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Final Report

IAAS seminar 2017: Make Agriculture Great Again

29th of April 2016 – 6th of May 2017





“Make Agriculture Great Again” – this was to be the topic of this year’s seminar. In times of decreasing producer prices, a damaged image of agriculture and rising pressure from society it seems to be our task as students in the field of agriculture and related sciences to do exactly that. Supported by our generous sponsors we left Stuttgart for a journey that would take us to two different countries, seven exciting companies, farms and research centers as well as diverse landscapes and cultures. We were joined by students from Germany, Uruguay, Switzerland, Slovenia, Serbia, Spain, Croatia and Poland, 32 in total, who made this a memorable week for IAAS Hohenheim.

Saturday, April 29th *Hohenheim day*

After a long journey we expected the participants to be tired but the excitement to meet new people and to start the seminar predominated. We prepared a little scavenger hunt on the campus area and also a little quiz about Germany. In the afternoon we started our journey to the Lake Constance.

Sunday, April 30th *RAUCH day*

On Sunday morning, we visited the Hops museum in Tettngang, one of the world’s most important areas for hops production. Here we learned a lot about the traditional and modern cultivation and processing of hops for brewing purposes. In the afternoon, we had a city tour through the historical town of Meersburg. We enjoyed the sunny day at Lake Constance and the clear view from the castle onto the snow-covered Alps. Sunday evening was the week’s highlight with the Trade fair, where every participant presented culinary specialities from his or her home country.



Monday, May 1st Wulle day

Sunshine, a handcart with some beer and a hike – that is how most of Germans expect their traditional May hike to be. Although we lacked mostly all of it we tried to keep up with this tradition and went out for a little walk. Despite the bad weather and the fact that our hike was more of a little walk than the hike everybody expected the participants enjoyed it. In the afternoon we went to see the open-air museum in Neuhausen ob Eck where we experienced how people of the region of the Black Forest used to live and work in the past. One of the highlights was the demonstration of the water wheels which were used to for a band-saw and a mill. In the evening we prepared a "Spätzle"-Workshop and showed the participants how this tasty traditional Swabian dish is prepared. Of course we also tasted the result of our work - Käsespätzle.

Tuesday, May 2nd AMAZONE day



On Tuesday morning we visited the Claas Bad Saulgau GmbH, a European market leader in green harvest technology. Dr. Katalin Csehi gave us a warm welcome, introduced us to the world of Claas and gave us an insight into the fields in which Claas will operate in the future. Afterwards we were shown the production site and followed the production step by step. At this time of the year the drums of the "Jaguar" forage harvesters are produced.

After a delicious lunch at their cafeteria we moved on to visit the LAZBW, the research centre for cattle production and grassland of the federal state Baden-Württemberg. First we got explanations on the impact of different feeding strategies, bedding materials and modern stable technology before we looked at the milking parlor. Following this Prof. Dr. Elsässer showed us his research for the so called "protein strategy" in the subject of greenland. In their trial fields they observe the mixture of grassland with different legumes like white/red clover or lucerne to increase the protein yield of the grassland.

In the evening we listened to presentations on "innovations in agriculture" which our participants prepared with regard to their countries.



Wednesday, May 3rd Vegetables & Energy

Wednesday's journey started with a drive towards Lake Constance. Our first program point was the grower cooperative "Reichenau-Gemüse eG". They represent the horticulturists which traditionally produce their vegetables on the Island Reichenau that is a UNESCO world heritage site. The cooperative undertakes the commercialization and is responsible for distributing, selling and promoting products from this special island. The philosophy is to produce high quality in a sustainable way.

We saw their modern logistic center in the middle of the island. Here they pack, cool and distribute the vegetables. Afterwards one of their horticulturists kindly showed us around his greenhouses. He is producing organic tomatoes as well as conventional cucumbers and peppers. We learned about the integrated crop management that is used for their production.

Due to our tight program, we had lunch on our way to the next program point, the "Farm Heggelbach". It is a Demeter Farm Community in the second generation with organic vegetables production, dairy cows, a cheese dairy, pigs and energy production. Special about the farm is that it is owned by 6 families working together, every member being responsible for their own division. After seeing the whole farm, we also had a look at their special research project, the Agrophotovoltaics. It is a photovoltaic construction in the height of five meters, so it is possible to grow crops underneath.



In the evening we had a little wine-tasting with different wines, produced in Baden-Württemberg.



Thursday, May 4th KWS-day

On Thursday we had a traditional Bavarian breakfast. The participants got Pretzels and Weißwürste and those who wanted could even try the “Hefe-Weizen-Bier”. After this bountiful breakfast we started our journey to Switzerland. Our first stop was Stein am Rhein, a flabbergasting beautiful little old town located directly at the Rhine river.



After a little tour through the town and a short history lesson on Switzerland we continued our journey to Hörhausen where we visited one of the region's largest Walnuts plantation. We saw how much work it means and how much time is needed to grow walnut trees. But we also saw the influences of the very recent late frost. There we learned that innovative breeds could prevent loss from late frost and could Make Agriculture Great Again.

On our way back home we came along the castle Laufen and the Rhine fall, Europes' largest water fall. We rounded off our day with a self-made wine tasting with wines from the region.



Friday, May 5th *Hochwald day*

On our last day we visited Hohentwiel, the largest fortress ruins in Germany, where we had an impressive view of the Lake Constance, over the gentle rolling hills of the Thurgau region to the majestic peaks of the Alps. In the afternoon we had a guided tour at the brewery "Berg" where we also could convince ourself from the fantastic taste of the beer, which is produced out of regional products.



Saturday, May 6th *Treiber day*

On Saturday was the day of farewells after one week of amazing experience. Bags were packed, phone numbers shared and all the participants were brought to the train station and to the airport to make sure they will have a safe trip back home to their countries. We had an amazing week with lots of impressions on how to "Make Agriculture Great Again"!

Got Interested?

Are you interested in IAAS Hohenheim, our activities or do you want further impressions of this year's seminar?

Send us an Email to iaas@uni-hohenheim.de

or visit our webpage www.iaas-germany.de



Acknowledgement

IAAS Germany would like to thank all participants for their great interest and motivation during the seminar. We look forward to meeting you again at your seminars!

Undoubtedly this seminar could not have been arranged without the generous help of our sponsors, whom we would hereby like to thank cordially.



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