

Why organic seeds?

Organic seeds stand for biodiversity and healthy nutrition in cooperation with nature.

The focus of our association Living Seeds is to promote and develop organic and biodynamic plant breeding whilst taking different regional conditions of soil and climate into account. Conventional seed, on the other hand, is grown in such a way that it can be produced in bulk and can be used anywhere. The compensation is made by chemical substances offered by the same conventional seed companies. Is this what we want?

Biodiversity, cultural seeds, plant integrity and sustainability form the basis for our life and are the goals of our association. In the context of organic farming, organic plant breeding ensures the enrichment of ingredients in the respective plant variety and reduces the environmental impact. Using a variety of different plants generates biodiversity and integrates the entire value chain into cooperation. Organic plant breeding and organic farming are far more than just omitting chemical fertilisers, pesticides and herbicides. It is a complex set of conscious interactions between humans, animals, plants, micro-organisms, climate, and soil structures, as well as cosmic energies that need to be captured and reconciled. Humans, know-how and nature are the central elements – not the laboratory. And organic farming is not “vegan”, but lives with the diversity of animals, insects, and microbes.

We want organic products from the start and organic food products from organic seeds:

- Healthy nutrition strengthens humans and is based on a variety of ingredients provided by a high diversity of plants.
- Since the beginning of the covid pandemic, there is an increasing awareness that healthy nutrition forms the basis for our resilience. Poisons distributed in water, air, and soil counteract this. This requires the commitment of the individual, knowledge, and exchange of experience.
- Many plants produce oxygen, absorb CO₂ as well as nitrogen oxides and introduce them into the soils, thereby helping to counteract global warming.
- However, their adaptability to climate change requires a wide variety of plant species and seeds.
- The spiritual, cosmological, cultural, and physical are combined in the discussion and processing between human beings, plants, seeds, soil, and climate environments. Conventional breeding is based exclusively on artificial separation of humans, plants, and soil under laboratory conditions, on excessive use of technology and chemistry to secure property rights.
- Organic plant breeding and organic agriculture consist of cooperation between the parties involved in the entire food value chain: consumers, retailers, food and seed producers, farmers and breeders.
- transparency, traceability of origins and easily reproducible varieties contribute to trust among all parties involved.

Industrialisation of food production in the last 100 years has led to monocultures in cultivation, pollution of water, soil, and air. As a result, we accepted a loss of up to 70 % of all plants, insects, and animal species in the industrial countries. Industrialisation also caused alienation to nature and field work and created a dependence on few agrochemical and food companies operating worldwide. Today's business model of large agricultural companies often consists of the combined supply of seeds, chemical fertilisers, and pesticides as well as of the privatisation of the knowledge behind it in the private vault of companies. The farmer gets a recipe on how to use the various means to generate the harvest. The farmer raptures himself from his fields and becomes a pure businessman who manages machines and labour. When insects are killed with chemicals, these poisons also affect our seeds, our air, our water, and us humans. Chemical fertilisers cause a disharmony of soils, disrupt the equilibrium of the micro-organisms, and reduces their ability to regenerate.

Organic farming is far more than the absence of chemical fertilisers and pesticides

Organic agriculture relies on local added value and more food sovereignty. Especially through the interlinked collaboration of scientists, farmers, and breeders of open-pollinated varieties, it is possible to distribute knowledge and learning.

Almost all life on earth is directly or indirectly linked with plants: Nutrition, medicine, fossil fuels, paper, perfume, clothing, building materials and much more. There is so much more in the plant genome than can be seen in the respective concrete appearance. Nature produces many seeds. From maple to cypress, from amaranth to wheat, from artichoke to onion and from apple to lemon – in the course of their lives, they all produce millions of seeds. A positive consequence of this wasteful behaviour of nature is the conservation of species under changing conditions, as well as the emergence of new species, in short: biodiversity. Have you ever noticed that every leaf, every stem, every root differs from other stems, leaves, roots, even the same kind? This shows how much energy nature puts in its diversity, and it seems only natural to copy it in this regard. Plants are adaptation artists, their sheer infinite diversity is not a coincidence, but a natural survival strategy that works like a kind of insurance: If the conditions of life change suddenly, at least always some specialists will manage to cope with it. The generosity and abundance of nature tempt us humans into purpose-oriented concentration. By focusing, for example, on a few varieties and at the same time poisoning our environment whilst using too much fertiliser, we give too little freedom to nature and make ourselves vulnerable. In the event of sudden environmental changes, adapted seed may no longer be available.

A seed contains not only the species, but also the potential of a plant. Seeds are destined by the past, but also open to the future. This means that every seed already carries all the important information about how resistant the resulting plant can be to diseases, drought, heat, moisture, nutrient deficiency, etc. Not every seed can be prepared against anything or adapted to all environments, as this takes time and energy. Today's climate changes take place faster than "planned" and the availability of diversity is reduced. A variety of seeds gives us the chance to draw the right card – depending on what environmental conditions require.

Organic plants produce more resistant, adaptable seeds

Seeds are the crystallisation points of living existence. During its growth and ripening cycle, the plant puts all its energy into them. In organic plant breeding, seeds grow from the beginning in “species-appropriate” climate and soil, in a non-sterile environment – of course without chemical fertilisers and pesticides, without GMO, without interference with the genome. The integrity of the plant is maintained. We see organic value creation as the basis of a reasonable breeding practice and as a holistic process – not as a reductionist and purpose-driven specialisation. Clean and lively water, organic and biodynamic soil cultivation, natural disease control, sufficient sun and shade – all these are factors significantly influence healthy plant growth. In a healthy, but by no means “overprotected” environment, plants gain the ability to develop a strong “immune system” which they inherit to their seeds. Consequently, organic seeds are more resistant and adaptable to the local environment than conventional seeds – and richer in all its gifts.

Organic and biodynamic cultivation strives for a harmonious relationship with nature, learns from it. Diseases, parasites, and other adversities are considered as an indication of disharmonies with the environment and signs of low resistance. It is about more than just growing plants, but about sophisticated techniques combined with supportive organic products, including micro-organisms. The local environment plays an important role. Findings are exchanged and published transparently. In conventional agriculture, pesticides combat diseases and soils are reduced to a mere substrate by means of chemistry.

100 % organic? Consumers deserve transparency

Organic products without organic seeds? What is written on the packaging should also be included in the packaging. Those who shop at organic stores believe that the offered food was produced from organic seeds – only a few know that in about 80%, this is not the case. The European Commission, however, has already recognised this: In 2018, the European Parliament adopted the Organic Cultivation Directive, which states that organic farmers may only use conventional seeds until 2035. 2035 – Oh, that’s still a long way to go? Some people will then be surprised. Eventually, within a few years, the consumer will be able to scan the QR code on every packaging and see all those involved in the value creation: breeders, farms, processors – and in which way the retailer contributes to all of this.

Organic seeds for a healthy, strengthening diet

This is not meant materially. We do not store any plant or animal particles in our tissues. But what we absorb affects our metabolism, our existential resilience. Nature consists of many cycles in which a multifaceted exchange takes place. If our diet is one-sided, then our ability to deal with challenges becomes weak. Foods made from conventional, manipulated seeds weaken us, while versatile organically bred seeds strengthen us. Comparative studies on ingredients, such as minerals and vitamins, confirm that open-pollinated, organic or biodynamic seeds offer a plus of 50 % compared to conventional hybrids.

Open-pollinated, organic seeds for more food sovereignty

Southern Europe imports 80-90 % of its seeds. These seeds come mainly from a few internationally operating corporations and the dependence of the respective countries on these companies is great. The imported seed comes with specific rights of the seed

companies that prohibit or make it genetically and legally impossible for third parties to reproduce or develop these seeds. Own seed production is therefore the means of choice, of course with open-pollinated varieties. With them, a certain sovereignty in the food and supply of the population can be regained and distributed among many stakeholders. Local seed production, knowledge dissemination of seed propagation, and breeding are important components of achieving this sovereignty.

Culture, cosmos, man and plant

Seeds and plants form the basis for most of life and many raw materials that we use today. Organic breeding must take account of this importance. Nature has billions of years of experience. We can draw from it and work with it when we watch and listen to it. Then all developmental skills are open to us. We understand organic and biodynamic breeding as a process that corresponds to the whole and is aware of its role in the changing nature context. Man, cosmos, and the earth are integrated, they support each other and influence each other. Organic and biodynamic seeds maintain and promote these forces from the very beginning – with consciousness and respect.

Lebende Samen •
Living Seeds e.V.

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become a member of our association
and strengthen with us the fruitful
South of the Mediterranean!*