

LIVESEED – workshop Biofach 2019

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

FAIR-BREEDING®

Gebhard Rossmannith,
CEO Bingenheimer Saatgut AG



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.**

idea for solution

- **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**

course of events underline the project

- ▶ **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



2008



2011



2014

2007 → 2017 ca. 180.000 Euro!



2017

bingenheimer
saatgut

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!

FAIR-BREEDING®

Bio-dynamische Pflanzenzüchtung als Teil assoziativen Wirtschaftens

- spends motivation and enthusiasm
- is enabling and empowering



- connects visions and initiatives
- is active assoziative partnership





Thank you for your attention!

Gebhard Rossmannith