

Preface

How can wasteful handling of such precious goods as food and pharmaceuticals be reduced between production and consumption?

This was the key question at the beginning of this research project. Having witnessed vivid and frank discussions between logistics experts from all segments of the cold chain in conferences and workshops during my work for the Cool Chain Association (CCA), I became increasingly curious and involved in the search for solutions. To prevent massive losses of nutritious food and life-saving pharmaceuticals caused by supply chain disruptions is one of the main goals of this association and its members. However, I realized that a more systematic and academic way of addressing the problem would be required.

During my search for cooperation partners from the scientific world, Professor Hülsmann offered me a position as PhD student and Research Associate in his workgroup “Systems Management” at Jacobs University Bremen. Hence, I took the opportunity to analyze causes of supply chain disruptions in more depth by linking scientific and industrial perspectives.

In the following years, research projects in logistics and supply chain management as well as scientific seminars and conferences broadened my horizon and deepened my insights into cold chain logistics, but also into scientific research methods and systematic analyses. Furthermore, discussions with my research colleagues, but also my former boss and colleagues from the CCA reinforced my motivation and determination to find out why supply chain disruptions occur.

These efforts led to the absolute highlight of this project, namely the empirical survey among cold chain managers from around the world. Their interest and willingness to support my research was amazing and showed how relevant the topic is for the industry. In the future, the results will hopefully be starting points for further research and will be considered in the design of supply chain partnerships.

These years of research were incredibly tough, challenging and rewarding. To all the people who guided and supported me as well as this project: thank you very much!

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