

## **Biodynamic Vegetable Breeding by Kultursaat e.V. (Germany), Independent Plant Breeding for Organic Farming**

Fleck, M.<sup>1,2</sup>

Keywords: plant breeding, breeding methods, property rights

### **Abstract**

*It is widely acknowledged that agro-biodiversity is decreasing while the so-called modern breeding techniques increasingly move away from the principles of organic farming. For this reason, biodynamic gardeners founded the association Kultursaat e.V. in 1994 with the aim of carrying out practical plant breeding for the organic market gardening sector. The work of Kultursaat e.V. has three guiding principles:*

1. *Congruence with the principles of organic farming*
  - *All breeding work is carried out on biodynamic sites.*
  - *-Traditional methods of plant breeding are applied, such as selection and crossing, and are further developed according to the practice of biodynamic cultivation.*
  - *Biotechnological methods are not applied.*
  
2. *Independence from corporate interests*
  - *The varieties that are developed out of the breeding process are not the property of individuals or companies, but are carried by the charitable association Kultursaat e.V. This means that they are in public ownership.*
  - *It is not aimed at creating breeds that maximize shareholder value, but breeds that foster the specific product quality of organic foodstuffs.*
  
3. *Biodynamic plant breeding puts itself in the middle of cultivated plant evolution*
  - *Cultivated plants evolved because generations of breeders could draw on existing resources such as land races.*
  - *Through hybrid breeding and transfer of CMS, this old principle (farmers' right) is ignored and cast aside. For this reason, in biodynamic plant breeding only open-pollinating varieties are developed.*

*In addition to the three above-mentioned principles, a fourth one is the important role of product quality in biodynamic growing. It manifests itself in two ways. Breeds have to*

- *have the ability to build high inner qualities (i.e., ability to ripen); and*
- *show sensitivity to specific measures of biodynamic agriculture (e.g., biodynamic preparations).*

---

<sup>1</sup> Kultursaat e.V., Schlossstr. 22, 61209 Echzell-Bingenheim, Germany,  
e-mail: [kontakt@kultursaat.org](mailto:kontakt@kultursaat.org), Internet: [www.kultursaat.org](http://www.kultursaat.org)

<sup>2</sup> ABDP – Association of Biodynamic Plant Breeders, Darzau Hof, 29490 Neu Darchau, Germany,  
e-mail: [abdp@abdp.org](mailto:abdp@abdp.org), Internet: [www.abdp.org](http://www.abdp.org)