„Involving the food chain in Organic Breeding“
- examples of best practice

FAIR-BREEDING®

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Initial situation: lack of interest in seeds

Majority opinion of market stakeholders (also in Organic!): Seeds are matter of farmers!

- last 50 years development of very productive, high performance agriculture, also in context of organic / biodynamic agriculture.

- permanently increasing economic pressure leads to intensive use of hybrids, modern resistances, high input varieties for high input production systems.
Initial situation: lack of interest in seeds

► the price: increasing deficit of food quality, huge loss of biodiversity in our agricultural systems, increasing use of biotechnology in conventional breeding.

► increasing dependency of the organic sector on conventional seed companies and their varieties, developed under and for conventional conditions.

Seeds are matter of farmers? Is that true?
the actors

- Naturata international gemeinsam handeln e.V.
- Kultursaat e.V.
  – association for biodynamic vegetable breeding
the history

- 2003: discussion by Demeter to “cell fusion” and “CMS (cytoplasmatic male sterility)
- 2003: workshop at Naturata Luxemburg
- 2005: Demeter bans CMS hybrids for biodynamic agriculture
realisation of the problem

► leaving the problem at farmers level leads to loss of whole groups of important crops – or to loss of trueness.

► seeds and breeding issues are not only matter of farmers! The choice of varieties is intensively influenced by all members of the market value added chain.

► retailers, processors and wholesalers have to take the responsibility by financing alternative breeding concepts.
Fair Breeding partners spend a certain percentage (0.3%) of the whole turnover of fresh products to breeding projects. Thus a single product is not overloaded.

Fair Breeding partners define a special need / target (e.g. cauliflower). Breeding partners define the practical implementation.

partnership driven agreement of a common will and a common intention.
idea for solution

- support is granted for a certain timeline (10 years, with prolongation) to ensure long term breeding projects.
- no private property rights and exclusivity for marketing on developed varieties by Fair Breeding partners.
- communication to consumers to let them participate.
history

► 2007: Naturata International starts Fair Breeding together with Kultursaat e.V.

► 2011: IFOAM international: discussion to ban varieties from Cell Fusion / CMS

► 2013: scandal in Germany: CMS – material (brokkoli, cauliflower, chicories) detected in organic / biodynamic food
2016/17: Demeter bans varieties from “NBT – new genetic engineering”

2017: IFOAM international “Position Paper on breeding techniques”

2018: broad discussion to promote and speed up organic breeding within the whole organic sector - searching for appropriate methods of support.
story of

FAIR-BREEDING®
Bio-dynamische Pflanzenzüchtung als Teil assoziativen Wirtschaftens

2007 → 2017 ca. 180,000 Euro!
potential

- to recognize and to take responsibility for seed and breeding affairs by every market value added partners.

- in consequence to create own activities together with partners: setting up concrete objective targets for breeding projects with binding character, but without dependency.

- to keep the results derived from those projects within common goods instead of private ownership.
potential

- after successful projects: marketing of really and truly biodynamic / organic products: „from the very beginning of breeding via farm to fork“.

- traceability and engagement lead to consciousness and safety.

- appropriate information: inclusion of consumer‘s expectation and needs , participation to create solutions – responsibility of consumers.
does not solve all problems and needs of alternative breeding, e.g.:

- general breeding basic research
- implementation and sustaining of breeding stations
- education in breeding affairs
- pre-breeding as precondition for concrete breeding projects
- setting up and keeping of genetic pools
- niche market concepts and crops
but is a very modern, really sustainable and future oriented answer to

- all monopolized, biotechnology dominated, conventional breeding business of global corporations like Monsanto, Bayer, Syngenta ...

- private owned, shareholder value driven, patent oriented breeding business models

- paralysis of the organic sector facing the huge problem of dependency from conventional concepts and economy.

... is active and concrete!
➢ spends motivation and enthusiasm

➢ is enabling and empowering
- connects visions and initiatives
- is active assoziative partnership
Thank you for your attention!

Gebhard Rossmanith