

# Biodynamics in the world

Newsletter April 2018

## Dear members and friends of Biodynamic farming,

When the members of Demeter-International will meet in June in Switzerland on the Herzberg, this event will be under the theme: „Being part of the movement“. Hence, it will not only be about standards and certification but as well about market development and training. Since good training is essential for Biodynamic quality, we have invited guests from all over the world to attend these sessions.

*“I hear and I forget.  
I see and I remember.  
I do and I understand.”*

Confucius

*Christoph Sieglendorfer*

## Agricultural Section at the Goetheanum

- Preparations - the heart of Biodynamic agriculture  
From February 7th to 10th more than 900 people from 47 countries came together to discuss the Biodynamic preparations.
- The Economy of Agriculture - Theme of the years 2018 /2019  
The Section for Agriculture invites you to dedicate yourself to the topic “economy of agriculture”. What type of economy does Biodynamic agriculture need?
- New book: Worldwide Practice of Biodynamic Preparation Work- The Case Studies  
The preparation study is now available in German and English as a book.
- Foundation of an International Professional Group for Biodynamic Viticulture  
On the occasion of the Agricultural Conference an International Group for Biodynamic Viticulture has been founded on 9th of February in Dornach.

## Research

- 1st International Conference on Biodynamic Research  
Evolving Agriculture and Food – Opening up Biodynamic Research.
- Research activities of Demeter-Germany  
Introduction of the team and current research projects.
- "aqua.protect" successfully tested as a substitute for copper-containing crop protection agents  
The product was effective against apple scab, late blight on potatoes and powdery mildew on grape vines.

## International Biodynamic Association

- Change within the Board of the International Biodynamic Association, IBDA  
At the Members' assembly of IBDA in February 2018, Thomas Lüthi resigned as a member of the board. Petra Derkzen was elected as his successor.

## Demeter-International

### International Certification Office

- Demeter-guidelines translated into many languages  
Demeter-guidelines are published in 9 different languages.
- New certifications  
Since January there have been six new certifications.

### Market

- Biofach 2018  
A substantial Biodynamic presence could be seen by the large number of stands at Biofach in Nürnberg.
- Demeter at ProWein 2018  
At the newly launched Demeter stand 31 exhibitors from 6 countries showed their new collection.
- Raw Materials Coordination  
The raw materials we are currently looking for are listed on the DI website.

### Lobby

- Conference: Seed as a commons  
Speakers and participants of the conference introduced alternatives to privatising and monopolisation of seed.

### Quality

- Farm Development Talks  
The motion of Germany and The Netherlands in 2017 to experiment with taking licensees out of the usual inspection process is a way to search further in how to design a better way of accountability.

### Reports from member countries

- Country profile: Demeter-Switzerland  
Introduction of the Swiss Association for Biodynamic Agriculture and the Swiss Demeter Association .

- Changes in Demeter-US  
Jim Fullmer has stopped as a director for Demeter-US Elizabeth Candelario, has taken over the responsibilities as the new president.
- Changes at Demeter Associazione Italia  
The organizational structure of Demeter Italy shall be strengthened and developed.
- Biodynamic Association of India: New team member  
Harsha Gangwal as deputy editor for the newsletter Biodyne.

### Reports/ various

- An International Demeter wine conference  
From 25./27. February around 140 participants exchanged views and experiences about Biodynamic viticulture in Vienna.

## Dates & events

- 6th - 7th of May: International Biodynamic Wine Conference, San Francisco, **USA**  
Programme
- 11th-13th of May: Swiss organic agricultural fair BIO-AGRI and organic wine fair BIO-VINO, Grange-Verney, Moudon, **Switzerland**
- 17th-19th of May: Autumn meeting and general meeting of ABD Chile, registration, **Chile**
- 5th - 8th of September: Research Conference (English): Evolving Agriculture and Food - Opening up Biodynamic Research, Goetheanum, Dornach, **Switzerland**
- 21st - 22nd of September: Building up the Ether– the Human being as a Creator - Intersectional Meeting, Goetheanum, Dornach, **Switzerland**
- 31st of October-3rd of November: Circle of Representatives - Meeting of the Members of the Circle of Representatives for Biodynamic Agriculture, probably Dornach, **Switzerland**
- 6th - 9th of February 2019: Agricultural Conference  
The Economy of Agriculture - between farm individuality and global economy (multilingual), Dornach, **Switzerland**
- 10th - 11th of February 2019: International Biodynamic Advisors: Meeting of the international Advisors(English), Goetheanum, Dornach, **Switzerland**



## Agricultural Section at the Goetheanum

### Preparations – the heart of Biodynamic agriculture

A stirring barrel stood on the stage of the large auditorium. A young person was stirring it for an hour! The transparent container in the Goetheanum was lit from below and the patterns cast were projected on to a large screen. The atmosphere was festive, there was no talk, only a practical demonstration. The conference community then distributed itself around the exhibition rooms and took in all that there was to see about the preparations – cow horns of all shapes and sizes, crystals and ground silica, stag bladders, intestines, dandelion flowers, bark from different oak species etc. What a wealth of earthly material! A long queue of people could be seen comparing, smelling and assessing the diverse range of preparation samples laid out on extended tables.

Here we could directly experience what the Goetheanum leadership have so often sought to describe over the last months: How the greater Goetheanum expressed as worldwide anthroposophical activity, comes to fertilise the small Goetheanum here in Dornach and then carries back new inspiration for the world at large. Conference contributions came from all continents. Five languages were spoken. Some contributions were in two languages. What is it about the preparations that proved such a draw? After all 900 people from 47 different countries came to this conference because of its theme! There is a new openness towards them and from all corners of the world it was reported how young people are coming to the farms and the courses offered because of the preparations, there is genuine public interest.

In reflecting on the conference two particular aspects of the current interest in the preparations could be mentioned, firstly: Matter and spirit are moving ever further apart in our post modern civilization or else coming together as toxic cocktails, yet here they are being brought together to heal both earth and mankind. The second is the discovery that common goods like the preparations, can be actively created. As an active human being I do not have to cause disturbance

## The Economy of Agriculture - Theme of the years 2018/2019

### The Economy of Agriculture – between farm individuality and global economy

Biodynamic agriculture as a wellspring for relationships and value creation

What is the task of agriculture within local, regional and global economic life? What is its task in relation to nature and the resources it uses? What responsibility does it have towards the people it is feeding? Is there a specific Biodynamic approach to agricultural economy? “The Economy of Agriculture” is a theme that should challenge us to look more closely at the issues, understand them better and work more collaboratively.

The farm is its own small economy. The Biodynamic farm is particularly focused on meeting its own requirements and attaining a certain degree of self-sufficiency. Do we understand clearly enough why the Biodynamic farm must necessarily aim to become agriculturally and economically self-sufficient? Where does the sustainable soil productivity of the Biodynamic farm come from?

The farm is also embedded in a regional economy. Not every farm is able to store its own grain, mill its own flour and make bread with it nor can every farm have its own dairy or farm shop. By far the greater portion of all Demeter and organic products reaches the consumer via a production chain that involves the division of labour. Over the last decades numerous ways have been found to enhance cooperation between farms, food processors, wholesalers, retailers and the various voluntary organisations that share similar values. The beginnings of associative working has come about in many different places. Associative economics is a sister impulse of Biodynamics. Together they have formed a strong socially formative impulse over the last 30 years which has made a significant impression on the developing organic 'Biofach' market.

Dramatic developments have occurred in this field over the last three years. Organic and increasingly also Demeter products have found access to commercial trading channels. One speaks of the 'conventionalisation' of the organic market. How do we respond to this development? Can we take a further step towards an associative economy through the regional trading of organic and Demeter products? Where could we begin? What prototypes are there for creating the right price, building a conscious link between producers and

[Back to top](#)

consumers, financing enterprises and addressing the question of property ownership?

Various forms of farm processing and direct marketing exist. From the very beginning a signature of the Biodynamic movement has been its conscious and economically necessary engagement with consumers. New approaches including community supported agriculture (CSA) are continually being developed. In this field many exciting and stimulating stories from all over the world, can be told.

The Biodynamic approach is universally applicable, can be taken up in all regions, climatic zones and cultural contexts and yet lead to the individualisation of the farm. We are called upon not only to think and act regionally, but also globally. The basis of production is not only one's own farm but the whole earth as a living being. It is not only our own hunger we must satisfy but the hunger of everyone on this earth. What is our contribution to the problem of world hunger? How can we help to reform the world's food system? What needs to be done to ensure that organics provides nourishment to the world rather than simply filling stomachs?

It is becoming increasingly apparent that agriculture is not only about the primary production of food. It also affects our drinking water and the climate. Agriculture has an ecological reach that extends far beyond the specific places where it is practised. How far have we come in implementing the concept of 'true cost accounting'? It is something that applies not only on an ecological level but on an economic one too – the living organic and Biodynamic economy of agriculture serves to counterbalance the resource consuming activity of industry. To measure agriculture only in terms of its contribution to GDP, is to misunderstand its overall economic significance. Is it possible to acknowledge and express the contribution that agriculture makes to the whole economic system?

**Agriculture Conference with the topic „economy“: 6th – 9th February 2019 in Dornach, Switzerland**

## New Book: Worldwide Practice of Biodynamic Preparation Work - The Case Studies

**Authors: Ueli Hurter | Dr. R. Ingold | Dr. M. Kolar | J. Schönfelder | Dr. A. Sedlmayr | A. van Leeuwen**

The eight Biodynamic preparations belong to the central elements of Biodynamic Agriculture as constitutional remedies for the agricultural organism. They can be produced locally on the farm on its natural basis and in the process with it. However, the worldwide spread of Biodynamics implies adjustments and individual procedures, which lead to a rich variety of making Biodynamic preparations.

Fifteen views of preparation sites and people will be presented in this study-based book, with both a wealth of experience and aspects for discussing and advancing Biodynamic preparation practice. Last but not least, the personal answers and examples help in the understanding of Biodynamic preparations and their social anchoring.

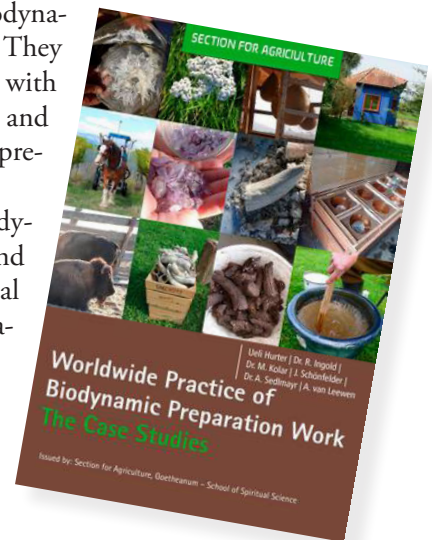
Issued by: Section for Agriculture, Goetheanum

Paperback

Pages: 336

Price: 29 CHF + shipping costs

to order by e-mail: [Sektion.Landwirtschaft@goetheanum.ch](mailto:Sektion.Landwirtschaft@goetheanum.ch)



The book is also available in German: ISBN: 978-3-941232-15-0

Verena Wahl

[Back to top](#)

## Foundation of an International Professional Group for Biodynamic Viticulture

On the occasion of the Agricultural Conference an International Group for Biodynamic Viticulture has been founded on 9th of February in Dornach. The aim of this group is to foster the exchange of experiences, to formulate research questions and to work on finding solutions and deepen the understanding of Biodynamic viticulture on an international level. The group will be a new professional group of the Section for Agriculture. It will be headed by the Section (Jean-Michel Florin, section leader and Dr. Georg Meißner, member of the circle of representatives of the Section) with the help of Demeter International represented by Christoph Simpfendörfer (general secretary).

During the conference approximately 150 participants expressed their questions and concerns in a Wine Forum:

- general questions towards nutrition quality
- quality of the Biodynamic preparations
- development of personal relationships and individual skills
- how to make the results of Biodynamic farming practices more visible
- how to bring Bio-dynamics into the world (communication)
- the need to share more experiences
- how to keep the core of Biodynamics in a situation of strong growth
- how to deepen the basis of the anthroposophical aspects in order to avoid becoming a mere technique?
- question of landscape and animals on vineyards

Philine Dienger (A), Michael Graf Goss-Enzenberg (A), Thierry Valette (F), Christophe Erhart (F), Emilio Fidora (I), Ricardo Pérez Palacios (SP), Rudy Marchesi (USA), Rudi Bauer (NZ), Andreas Schumann (G) are ready to form a coordination group.

The next meeting is planned during the next Agricultural Conference.

Whoever wishes to participate in this working group is welcome to fill in the [declaration of intent](#).

Christoph Simpfendörfer

# Research

## 1st International Conference on Biodynamic Research

### Evolving Agriculture and Food – Opening up Biodynamic Research

5 to 8 September 2018 in Dornach, Switzerland

Biodynamic research is done in any agricultural field, in many places of the world using a great diversity of methods and disciplines, getting in touch with many other research areas. Taking an inter- and trans-disciplinary approach, we aim to bring together both academic research and farmer's expertise to explore and discuss issues in Biodynamic food and farming systems. The perspective taken on these issues may be from a classical scientific point of view as well as from an innovative methodical standpoint.

#### We invited contributions to the following topics:

- New scientific methods in academic and on-farm research
- The farm organism and (new) perspectives in agroecology
- Beyond matter: Non-material influences on agriculture – quantum physics & co in agriculture
- Associative economy – an approach to sustainable food systems
- Living soil, soil life, and soil fertility
- Research on plants
- Food for life - food quality, nutrition and health
- Animal welfare
- others

We received 60 interesting abstracts from scientists and farmer researchers from Sri Lanka, France, Egypt, Brazil, the USA, India, Mexico, Spain, Switzerland, Germany, Israel, Denmark, Sweden, Italy, Lithuania, the United Kingdom, Nigeria, South Africa, the Netherlands and Chile. Abstracts will be subject to a review process. The programme committee decides about the acceptance or rejection of proposals based on reviewer comment by May 15th, 2018.

We invite proposals for workshops on issues related to the conference topics! [Application Form](#)

Confirmed keynote speakers: Prof. Dr. Jürgen Hess, University of Kassel; Dr. Silvia Ivmeyer, University of Kassel; Mechthild Knösel, Hofgut Rengoldshausen and Dr. Anet Spengler, FiBL

<b>Programme committee:</b> Dr. Christopher Brock (Forschungsring, Germany) Dr. Petra Derkzen (Demeter International, Netherlands) Dr. Jürgen Fritz (University of Kassel, Germany) Dr. Anet Spengler (FiBL, Switzerland)	<b>Organising committee:</b> Jean-Michel Florin Ueli Hurter Verena Wahl
<b>Your contact:</b> Verena Wahl Section for Agriculture at the Goetheanum +41 61 706 4211 <a href="mailto:biodynamic.research@goetheanum.ch">biodynamic.research@goetheanum.ch</a>	<b>Partners:</b> Faculty of Organic Agricultural Sciences of the University of Kassel (Germany) Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL, Switzerland) Forschungsring (Research in Biodynamic Agriculture, Darmstadt, Germany)

[Back to top](#)

## Research activities of Demeter-Germany

Dear colleagues, I would like to introduce myself and my team to those who do not already know me, and inform about the research activities of Demeter-Germany and the Forschungsring. My name is Christopher Brock, I have the honour and the pleasure to work as research coordinator for Demeter-Germany and the Forschungsring since Nov 2016. My task is both to establish Demeter and the Forschungsring as players in the organic farming research sector, to identify research demands and set up projects in our Biodynamic community. In April 2018, Anne Droscha and Tabea Meischner joined the team. Anne is in charge of research activities of Demeter, while Tabea is a member of the Forschungsring team.

Concerning joint research projects in the organic farming sector, 2017 was a very successful year. Demeter is a partner in the European H2020 project NEFER-TITI on the establishment of demonstration farm networks, and in the European Core Organic project GrazyDaiSy on grazing-based dairy production. The Forschungsring is a partner in H2020 Organic Plus on phasing out contentious inputs in organic farming, and in Core Organic Mix-Enable on strategies for diversified farms with different animal species.

With regard to bottom-up research in the Biodynamic sector, I am still working on the establishment of structures that foster research activities. This includes the intensification of conceptual work in the permanent Demeter work group on research and breeding, the setting-up of regular cooperation with regional and sectoral Demeter groups, and globally making our members aware of the benefits and potential of joint practice research. As a result, the first project is one in Demeter bee keeping that is just about to start.

Last, I would like to inform you about the extension of the long-term field experiment on soil fertility in Biodynamic farming conducted at Dottenfelderhof since 2012. With substantial support of the Software AG Foundation and other Donors (Zukunftsstiftung Landwirtschaft, Mahle Foundation, Rudolf-Steiner-Fonds), we were able to set up a second experimental site at Oberfeld farm in Darmstadt. We invite your questions and will be happy to discuss the outcomes of the experiment with you! The experiment allows for the temporal inclusion of sub-treatments. This year, we will explore effects of 'regular basic' and intensified application of the preparations.

Christopher Brock

[brock@forschungsring.de](mailto:brock@forschungsring.de)



*Anne Droscha, Tabea Meischner, Christopher Brock (f.l.t.r)*

[Back to top](#)

## "aqua.protect" successfully tested as a substitute for copper-containing crop protection agents

BONN. A new option for reducing the use of copper-containing pesticides in organic farming is suggested by promising research results from the joint project "aqua.protect". According to current information from the German Federal Agency for Agriculture and Food (BLE), through whom the project was supervised, researchers have found a broad crop protection effect through the use of the product "aqua.protect", in field trials over four consecutive years. According to the manufacturers, this is based on the electrochemical activation of saline-solution which leaves no residues on the plants except for a small amount of common salt. As the BLE reported, "aqua.protect" was used in the tests in combination with a specially designed spray strategy based on weather data and predictive modelling. The product was effective against apple scab, late blight on potatoes and powdery mildew on grape vines. In potato production, the effect against late blight was just as good as with conventional copper applications. In particular, by a combined treatment of "aqua.protect" and copper-containing agents, a reduction in the amount of copper is possible, explained the BLE. For grapevines, it has been possible to show in the field that the amount of sulphur used in the control of powdery mildew may be able to be reduced even using the spraying frequency customary in organic cultivation. The project was funded by the RWTH University, Aachen, the Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms University Bonn, the Julius-Kühn Institute (JKI), the Rural Service Centre (DLR) Rheinpfalz and the two development companies ARGUS monitoring and aquagroup AG.

Source: top agrar Österreich, 26.02.2018 (online)

## International Biodynamic Association

### Change within the Board of the International Biodynamic Association, IBDA

At the Members' assembly of IBDA in February 2018, Thomas Lüthi resigned as a member of the board. During his 16 years' term as a board member and as a founding member, he had a significant influence on the work of IBDA. His colleagues and the IBDA members thank him for his tireless commitment to the Biodynamic movement!

Petra Derkzen was elected as his successor and new representative of Demeter International within the IBDA in the same meeting.

Verena Wahl

## Demeter-International

### International Certification Office

#### Demeter-guidelines translated into many languages

Every year, the Demeter guidelines are adapted and revised. In addition to the English version, there is always a German translation. The current Demeter guidelines for production, processing, labelling and bee keeping are still available in the following languages:

- French
- Spanish (Version 2016)
- Chinese (production only)
- Polish (production only)
- Portuguese
- Turkish (production, labelling, bee keeping)
- Hungarian

The guidelines are available on the Demeter International [website](#).

Ute Bucholski

[Back to top](#)

## New certifications

Since January there have been the following new certifications / contracts:

- YÜCEMAK / Turkey: processor of dried fruits. Demeter inspection by bio.inspecta. Contact: [mert@yucemak.com](mailto:mert@yucemak.com), [www.yucemak.com](http://www.yucemak.com)
- Virág Anna Póth / Hungary: 215ha of arable farming / forage with cattle and other animals. BD Consultation by Mihaly Mezei, Demeter inspection by Biocontrol Hungaria. Contact: [virag@sargafogo.hu](mailto:virag@sargafogo.hu)
- Triodo Spa Chile / Comunidad Terapeutica de Cuyuncavi / Chile: 13ha mixed operation of a therapeutic institute, in conversion to Demeter. BD advice from Rodrigo Fernando Caviares Cancino. Demeter inspection by CERES. Contact: [alidaleighton@gmail.com](mailto:alidaleighton@gmail.com), [www.comunidadterapeuticahecuyuncavi.cl](http://www.comunidadterapeuticahecuyuncavi.cl)
- Soc. Agrícola y Comercial ARANTRUF Ltda./Chile: 11ha of blueberries in conversion to Demeter and also the production of truffles (not yet certified). BD advice from Rene Piamonte. Demeter inspection by Ecocert Chile. Contact: [juliodiaz@arantruf.cl](mailto:juliodiaz@arantruf.cl), <http://arantruf.cl>
- BANANICA S.A.C./Peru: Fundo Bananica & Fundo Sausalito with 186ha bananas, in conversion to Demeter. BD advice from Tadeu Caldas. Demeter inspection by CERES. Contact: [mapopolizio@banana-x.net](mailto:mapopolizio@banana-x.net), [www.sharedximpact.com](http://www.sharedximpact.com)
- Patagonian Fruits Trade S.A./Argentina: Five production plants with a total of 162ha apples and 72ha pears, in conversion to Demeter. BD advice from Antonio Heinze. Demeter inspection by Fundacion Demeter Argentina. Contact: [lfernandez@pft.com.ar](mailto:lfernandez@pft.com.ar), <http://patagonianfruits.com>

We warmly welcome all new licensees!

Cornelia Hauenschield

[Back to top](#)

# Market

## Biofach 2018

### Nürnberg/Germany

Biofach was held from the 14th- 17th February with around 50,000 visitors and 3,218 stands. There was an enormous organic diversity on display, but also a substantial Biodynamic presence as could be seen by the large number of stands linked by the orange carpet! This delineation incorporated the substantial stand from Demeter e.V. (Germany), several other Demeter certifiers e.g. from Austria, Brazil, Italy and Spain, a wide variety of Demeter licensees and of course the Demeter- International presence. This was manned by a multinational team well organised by Anette Jorjy and it became the focus for intensive discussion with licensee and other visitors from all parts of the globe.

The Biofach themes this year included the 'Next generation' and 'Organic Breeding' as topics for the organic community – both of which were reflected in the Biodynamic stands. In addition to the highly committed generation of pioneers, a new generation is evident with inspiring ideas, enthusiasm, passion and energy; with projects dedicated to shaping the world they will inhabit now and into the future.

In tune with the Biofach focus on organic seed breeding, Demeter is developing international Biodynamic plant breeding standards and labelling – another step toward a more sustainability.

Biofach is the world's leading trade fair for organic food and the international trade fair for natural cosmetics reflecting the popularity and rapid growth in the overall organic sector. In Germany alone, the turnover of organic products was 10 billion EUR last year, every 10th farm is now organic, according to the Association of Organic Food (BÖLW). In addition, IFOAM - Organics International reports International sales in 2016 of nearly \$ 90 billion.

Biofach Nürnberg 2019 will be held on 13th -16th February 2019.

Ian Henderson

### Bio Eco Actual Special Edition:

The [digital version](#) of the BioFach 2018 Bio Eco Actual Special Edition. Full edition in [Spanish](#) and [Catalan](#). Demeter article [direct link](#)



*Demeter-International team and visitors (from left to right): Reto Ingold, Alexandre Harkaly, Ute Bucholski, Eduardo Tilatti, visitor, Anette Jorjy, Cornelia Hauen-schild*



[Back to top](#)

## Demeter at ProWein 2018

The 2018 ProWein Trade Fair ended again with a visitor surplus despite the onset of winter with numerous cancelled flight and train connections to Düsseldorf where it was held. The fair registered more than 60,000 trade visitors (2017: 58,000) who came to Düsseldorf to check out the offer of 6,870 exhibitors from 64 nations. The newly launched Demeter stand with 31 exhibitors from 6 countries showed their new collection. Newcomers at the stand were the Gysler winery from Rheinhessen, Antica Tenuta Pietramore from Italy as well as Ernesto Catena Vineyards from Argentina together with seven more Demeter wineries from France. In the big international tasting area visitors could get an idea about Demeter wine quality for themselves.



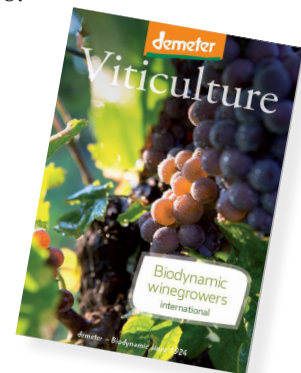
*Wine queen Katharina Staab,  
Nina Weis Demeter e. V.*



Great organic food and inspiring events around organic viticulture could be found at the Demeter partner stand “Organic Lounge” right next to the Demeter booth. Visitors could meet up with VIPs such as the German wine queen Katharina Staab, Master of Wine Romana Echensperger, wine journalist Jürgen Schmücking, “Drunken Monday” wine blogger Nico Medenbach as well as with numerous Biodynamic top-notch winemakers. The “Organic Lounge” is a Demeter partner project realized together with ECOVIN Bioland and Düsseldorf Fair, which has been implemented for the second time in 2018.

An international list of Demeter winemakers world-wide is available [online](#)

Nina Weis



## Raw Materials Coordination

The raw materials newsletter is no longer issued, but all product offers are still welcome and will be answered with a list of possible buyers.

The raw materials we are currently looking for are listed on the [DI website](#) (regular update):

Feel free to contact me for any further information.

From now on, please use my new email address: [aurelie.truffat@demeter.net](mailto:aurelie.truffat@demeter.net)

[Back to top](#)

# Lobby

## Conference: Seed as a commons

### The key for organic plant breeding - establishing alternatives to seed monopolies

Brussels, October 2017

Market concentration in the seed sector is growing incessantly. Demanding better seed policies is not enough to stop this trend. Strategies and practical alternatives to counter further privatising and monopolisation of seed are needed to save the basis of our food system. Speakers and participants of the conference “Seed as Commons” have introduced and discussed such strategies in Brussels.

Johannes Wirz, Researcher, Section for Agriculture – Goetheanum, Switzerland, presented the newly released study ‘Seeds as Commons’ explaining that non-profit organic breeders have the expert knowledge to develop locally adapted varieties for organic agriculture. “Organic breeders deserve that governmental authorities as facilitators and the value chain as partners support their work.”



Johannes Kotschi from OpenSourceSeeds / Agrecol, Marburg, Germany presents in his key-note the new strategy of open-source seeds licensing: “Commons can only be sustained if they are protected. With the OSS Licence, a way has been found to redress this. The licence may, therefore, become an important tool to re-build a commons based seed domain to be established as a second column to counterbalance the corporate seed sector.”

Monika Messmer, President of the European Consortium for Organic Plant Breeding (ECO – PB) and researcher in FiBL highlighted the need for investment in organic breeding and innovation: “Projects like LIVESEED that has just started under the Horizon 2020 framework are of major importance to move the organic sector forward. We need to improve organic seed and plant breeding, therefore we need action on the technical, scientific, socio-economic and legislative level.”

Effimia Chatzinikolaou, Policy Coordinator IFOAM EU Group explains: “It is a priority for the organic movement to develop the organic plant breeding sector. It is important to change the current legislative framework on seed marketing in order to facilitate market access for organically bred varieties. If we want to reach 50% organic farming in the EU by 2030, this target also needs to be reflected in public research funding.”

Peter Kunz, organic breeder from Switzerland, added: “Bringing forward organic breeding is a common task of the whole organic food chain. Organic operators should get actively involved and dedicate part of their profits to breeding.”

Maria Heubuch, Member of the European Parliament was convinced that independent organic plant breeding is of key importance for the future of organic farming.

Alexander Gerber, Vice President of Demeter-International, concluded that plant breeding serves the society: “Therefore, different models to ensure that the genetic basis of our daily food remains an accessible good that needs to be further developed and organic breeding needs recognition as an innovative approach for future food security.”

### Further information

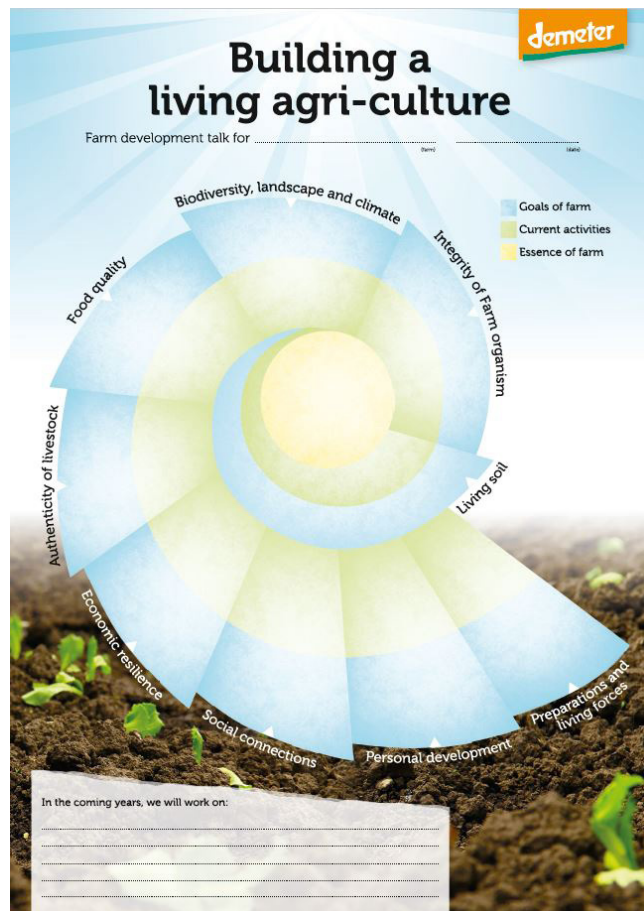
Antje Kölling

[Back to top](#)

# Quality

## Farm Development Talks

Farm Development Talks have been on the agenda of the Members Assemblies for at least the last 5 years, but the impulse goes back at least a decade. The impulse originally had two sources and these are still present today in the various practices that now exist. The first one is related to certification; how to imagine a certification which is not about ticking boxes and checking documents but about a meaningful exchange on the quality of Biodynamic practices. The second one is related to development; how to move away from looking at the minimum for all, towards appreciation of the qualities and unique development potential of the individual farm. So, the first impulse has as an aim to transform our system of accountability (certificate) and the second to work on consciousness for farm development. In the meanwhile the focus of many of the Demeter organisations in member countries has been to build, improve and assure the certification system as it is today, chosen as the way to do it by the founding of Demeter International 21 years ago. Hence, despite the intention, it was and still is extremely hard to find time, resources and a suitable structure in many member countries to make a start.



In those places where it did take off, mainly in the regions of Germany and in The Netherlands, various methods, tools and ways of working were tried and tested. Recently, it led to a 'second generation' of instruments, connected to both impulses. The motion from Germany and The Netherlands in 2017 to experiment with taking licensees out of inspection and going through a different kind of process with them is part of the continuing search to design a better way of accountability. And the old tools were reworked to a new graphical design for the farm talk to help the peer conversation in the Netherlands. In presenting the new graphical design I noticed how this picture helped in the imagination of how farm development talks could be integrated in the different contexts in other countries. It led to translation of the material to English and German, with more translations to amongst others, Finnish, Hungarian and Spanish in the pipe line. The material consists of self-evaluation on nine Biodynamic principles which is used as preparation for the talk. There is also a poster, which is present during the talk and has summary elements of the self-evaluation, and which is further filled in during the talk.

In quite a few countries the organic sector is growing rapidly, and we as colleagues working in Biodynamics have observed the tendency of dilution of the organic values as a result. How to stay connected to our Biodynamic values is pivotal in order not to gravitate towards being a marketplace instrument only but to keep on being a movement. Awareness of and working from Biodynamic values need 'maintenance'. It needs a culture of regular exchange, consciousness building together, for which farm development talks are a useful instrument.

The Introduction manual, the self-evaluation and the poster are currently available in English and German. If you want further info, please email to [petra.derkzen@demeter.net](mailto:petra.derkzen@demeter.net)

[Back to top](#)

## Reports from member countries

### Country profile: Demeter-Switzerland

The Swiss Association for Biodynamic Agriculture was founded in 1937, the Swiss Demeter Association 1997. The joint office "Demeter Switzerland" in Liestal coordinates the tasks and projects of the two organizations with 7 employees (360% total work capacity). The Office is operationally responsible for promoting and protecting the Demeter brand and coordinating the tasks and projects of the Association for Biodynamic Agriculture.

The Association for Biodynamic Agriculture organises introductory, preparation and standards courses for newcomers and organises training for Demeter producers throughout Switzerland in 5 regions. The association is the holder of the "Biodynamic Education Switzerland".

The association also supports research projects and projects for Biodynamic agriculture, currently: "Reduction in antibiotic use", "Lucky Roosters" (raising male chicks) and "Lucky Cattle" (raising the dairy breed calves on the farm of their birth).



*Team of Demeter-Switzerland: Aline Haldemann, Bettina Holenstein, Christian Butscher, Susanne Huber (f.l.t.r.)*

Organic agriculture is booming in Switzerland - we have the highest organic per capita consumption world-wide. This means that Demeter producers want to, in fact have to produce quality and receive a reasonable amount for it. Sales opportunities and the development of Biodynamic agriculture in Switzerland have increased, not least thanks to the supply of Demeter products on offer in the wholesale distributors.

#### Development of Demeter producers from 2016 to now

- 2016: 263 producers, 4440 ha
- 2017: 280 producers, 4790 ha
- 2018: 299 producers, 5100 ha
- 20% of the producers are winemakers.

#### The challenges of Demeter Switzerland are above all the main topics "Demeter for many!" And: "Demeter becomes visible!"

- As many consumers as possible should have access to Demeter products. It turns out that the wholesale distributors are opening up a new customer segment and improving sales opportunities. At the same time there is more communication and information on organic and Demeter farming.
- Generational question: is the older generation ready to respond to changing situations and let the younger generation take the helm? At the office, this change is taking place, accompanied by an intensive and fruitful dialogue.

#### Demeter-Switzerland wishes for the development of Demeter-International:

- More and more land is Biodynamically cultivated; The liveliness of the soil and the quality of the food is constantly improving.
- More and more animals are kept according to their nature.
- Demeter foods are available in all regions of Switzerland and affordable for many.
- Nothing is thrown away - neither food nor animals: The idea of the cycle is apparent through all areas.

The employees of Demeter Switzerland see great potential in Demeter and Biodynamic agriculture. Every day, they are motivated to change the world and to set positive impulses in the future as well.

[Website](#) and [email](#)

[Back to top](#)

## Changes in Demeter-US

Jim Fullmer has stopped as a director for Demeter-US at the end of February. Elizabeth Candelario, until then co-director with Jim, has taken over the responsibilities as the new president of Demeter-US.

## Changes at Demeter Associazione Italia

The renewed Board of Demeter-Italy has started working in autumn 2016. In a retreat, the Board has re-defined the tasks, goals and strategies of Demeter-Italy. Demeter should function mainly as development organ as a service for the farmers.

The board itself should care for the development of the association and of the Biodynamic movement in Italy and function strategically. The operative part will be delegated to skilled employees. Debureaucratization, improvement of efficiency, cost savings are important aspects that the board is implementing. The board is especially working on improving the quality of the work on the farms. A new way of training (conversion) has been successfully implemented and guarantees that the entrance level for new members is high.

In the General assembly beginning of May, the members receive guidelines for adoption that will clarify themes of the standards for production and will serve as an important tool for farmers, technicians or inspectors. We want to induce a change of consciousness in order that everybody knows that if he acts outside the standards, he cannot count on receiving or keeping the Demeter certification. The farmers should feel themselves as members of the association with joy and not to perceive it as a control organ. A new statute which will be voted on at the same Members' Assembly shall facilitate a renewal and an extension of the association, its organs and its structure. It has to be secured that the association will be carried as well in future by farmers and is supporting them. To reach in the coming years the goals that the board has set, we have established transparency in the costs and started to diminish expenses that could not be justified. This has led to painful decisions.

As a first sign, that we can observe a fruitful development, are the many requests of farmers interested in getting a Demeter certification. Since the beginning of the year, we have received 90 new applications, having 360 certified production units overall. It is an almost disturbing figure that brings us to consciousness how important it is to strengthen and to build up the organizational structure of Demeter-Italy. It is our task to be able to accompany these new farms and to guarantee that they become good Biodynamic farmers. To that purpose, we have built up a close cooperation with the Biodynamic Association in Milano. It is leading and coordinating the training of the farmers.

At the beginning of February, Lapo Cianferoni has stopped working for Demeter; at the beginning of April, he stepped back as a Board member. He will no longer represent Demeter Italy on the international level.

Alois Lageder, president

## Biodynamic Association of India: New team member

We would like to inform you that we have a new team member, Harsha Gangwal, who will be the Deputy Editor of our newsletter Biodyne.

For future requests for articles etc. please use the following email addresses: [gangwalharsha@gmail.com](mailto:gangwalharsha@gmail.com) and that of our Editor, [biodyne@biodynamics.in](mailto:biodyne@biodynamics.in)

Harsha Gangwal:

'I listen. I read. When I am not doing either of the two, I practise and teach Yoga. After a stint as an IT professional, I joined the Biodynamic Association of India as the deputy editor of its newsletter, Biodyne. I endeavour to continue my journey with the association, and be a part of its noble mission.'



[Back to top](#)

## Reports/ various

### An International Demeter wine conference held in Vienna 25./27. February 2018

This event followed on from the vintners meeting at the Goetheanum during the Agricultural Conference, and had as one of its objectives to provide another venue to gather and so strengthen the wine community

On the first day there were presentations from experts on the topics of the influence of animal elements in viticulture (Henry Finzi-Constantine), field composting, compost tea applications in viticulture (Gerhard Weißhäupl), Biodynamics – where we are now and where to go from here (Monty Waldin) and great wines - no sulphites (Arnaud Imméle). A total of around 140 enthusiastic participants from across the wine production spectrum attended.

The second day was dedicated to workshop work in the morning on the following topics:

- Demeter – together we are a force to be reckoned with  
How can we present ourselves on the European market as a unified front?  
Nina Weiss von Demeter e.V. led the workshop and also reported on activities in Germany.
- Demeter wine – where will we be in 20 years?  
Overview international structures and their relevance for wine standards development and certification, Demeter as a marketing instrument, standards setting - where should the wine standard sit, wine task force and the community of vintners.  
Led by Ian Henderson from Demeter-International with Niki Moser, Demeter winegrower and Demeter board member in Austria.
- The Biodynamic farm organism – The wine begins with the grape  
A philosophical view - the soul element in grape production, the natural world, how can be develop grape growing further and where does the future of sustainable production lie?  
Led by Monty Waldin.



A presentation of Demeter wines with tasting from some 35 vintners filled the afternoon programme.

The final day saw excursions to Demeter vineyards in two regions of Austria – Burgenland (Meinklang, Birgit Braunstein, Gut Oggau), and Donau/Wachau (Fritz Salamon, Weingut Sepp Moser and Nikolaihof

The Austrians made an excellent job of the organisation (Werner Michlits/Nikki Moser, Nadja & Niklas Peltzer and their team of young helpers). As Monty noted: I was surprised about the very high level over all in the meetings and the tastings I had with the farmers. This was my best Biodynamic wine show in recent years!

In summary, a very warm and productive atmosphere despite outside temperatures plunging to minus 20!

Ian Henderson

[Back to top](#)

## Section for Agriculture

Ueli Hurter, Jean-Michel Florin

ph: +41 61706 4212 sektion.landwirtschaft@goetheanum.ch, skype: ueli.hurter, skype: jeanmichel florin

## International Biodynamic Association IBDA

Ueli Hurter, Therese Jung

ph: +41 61706 4212 office@ibda.ch skype: ueli.hurter

## Demeter-International

<b>General Secretary &amp; newsletter</b> Christoph Simpfendörfer ph: +49 711 40049551 christoph.simpfendoerfer@demeter.net skype: christoph.simpfendoerfer	<b>Certification</b> Cornelia Hauenschild ph: +45 874269 90 c.hauenschild@demeter.de skype: hauenschildsingapore	<b>New Projects</b> Ute Bucholski ph: +49 6155 8469 99 ute.bucholski@demeter.de skype: utebucholski
<b>Accreditation Council</b> Reto Ingold ph: +41 61 7 03 11 88 reto.ingold@demeter.net skype: r.ingold	<b>Raw Materials Co-ordinator</b> Aurelie Truffat ph: +33 450 357 440 aurelie.truffat@demeter.net skype: truffat.demeter	<b>Standards</b> Ian Henderson ph +64 4143 712 ian.henderson@demeter.net skype: hendersonian
<b>International Communication, Biofach</b> Anette Jorry ph: +49 6155 8469 81 anette.jorry@demeter.de skype: anette.jorry	<b>IMC Coordination</b> Katja Aßmann ph: +49 30 24339759 katja.assmann@demeter.de	<b>Research, Training and Advisory work</b> Dr. Petra Derksen ph: +31 6 16390027 petra.derksen@demeter.net
<b>Office Brussels</b> Dr. Andreas Biesantz ph: +32 26 462 117 andreas.biesantz@demeter.net skype: biesantz		

Published by Demeter-International e.V.

Editor Christoph Simpfendörfer & Carolyn Heubeck

The next newsletter will be published on 26th of July 2018

Editorial deadline will be 11th of July 2018

[Back to top](#)