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European partnership for biodiversity protection in viticulture

The loss of biodiversity is next to climate change one of the biggest challenges of our time. Animal and plant species are under multiple stresses and a lot of them threatened with extinction. Moreover, in Europe and elsewhere, two thirds of all ecosystems are endangered due to overexploitation.

Agriculture significantly contributed to increasing the diversity of landscapes and species in Europe in the past. But nowadays agriculture is one of the main drivers of biodiversity loss. Knowledge about the relationship between agriculture and the protection of biodiversity is now better than ever. However, this knowledge is still inadequately addressed in agricultural education and the further training of farmers. Furthermore, most of them do not receive consulting about this topic directly on the farm. As a consequence, production methods are not sufficiently adapted to the protection of biodiversity.

>>> The purpose of the partnership

Organic vine growers can support biodiversity by working close to nature. And they are highly motivated to contribute to the protection of biodiversity as in this production system a healthy ecosystem is essential to produce, in a sustainable way, healthy grapes with a good quality. The aim of this partnership is to adapt vine growing practices so that biodiversity is protected, enhanced and promoted through the development of analysis modules and trainings.



>>> How is the procedure?

The partner organisations are experienced in the topic of viticulture and biodiversity and, in a first step, they will exchange those experiences and methods. The project partners will develop information material concluding important aspects of biodiversity as well as identification guides to support farmers in the identification of characteristic species that can be found in vineyards. In a further step, biodiversity analysis modules will be developed. With this, farmers will gain knowledge about methods and managing practices to integrate biodiversity into their workday. In addition, training, supported by previously produced material, will allow farmers to promote the adaptation of their production methods. The basis for the analysis modules is the biodiversity check for organic viticulture and the biodiversity programme developed by the German partners. The material will be adapted to the conditions of each viticulture region.

>>> Biodiversity check and biodiversity programme

The biodiversity check assesses potential negative impacts of viticulture on biodiversity. Along with investigating the influence of activity in the vineyards themselves, all operational areas came under the microscope, including vinification, procurement, logistics and marketing. As a result, organic vine growers will receive recommendations and training on how to promote biodiversity in their businesses and how to reduce negative implications for species diversity and ecosystems.

With the experiences and the results from the check, a biodiversity programme will be developed. It is a roadmap for biodiversity improvements and supports the continuous verification of possible negative impacts on biodiversity, as well as the identification of measures to minimize these impacts.