



# GRAND FARM

Innovation • Research • Demonstration

Alfred Grand, 09<sup>th</sup> of April 2019

26th Danube Region Conference, Tulln, Austria



# Introduction:

**Alfred Grand,**

- Farmer at **GRAND FARM** for Research and Demonstration
- Managing director at **VERMIGRAND Naturprodukte GmbH**
  - Vermicomposting with epigeic earthworms
  - Organic fertilizer Biohumus (earthworm compost)
  - Soil amendments (biochar)
  - Peat free soil substrates
  - Earthworm compost extracts (soil remediation)
  - Seed coating with earthworm microbiome



# Why cooperate?

- Complex problems need more than one profession
- Dissemination of research results is difficult
- Even within the same language, little understanding
- Different perspective between research and practice
- Farmers are solution driven
- Scientists are research driven
- Multi Actor Approach (see Horizon2020, Horizon Europe)
- Everyone benefits from cooperation (EIP-Agri)



# How can (organic) farmers contribute?

**Organic farmers ...**

**... are curious and innovative**

**... are looking to find their own solutions**

**... do not expect help from the industry**

**... are a bridge to other farmers (demonstration)**

**... and citizen (raising awareness)**

**... independent, dynamic and decision makers**



# Research and Demonstration Farms:

- Typical tour farms, which are chosen for specific topics
- Farmer provides infrastructure for scientists
- Farmer is fully involved in research question
- Focus on specific topic (e.g. soil health, potato, bees)
- Research is benefitting farmer, but on the same level also climate, environment, biodiversity, society
- Demonstration on farmer to farmer level (trust)
- Dissemination for farmers, citizen, students, ...
- Head organization provides support for networking, funds, dissemination, video making, training ...



# GRAND FARM for Research and Demonstration:

- Absdorf, Lower Austria, East of Austria (30 km WNW of Vienna)
- 90 hectares arable fields, agroforestry, grassland, vegetable
- Stopped ploughing 25 years ago, min-till (3-5 cm), No-Till trials
- Converted to organic in 2006
- BOKU, AGES, ABB, Bioforschung Austria, chamber of agriculture,
- EIP-Agri
- Rodale Institute
- Wageningen WUR Lighthouse Farming Project



# GRAND FARM for Research and Demonstration:

## Partners:

- BOKU, FIBL, Bioforschung Austria, ABB, AGES, BAW, Bionet, chamber of agriculture, ministry for sustainability,
- RODALE INSTITUTE and WAGENINGEN UNIVERSITY
- EIP-Agri,
- Cooperation and contacts to scientists and agronomists in Switzerland, Germany, Italy, Spain, Netherlands, UK, USA, Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovenia, Poland, France, Portugal, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, ...



# 1: Soil-Health:

- Tillage (reduced, no-till)
- Crop-rotation
- Cover-crops
- Compost
- Livestock

Goals: SOM increase, mitigation + adaptation to climate change, soil health, biodiversity, water infiltration, stabilization in yields, ...



# 2: Agroforestry:

## Trees on the field!

- Fruits
- Veneering
- Livestock

Goals: mitigation and adaptation to climate change, reduced wind speed, support for pollinators and beneficial insects, biodiversity, SOM increase, landscape and tourism, beekeeping, flower-strips,




# 3: Market Garden:

**Bio-Intensive organic vegetable production:**

- 1 hectare size
- No tractor
- 2-3 employees

**Goal: regional organic vegetable supply, regional added value, creation of local employment, biodiversity, energy self-sufficiency, climate-friendly production, food security, ...**





**Dear god knows how to make a  
fertile soil, and he has shared this  
knowledge with the earthworms.**

French farmers proverb.

**Thank you for your interest**

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