

New: The Biodynamics Research Collection (BDRC) - free and open access on ZENODO

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The Biodynamics Research Collection (BDRC) is a free and open access collection of biodynamic farming research. The BDRC carries forward, into the digital realm, an impetus that Dr Rudolf Steiner launched at Koberwitz in 1924.

When he presented his Agriculture Course at Koberwitz, Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925) stressed the need for research (1924a). Steiner stated that what he provided at Koberwitz were “hints” - and that these hints should be put to the test (1924b).

Rudolf Steiner founded the Experimental Circle of Anthroposophic Farmers and Gardeners during the Koberwitz course. Its task was to put his hints to the test, to establish what works, and to publish the results (Paull, 2011a). Steiner’s opinion was that farmers would be convinced by seeing results - not by preaching or dogma or mystical mumbo-jumbo.



Image 1. Logo of the Biodynamics Research Collection (BDRC).

The mission of the Experimental Circle was to reach the point: ‘Do this because it works, and here is the evidence’. During the Course, sixty attendees at

Koberwitz joined the Experimental Circle. In the two decades that followed the Agriculture Course, more than one thousand members of the Anthroposophy Society joined the Experimental Circle.

Rudolf Steiner proposed that 'the farm is an organism' as a foundational precept for his proposed agriculture. This farming was to be differentiated from the chemical farming that was then proliferating.

The First World War (1914-1918) has been described as the "chemist's war" (Freemantle, 2015). It was war on an industrial scale facilitated by the industrial scale production of synthetic chemical explosives and synthetic chemical poison gases. Once the war was over, the technology and production facilities of chemical warfare were promptly repurposed for chemical agriculture. It was this thrust of chemistry into agriculture that Rudolf Steiner was railing against in 1924.

Steiner advocated biological practices and solutions to the challenges of agriculture while eschewing the alternative of synthetic chemicals. His differentiated agriculture remained unnamed in his lifetime.

Ehrenfried Pfeiffer (1899-1961) published his 1938 book 'Bio-Dynamic Farming and Gardening'. It was a fulfilment of Rudolf Steiner's injunction to test and publish the results of experiments testing the hints of Koberwitz (Pfeiffer, 1938). Pfeiffer was not at the Koberwitz course (Paull, 2020). Nevertheless he oversaw and facilitated the morphing of Anthroposophic farming to 'biodynamic farming' (Paull, 2011b).

Lilly Kolisko (1893-1976) published the results of her decades of research in her 1946 book 'Agriculture of Tomorrow' (Kolisko & Kolisko, 1946). Kolisko was at Steiner's Koberwitz course (Paull, 2020). A decade later, during the rise of the Nazis, she fled Germany and settled in England. She worked independently of Dornach (and independently of Ehrenfried Pfeiffer). She rejected 'biodynamic' as a descriptor of Steiner's agriculture (Kolisko & Kolisko, 1946).

Other than the milestone BD books by Pfeiffer and Kolisko, the published research output of the Experimental Circle was sparse. This is despite that its members exceeded 1,000 by 1938, the membership was distributed across the world, and that Rudolf Steiner's set its *raison d'être* as 'experiment and publish'.

If you believe that the early BD research output was not 'sparse' (perhaps because you have a cache of early BD research), you are invited to scan any early BD research and submit it to the BDRC - in any language- it would be preferable to apply OCR (optical character recognition) on your scan, prior to uploading, so that the file is searchable.

By now there has been almost a century of biodynamics research. From biodynamics enthusiasts, I hear too frequently that 'xyz' research should be done - seemingly without reference to, or knowledge of, the century of prior research - and often appears to be driven more by enthusiasm than by the identification of a gap in the body of prior research.

Why BDRC?

The Biodynamics Research Collection (BDRC) (zenodo.org/communities/biodynamics) fills a need for aggregating biodynamic agriculture research in one place.

All papers are free to download. No registration is required to browse or search or download from the BDRC. As researchers publish new papers they can be made available via ZENODO and BDRC.

Readers with published biodynamics research are encouraged to share that research and upload papers to the BDRC at <http://zenodo.org/communities/biodynamics>.

What is ZENODO?

ZENODO is a free open access repository of all disciplines of research (zenodo.org). It is a project of the European Commission and CERN (Conseil Européen pour la Recherche Nucléaire), in Geneva, Switzerland (EUI, 2021). CERN is a leading European research organisation. It was at CERN that Tim Berners-Lee invented the world wide web and gifted it free to the world (1999).

ZENODO (suggested pronunciation: zen-o-doh) is named after Zenodotus, the first Director of the Great Library of Alexandria (Egypt) (from 284 BC). There is no advertising associated with ZENODO.

Visit BDRC

The research on the Biodynamics Research Collection (BDRC) is free to read and download, no registration is required, the papers and book chapters are all open access. You can search them, read them, print them, distribute them,

publish them, even incorporate them into your aggregation or book of research (for all CCA 4.0 licensed files). Please remember to retain intact, and associated with the text, the author name/s and the original publishing journal data.

Contribute to BDRC

If you have BD research papers, chapters, or data sets, please add them to the Biodynamics Research Collection (BDRC).

To upload research, you need to register at Zenodo; it is free to register. If you upload using this link: <<http://zenodo.org/communities/biodynamics>>, then your paper will be automatically submitted to the BRDC (which is a curated collection).

Alternatively, if you upload at the ZENODO main page <<http://zenodo.org>> (instead of the recommended link above), please select the 'Community' as the 'Biodynamics Research Collection' - in this way your uploaded paper will be aggregated with other biodynamics papers in the BDRC.

An uploaded file is assigned its own unique DOI (digital object identifier) number and the file cannot be changed after upload. (If the paper already has a DOI known to you, submit that in the DOI field).

Please remember to complete the fields: author, title, journal, publication date, and preferably references. All these fields can be edited, if necessary, after saving and uploading (but not the uploaded file). Research submitted to the BDRC may be your own or by others - if by others, please check that it is an open access paper (or that it is out of copyright).

Readers with biodynamics research are encouraged to upload papers to the BDRC and to share the research at <<http://zenodo.org/communities/biodynamics>>. If you need assistance, email the author <j.paull@utas.edu.au>.

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