



Annual theme 2024/25

The earth as a living being

At the Agricultural Conference 2025 and the associated annual theme, we want to look to the future. After 100 years of biodynamics, we looked back in 2023, took an in-depth look at the content of the Agricultural Course in 2024 and the third part of the trilogy, the outlook for the future, is due in 2025. What lies ahead as we enter the second century of the biodynamic impulse? Torrential rains and persistent droughts – how do we live with the ecological crisis? Can these climate events only be explained mechanically, or do they also bear witness to the "illness" of our living earth? Protesting farmers in Europe and farmers migrating to the megacities in the global South – is there even a future for farmers? Tree-hugging seminars on the one hand and gigantic investments for emigration to Mars on the other – is there still a sensible relationship with our earth and nature?

The faithful work on biodynamic farms seems to have fallen out of time. Where is the aspect of the future if we are fully biographically committed to a few hectares of land, a few crops, and a few animals? The idea is to create a place to live, a place where many living beings come together to form an organism, where earth and sky meet and interpenetrate fruitfully. Can such a place reflect life if the earth all around it is dead? Are we promoting life only on our farms, and we find mechanistically dead earth all around it? For example, when I spray a biodynamic preparation at sunrise, I can experience the breathing of the earth with the sky. Or the concrete experience of how the plant world forms a living skin that develops over the year. Is it not instead an intimate intuition that comes to us again and again? My place of life is like a gate that opens into the world of all-embracing earthly life. Is not the earth as a whole a living being? Can I experience the earth as a living being? Can I think of it as a living being? Can I connect with it in honour and love?

Let us step into the future from the individual place of life to the earth as a whole as a living being. As we enter the second century, let us orientate our biodynamic work on the future view of the earth as a living being.

Interestingly, current sciences such as plate tectonics, marine biology, microbiome research, chronobiology, and climate science, which investigate the dynamics of change, show a dynamic picture of the Earth's development. The earth goes through developmental stages typical for a

living being. What is clearly formed and functionally defined in a later stage goes back to pictorial, functionally open stages. Older scientists such as C. G. Carus in his twelve letters on earth life or Goethe with his earth spirit in "Faust" also speak of the earth as a living being. Rudolf Steiner describes a detailed evolutionary process of the cosmos and the earth over four stages. In his description, the mineral earth emerged from a living earth, this from an animated earth and this from a spiritual origin. The mythological images from ancient cultures reflect the deep connection that people in past times had with the forces of the earth and the cosmos. For example, the indigenous peoples of Central America used very sophisticated calendars and systems to cultivate their fields, care for their animals and breed species.

The sick earth needs us more than ever. Let us actively seek open partnerships. We are not the only ones seeking a breakthrough from a mechanistic understanding of the earth to a realization of the earth as a living being. Let us look for research partners with whom we can exchange ideas and where we can learn from each other how to see phenomena in a new way. Let us seek partnerships with artists who live with the poetic, musical and artistic vision of the earth as a living being.

Let us look for alliance partners for concrete fields of action in climate policy, landscape design, and the promotion of biodiversity to initiate relevant actions based on the image of the earth as a living being.

In this way, we want to work with the annual theme "The Earth as a living being" with a thematically and socially opening gesture through 2024 and thus prepare for the Future Conference from 5 to 8 February 2025.

Rudolf Steiner: Michaels Task in the Sphere of Ahriman. Leading Thoughts 106–108
(In: Anthroposophical Leading Thoughts, GA 26)