



Value creation with old varieties and ancient breeds

Success stories
and success factors



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Introduction

Consumer demand for food with ecological and social added value is increasing. This is demonstrated by the success of regional, organic and fair trade products. What is new is that products with special benefits for biodiversity are also becoming increasingly common.

Old crop varieties and traditional breeds of livestock are an important element of biodiversity in Germany. They often have interesting characteristics and an impressive regional history. Unfortunately, many varieties and breeds have almost been lost in recent decades and are now included in the “Red List of endangered native crops in Germany” and the “Red list of domestic livestock breeds in Germany”.

Many of these crop varieties and livestock breeds have special characteristics in terms of taste, appearance, production or ingredients, such as secondary plant substances. As a result, they offer an interesting field for product innovations from rural regions. The first companies are enjoying success with these food specialties. They are using the promising opportunities to stand out from the competition and differentiate from the usual standards. In doing so, they are repeatedly focusing on regional value chains. In addition, the “revival” of ancient breeds and old crop varieties makes a valuable contribution to reactivating regional history, traditions and specialties. This promotes identity in rural areas and supports image and brand building in the competition between regions. This new, traditional diversity with ancient varieties and heritage breeds combines value creation and employment in rural regions with tradition and history and the preservation of biodiversity.

The nova-Institute for Ecology and Innovation and the Foundation Rhineland Cultural Landscape have been working intensively on this topic as part of the project “AgroBioNet – Creating value with old varieties and old breeds”. The project was funded by the German Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL) and the Federal Office for Agriculture and Food (BLE) in the Federal Rural Development Scheme and supported by the Competence Centre Rural Development and the Information and Coordination Centre for Biological Diversity (IBV) of the BLE.

The 20 examples in this publication provide insights into the practice of rural regions and companies that have achieved success with food from old crop varieties and traditional breeds. With these “success stories”, we want to create more awareness of the opportunities that are available for rural regions, farms and regional companies.

Based on a detailed analysis of these practical examples, we have identified seven success factors that favor projects for value creation with old varieties and traditional livestock breeds. Our associated recommendations are aimed at politicians and administrators, who can make a decisive contribution to mobilizing the potential offered by rural regions and promoting the conservation of biodiversity through sustainable use.

Let us inspire you!



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Murnau-Werdenfelser

A traditional Bavarian cattle breed successful in the Munich gastronomy and the Garmisch region



Young Murnau-Werdenfels cattle on the pasture



The home of the Murnau-Werdenfels cattle is the Alpine region and the Alpine foothills around Garmisch-Partenkirchen and Oberammergau. The breed is well adapted to the harsh climate and to life on hillsides and wetlands. Around 1870, 62,000 of the triple-purpose cattle (working animals as well as milk and meat suppliers) were still counted in Bavaria. The relatively low meat and milk yield caused the number of individual animals to fall to 350 in 2006. Today, the old animal breed is included in the “Red list of domestic livestock breeds in Germany” and has been included in the project “Ark of Taste” of Slowfood foundation. Jürgen Lochbihler, gastronome and entrepreneur from Upper Bavaria, successfully markets the meat of the heritage breed from 51 regional producers in his traditional Munich restaurant and in the food retail trade via Fleischhandels GmbH, which was founded for this purpose.

Typical regional quality meat in a traditional Bavarian restaurant

Jürgen Lochbihler, owner of the traditional restaurant „Der Pschorr“ in Munich, grew up in Bavaria between a farm and a butcher’s shop and therefore developed a special appreciation for high-quality, local food early on. It was an obvious idea for him to offer meat dishes from typical regional Bavarian cattle in his restaurant, which underline the typical Bavarian image and also offer a special meat quality. Lochbihler has had Murnau-Werdenfels beef dishes on his menu since 2005. The special characteristics of the old breed of cattle, the slow growth of the animals and stress-free slaughtering ensure the exceptional taste quality, which is very well received by guests.

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Value creation and trusting cooperation with regional producers

In order to gain access to the meat from the Murnau-Werdenfels cattle, Jürgen Lochbihler contacted the local farmers, who at that time kept the animals mainly out of a sense of tradition. The high demand in his Munich restaurant allowed him to pay an above-average price and guarantee a reliable supply. This allowed him to overcome the farmers' initial skepticism and develop a trusting working relationship. The animals are still mainly kept, slaughtered and cut up in their region of origin. The meat is also preferably processed in the region. In the first year, 18 slaughtered animals were marketed via the „Der Pschorr“ in Munich. The dishes with Murnau-Werdenfels beef were a great success, with around 100 animals being processed in 2013.

With Murnau-Werdenfels cattle into the food retail trade

Jürgen Lochbihler was convinced of the special regional character of the cooperation and the high quality of the meat. With this potential in mind and in view of the fact that the sales opportunities via the restaurant were soon exhausted, he decided to market the meat via the food retail trade. He founded MuWe Fleischhandels GmbH in 2011. Retailers reacted positively. Several REWE stores added Murnau-Werdenfels beef to their butcher's counters. Demand increased significantly. It is now sold through food retailers in large parts of Bavaria. The „Proven Quality Bavaria“ (GQB) seal guarantees reliable traceability. The success of the regional premium products with consumers enables MuWe to pay farmers almost twice the price of conventional meat. The attractive remuneration has led to 51 farms now being involved and over 300 animals being marketed each year. While 30 percent of the meat is still sold via „Der Pschorr“, the meat trade now accounts for 70 percent of the total volume. Despite the high growth potential, slow and sustainable growth as well as independence from economic pressure to perform and optimize are paramount for Jürgen Lochbihler.

Characteristic for the landscape and regional image in tourism

The Murnau-Werdenfels cattle are increasingly valued as a traditional breed in their region of origin in Upper Bavaria and are perceived as a characteristic feature of the landscape. The regional development of the Zugspitz region is also committed to the preservation of the heritage cattle breed and the milk and meat products of these animals. Murnau-Werdenfels cattles are becoming increasingly common in tourism in the Zugspitz region, so that the animals are in the process of developing into a symbol of the traditional Upper Bavaria.



“The best jump start for a project like this is a benevolent climate for networking. This can be created above all by the political players in the region.” Jürgen Lochbihler



Bentheim Black Pied pigs

A highlight for gourmets and animal lovers



Bentheim Black Pied pigs in the Nordhorn Zoo



Bentheim Black Pied pigs had their peak in the 1950s, as the fertile and undemanding animals produced high-quality, high-fat meat. The old, regional breed disappeared with the increasing demand for animals with lean meat. In the 1990s, there were only around 100 breeding animals left in Germany. Today, the old pig breed is listed in the “Red list of domestic livestock breeds in Germany” and in the project “Ark of Taste” of Slowfood Foundation. The Association for the Preservation of the Bentheim Pig has set itself the task of breeding and marketing the heritage breed according to the motto „Preservation through eating”. The renowned former star chef Franz Keller also supports the preservation of the Bentheim Black Pied pigs. In his restaurant „Adler Wirtschaft”, he focuses on regional cuisine and processes pork of Bentheim pigs he keeps on his „Falkenhof” farm.

Breed saved and quality standards established

In the mid-1980s, there was only one farmer in Germany, Gerhard Schulte-Bernd, who still kept Bentheim pigs. On the initiative of the Nordhorn Zoo, with the former director Thomas Berling, a conservation breeding program for the breed was set up and in 2003 the Association for the Conservation of the Bentheim Pig was founded, in which around 100 farms are now involved. Today, the livestock numbers are around 600 breeding sows and 100 boars. In order to preserve the old breed, avoid unwanted cross-breeding and guarantee quality standards, the association has drawn up husbandry standards and breeding specifications and monitors compliance by issuing protected yellow ear tags for herd book farms.

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Quality through free-range farming

In the past, the meat of the Bentheim pig had a reputation for being too fatty, which made it difficult to market. By adapting the husbandry conditions to the needs of the traditional breed, this prejudice could be refuted. This is because when the robust Bentheimer cattle have enough exercise and are fed traditionally and slowly, they put on less fat. They are not slaughtered until they are one year old and not after six months as usually. The longer growth phase allows the matured meat to develop its full flavor. Animal husbandry makes the decisive difference in meat quality and cannot be reconciled with conventional forms of husbandry. The principle of quality over quantity applies.

Diverse marketing channels and regional cooperation

Due to extensive educational work, the conservation association has been able to dispel the prejudices regarding meat quality among farmers and consumers. Marketing now works very well and is mainly carried out in the surrounding cities with greater purchasing power. Hubert Wahoff, the association's first chairman, keeps his animals in Andervenne near Lingen in Lower Saxony and sells the meat mainly directly to restaurants and private individuals. Other keepers of the traditional breed also market their animals through farm stores, delicatessens and at weekly markets. In some cases, they earn twice as much as for conventional pork. As the county of Bentheim still has a comparatively large number of butchers, most of the processing can take place in the region. The association offers its members good opportunities for exchanging experiences and establishing co-operations and advises them on marketing.

Bentheim pigs as a marketing factor for the „County of Bentheim“

The traditional pig breed „Bunte Bentheimer“ bears the name of the region „Grafschaft Bentheim“ in its name. With the increasing awareness of the heritage breed and the high quality of the products, regional marketing has discovered the potential of this local specialty for communicating the „County of Bentheim“. Nowadays, the Bentheim pigs are increasingly helping to give „County of Bentheim“ a face.

Animal welfare and delight at Frank Kellers „Adler Wirtschaft“

Michelin-starred chef Franz Keller is also convinced of the high quality of meat from Bentheim pigs. He consciously left the world of Michelin stars in 1993 to offer regional, down-to-earth cuisine in his „Adler Wirtschaft“ in the Rheingau. Keller not only uses meat from Bentheim pigs in his restaurant, he also breeds them himself. On his 14-hectare organic farm „Falkenhof“, Franz Keller keeps 46 pigs of this heritage breed. He attaches great importance to species-appropriate husbandry. The restaurateur is convinced that the good taste of his dishes is significantly influenced by the quality of the ingredients and especially the meat quality of the animals. With the Falkenhof, he takes the production of high-quality food for his business into his own hands.



„Keeping Bentheim pigs and using the meat for high-quality dishes is in line with my philosophy: the best of the simple.“ Franz Keller



Organic farm Düna

Cattle breeding and landscape conservation with the Harz Red Mountain Cattle



Farmer Daniel Wehmeyer and his Harz Red Mountain Cattle



Daniel Wehmeyer had wanted to be a farmer for a long time. To fulfil this wish, he took advantage of a good opportunity: a land consolidation process by the state of Lower Saxony gradually resulted in him taking over the maintenance of nature conservation areas in the southern Harz region and thus also the keeping of the regionally typical and endangered Harz Red Mountain cattle breed. Daniel Wehmeyer now runs the organic farm Düna and embeds the keeping of the heritage breed in a circular economy with arable farming, grassland and landscape conservation. The successful farmer thus operates a concept that enables successful value creation with the Harz Red Mountain cattle and is also recognized by the public.

High personal commitment and lucky coincidences

Daniel Wehmeyer has found an economically viable approach for his farm, in which the rare Harz Red Mountain cattle breed plays a central role. The road to this was winding and exciting and would hardly have been possible without his great personal commitment. When Wehmeyer decided to resume his parents' dormant farming business as a sideline, a land consolidation process was taking place, in the course of which more than 50 hectares of nature conservation land were leased to farmers with conditions. Wehmeyer leased the first three hectares of grassland and, on the recommendation of the Lower Nature Conservation Authority, bought six Harz Red Mountain cattle calves in 1998 to farm the land. Over time, the sideline became a main occupation with an organic focus. He was able to increase the herd when he joined the cattle breeding association.

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Daniel Wehmeyer now keeps around 90 cows in suckler herds, each with a breeding bull, on over 300 hectares of grassland. The necessary barn expansions were partly realized with subsidies.

Agricultural circular economy with model character

The successful value creation with the Harz Red Mountain cattle at the organic farm Düna is based in particular on the organic circular economy. The farm's grassland management, cattle farming and landscape conservation complement each other perfectly with arable farming. Among other things, fodder is produced in arable farming and fertilized with the cattle manure from the animals.

Successful landscape management with a traditional cattle breed

Harz Red Mountain cattle are robust and very suitable for grazing on slopes or for covering long distances from pasture to pasture. Thanks to their calm disposition, the horned animals are easy to handle, which is an advantage when keeping suckler cows. The traditional breed tolerates adverse conditions, such as feed shortages due to drought, which means that supplementary feeding is rarely necessary. Daniel Wehmeyer's cattle successfully graze the only site of the endangered steppe fennel in Lower Saxony: the occurrence of the rare plant species is developing positively.

Direct marketing as a key to profitability

Daniel Wehmeyer currently farms 480 hectares of land, of which 123 hectares are arable land. Landscape conservation combined with contractual nature conservation programs and arable farming each provide a third of the income. The direct marketing of the high-quality meat also makes keeping the cattle profitable. In addition to sales via the farm store, cooperation with restaurants in the region has also proved successful. Direct marketing now accounts for another third of the income. Every year, around 40 animals are sold to the farm's own abattoir and their products are marketed regionally. Due to the special meat quality of the heritage breed, a price six times higher than usual can be achieved through the catering trade. In order to ensure that all parts of the slaughtered animals are marketed and that the approach is economically viable, the catering establishments working with the organic farm Düna undertake to purchase at least three different products (e.g. fillet, leg slice, minced meat). The restaurants also benefit from the good image of the farm.

Public relations work pays off

The public presence and the awards that the organic farm Düna has received (e.g. CERES Award as the most successful organic farmer in 2017) increase awareness of the farm with the Harz Red Mountain cattle and promote sales of the meat products. The farm festival, which takes place every two years and attracts up to 5,000 visitors, also makes an important contribution to this. There is potential for marketing significantly more cattle and thus increasing the size of the farm. However, Daniel Wehmeyer prefers slow growth and wants to „remain a farmer“.



“The keeping of this old breed of cattle is ideal for a biological circular economy.”

Daniel Wehmeyer



Thuringian goat

Regional production and marketing of dairy products by Ziegenhof Peter



Thuringian goats at the Ziegenhof Peter



The Thuringian goat is ideally adapted to the harsh climate of the Thuringian Forest, with cold winters and high levels of precipitation, and is very well suited to landscape management. As a dairy goat, it can easily keep up with the performance level of other goat breeds. It is the only native and independently bred goat breed in Germany. Nevertheless, there were only 120 individual animals left at the end of the 1980s. The breed is now included in the Red list of domestic livestock breeds in Germany. In the meantime, the population has recovered, with around 150 bucks and 1.500 registered goats. The farm Ziegenhof Peter in Greußen, Thuringia, has set itself the task of preserving this heritage breed.

The farm has around 100 dairy goats as well as its own farm cheese dairy and farm store. The wide variety of cheese can now also be purchased in selected stores of the German supermarket chains EDEKA and "tegut" throughout Thuringia.

Connected with Thuringian traditions

Katja and Wolfgang Peter run an arable farm with 300 hectares of agricultural land around the historic mill Steinfahrtsmühle near Greußen, which forms the farmstead. Around 20 years ago, the Peters decided to expand their livestock and became aware of the Thuringian goat. It quickly became clear that they wanted to support the preservation and breeding of this traditional and rare goat breed. With the first ten goats, they began to develop a new branch of the business. The old outbuildings of the Steinfahrtsmühle mill lent themselves to goat farming and

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the direct marketing of dairy products, giving them a new purpose. By using the historic mill to keep the heritage breed, two Thuringian traditions are combined. As a so-called “Ark-farm”, Ziegenhof Peter is now also committed to other livestock breeds threatened with extinction.

Own farm cheese dairy and direct marketing

Marketing the raw milk was initially a challenge, as there was a lack of suitable milk processing structures in the region that would also accept smaller batches. The solution came in the form of funding from the European LEADER program, which enabled the Peter family to set up their own cheese dairy in the buildings of the old Steinfahrtsmühle mill. There, the Thuringian goat’s milk is still processed into various types of farmhouse cheese according to traditional methods. These include goat cream cheese, Greußener Kräuterziege (soft cheese) and Greußener Mühlenkäse with fenugreek. Particularly popular is the newly developed goat’s milk drinking yoghurt, which appeals to children in particular and is sold under the specially developed „Zickolo“ brand. Marketing initially took place via a self-service fridge and later via the Peters’ steadily growing farm store.

Successful cooperation with the food retail trade

The farm’s own value chain, from production to processing to marketing, developed very successfully and the goat population increased significantly. After four years, however, it became apparent that the farm’s own marketing for the dairy products was no longer sufficient. The popularity of the Thuringian goat and the mild taste of the cheese were the key factors that helped the Peters to do business with regional retailers. The local EDEKA stores, a German supermarket chain, added the products to their range, where they were immediately well received. Word of the success quickly spread among the retailers, and other interested parties followed. Farmhouse cheese from Ziegenhof Peter is now available in around 25 EDEKA and “tegut” stores throughout Thuringia. The good personal contact with the store owners enables the Peters to find uncomplicated solutions for seasonal changes in the cheese range.

Good prospects for the traditional breed and economic success at Ziegenhof Peter

Thanks to the cooperation with the retail trade, sales of dairy products are developing very well. For example, the volume of goat’s milk drinking yoghurt „Zickolo“ has risen from around 10 litres per week at the beginning to 150 litres per week today. The cheese dairy of Ziegenhof Peter is now known as the „Thüringer Hofkäserei“ and is an independent business with three employees.

The number of Thuringian goats kept has also grown to 100 dairy goats and 4 breeding goats. This means that Ziegenhof Peter has one of the largest herd books of this rare breed in Germany. Katja Peter is also committed to the preservation of this heritage breed as chairwoman of the Thuringian goat breeders’ association and passes on her expertise.



“Our types of cheese are regional specialties with a face of their own – that’s what makes them so charming.”

Katja Peter



Limpurger, Red Mountain Cattle and Glan Cattle

Marketing of traditional breeds via EDEKA supermarkets
in their regions of origin



Glan cattle from the Bainerhof graze on a nature conservation area



Glan Cattle and Red Mountain Cattle were widespread as frugal triple-purpose cattle in Rhineland-Palatinate and many low mountain ranges until the 1930s. The Limpurger cattle, Württemberg's oldest breed of cattle, has always been valued for its good meat quality and milk yield. Due to the emergence of high-performance breeds, the animals were almost extinct by the 1970s. Today the breeds are listed in the Red list of domestic livestock breeds in Germany and in the project "Ark of Taste" of Slow-food Foundation due to their excellent meat quality. As a producer of meat and sausage products, EDEKA Südwest Fleisch GmbH has been successfully offering meat products of the heritage breeds in markets in the respective region of origin since 2015, together with traders and farmers.

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Excellent meat qualities in the markets of three regions

Anyone who goes shopping in selected EDEKA supermarkets in the Odenwald, the Hohenlohe region or the Vorderpfalz region will be rewarded with something special at the meat counter. Since 2015, the shops have been offering products from traditional breeds of cattle. It started with Limpurger beef, which is known for its fine-grained, excellent meat quality and has been labelled with the EU "Protected Designation of Origin" seal since 2013. At the beginning, an animal was marketed for slaughter every two weeks. Consumers were very interested in the premium meat and confirmed Ralf Engelhardt from EDEKA Südwest Fleisch to market other traditional cattle breeds in markets in their regions of origin. Red Mountain cattle and Glan cattle were also successfully included in the program. Twelve retailers with 18 stores are currently involved. An average

of ten to twelve animals are marketed per week. An extra charge of 20 to 30 percent is achieved for the products of the traditional cattle breeds compared to conventional meat.

Consumer information as a success factor

Many of the older consumers still remember the old cattle breeds from their region. However, an important tool for successful marketing is providing customers with information directly at the meat counter. Specialist salespeople were trained to provide information about the special quality, regionality and contribution to the preservation of rare local cattle breeds. This is also indicated by displays, flyers and brand-like labelling of the meat specialties. Consumers also receive information about the possible uses of lesser-known beef cuts.

EDEKA Südwest Fleisch as coordinator of the value chain

The concept developed by EDEKA Südwest Fleisch is characterized by a clear distribution of tasks and communication structure. The EDEKA company supports the retailers with training of sales staff and customer information as well as with specialist advisors in the marketing of all beef cuts. In addition, the company takes on the role of a coordinator of the value chain from the farmers to the slaughterhouse or cutting plant to the markets. EDEKA Südwest Fleisch ensures quality and hygiene requirements and ensures compliance with the legal conditions for those involved. Communication about the amount of meat required takes place directly between retailers and farmers. For the owner-managed EDEKA markets, marketing the meat of the heritage breeds in their respective regions represents a unique selling point that sets them apart from other supermarkets.

Traditional breeds as an additional business pillar for agriculture

For the farmers involved, such as the Simon family, who run the Bainerhof in Waldböckelheim, Rhineland-Palatinate, the "Traditional Breeds Program" from EDEKA Südwest Fleisch offers an additional business pillar with its price surcharges. In addition to farming, the family keeps around 75 Glan cattle, including 35 suckler cows and 40 breeding and fattening cattle, which are also used for landscape maintenance. Due to the particular robustness and frugality of the heritage breeds, they can also graze in barren, sloping areas and counteract bush encroachment on the cultural landscape.



"The success of the project is largely due to the entrepreneurial courage and commitment of the retailers."

Ralf Engelhardt



Champagne Rye

A success story in the Upper Lusatian Heath and Pond Landscape



Field with champagne rye in Upper Lusatia



After Adolf Jäger brought champagne rye from France to northern Germany in 1850 and developed “Jaeger’s North German champagne rye”, the variety became one of the most common winter rye in the Margraviate of Brandenburg. Having been forgotten in the 1960s, the VERN association¹ brought the variety from the gene bank back to the field in 1994. Champagne rye is now listed on the “Red List of endangered native crops in Germany”. In the Upper Lusatian Heath and Pond Landscape biosphere region, farmers cultivated more than 250 hectares of the traditional rye variety in 2019. Five conventional agricultural businesses, a mill and 20 bakery businesses are involved in the successful regional value chain.

Champagne rye: ideal for cultivation in Upper Lusatia

Eva Lehmann, agricultural expert in the biosphere area administration, fondly remembers the lecture that Rudolf Vögel from VERN gave in Malschwitz in 2007. Practicing biodiversity with farmers, history and a few seeds of the grain were the deciding factors for their commitment. The old variety has proven to be particularly suitable for the dry, barren sandy soils of Upper Lusatia and still delivers stable yields even in drought. Due to its tall growth, champagne rye also has fewer leaf diseases. Many farmers therefore forego pesticides and a large proportion of mineral fertilizers. Farmer Steffen Ladusch, who now culti-

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¹ Verein zur Erhaltung und Rekultivierung von Nutzpflanzen in Brandenburg e.V. (Association for the Preservation and Recultivation of Crops in Brandenburg)

vates around 30 hectares, was one of the first farmers in 2008 to be convinced of the quality of the grain. There has been a real boom in cultivation since 2017, so that the supply of the grain continues to exceed demand.

From the niche into everyday life in the region

Eva Lehmann, who is the coordinating force of the champagne-rye value chain in Upper Lusatia, started a press and media campaign in 2016 together with Andreas Hultsch, who owns the bakery “Himmelsbäckerei”, and the brothers Johannes and Sebastian Unger and their mill “Rätze-Mühle”, which attracted widespread attention. The brothers had the idea of starting training courses for bakers and sellers on champagne rye in collaboration with the bakers’ guild of Bautzen. As a result, several smaller bakeries were added. Today, the mill “Rätze-Mühle” produces around 300 tons of champagne rye flour, five percent of its total, and compensates farmers for the lower yields. When sold, the price of the flour is around 40 percent higher than that of standard rye flour. The flour is no longer only processed in bakeries but is also available in local stores of the German supermarket chains Rewe and Edeka.

The breads: quality, good taste and long-lasting freshness

Local bakeries rely on champagne rye. The “Lausitzer Heidekasten”, a champagne rye bread from the bakery “Himmelsbäckerei”, has now achieved fame and contributes around 25 percent of the bakery’s bread sales. It is characterized by its particular digestibility, good taste and very long freshness. More and more customers are coming to the bakery in Neukirch because of the “Lausitzer Heidekasten”, which has increased total sales by around 10 percent. Andreas Hultsch is committed to maintaining added value in the region and contributing to ancient crop varieties with champagne rye. He also conveys this to his customers. In addition to the smaller family bakeries, the Fehrmann large bakery with its two branches in the biosphere area also specializes in bread made from champagne rye. It also markets the bread in its 15 other branches in Bautzen and as far away as Dresden, the capital of the German federal state of Saxony.

Old crop variety with good development prospects

Champagne rye is writing a success story in the Upper Lusatian Heath and Pond Landscape. In addition to the positive economic effects, the initiative helps to strengthen commitment to the local region and its natural diversity and to give positive impetus to the image. The development is not at its end and is being further advanced by the biosphere area administration together with the companies. On almost 200 hectares, farmers grow additional old grain varieties that are listed in the “Red List of endangered native crops in Germany”: Dr. Francks Grannenabwerfende Imperialgerste, Heines Goldthorpe, Berkners schlesische Wintergerste, Alter Pommerscher Dickkopf, Roter Sächsischer Landweizen. With the two old brewing barley varieties, Imperialgerste and Goldthorpe, the brewery “Frenzel-Bräu Braumanufaktur” in Bautzen, as a partner of the biosphere region, produces the regional special beer “Oberlausitzer Heidebräu”.



“Consumers have to want it. That’s why we need more advertising for our handcrafted products and the special quality from our region.”

Johannes Unger



Laufener Land Wheat

A regional German-Austrian cooperation network



Farmer Manfred Eisl in the field with Laufener Land Wheat



After generations of farm selection and passing on, Laufener land wheat, an ancient winter wheat variety, fell into oblivion and was rediscovered in the 1970s. Today it is considered the only preserved local variety in the area of the Alpine foothills around the German towns Laufen and Berchtesgaden and the adjacent Austrian town Salzburg. The ancient variety is now listed in the “Red List of endangered native crops in Germany” and in the project “Ark of Taste” of Slowfood Foundation. In 2019, around 30 organic farmers grew the variety on around 30 hectares in the German-Austrian border region. In addition, four smaller mills, 11 bakeries and three breweries are currently involved in the value network.

Start with obstacles

In 1996, Laufener land wheat aroused the interest of landscape ecologist Heinz Marschalek, who propagated the ancient wheat variety together with the Bavarian Academy for Nature Conservation and Landscape Management (ANL). In 2007, the ANL passed on 400 kilograms of the seeds to interested organic farmers in the region for cultivation. However, this old, new type of grain met with little interest in bakeries. The majority of the harvest went into animal feed and the “Laufener Land Wheat project” came to a standstill. Six years later it was brought back to life from two sides. In 2013, Salzburg nutritionist Margarita Kwich campaigned for Laufener land wheat. Their approach linked identity-forming factors and the question of nutritional benefits. At the same time, Marlene Berger-Stöckl developed collaborations between cultivation pioneers with organic bakers and new marketing initiatives such as “Bio-Flaschlbrot” as part of the “Öko-Modellregion Waginger See – Rupertiwinkel”, a program for organic farming.

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INTERREG: Impulses for cross-border cooperation

The German-Austrian INTERREG project on Laufener land wheat provided an important impetus in 2016. The previous cooperation work has been supported by other actors, such as Slow Food Germany and Austria, the Berchtesgadener Land solidarity community and Bio Austria. Important steps for cross-border networking and valuable specialist information on Laufener land wheat were added. A “cross-border network of Laufener Land Wheat” was agreed to preserve this natural and cultural heritage.

Laufener Land Wheat: For extensive sites and more biological diversity

During cultivation it became apparent that Laufener land wheat only delivers around half of the usual yields in organic farming, but that these were still relevant and stable on poorer soils and with less fertilization. The variety is also characterized by a particularly tall growth, which promotes the diversity of the arable flora and provides a lot of straw. While in 2013 there were around ten farmers who occasionally cultivated the old country wheat on small areas, in 2019 the variety was grown by around 30 organic farmers on around 30 hectares in the German-Austrian border region. In addition, four smaller mills, 11 bakeries and three breweries are currently involved in the value creation network.

Traditional breweries offer beer specialties made with Laufener Land Wheat

Today, Laufener land wheat breads are particularly successful in Salzburg, Austria. Bakeries there, such as organic baker Itzlinger, have joined forces under “BioBrot Salzburg” with the support of Bio Austria and carried out advertising campaigns. On the German side, for example at the Neumeier bakery, bread and baked goods made from Laufener land wheat have a sales share of around one percent. Despite this niche function, the concept of these breads brings attention to smaller businesses and sharpens their image in the sense of regionality and craftsmanship.

Traditional breweries offer beer specialties made with Laufener Landweizen

At the traditional Wieninger brewery in Teisendorf, the topics of regionality, sustainability and ecology are an important basis of the company philosophy. With its new brand “Hoamat Beer”, the brewery relies on local raw materials. So far, around 80 hectoliters of “Hoamat beer” have been brewed every year, which is in high demand in the region’s restaurants and in the beverage trade despite the significantly higher price. Wieninger purchases around 25 tons of Laufener land wheat from local farmers every year for “Hoamat Beer” and other quality beers. Austria’s largest private brewery “Stiegl” in Salzburg has also discovered Laufener land wheat and developed “Stiegl-Paracelsus Bio-Zwickel”. Stiegl promotes a natural, traditional beer specialty made from local raw materials and a noble type of ancient grain with a special taste.

Perspective: More regional coordination and cohesion

In order to develop the value network, those involved plan to improve the coordination of the Berchtesgadener Land biosphere region administration, Öko-Modellregion and Bio Austria and to strengthen communication around Laufener land wheat.



“Laufener land wheat offers farmers and food crafts an alternative with good prospects, and with its accompanying arable flora it enriches the biodiversity and recreational value of our region.”

Manfred Eisl



Swabian Squarehead Wheat

A bakery combines regionality, biodiversity and good taste



Field with Swabian Squarehead Wheat



Until 1950, numerous wheat landraces dominated agriculture in southern Germany. They have been almost completely replaced by advanced wheat varieties over the past 70 years. The Swabian bakery “Bäckerhaus Veit” pursues, together with Prof. Dr. Sneyd the Swabian Squarehead Wheat project. Today there is a functioning regional value creation partnership in which farmers with a cultivation area of seven hectares are involved. “Dickköpfe” wholemeal breads are sold in the bakery’s 54 branches, which contributes to the preservation of the traditional grain variety and around 600 jobs at the Veit bakery. Swabian Squarehead Wheat was added to the “Red List of endangered native crops in Germany” in 2011 and is listed in the project “Ark of Taste” of Slowfood Foundation.

A long road to “Dickköpfe”

Master baker Albert Veit opened the first small village bakery in Bempflingen at the foot of the Swabian Jura in 1927, and his son Richard Veit expanded the bakery in 1973. Today his daughter Cornelia Veit runs the medium-sized company as managing director with a focus on quality, sustainability and regional responsibility. In 2008, Prof. Sneyd, then a lecturer in plant breeding at Nürtingen University, met the Veits. It was about two handfuls of grains of Swabian Squarehead wheat and the possibilities that this offers for the bakery. The Veit family was open to new ideas that fit the company philosophy. This was followed by several years of propagation as well as cultivation and baking experiments. In 2010, wild boars devastated the field, and in 2014 and 2017 there

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were further crop failures due to weather. In 2012, the first quality wholemeal bread "Dickköpfe" with 63 percent of the wheat variety Swabian Squarehead wheat was offered in the branches.

Positive impulses for farmers

Martin Schnerring is one of the farmers involved who shares a connection to the landscape at the foot of the Swabian Jura and an openness to new developments with Prof. Sneyd and Susanne Erb-Weber, who is overseeing the project at Veit. With around four percent of his arable land, the cultivation of Swabian Squarehead wheat has a rather niche character for his business. Even if Veit compensates him in the long term and completely for the reduced yield of around 50 percent compared to conventional wheat. Schnerring appreciates the positive impact that this rare wheat variety has on the public. The diversity project also allows him to further develop his own ideas in a meaningful way in his daily work and to provide positive impulses for the two successors to the farm. In addition, Swabian Squarehead wheat can offer interesting prospects for more extensive cultivation with less fertilizer and in changing climate conditions. Because the traditional local variety also delivers yields on barren and drier soils.

Regional cooperation, regional identity and positive image building

The conservation work of the past few years is documented in the exhibition and on display areas in the open-air museum in Beuren. Particularly exemplary is the modern "experience center", where ancient, local crop varieties can be experienced with all senses. Through the network of Veit bakery-café and employees who provide background information to the "Dickköpfe", the open-air museum and the regional media, the cultural asset of Swabian Squarehead wheat has also reached the local population. It makes a contribution to regional identity in the Swabian Jura, in which the population actively participates. In addition, Veit maintains collaboration with other companies in the region: with several grain mills, the Swabian orchard paradise, an association that promotes orchards, and a beekeeping facility. The fruit for the apple pie grows on their own apple orchard, and plums, cherry juice and walnuts are sourced from the nearby Ermstal. This is also important for the bakery to perceive the special corporate philosophy and its implementation. This strengthens Veit in the close competition between branch bakeries in the region.

Perspective: New products with traditional varieties

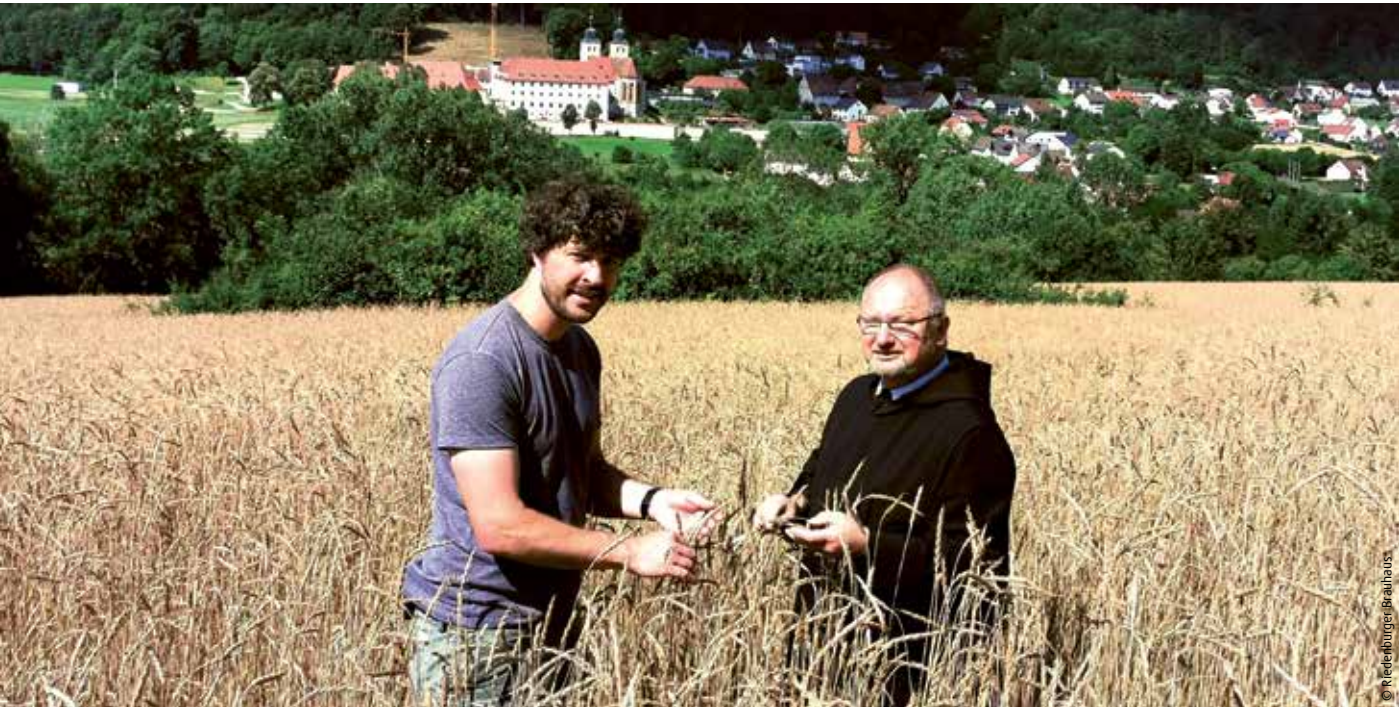
Further new products with Swabian Squarehead wheat are being tested at the bakery. For a campaign in autumn 2020, a variant of a local dish called "Dickkopf-Dinnete" with "Höri Bülle" was offered in the stores. The innovative master baker combined old Swabian bread with an old onion variety from Lake Constance: two passengers from the Slow Food Ark of Taste in one product. Veit's desire to innovate with old grain varieties continues. Around 20 other varieties that the bakery maintains together with Prof. Sneyd offer interesting perspectives. In 2020, 2000 kilograms of the 3000-year-old club wheat variety (Binkel) were harvested for the first time: After successful baking trials, breads made with Binkel wheat were available in the company's branches for the first time in autumn 2020.

"Bread made from ancient grain varieties, fruits from the swabian orchard paradise and the buzzing of insects in flowering meadows: preserving biological diversity, taste experiences and regional economic activity are important to us." Cornelia Veit



Riedenburger Emmer Beer

Cooperation and regional value creation in Altmühltal



In the grain field of the Plankstetten monastery



Emmer is one of the oldest cultivated grains and spread from the Middle East to Europe around 10.000 years ago. In Roman times, the grain was considered the “wheat of Rome”; in modern times it lost its importance. Today, emmer is gaining attention again when it comes to bread and beer. The brewery Riedenburger Brauhaus has been producing emmer beer since 2004 and is now deeply rooted in the organic beer market. In the Altmühltal, a rural area between Ingolstadt and Nuremberg, 15 farmers grow organic emmer on around 60 hectares. The naturally cloudy, unfiltered emmer beer represents the brewery’s high standards of compatibility with people and nature.

Benedictine tradition of the Plankstetten monastery

The Benedictine monks of the Plankstetten monastery in the Altmühltal traditionally cultivate old types of grain and brew a tasty spelt beer. In 1997, close contact with the Benedictines gave Michael Krieger the idea of trying something new: beer made from emmer grain. A few years previously, he had his brewery certified as an organic business, which led to difficulties in converting. His historic emmer beer opened up a valuable perspective for him: At the historic town festival in medieval Riedenburg in 2004, not only people were enthusiastic about the specialty, the media across Bavaria also became aware of the beer specialty. A one-off campaign with 1.000 crates of emmer beer turned into 5.000 hectolitres annually to this day.

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The brewery's highest-selling beer and trademark

With a share of 12 percent, the historic emmer beer has become the Riedenburger brewery's highest-selling product and trademark. Its price is around 10 percent higher than other organic beers and is marketed directly through organic grocery stores and online. Around 25 percent are now exported to Italy and the USA, where the background of the beer specialty is of particular interest. Thanks to the emmer grain, the beer has a particularly high content of protein and tannins, which contribute to its good digestibility and taste quality. In addition to emmer beer, the company owner and his master brewer have developed and established two other organic ancient grain beers: Einkorn Edelbier and 5-Korn Ur-Bier.

Trust and credibility in the regional value chain

Michael Krieger is closely connected to his partners in agriculture and processing as well as the region's municipalities and media. He is the driving force of this regional value chain with established beer products from emmer and Einkorn wheat and employment in the rural Altmühltal. The basis lies in the trusting cooperation with the Benedictine monastery in Plankstetten and the farmers who cultivate the areas. In addition, emmer is shelled as a husk grain by a local organic farmer. Regional production with short distances is particularly possible in the neighbouring Riedenburg malt factory, where malting takes place as an important component of beer production. The good cooperation and the quality of the product are also linked to the Christian views of the company owner Michael Krieger. In practice, he advocates for a high level of food compatibility for people and nature and has a high level of credibility as a person.

Farmers appreciate the more extensive cultivation of emmer

Emmer is one of the ancient grains that have so far received little breeding. When cultivated, the grain still delivers relevant yields even on poorer soils and is therefore ideal for extensive farming and less fertilization. Riedenburger compensates farmers for the lower yields of emmer grain and rewards them for particularly high quality as part of its own quality management system. There is great demand from farmers to participate in the more extensive cultivation of Riedenburg ancient grain beers. Michael Krieger hopes that the generational change will work in his brewery. And he continues to work to ensure that emmer grain is maintained in its existing quality so that the composition of the ingredients and thus the quality of his ancient grain beers are not negatively influenced by breeding.

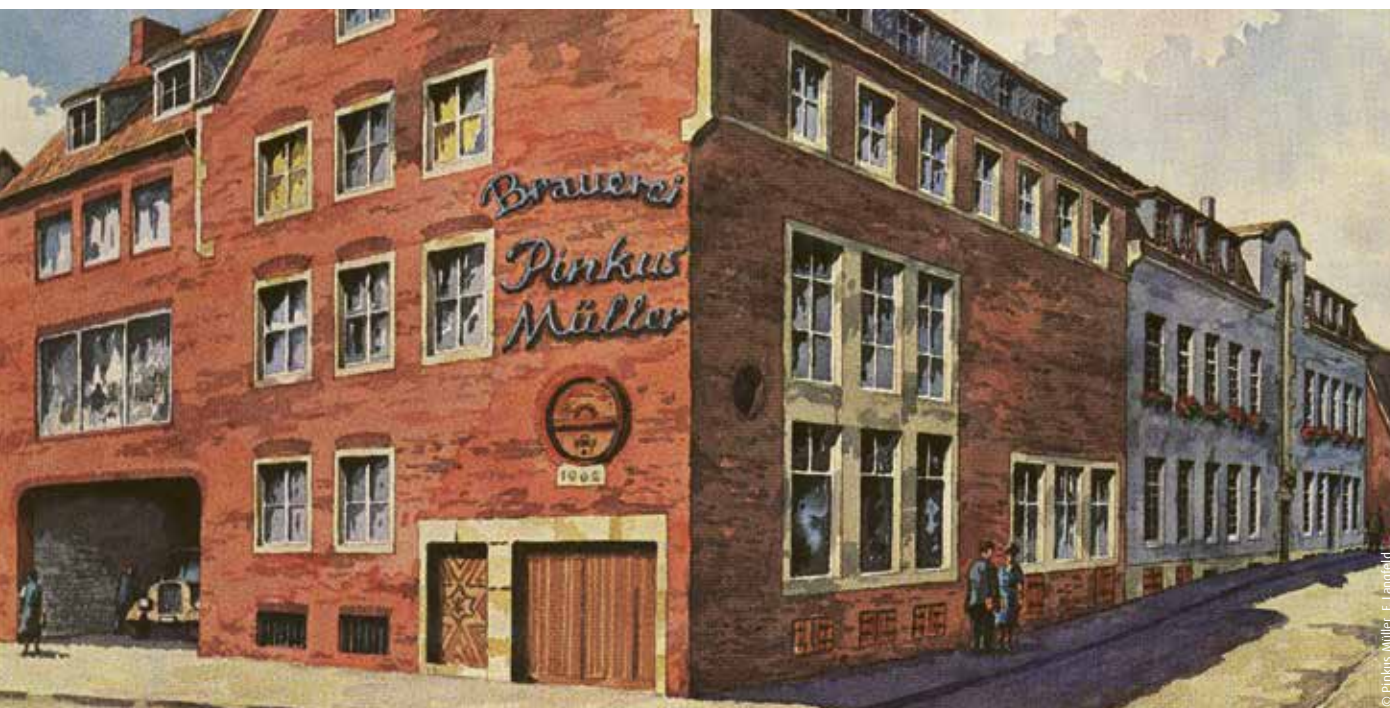
"With the historic emmer beer, we have a regionally produced organic special beer that also sells very well in Italy and the USA"

Michael Krieger



“Pinkus Classic” made with Imperial Barley

A seasonal beer specialty in Münster



Historic brewery of Pinkus Müller

The logo for 'Pinkus' is written in a bold, black, cursive script. It is centered within a white circular graphic that overlaps the orange background of the page. The word 'Pinkus' is written in a slightly slanted, dynamic style.

© Pinkus Müller, F. Langfeld

The “Pinkus Classic” beer from the traditional Westphalian brewery “Pinkus Müller” in Münster is brewed with an ancient imperial barley variety called „Dr. Francks Grannenabwerfende Imperialgerste”. It was used throughout Germany in the 19th century because of its good brewing properties. With the breeding of today’s barley varieties beginning around 1900, this local variety was forgotten and is now included in the “Red List of endangered native crops in Germany”. The organic brewery has been producing the summer seasonal beer since 2005. The value of “Pinkus Classic” for the brewery lies primarily in the additional attention and its contribution to product differentiation and image building.

Start with obstacles - development of a new recipe

The family business “Pinkus Müller” has existed since 1816 and, with its brewery, is very popular in the city of Münster. Master brewer Friedhelm Langfeld had just taken on his new duties in 2004 when he started talking to Ulrich Schulze, the expert on ancient grain varieties at the Chamber of Agriculture of North Rhine-Westphalia. Langfeld quickly became interested in trying something new with historic malting barley. In 2005 he started and developed his own recipe with 100 percent malt from imperial barley, which produced a very tasty, aromatic beer. However, after the first brews and six metric tons of the ancient barley, considerable difficulties arose in the brewing process: lautering required nine hours instead of the usual two hours. After several series

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of tests, a new recipe with a 25 percent proportion of the ancient barley variety proved to be easy to handle. The new process produced a beer with a fresh, slightly sour taste: "Pinkus Classic" was born.

Seasonal summer beer specialty with attention value

To this day, Langfeld brews 100 hectolitres of this beer specialty annually and markets it as a fresh, seasonal summer beer from April to September, while stocks last. "Pinkus Müller" has been on the market in Münster with the "Pinkus Classic" variety for around 15 years, where it has found a solid customer base in the catering and natural food trade. After the initial major media interest when it was introduced, the beer continues to generate interest today. It fits well with the organic brewery as a traditional regional size. In production, Langfeld uses around 450 kilograms of imperial barley or 350 kilograms of malt every year, which he obtains from Rhön Malz GmbH. The Hessian company is able to process the grain, which has properties that differ from the usual types of barley, even in smaller quantities. Ulrich Schulze provided important support in coordinating this value chain, especially with the farmers who produce the old malting barley variety.

Perspective: Good taste and storytelling

Master brewer Friedhelm Langfeld sees good perspectives for "Pinkus Classic" with the „Dr. Francks Grannenabwerfende Imperialgerste" in the niche of seasonal beers. The beer has a distinctive, good taste and the historic malting barley is associated with a special story that is very well received by the media and customers in Münster.

"The beer made with old malting barley fits very well with the traditional image of our family brewery with strong regional roots and with the ecological lifestyle in a city with lots of students."

Friedhelm Langfeld



Van Nahmens “Rote Sternrenette”

Orchard fruit juice with history from the Lower Rhine region



„Rote Sternrenette“ apples with the typical star-shaped dots on the peel



The traditional Lower Rhine company “van Nahmen” processes scattered fruit into single-variety fruit juices. The ancient apple variety “Rote Sternrenette” used to be considered a classic “Christmas apple” and is known on the Lower Rhine as a traditional post-war Christmas decoration. Today the old apple variety is listed on the “Red List of endangered native crops in Germany”. The juice has become a flagship product for van Nahmen’s range. The company works closely with 330 contract farmers and the German nature conservation association NABU on site.

From apple syrup to pure fruit juice

Over 100 years have passed since the “van Nahmen” apple syrup factory was founded in Hamminkeln on the Lower Rhine. A lot has changed since then, apple syrup production became juice production - but the connection to orchards has remained. Since the beginning of the 1990s, the fruit pressing company has been committed to the preservation and care of the orchards in the region with their ecologically valuable habitats and many heirloom fruit varieties. In order to offer the owners of orchards an economic incentive to maintain and expand their holdings, “van Nahmen” developed an attractive surcharge concept with the local NABU group. The farmers sell their orchard apples at attractive prices to the fruit pressing company, which uses them to produce orchard fruit juices. In 2007, Peter van Nahmen put another business idea into practice: single-variety fruit juices as high-quality drinks with a special enjoyment, similar to wine. Today, the pure juices are successfully established on the market and increase the added value that can be achieved with the orchard.

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"Rote Sternrenette" – Christmas apple with a story

At a fruit variety show in 2007, Peter van Nahmen came across the ancient apple variety "Rote Sternrenette", which was particularly in demand there. The variety was first described in 1830 and is particularly widespread and well-known in the Lower Rhine. The dark red colored apple used to be considered a classic "Christmas apple" and is associated by many Lower Rhine residents with personal stories, emotions and home. The "Rote Sternrenette" therefore creates a particular identity for the Lower Rhine. The heirloom variety has proven itself in orchard cultivation because it is resistant to diseases and frost. Nevertheless, the ancient apple variety is now threatened with extinction.

Typical regional showcase product for the juice range

Van Nahmen recognized the potential of the "Rote Sternrenette" as a regional product with history and developed the juice into a showcase product for his range of single-origin juices from old and newer varieties. The local company successfully markets the products through regional food retailers and organic shops as well as national delicatessen stores. Above all, health-conscious consumers who are willing to spend a little more money on high-quality products buy the juices. The high demand also ensures that the "Rote Sternrenette" and some of the other heirloom fruit varieties are preserved and replanted.

Cooperation for value creation and biological diversity

330 contract farmers now deliver orchard fruits to van Nahmen. The meadows are managed sustainably by the producers and offer many ecologically valuable habitats. The surcharge concept and an obvious appreciation of the farmers' commitment by van Nahmen contribute to the good cooperation. During the company's planting campaigns, which take place twice a year, farmers can purchase the ancient orchard apple varieties directly. In addition, van Nahmen also expanded the local cooperation with NABU and founded the Lower Rhine-Westphalian Orchard Association. The association offers fruit tree pruning courses and advises farmers on new or replanting orchard fruit trees. Together, van Nahmen, the NABU group and the orchard association make a valuable contribution to the preservation of the "Rote Sternrenette" and many other traditional orchard varieties.



"The Rote Sternrenette is not just an apple variety – but also all the emotions and stories that are associated with it."

Dr. Peter van Nahmen



Regional juice brand “hesselberger”

A Franconian region benefits from its orchards and ancient varieties



Extensively used orchard in Franconia



Orchards with their large fruit varieties have a long tradition in Franconia and many other rural regions. However, since the 1960s, the number of landscape-defining trees and ecologically valuable habitats has decreased by almost 70 percent. To date, around 150 different apple varieties have been described in the region around the Hesselberg, the highest elevation in Middle Franconia. Estimates suggest that there are more than 350 varieties, including many old and endangered Red List varieties, such as the Blauapfel or the Champagnerrenette. The company “allfra Regionalmarkt Franken GmbH”, with its 34 shareholders from the Hesselberg region, has set up a regional value-added network with 1.500 producers and around 170 sales points and restaurateurs for orchard drinks, which contributes to making this cultural asset more popular again to appreciate and preserve value.

Orchards: preservation through regional value creation

In 2001, Norbert Metz from the Landscape Conservation Association of Middle Franconia followed his conviction that the fruit from the orchards could be used to create more added value in the region, so that the diverse habitats and ancient varieties could be preserved in the long term. He developed a concept for the regional beverage brand “hesselberger”, which was tested five years later as part of the LEADER project “Fränkische Moststrasse”. He was particularly concerned with creating awareness among the people in the region of the opportunities that traditional orchard cultivation offers for the structurally

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weak region. Many stakeholders were convinced, including farmers, mayors, restaurateurs, owners of orchards and representatives of fruit and horticultural associations and public institutions.

An orchard company "from the region for the region"

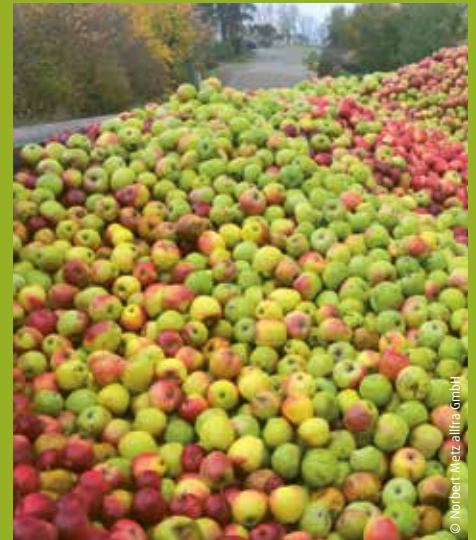
The start for a commercial juice initiative as part of the "Fränkische Moststraße" was convincing: After the LEADER funding expired, "allfra" (abbreviated for "alles aus Franken" what means "everything from Franconia") Regionalmarkt Franken GmbH was founded in 2006 with 34 partners from the region. The concept envisages a decentralized purchase of the scattered fruit. This currently takes place at more than eleven purchasing points within a radius of 30 kilometres around the Hesselberg. This approach ensures the freshly harvested quality of the products, as the fruit is further processed in the partner cider factory on the day of delivery. In addition to purchasing fruit, "allfra" takes over all marketing, from product and recipe development to advertising design.

Advantages for producers, ancient fruit varieties and natural diversity

Farmers and owners of orchards around the Hesselberg benefit from this concept. In addition to short journeys, short waiting times and trustworthy contact at the purchasing points, you receive reliable and good pay that exceeds the regular market prices. "allfra" is taking on a pioneering role: the purchase price for orchards has now risen across the entire region. Currently, up to 1.500 orchard managers are taking part in the regional initiative and together they are helping to ensure that around 400 metric tons of fruits are processed each year. "Allfra" continues to work closely with the Landscape Conservation Association of Middle Franconia, which provides farmers with technical and financial support in the care and replanting of the orchards. The combination of economic efficiency and care of the orchards already clearly contributes to the preservation of natural diversity and ancient fruit varieties.

"hesselberger" - brand for Franconian orchards fruit beverages

The Franconian regional market company has developed the "hesselberger" brand for its orchard fruit products, which indicates the regional origin of the products and helps many consumers to identify with the products. The range of products today goes far beyond the original juices and spritzers and also includes cider, seccos, lemonades and fruit brandies. Around half of the drinks are marketed through wholesalers, who resell the products to restaurants and food retailers in Franconia. Around 170 sales points and restaurateurs contribute to the added value in the region. In addition, the partner cider factory sells a large part of the juice production directly or stores the products proactively in order to compensate for fluctuations in the harvest quantity due to unfavorable weather conditions or alternation. Looking ahead, Norbert Metz, now managing director of allfra GmbH, can imagine expanding the sales region for "hesselberger" products to include Nuremberg and other larger cities in the area with greater purchasing power. The shareholders' driving force is to build long-term economic prospects for the owners of the orchards in the region.



"Good things happen in the countryside, but the really good profits come from the city." Norbert Metz



Middle Rhine cherries

A brand for variety diversity in the UNESCO World Heritage region



© Zweckverband Welterbe Oberes Mittelrheintal / Katja S. Verhoeven

Middle Rhine cherries in Filsen



In the UNESCO World Heritage region of the Upper Middle Rhine Valley, cherry cultivation, which characterizes the landscape, and the associated diversity of cherry varieties are promoted as cultural and natural assets. For this purpose, a value chain was built that better networks producers and processors and promotes marketing by involving municipalities, restaurants and the tourism industry.

Diversity of cherry varieties as a topic at the 2011 Federal Garden Show

The 2011 Federal Garden Show in Koblenz provided a decisive impetus for the project. The diversity of cherry varieties on the Middle Rhine and the sale of dried cherries were very well received by visitors. Since then, the identity-creating products made from cherry varieties typical of the region have aroused the interest of visitors to the UNESCO World Heritage region. Tourists from all over the world come to the Upper Middle Rhine Valley for the cherry blossom season. At this time, visitors can enjoy cherry blossom festivals and culinary hikes. Regional traditions and stories, which some ancient varieties such as the “Perle von Filsen”, the “Bopparder Krächer” or the “Geisepitter” have in their name, offer an additional appeal.

A regional value creation concept with a brand

As part of the land consolidation process in Filsen, it became clear that the region has a diversity of cherry varieties that is unique in Germany. The Rural Area Service Center with Frank Böwingloh then developed a concept for preserving this diversity of varieties together with Nico Melchior from the Upper Middle Rhine Valley World Heritage Association. The implementation of the concept

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works: the association takes over the marketing and coordinates the cooperation between the producing and processing companies. The producers benefit from being able to sell their cherries at a higher price than usual on the market. For quality assurance and marketing purposes, the "Mittelrhein-Kirschen" brand was developed, which is awarded to regional cherry products. The LEADER project "Innovative Marketing for the Mittelrhein-Kirsche brand" was helpful. Sales are handled by "Rhein-Touristik Tal der Loreley e. V.", which acts as a wholesaler, bundles the products and resells them to tourist outlets and restaurants.

New products from ancient cherry varieties create attention and perspectives

Marketing is currently particularly focused on processed cherry products such as cherry jam, juice, chocolate, mustard, salami and wine, which can be offered all year round. The amount of cherries processed fluctuates annually and currently amounts to three to ten metric tons. Due to tourism, there is also increasing demand for seasonal fresh cherries of regional varieties.

There are currently ten producers with eleven products involved in the Mittelrhein-Kirschen brand. When processed and marketed, the cherry products form an additional element of the product range that contributes to differentiation and attracts attention among customers. The entrepreneurs mainly act out of idealism and connection to their own region. The producers see economic opportunities in the cultivation of ancient cherry varieties. The association explicitly supports the development of new products. Courses are offered in collaboration with the Rural Area Service Centre to advise farmers in pruning the cherry trees.

Preserve the biological diversity of cherries through use

Through use, many traditional cherry varieties have acquired an obvious value that supports their preservation. The new variety garden in Filsen and many public planting campaigns also contribute to this. In addition, ecologically valuable areas such as orchards are now being used extensively and preserved. The biological diversity of cherries offers valuable perspectives to the Upper Middle Rhine Valley and the companies located there. The variety of flavors and variety-specific flowering and ripening times create further opportunities for product innovations. Tolerances or resistance to pests or new environmental influences can have a positive effect on cultivation and could become even more important in the future.



"Tourism in the Upper Middle Rhine Valley is increasing the demand for the old cherry varieties, which are developing into a real identification and recognition feature for our region." Nico Melchior



OSTMOST

From the orchard to the club scene



Apples in an OSTMOST orchard



Streuobstwiesen Manufaktur GmbH is a Berlin start-up that markets juice, spritzers and cider made from ancient fruit varieties from orchards in clubs, trendy bars and organic shops under the OSTMOST brand. The young company, together with the association “Verein Äpfel und Konsorten”, promotes sustainable orchard management and links the preservation of traditional fruit varieties with economic success. OSTMOST pays farmers higher prices for their orchards in order to make this form of cultivation profitable again. Thanks to the ecological and social added value as well as a modern design, OSTMOST stands out from other brands and particularly appeals to a young, urban audience.

Orchards – biodiversity and economic use

Orchards are among the most species-rich biotopes in Europe. Up to 5.000 animal and plant species can find a home in an orchard. In the past 70 years, however, there have been efforts to abolish this form of cultivation because it requires a lot of time and effort and was often difficult to make economically viable. Many orchards are now in poor condition and are only sparsely maintained. This is where OSTMOST comes in with the guiding principle of “protection through use”.

Symbiosis between nature conservation and marketing

First, the “Verein Äpfel und Konsorten” association was founded in 2012 with the aim of preserving Brandenburg’s orchards and ancient apple varieties, such as the “General von Hammerstein” or the “Geheimrat Dr. Oldenburg” and to develop into a regional competence centre for those interested in the area. But it quickly became clear that volunteer work alone was not enough. This is

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how the idea of a modern brand was born, which uses the knowledge from the club's work to bring new attention to the topic of orchards and create new marketing opportunities. Today, the association and the company Streuobstwiesen Manufaktur GmbH work closely together when it comes to securing orchards and building new ones.

Orchard fruit spritzers as an ecological trendy drink

Although the juice spritzers form more of a niche as a modern trendy drink, entering the highly competitive Berlin market was not easy. Through their own initiative and persuasion, the team at Streuobstwiesen Manufaktur GmbH managed to establish OSTMOST on the market. Their commitment to the good cause benefited them. The approach of preserving orchards and their old fruit varieties with delicious spritzers is well received. The OSTMOST spritzers are now marketed in around 400 restaurants and 100 organic supermarkets, even beyond the borders of Berlin. OSTMOST bottles stand out thanks to their innovative design, which was developed by two Hamburg street artists. With new flavors and organic certification, OSTMOST specifically appeals to young people in Berlin's gastronomy and club scene: the customers of tomorrow who value sustainability. Due to the company's good network in the Berlin-Brandenburg region, the start-up now also works with tourism and catering companies and offers OSTMOST at large events and in canteens, e.g. in the Berlin ministries. Companies and associations are also promoting the concept at a political level. In 2017, this led to the 16 environment ministers jointly inaugurating a ministerial variety garden in one of the association's orchards at the end of the environment ministers' conference.

Change in the system for preserving old varieties and orchards

For the young company, both the ecological and social added value of its actions are particularly important. The aim is to pay farmers well above market levels for their fruit. This makes the management of orchards attractive again. "We want people to once again see orchard as a term that stands for the highest quality," says Lukas Küttner. To achieve this, OSTMOST works in two areas: by producing trendy drinks, the topic of orchard fruit can be experienced by consumers and by paying fair prices for the fruit, producers also benefit. At the same time, OSTMOST sends a strong signal to the market and other beverage manufacturers. This is how the system change around orchards should be successful. In the future, the OSTMOST team hopes that the importance of sustainable products and the willingness to buy fair products with ecological added value will continue to increase.



"Orchards are a sustainable generational project."

Lukas Küttner



Lippische Palme

Value creation in agriculture and preserving regional cultural assets



Hand harvesting of the Lippische Palme



The “Lippische Palme” has been grown as kale in self-sufficient gardens in Lippe region for centuries. The preservation of this ancient variety of kale is at great risk, as it owes its continued existence today to a few cabbage lovers in their private gardens, almost all of whom belong to the older generation. The vegetable variety has been listed in the Slowfood “Ark of Taste”. The organic farmer Jan Fleischfresser grows five hectares of this traditional vegetable variety in Kalletal in Lippe region and markets it as canned food in organic markets in neighbouring city of Bielefeld and in northern Germany via the organic market chain “denree”.

From the grandfather’s garden to the grandson’s field

Kale is part of the cultural identity of Lippe region, including the diverse recipes and traditional gatherings to eat. In 2012 the LWL open-air museum Detmold in the Lippe region launched a call to find out more about the old varieties of this regional cultural asset and to preserve them on their land. Due to its taste quality, the LWL experts selected the variety from the traditional self-sufficiency garden of organic farmer Jan Fleischfresser’s grandfather for registration as an amateur variety with the Federal Plant Variety Office. The idea of the open-air museum’s landscape ecologist, Agnes Sternschulte, was to make it possible for more lovers to enjoy the “Lippische Palme” again and to provide information about it. The farmer dared to take the step into marketing: The reports in the regional and national media about the winter kale season were varied and the success was enormous. The organic farmer then decided in 2018 to grow the ancient kale variety on two hectares of his fields.

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From the museum shop to the organic market central warehouse

“Lippische Palme” is characterized by a particularly fine quality. Because of its height, it can only be harvested by hand. Jan Fleischfresser is helped by his good relationship with his harvest helpers, who have been supporting him with organic rhubarb for years. A decisive stroke of luck in the development for him was that the neighbouring company “Lipperland Konserven”, with many years of experience in vegetable processing, was willing to process smaller quantities of the traditional kale variety in organic quality. The big advantage of glass canning is its durability and the resulting flexibility in marketing the around 23.000 jars that come together per hectare. When it comes to sales, Jan Fleischfresser relies primarily on urban organic markets, where cost-effective prices are achieved for high-quality products and special quality. The company supplies the markets itself with its own delivery van. Because of the continued success, the farmer expanded the cultivation area to five hectares in 2020. This offers the opportunity to sell some of its products in the future through the central warehouse of the northern German organic market chain “denree” in Hamburg and to reduce its own logistics.

Robust in cultivation - mild and digestible when consumed

The “Lippische Palme” is not only beautiful to look at due to its tall growth and appearance similar to a palm tree, but it also has a particularly mild taste compared to classic kale varieties. The variety also has a red-brown colour due to a high content of red plant pigments (anthocyanins), which makes it particularly healthy. In cultivation, the “Lippische Palme” has proven to be particularly resistant to drought, which is due to its genetic diversity. Jan Fleischfresser propagates the seeds of the plants himself, in close cooperation with the open-air museum, and ensures a careful selection. This maintains heterogeneity in the sense of a population variety.

Promoting regional roots and regional identity

What is important to the farmer from Lippe region are the regional roots of his local organic vegetable specialty and the contribution to preserving regional culture and identity. The jars with “Lippische Palme” can not only be found in the tourism shop in the city of Detmold, but have also been available since autumn 2020 through the regional brand “Lippe Quality”, which supplies the markets in the region with goods from regional producers. The “Lippische Palme” is a regional specialty in the Lippe kale region. In the future, Jan Fleischfresser is toying with a kale festival in Lippe region, which would strengthen the importance of the cultural heritage and regional identity and make it enjoyable for younger and older people.



“For our agricultural business, the old regional vegetable variety offers a good opportunity to position ourselves well for the coming years and at the same time to do something for the region and biological diversity.”

Jan Fleischfresser

“Diversity tastes good!”

New delight variety with old vegetables around
Freiburg and Lake Constance



Old variety of “tomato peppers” on an organic farm near Freiburg



Rinklin Naturkost, a leading natural food wholesaler in southern Germany, and ProSpecieRara, a non-profit variety preservation network originating in Switzerland, set themselves the goal in 2017 of promoting the cultivation and marketing of traditional vegetable varieties that are in the “Red List of endangered native crops”. To this end, by 2020 they had built a network of producers, grocery stores and catering establishments in the region around Freiburg and developed a marketing strategy. In 2020, the project gained another partner in the form of the natural food wholesaler BODAN on Lake Constance.

Cooperation between the natural food trade and the variety conservation network

Rinklin Naturkost and ProSpecieRara share the enthusiasm for ancient vegetables and brought their know-how together in 2017 to launch the “Diversity tastes good” project. One of the leading southern German natural food wholesalers with marketing expertise and the non-profit network for the preservation of cultural-historical and genetic diversity of plants and animals, with many years of experience in Switzerland, complement each other ideally. Antje Virkus (Rinklin Naturkost) and Ann-Kathrin Söllner (ProSpecieRara) set themselves the goal of developing a network with vegetable production, transport logistics and marketing for at least 15 types of vegetables in the Freiburg region. The German Federal Agency for Agriculture and Food (BLE) promotes this approach as part of the Federal Organic Farming Programme (BÖLN).

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Agricultural production with expertise and conviction

The decisive factors for selecting the varieties were the visual difference compared to conventional varieties, a special taste, good availability of seeds and existing experience in cultivation. To date, nine organic farms around Freiburg, in the Palatinate and on Lake Constance are involved in growing the traditional varieties. The participating natural food retailer Rinklin supports the predominantly small organic farms in this expansion of their product range through purchase guarantees. Since the cultivation of old varieties often requires more effort than the cultivation of conventional vegetables, the agricultural producers are characterized by craftsmanship and a healthy dose of idealism.

Taste experiences in Freiburg organic shops

Today, varieties such as the radish "Eiszapfen", the beefsteak tomato "Ochsenherz" or the lettuce "Wunder von Stuttgart" can be purchased in selected organic shops in and around Freiburg. Some of the participating production companies also market the heirloom vegetables directly through their farm shops or regional markets. In order to make consumers aware of the "new old varieties" and to inform them about what makes the ancient types of vegetables special and what ecological benefits are associated with them, the "Diversity tastes good" project and its partners offer cooking courses and workshops. At the same time, information flyers and recipe postcards are available that provide background information. The tastings that take place at the start of the season have become an integral part of the marketing of many organic shops.

Creative dishes in gastronomy

The new taste and visual diversity of traditional vegetables offers catering establishments special opportunities for creative dishes. Six restaurants and cafés are currently taking part in "Diversity tastes good". Training courses on the processing and presentation of vegetables, which are offered in collaboration with the organic farming association Bioland, are welcome. Guests can get to know the ancient varieties and their special taste through menu promotions and lunch specials. The regional gastronomy is in the process of recognizing and appreciating the potential of the traditional varieties. A positive development for both the heirloom varieties and the producers.



"We want to give consumers the opportunity to experience and taste the old variety in a new way!"

Antje Virkus



Old vegetable varieties in Berlin-Brandenburg

From the seed bank to the sale



Old vegetables varieties for sale in the farm shop by Domäne Dahlem



The organic farm at Domäne Dahlem¹ in Berlin has been producing old varieties of vegetables since 2007 and markets them in the farm shop and in restaurants. The Domäne Dahlem cooperates with the Humboldt University of Berlin (HU) and the Eberswalde University for Sustainable Development (HNEE). The company is part of the VERN association². Since 2012, the partners have been bringing old vegetable varieties, which are often listed on the “Red List of Endangered Native Crops”, from seed banks into good breeding condition, growing them and marketing them, mostly directly to consumers.

Score points and biodiversity conservation with new varieties

VERN e.V. started the ZenPGR³ project in 2017 with its network of 20 vegetable production, seed cultivation and direct marketing companies, together with the HU Berlin and the HNE Eberswalde, with the aim of bringing old vegetable varieties back into use. The Domäne Dahlem with the manager of its plant nurse-

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- ¹ Stiftung Domäne Dahlem – Landgut und Museum (Domain Dahlem Foundation – estate and museum)
- ² Verein zur Erhaltung und Rekultivierung von Nutzpflanzen in Brandenburg e.V. (Association for the Preservation and Recultivation of Crops in Brandenburg)
- ³ Züchterische Erschließung und Nutzbarmachung pflanzengenetischer Ressourcen durch on-farm / in-situ Erhaltung und Positionierung von Produkten im Bio-Lebensmitteleinzelhandel (Breeding development and utilization of plant genetic resources through on-farm / in-situ preservation and positioning of products in organic food retail)

ry, Markus Heiermann, is also involved in this project with cultivation trials and trial marketing. It's about old varieties of radishes, bush beans, beetroot, carrots and sugar peas. Other companies in the network, which have already done valuable preparatory work in conservation breeding and propagation, supply the seeds, so that a real value creation network has emerged in the Berlin-Brandenburg region. Berlin offers good prospects for sales. With its office and quarterly meetings, VERN association acts as a coordination point.

Ancient varieties of radishes and bush beans – top sellers in the farm shop

In 2020, Sieglinde Hohmann discovered in the Domäne Dahlem farm shop that the old radish varieties ‚Scarlett Turnip‘, ‚Rundes Gelbes‘ and ‚Purple Plum‘ were particularly well received by customers. Consumer interest has also increased overall sales of radishes to more than double. People were particularly interested in the appearance and taste. The new variety of radishes will be included in the farm shop's regular cultivation and sales program in the future. The two old bush bean varieties „Berliner Markthallen“ and „Alte Weiße Cottbusser“ have already achieved this step. These bush bean varieties have an excellent taste and hardly fall behind standard varieties in terms of cultivation and yield. This new variety of old vegetables, which repeatedly attracts interest from the public media, fits perfectly into the concept of Domäne Dahlem with its operational diversity and supports the sale of regular and regional organic vegetables.

ZenPGR: Science and practice in close connection

In terms of sales, the Domäne Dahlem farm shop benefits from its participation in the ZenPGR project. Brief information about the old varieties is available to consumers and a button marks them with „Variety Treasures – Special & Precious“. The University HNE Eberswalde developed these materials and evaluates consumer behaviour. As part of the project, the HU-Berlin records suitable historical varieties in data and gene banks, which enables systematic breeding „recultivation“ as well as the preservation and use of old vegetable varieties. The medium-sized Brussels sprout varieties ‚Rosamunde‘ and ‚Zwerg Special‘, the savoy cabbage varieties ‚Grüner von Marke‘ and ‚Ulmer‘ as well as the endive variety ‚Königin des Winters‘ were recommended for further breeding and propagation. All varieties can be found on the „Red List of Endangered Domestic Crops“.

Score points and biodiversity conservation with new varieties of vegetables

As part of ZenPGR, the trial marketing of old vegetables in a pop-up store in Berlin's organic food retailer is planned for 2021. In principle, good prospects are seen for classic direct marketing from the farm, as well as for other local marketing approaches that offer direct contacts and information opportunities for consumers. These include ‚Marktschwärmerei‘ or ‚Solawi‘ (community-supported agriculture). The Domäne Dahlem Foundation will continue to focus on the continuous integration of old vegetable varieties into regular cultivation and direct marketing via the farm shop. Markus Heiermann appreciates trying out new things and scoring points with offers that go beyond the usual standards. In addition, he is also concerned with maintaining the added value of the colleagues in the region who produce the seeds and preserving the diversity of heirloom vegetable varieties.

“With traditional vegetable varieties, the availability of seeds is often the bottleneck. The committed seed farmers with their conservation breeding in our network are a real stroke of luck,”

Alexandra Becker



Red Riesling

Ancient Riesling specialty from the Hessian Bergstrasse and in the Rheingau region



Red Riesling grapes



The Red Riesling was cultivated until the 19th century and was then considered lost for a long time. Often referred to as the “Ur-Riesling”, it is listed on the “Red List of Endangered Native Crops”. Today, around 40 hectares of this old grape variety are being cultivated again, of which 12 hectares are grown by the “Bergsträsser Winzer eG” and 0.5 hectares by the winery “Corvers-Kauter” in the Rheingau region. The grape variety is an important identity feature not only for the cooperative but also for the Hessian Bergstrasse region. For Corvers-Kauter it is also about preserving the Riesling tradition and variety as well as a valuable unique selling aspect for its business.

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Hessian Bergstrasse: More than a niche

In 1991, a student dream came true for Reinhard Antes: the first Red Riesling vines were available at the Institute for grapevine breeding at Geisenheim University. These and other old grape varieties gave him the opportunity to pursue new paths in viticulture and vine cultivation. Antes planted the first Red Riesling vines in his home region “Hessische Bergstraße” in 1996. A lot of persuasion was required and a lot of media attention also helped: The 180 winegrowers of Bergsträsser Winzer eG now grow around 12 hectares of the old grape variety on around five percent of their cultivation area. This puts the Red Riesling in fourth place among their white grape varieties.

Rheingau: wine-growing tradition and diversity of varieties

Even if the strong media attention has waned somewhat, Matthias Corvers still associates the Red Riesling with great value for his company and the Rheingau region. The availability of the “Ur-Riesling” demonstrates the “Riesling compe-

tence" and distinguishes his company and the wine region from other Riesling areas. In addition, he is concerned with preserving the wine-growing tradition and the associated diversity of varieties. The tradition of the Corvers and Kauter families can be traced back 250 years. Today the winery cultivates 31 hectares and produces organic wines of the highest quality, including half a hectare of red Riesling. In 2003, while looking for a new quality grape variety, Matthias Corvers came across the Red Riesling in contact with the Geisenheim University of Applied Sciences. In 2006 he was the first winemaker in the Rheingau to sell this specialty.

"The Bergstrasse - in the land of the Red Riesling"

The Red Riesling is about to become an image-building specialty in tourism and regional development for the Hessian Bergstrasse. This is a good opportunity for Germany's smallest wine-growing region. Tourism uses the old grape variety to draw attention to scenic attractions in the region. Hiking and culinary offerings such as the special hiking trail "Wine & Stone" offer visitors attractive experiences, as does a diverse vineyard with 120 grape varieties and prominent wine ambassadors. The activities are summarized under the umbrella of the regional tourism association's campaign "The Bergstrasse - in the Land of the Red Riesling", which was launched in 2017.

Historical viticulture - an opportunity for tourism and regional development

The Rheingau region has also recognized the opportunities that historic viticulture with its ancient grape varieties offer tourism and regional development in the region. In the "Historical Viticulture in the Rheingau" association, 15 winegrowers and 25 organizations from viticulture, science, politics and administration have come together. After a first successful congress in 2016, in cooperation with Geisenheim University, the association is active in the LEADER action group Rheingau and is launching a wine-historical internet platform for tourism.

"Climate Riesling" - interesting perspective for viticulture

In addition to the high quality of taste, the Red Riesling offers winemakers other interesting properties, which is why the grape variety is also referred to as "climate Riesling". The heirloom grape variety is more robust and can be harvested around a week later than white Riesling due to less rot. This later harvest has positive effects on the aroma formation and the taste expression. The acid is broken down more strongly due to the warming of dark berries in hot summer temperatures and the extract values are significantly higher than with white Riesling.



"The results of the collaboration between winemakers, tourism and regional development on Red Riesling show what potential the 'Climate Riesling' has" Reinhard Antes.



Old Franconian Set

Diversity of grape varieties and vibrant regional cultural heritage



Diverse grapes from the Old Franconian Set



While single-variety vines were planted and pressed in the wine-growing regions from the 19th century onwards, the old, historical mixed method in Franconia has been preserved to this day. The cultivation method is based on up to 40 old Franconian varieties, some of which are included in the “Red List of Endangered Native Crops”. The “Old Franconian Set” has been approved as a separate variety in Bavaria since 2018. Today, around 50 winegrowers produce this wine on around ten hectares of land using partially ungrafted vines that are up to 285 years old, or with new plantings. The wines with their special history represent regional authenticity as well as quality and diversity and enable the winemakers to stand out from the mass.

Historic vineyards overlooked by land consolidation

Many years ago, Josef Engelhart from the Bavarian State Institute for Viticulture and Horticulture (LWG), near Würzburg, had his eye on the old, overgrown vineyards that had been overlooked by the land consolidations of the past decades. In 1999, as part of a project, there was finally the opportunity to have 50 of these areas mapped. A more detailed examination of the grape varieties in 2007 revealed old Franconian local varieties such as Adelfränkisch, Heunisch, Vogelfränkisch, Hartblau, Grünfränkisch and Blauer Kölner as well as various Silvaner varieties. They were grown there in the historical mixed form, the “Frentsch” or “Fränkischer Satz” (“Franconian Set”), as it was common from the Middle Ages to the 19th century.

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Convince owners – connect interested parties

In the beginning, it was not always easy for Josef Engelhart to convince the landowners of the value and opportunities associated with these varietal treasures. Some of which date from the time when the first Nuremberg-Fürth railway line was inaugurated. Today, a total of 70 winegrowers, tour guides and wine lovers exchange ideas at the regular meetings of the “Old Franconian Set Interest Group” and work closely with “Slow-Food Germany”, which has included this regional cultural heritage in its project “Ark of Taste”.

Additional attention for passionate winemakers

For smaller wineries, like that of Otmar Zang and Nico Scholtens, the wines of the “Old Franconian Set” are important flagships, giving them a valuable unique selling aspect that brings them into conversation and attracts attention. The preservation of these old vineyards of the Franconian ancestors is a personal concern for these passionate winemakers. Otmar Zang saved what is probably the oldest vineyard in Franconia, which was planted in the Rimbach in 1835, from being cleared in 1989. The 0.2 hectare vines were carefully reactivated and now produce around 2.000 bottles of “Old Franconian Set” per year. The Zang family essentially markets the wine from the farm, like many winemakers in the region.

“Old Franconian Set” wines with good prices and strong demand

Nico Scholtens came to Franconia in 1970 as a jazz-rock musician and learned to appreciate viticulture through his wife Salome. The cultural worker was immediately enthusiastic about the “Old Franconian Set” and he and his son Noel went in search of historic vineyards. Since 2010 he has acquired four plots of land measuring around 0.3 hectares on the Zeller Schlossberg, which were planted in 1910. He revived the old vines, replanted old grape varieties such as white Rauschling, yellow Kleinberger or Weißer Lagler and restored old vineyard walls. With the “Old Franconian Set”, winemakers today achieve very good prices and the vintages are always in high demand.

Regional specialty with a high image and identity factor

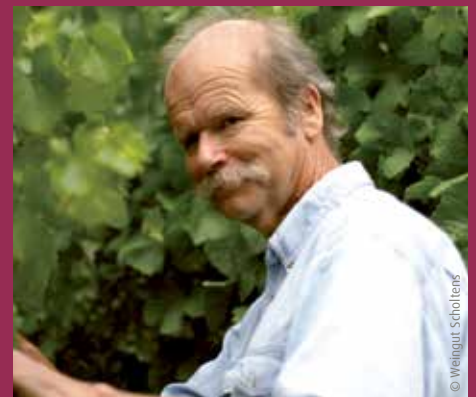
The “Old Franconian Set” has the potential to become a regional specialty of Franconia with a high image and identity factor. The old variety is part of the museum vineyard in Iphofen, Franconia, and is visited with great interest by visitors with tour guides. More and more young winegrowers are replanting the “Old Franconian Set” with vines of the old varieties. They associate the local varieties with something “of their own,” “local” with identity and authenticity and, of course, good market opportunities, including among younger wine drinkers.

Preservation of biological diversity with interesting properties

The “Old Franconian Set” offers even more advantages: Initial testing of the ancient grape varieties showed that the Hartblau variety is resistant to the spotted wing drosophila, a fruit fly and common vineyard pest, and Adelfränkisch is particularly resistant to drought. There still seem to be some interesting surprises lurking here for grape variety breeding. In addition, the preservation of the old, ungrafted vines, which have been excellently adapted to the conditions of the region over centuries, ensures further valuable expressions of biological diversity.



“With the “Old Franconian Set” we have a new regional specialty in Franconia that combines history, wine and tourism in an exemplary manner,” Josef Engelhart

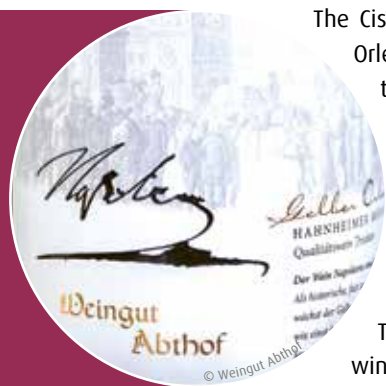


The Yellow Orléans in Rheinhessen region

In the footsteps of the Cistercian monks



Vineyard with Yellow Orléans vines



The Cistercian monks of the Eberbach monastery brought the Yellow Orléans grape variety with them from France in the 12th century. In the 19th century it was replaced by Riesling. The last known Orléans wine of the 20th century was made in Rüdesheim in 1921. In the 1990s, Geisenheim University built up a small stock of this variety from a few overgrown sticks. Today the grape variety is included in the “Red List of endangered native crops in Germany”. The family business Wine yard Abthof in Rheinhessen region grows Yellow Orléans on around half a hectare. The quality wine made from it is an important figurehead of the winery, which arouses interest and contributes to image formation.

Business development with an old grape variety

The Cistercians of the Walheimer Hof near Hahnheim, an agricultural outskirts of the Eberbach monastery, grew Yellow Orléans centuries ago in the region of the abbot’s farm, as is recorded in the history of the small Rheinhessen wine town of Hahnheim. This seemed fascinating to Martin Koch as a winemaker with a long family tradition. From his point of view, it was a very good opportunity to build on the regional history of the winery and thus develop the business. In 2011, he planted the first vines of this old grape variety in the areas that the Cistercians had already cultivated, as the boundary stones from this time also indicate.

Yellow Orléans as a driving force and image factor

The high quality and fine taste of Orléans wine have been handed down historically and are also confirmed in the Abthof wines. The winery reduces the yield of the vines in order to increase the quality and longevity of the wines,

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with which the family achieves good added value. Marketing takes place via specialist retailers and restaurants as well as directly from the farm and via the Internet. Various media report more frequently on the historical wine of the Cistercian monks. Wine lovers come to the Abthof because they have heard about it and want to try it. This also benefits the family when selling other wines. As a further innovation for the company, Martin Koch plans to produce sparkling wine from Yellow Orléans.

Advantages in terms of aroma and climate change through later harvesting

The Yellow Orléans has interesting advantages in cultivation. Because the wine is harvested about two weeks later than other grape varieties, the increasing temperature differences between day and night can contribute to the development of the fine, elegant aroma. In addition, the Orléans grapes have fairly strong skins, which protect them from extreme temperatures in summer and make them less susceptible to fungi in autumn. These characteristics give the Yellow Orléans advantages in adapting to current climatic changes.

Interesting potentials for regional development

The interesting history of wine in the region around Hahnheim is linked to attractive cultural assets, a diverse landscape and special enjoyment and experience opportunities. The first hiking routes on the topic include some of these regional highlights. There is still a lot to discover for visitors.

“By cultivating the Yellow Orléans and its history in our region, we have found an excellent opportunity for development and image building for our family business.”

Martin Koch



Success factors and recommendations

1st success factor

INNOVATIVE ENTREPRENEURS AND FARMERS WITH COMMITMENT AND ENTHUSIASM

- Willingness to innovate on the part of the participating entrepreneurs and farmers.
- Economic and ideal motivation (region and homeland, tradition and history, creation, nature and biological diversity).
- Commitment and enthusiasm of the participants

Why are the lighthouse projects presented in this magazine so successful, on what factors is the progress based?

As part of the AgroBioNet project, the nova-Institute and the Foundation Rhineland Cultural Landscape examined the 20 projects to answer this question. The following seven success factors are a result of this analysis.

Based on these success factors, recommendations were developed on how companies, farms and rural regions that are interested in creating value with old crop varieties and breeds can advance their development. Here we differentiate between more general, conceptual “recommendations” and specific recommendations for action “recommended actions”.

The idea is to give politics and public administration as well as rural regions with their companies and agricultural businesses additional impetus so that the opportunities can be used that arise from the preservation and use of ancient crop varieties and heritage breeds for operational innovation and differentiation. Also, regional identity and image building can be connected with the preservation and promotion of biological diversity.



Recommendations

- Information and mobilization, especially of young entrepreneurs, young farmers and rural women with idealistic motivation and regional roots, as well as addressing regional multipliers.

Recommended actions

- Recording, networking and publicizing committed entrepreneurs and farmers with their products and product ideas as part of a competition with awards and recognition.
- Open networking, exchange of information and experiences between entrepreneurs and farmers who work professionally with ancient varieties and heritage breeds, within the framework of events and workshops regionally, nationally and nationwide.
- Information and communication about young entrepreneur meetings and entrepreneurial days in rural regions as well as farmers’ days and rural women’s days (e.g. the chambers of crafts, agriculture, gastronomy, commerce and industry, district administrators, agricultural offices, LEADER, direct marketer associations, tourism associations, nature parks, biosphere reserves, regional marketers).
- Information and contact via producer networks and producer associations (meat, bread, beer, fruit, vegetables, wine).
- Information and contact with future graduates at agricultural universities/training centres who then put their ideas into practice.
- Inclusion of the topic “Old Varieties – old Breeds” and its funding opportunities in business, innovation and nature conservation advice from the chambers of crafts, agriculture, gastronomy, commerce and industry, the agricultural offices and producer associations.

2

Recommendations

- Establishment and support of regional competence centres for seeds, planting material or animal breeds and competence in handling.
- Identification and networking of actors and locations with ancient varieties and heritage breeds in the city and in the countryside (companies, initiatives, monastery gardens and botanical gardens, open-air and local museums, etc.).
- Financial support and non-material incentives for the preservation and care of ancient varieties and heritage breeds as well as the networking of the actors (companies, initiatives, monastery gardens and botanical gardens, open-air and local museums, etc.).
- Collection and dissemination of information on the handling of ancient varieties and heritage breeds through collection from stakeholders and their networking.
- Further development of processes for the preservation, propagation and production of ancient varieties and heritage breeds to ensure a good link between ecology and economy.

Recommended actions

- Promote conservation, cultivation and care within the framework of public programs such as ELER/GAK, federal state programs, BÖLN etc¹.
- Promote courses and workshops on the management of ancient varieties and heritage breeds within public programs.
- Inclusion of specific aspects in the handling of ancient varieties and heritage breeds in curricula of relevant vocational training (agriculture, horticulture, viticulture, etc.).
- Simplification of procedures in cultivation and variety law for wine through “conservation varieties” in viticulture and fruit and vegetable production; experimental cultivation in viticulture for new varieties and not for old historical varieties.

3

Recommendations

- Appreciation of craft skills and traditions in the processing of ancient varieties and heritage breeds as well as information about the opportunities for food trade companies.
- Collection of know-how in the artisanal processing of ancient varieties and heritage breeds and dissemination of this knowledge in crafts and gastronomy.
- Recording of local processing structures for smaller quantities and smaller businesses (e.g. meat) in rural regions and better networking with local producers.

¹ Membership in a breeding association is required to receive funding for animals in Germany. This is intended to ensure that keeping and breeding takes place in an orderly manner.

2nd success factor

AVAILABILITY OF SEEDS, SEEDLINGS OR ANIMAL BREEDS AND COMPETENCE IN HANDLING

- Availability of seeds, seedlings or animal breeds of good breeding quality and sufficient quantities.
- Competence in handling and managing this central resource (breeding, propagation, care and cutting, husbandry, technology)

3rd success factor

PROCESSING STRUCTURES AND SKILLS FOR SMALLER QUANTITIES

- Craftsmanship skills in processing, especially meat, bread and beer.
- Availability of suitable processing structures for smaller quantities and short distances, especially at slaughterhouses², mills, dairies, malt-houses and fruit and vegetables.

4th success factor

ATTENTION AND IDENTIFICATION VALUE AS WELL AS QUALITY OF THE PRODUCTS

- Additional added value in the form of history, regionality, ecology or health and the connection of these aspects with enjoyment and biological diversity³.
- Special taste and breeding quality as well as their safeguarding and control (particularly in value chains and producer groups).
- Availability of a marketable product with the required shelf life, transportability and logistics.

- Realization of economically viable processing structures for smaller quantities and smaller businesses (meat, beer, bread, milk, fruit and vegetables).

Recommended actions

- Recording and supporting regional and national courses, workshops and webinars on the processing of ancient varieties and heritage breeds as part of public programs.
- Inclusion of specific processing aspects of ancient varieties and heritage breeds in curricula of relevant vocational training in crafts (butchery, bakery, brewing, etc.) and gastronomy.
- Clarification of options for action with veterinary offices in the implementation of the EU food hygiene regulation in the sense of local processing structures for smaller quantities and smaller local operations.
- Support (planning, investment) and advice to smaller regional companies for processing structures (meat, beer, bread, milk, fruit and vegetables) for smaller quantities on site as part of public programs.



Recommendations

- Closer connection of the aspect of preserving ancient varieties and heritage breeds (biological diversity) with the currently more attention-grabbing aspects of history, regionality, ecology and climate protection as well as taste and health.
- Dissemination of skills in production and processing, which can contribute significantly to the quality of many products (see 2 and 3).
- Clear characterization of the ancient variety or heritage breed of products.
- Securing and coordinating quality standards for products made from ancient varieties and heritage breeds, especially if production is linked to regional value chains or producer groups (see also 7.).

² Legal requirements such as the EU Regulation for animal welfare at slaughter and the EU Food Hygiene Regulation place high demands on animal protection and food safety. All slaughterhouses, including those on farms, must have EU approval. Exceptions include home slaughter and when only cutting and processing takes place, as well as local, minor marketing in accordance with the regulation. The Association of Farmers with Artisan Meat Processing (vlhf) was founded in 2010 as a result of a BÖL project. It provides advice through seminars and further training measures, in addition to the craft guilds that are aimed at artisan butchereries.

³ The attention for the products among consumers and the media and the identification with the local products are currently mostly based on history, regionality, health or ecology. They are central factors for perception and success in marketing and communication.

Recommended actions

Development of cooperation between producers and organizations such as open-air museums, nature parks, botanical gardens, zoos, arch farms, nature conservation associations, seed conservation initiatives, slow food.

Recording and supporting regional and national courses and workshops on the production and processing of ancient varieties and heritage breeds as part of public programs (see 2 and 3).

Stimulating the coordination of quality standards, including in breeding, especially for regional value chains or producer groups (see 7.).

Inclusion of the topic of ancient varieties, heritage breeds in curricula of relevant vocational training (agriculture, horticulture, viticulture, food crafts) (see 2., 3.).

5

Recommendations

- Improving the perception of the topic of “ancient varieties and heritage breeds” to increase demand and interest in gastronomy and food retail.
- Reducing the economic entry threshold for companies to start with products from ancient varieties and heritage breeds through support and advice.
- Improving contacts between producers, restaurants and retailers.
- Strengthening the direct marketing of products from ancient varieties and heritage breeds⁴.

Recommended actions

- Contact events on the topic of “ancient varieties – heritage breeds” at the national and regional level with producers, restaurants and retailers.
- Support and advice for companies at national and regional level:
 - a) Innovation and diversification with ancient varieties and heritage breeds;
 - b) Keeping heritage breeds of livestock and growing ancient varieties of crops (e.g. husbandry and cultivation premiums);
 - c) Direct marketing of products from ancient varieties and heritage breeds, including approaches such as “Marktschwärmerei” or community-supported agriculture (e.g. websites and social media, information materials, stands).
- Support for conservation breeding operations with the fees for compulsory membership in breeding associations.
- Integration of the topic “ancient varieties and heritage breeds” in competitions and awards as well as in campaigns that concern the topics of rural tourism, enjoyment and local recreation.

⁴ Direct marketing offers particularly good opportunities for direct communication with consumers, which is a great advantage for information-intensive products made from ancient varieties and heritage breeds. In addition, suitable target groups are reached particularly well here.

5th success factor

ECONOMIC AND BUSINESS BENEFITS OF THE PRODUCTS

- Compensation for the additional effort through higher product prices: establishment of products in the premium segment, regional or seasonal specialties.
- Successful market access via direct marketing, gastronomy or food retail, with which suitable target groups and target regions are reached.
- Business benefit through unique position, product differentiation and awareness.

6th success factor

COMMUNICATION WITH MEDIA AND CONSUMERS

- Fast and continuous success in the public media with regard to products and the topic of “ancient varieties and heritage breeds” as a whole.
- Meet increased communication needs among consumers with regard to ancient varieties and herita-



Recommendations

- Develop press and media contacts at local, regional and national levels to increase the presence of the topic of “ancient varieties and heritage breeds”.
- Use of attention-grabbing added value aspects and storytelling with regard to regionality, tradition and history, health and ecology as well as the connection with enjoyment and biological diversity.
- Competence development and training of people in sales to producers and retailers.
- Development of specific product brands in regional value chains or producer groups or participation in more comprehensive regional brands.

Recommended actions

- Annual press and media events on the topic of “ancient varieties – heritage breeds” at national or regional level with the participation of TV editorial teams.
- Communication of the topic in food blogs, on relevant consumer portals and realization of an active online presence (website, social media: Instagram, Twitter, Facebook). Conducting seminars for food bloggers and television chefs.
- Communication in cooperation with organizations such as open-air museums, nature parks, biosphere areas, slow food, organic farming demonstration farms and other agricultural businesses, trading companies, food councils, organic cities, regional value companies, botanical gardens, zoos.
- Development and promotion of regional or mobile “delight academies” as “living arks of good taste” as part of public programs.
- Funding for the training of salespeople and the development of training and information materials.
- Promoting participation in trade fairs, community stands, local events with tradition as well as overarching regional brands, also in cooperation with partners such as chambers of commerce, LEADER, direct marketer associations, slow food associations, tourism associations, community-supported agriculture, nature parks, biosphere areas.
- Integration of “ancient varieties and heritage breeds” into criteria for quality awards.

7

Recommendations

- Efficient coordination of regional value chains or producer communities of products from ancient varieties and heritage breeds, especially with regard to quality assurance, logistics and joint product marketing (see also 4).
- Development and promotion of cooperation with regional areas such as tourism, nature conservation and regional development as well as strong local actors (politics, administration, media) to create synergies such as regional specialties, tourist offers, regional image building, grazing in nature conservation.
- Greater public presence of old domestic livestock breeds and crop varieties as an element of the population's identification with their rural region and as part of the image of a region in the public perception.

Recommended actions

- Start-up financing for the coordinators of regional value chains or producer groups in connection with products from ancient varieties or heritage breeds and their quality assurance within the framework of public programs (see 4).
- Locating a coordination at an existing regional office (external) (e.g. LEADER coordination, eco-model region, biosphere area administration, nature park administration) or a participating company (internal) contributes to acceptance among partners in the region.
- Promote the training and skills development of relevant coordinators within public programs.
- Participation of representatives of companies or value chains with ancient varieties or heritage breeds in committees and programs of regional synergy areas such as tourism, nature conservation, regional development or in "regional value creation centers".
- Further development of the possibilities and promotion of the use of old domestic livestock breeds in landscape management and for grazing nature conservation areas in rural regions.

7th success factor

COORDINATION AND NETWORKING IN THE REGION

- Efficient coordination of value chains or producer groups in the region with regard to quality, logistics and marketing.
- Networking with important regional synergy areas (tourism, nature conservation, regional development) and strong local actors (politics, administration, media).
- Participation of other public authorities: chambers, guilds, universities, biosphere areas, nature parks, open-air museums, eco-model regions.

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As a concession to the readability of the texts, we have partly refrained from using male and female language forms at the same time. All personal names apply equally to all genders in the spirit of equal treatment.

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