



Sektion für Landwirtschaft
Section for Agriculture
Section d'Agriculture
Seccion de Agricultura

International Professional Group Herbs and medicinal plants

NEWSLETTER 5

December 2019

Dear members and friends of the Professional Group Herbs and medicinal plants,

Pioneering project on the website

A major concern of the Group is the networking of the many different medicinal plant and herb companies worldwide. In order to make this possible, we have started, in cooperation with the Section, to build up an international platform for biodynamic medicinal plant and herb companies, on their website. Here you now have the opportunity to present your company with a focus on specific working topics or research projects. Through this open source tool, getting to know one another and exchanging ideas can take place, and experiences and results can be shared internationally.

Please note: The texts will be published in the language in which they are submitted. The publication of these portraits is possible with the help of a freely chosen usage fee. The whole thing is a pioneering project of the Group.

The first companies are now online. **In order for the networking to take place, we would be pleased if many take part.** The form to fill out can be found at:

www.sektion-landwirtschaft.org/en/thematic-areas/herb-and-medicinal-plants

Events during the Agriculture Conference 2020

On the initiative of the Professional Group Herbs and medicinal plants, a **three-day workshop** on the subject of "Herb-growing between beauty and utility" will be held with Ola Aukrust and Christina Spieß. In this interactive workshop, the topic of the Conference will be referred to on one hand, and on the other hand the relationship between humans and plants will play an important role. Ola Aukrust will give an insight into the cultivation of herbs on his farm in Norway, while Christina Spieß will deal with the subject from an ethnological perspective. Further information can be found on the Section's website: www.sektion-landwirtschaft.org

In addition, a **two-day Professional Group meeting** will take place. We will again dedicate ourselves to the mission statement "What is a biodynamic medicinal plant?". The aim is to develop basic criteria that can serve as a basis for the certification of biodynamic medicinal plant cultivation. In addition, there should be room for an exchange of experiences, initiatives and future projects.

The meeting will take place on Thursday, 6th February, from 15.15 to 16.30, and on Friday, 7th February, from 15.15 to 18.15 in the Glashaus. It is open for all interested!

Company portrait: Biodynamic herbs from Krebsbachhof (D)

Following the report by our Norwegian Demeter herb grower Ola Aukrust in our last newsletter, excerpts from a report by Bettina Billmann on the Krebsbachhof in Lohra-Seelbach near Marburg are now to follow. The complete version can be found in the report about the summer excursion 2019 at www.netzwerk-kraeuter.de : "As they founded their Demeter farm in 1987, Peter Heuner and his colleagues decided to cultivate herbs, next to grassland and cereals, due to the stony soils and dry climate conditions. Of the now 106 hectares of arable land and grassland, the area for medicinal and aromatic herbs has levelled off to around 8 hectares, and the same amount of land is used for seed production for Bingenheimer Saatgut AG. Due to the special requirements of these crops, the herbs can only be partially integrated into the crop rotation of the rest of the farm.

The range of medicinal and aromatic herbs currently includes calendula, arnica, tarragon, St. John's wort, yarrow, nettle, cornflower, kidney vetch and chamomile. For seed multiplication, buckwheat, phacelia, chives, savory, cornflower, calendula, arnica and crimson clover are cultivated alternately with St. John's wort, rocket, chervil and chamomile, among others, as the customer does not need seed from all crops every year. The farm's own arnica variety was taken over from the Botanical Garden in Marburg a good 30 years ago and over the years adapted to the location as best as possible through own selection and multiplication.

The herbs are sold primarily to companies which are active in the tea or pharmaceutical sector, as the production quantities are too small for the natural cosmetics sector".

In July 2019, Peter Heuner and his family handed over the business to their successor Karl Meßing, who had been working for the company for five years.

Further information: www.krebsbachhof.de



The self-developed flower harvesting machine removes the calendula blossoms cleanly from the crop. (Photo: Krebsbachhof)

Outlook: The Group will again be joining the next summer excursion of Hortus Officinarum and Netzwerk Kräuter BW. On May 23 and 24, 2020, this will take us to DHU in Karlsruhe, the largest manufacturer of homeopathic remedies in Germany. All further information at: www.netzwerk-kraeuter.de or www.hortus-officinarum.ch

Suggestions, wishes, ideas or contributions for the next newsletter are welcome! Please contact Michaela Spaar: info@odilienzeit.ch

We wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy Herb Year 2020.

Michaela Spaar (coordinator) with Ola Aukrust, Bettina Billmann, Henrik Hoeren and Michael Straub