

Biocyclic Vegan Agriculture Organic Farming the Vegan Way Update Spring 2020



By Axel Anders and Dr. agr. Johannes Eisenbach

There are some new developments in the world of Biocyclic Vegan Agriculture! Over the last year, the network has gained a number of significant partners.

Apple growers in southern Germany

The first operation to be certified according to the Biocyclic Vegan Standard in Germany, the organic apple farm 'Biolandhof Clemens Hund', is located in the beautiful Lake Constance region in the southernmost part of Germany. When Clemens Hund came into contact with representatives of the Biocyclic Vegan Network in 2017, he realised that there was significant overlap with his own philosophy and practice. Even prior to his certification, Hund did not keep livestock or utilise any inputs of animal origin. Since obtaining the Biocyclic Vegan Certification in August 2017, Clemens Hund has been supplying the market with some of the best varieties of apples and apple juice marked with the Biocyclic Vegan Quality Seal.

Two of his neighbours, Nikolaus Glocker and Stefan Geiger, share the same approach and underwent the audit in October 2019 and have now been certified biocyclic vegan. The three plantations cover a total area of approximately 120 hectares and produce 1800 tons of biocyclic vegan apples annually.

To make these products available to the market and to guarantee a full traceability of biocyclic vegan production along the supply chain, processing companies (fruit presses and bottling plants) and handling agents (warehouses and packaging facilities) had to be certified as well. As a result, one of the world's biggest providers of agricultural raw materials and Germany's leading trader of agricultural products, the BayWa Group, was recently certified.

Arable farming along the Austro-Hungarian border

In September 2019 a group of farms in the northwest of Hungary were certified according to the Biocyclic Vegan Standard. The owner, Harald Strassner, was a pioneer of organic farming. Now, he has decided to transition towards the Biocyclic Vegan Standard. To him, the standard represents an even more sustainable and future-oriented form of agriculture.

For Strassner, the growing interest in vegan diets is more than just a trend. Since pulses play a major role in these diets, he decided to relaunch the cultivation of dry beans and is now growing ten different varieties. In addition, he grows soya beans, cereals, pumpkin and sunflowers on an area of about 500 hectares of land on both sides of the Austro-Hungarian border, two thirds of which is already certified Biocyclic Vegan. The unprecedented availability of crops like soya in biocyclic vegan quality opens up new perspectives for the food processing industry. Harald Strassner is also cooperating with the Austrian organic food brand 'Mutter Natur' that is planning to introduce packed bean and soya

products under the Biocyclic Vegan Quality Seal to the retail market.

Harald Strassner in his fields



Award-winning wines from south-west France

The vineyard of Château La Rayre is located in the region of Bergerac, on the clay-limestone slopes south of the village of Monbazillac. This combines ideal climatic and geological conditions to produce great wines under the designation Appellation d'Origine Contrôlée (AOC) 'Bergerac' and 'Monbazillac'. The owner, Vincent Vesselle, has – accidentally – been running his operation according to biocyclic vegan principles for over ten years. When he came across the Biocyclic Vegan Standard via the French association 'Agriculture Biocyclique Végétalienne', he immediately decided to undergo the certification process and thus became the first biocyclic vegan winegrower worldwide. The audit took place in August 2018 and the first bottles marked with the Biocyclic Vegan Quality Seal were shipped in October 2019.

The award-winning wines of Château La Rayre can be found on the wine lists of high-end restaurants from France to Japan.

Outlook: from niche to mainstream

The fact that significant producers are adopting the Biocyclic Vegan Standard indicates a shift towards an entirely new model of agricultural production. The production method positively impacts on key issues such as climate change mitigation, air and water quality, land use, food waste,

human health and animal ethics. Increasing both the range and volume of certified biocyclic vegan products will help to deploy the multiple benefits of biocyclic-vegan agriculture as widely as possible with globally measurable results. The biocyclic vegan approach is perfectly suited to small scale operations and subsistence farming, as well as

Biocyclic Vegan Certification at Château La Rayre (from left: Hélène Modrzejewski, Agriculture Biocyclique Végétalienne; Vincent Vesselle, Château la Rayre; Axel Anders, International Biocyclic Vegan Network)



Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) projects with direct access to local and regional consumer groups. However, biocyclic vegan agriculture does not exclude larger production units and distribution via classical retailers and supermarkets. The benefits will be amplified by a wider adoption of the standard at all levels of the supply chain. The use of the Biocyclic Vegan Quality Seal on products sold in the market provides full transparency to the customers and, at the same time, gives emphasis on the special effort that has been undertaken by producers that underwent the specific certification process. This applies to fresh fruits and vegetables, processed products such as plant-based milks or tofu and, once a larger variety of certified biocyclic vegan ingredients is steadily available to the market in sufficient quantities, all types of plant-based convenience food.

The presentation of the first biocyclic vegan products at the leading international organic trade fair Biofach in Nuremberg in February 2020 (with a special booth in the section 'Experience the World of Vegan') has introduced the Biocyclic Vegan Standard and the Biocyclic Vegan Quality Seal to an international audience of professionals. This motivated further partners who join the vision of a highly productive agriculture in harmony with the natural limitations of our planet.

For more information see:
<https://tinyurl.com/GGI44BIO>

THE DEATH OF PUMPKINSTEIN

the green kitchen vegan cafe

"Waste not", helping you prevent waste when nature has just been too abundant

Perhaps, just sometimes, pumpkins are better off being turned into carriages than being eaten?

I was 'fortunate' to be given a very large watermelon - pumpkin at the end of the summer. As you can see from the photo it was a very handsome vegetable. The flesh inside was white and it smelt of watermelon, BUT had the texture of pumpkin and with no discernable flavour! The gardener who gifted it to me said it was over a year old, and it was a result of cross-pollination with a watermelon and a pumpkin being planted too close to each other. I have been trying to find out more for this article but Google has failed me!

It appears watermelon and pumpkins cannot cross pollinate (being as they are not from the same species, although there seems to be plenty of hybrid watermelon-pumpkin cross photographs). So, I'm still confused! Anyway, let's get on to trying to use the aforementioned culprit given that's my task for this article!

I decided as it had a slightly sweet smell, a curry flavour soup would work well, so with the flesh cut up into chunks, I



sautéed shallots, added a Sri Lankan spice mix (I had made previously for a delicious apple curry with Granny Smiths) added the pumpkin and some water. Cooked it away till the vegetable was soft, blended it and tried it. But Oh No! It really didn't taste nice, even my colleague who eats anything turned her nose up. It could be that it was too old to have a decent flavour, and although it was very sound, and had obviously been cured well; (the skin was quite tough,) it really should have been eaten sooner. It could just have been that the cross pollination aspect wasn't in its favour and it should have been discarded to the compost heap. But as gardeners we don't want to waste the fruits of our labour or anyone else's labour! Even so there are times when I think the compost heap is the best option.

So, if this spring you are planning on growing squashes, do consider the possibility of cross pollination, and guard against it. My advice would be to not let your vegetables grow too large if you are growing for flavour! Oh, and don't keep them longer than you have to.