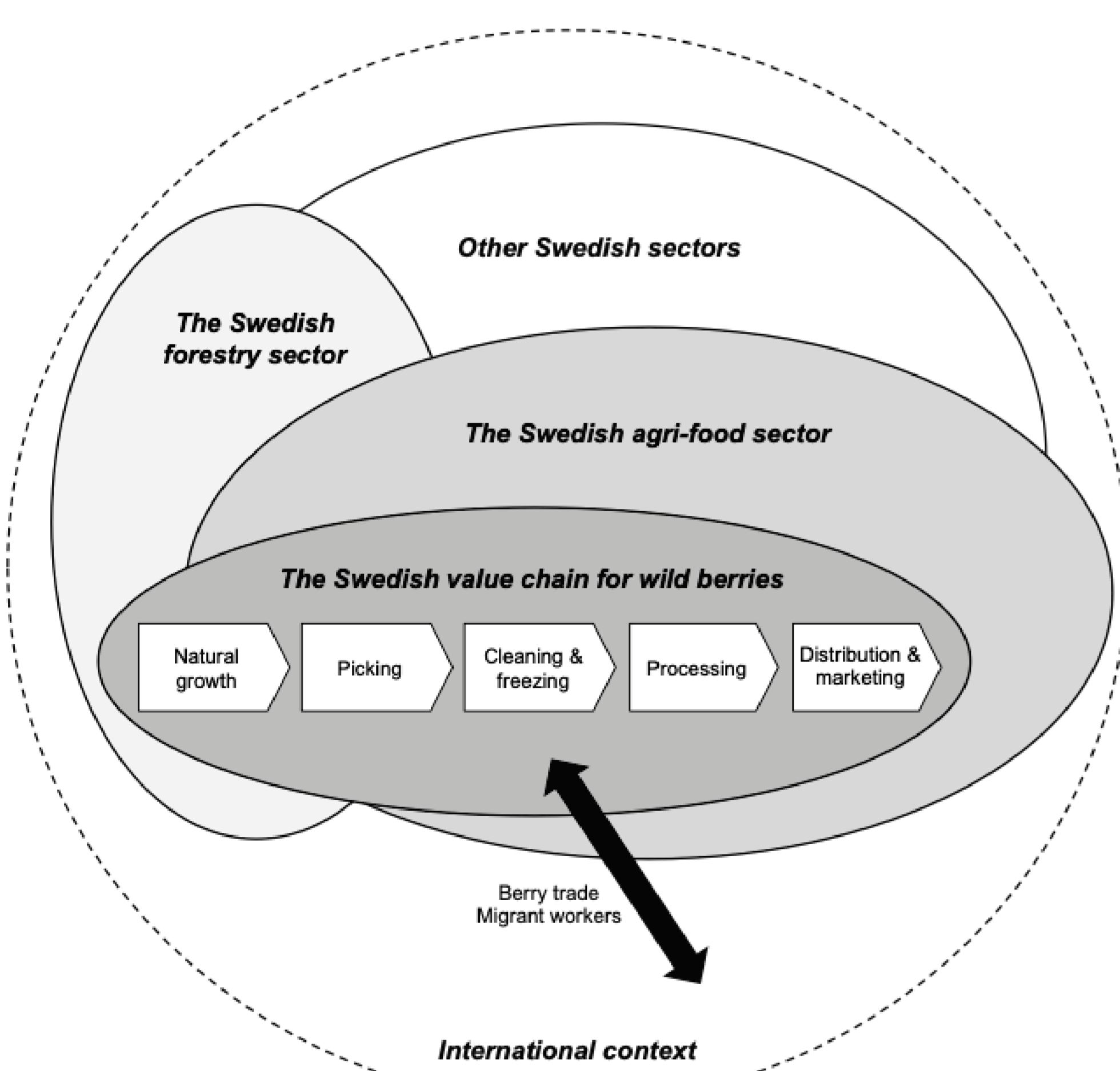
# Fruit without farming? The wild berry value chain and its development in Sweden

## Background

As a natural, regenerative food resource, wild berries are associated with opportunities and challenges in the Swedish food system. Multiple research and innovation initiatives are now underway which promote development and innovation within the wild berry value chain. To understand and navigate these initiatives, there is a need to grasp their drivers and barriers in relation to the goal of a competitive and sustainable Swedish food system

## Project

My project investigates ongoing development efforts connected to the value chain for Swedish wild berries. The aim of my research is to provide a system-level understanding of the value chain, to describe how innovation is shaping ongoing development processes, and generate an understanding of how these processes can be navigated effectively in relation to broader, longer-term objectives within the Swedish food system.



### A broad conception of innovation

In my ongoing research, I conceive innovation broadly in terms of the development and diffusion of novel products and processes in all parts of the value chain for Swedish wild berries. (i.e. including technological, organisational, institutional and behavioural change).

This conception captures the diversity of ongoing initiatives, which promote diverse solutions including: new, technology-driven, domestic processing industries; alternative economies of entrepreneurship and work, creating new roles migrant berry pickers; and intermediate value chains supported by regional business model innovation.

### The innovation systems approach

Conceptually, an innovation system can be understood as a constellation of structural components, such as actors, networks, institutions and infrastructure, which interact to enable or constrain innovation in a pre-defined geographic, sectoral or technological context.

Multiple actors from multiple sectors are engaged in efforts to develop the wild berry value chain. Moreover, opinions on desirable directions for change are diverse, and subject to and contestation between actors. Characteristics like this make an innovation systems perspective particularly useful for investigating this case.

### A functionalist view of innovation systems

A functionalist view on innovation systems, which has been developed within the technological innovation systems literature, focuses on innovation sub-processes (or functions) which result from interactions between the components of an innovation system, such as actors, networks, institutions and infrastructures.

The functional approach to innovation systems, as shown by its widespread use in the growing literature on sustainability transitions, is a useful analytical perspective that enables the identification of barriers to the diffusion of new technologies and the development of related industrial value chains.

Innovation System function	Description
Knowledge development and diffusion	The development of new technical and social knowledge through research and development as well as the diffusion of knowledge through publications and interaction in industrial networks, innovation platforms and other fora.
Experimentation and commercialization	The experimentation with, and commercialization of, new products and processes.
Resource allocation	The mobilization and reallocation of human, financial and material resources.
Market formation	The formation of new, and destabilization of old, markets for technical and social solutions.
Legitimation	The creation of legitimacy for developing and diffusing new solutions as well as the withdrawal of legitimacy from undesirable practices and technologies.
Reflexive governance	The critical reflection and redirection of innovation activities in relation to overarching objectives.