



OFFICE INTERNATIONAL

du Coin de Terre et des Jardins Familiaux

association sans but lucratif

Regroupement des fédérations européennes des jardins familiaux
Statut participatif auprès du Conseil de l'Europe

Dear allotment gardeners

1926 – 2016

The founding members of our international union, the Office International du Coin de Terre et des Jardins Familiaux, were convinced that a steady relationship between the national federations was necessary for the development of the allotment movement. They thought that the national federations, taken separately, were not strong enough to reach this aim.

The subjects and problems facing the allotment gardeners and their federations have meanwhile become more complex and much more diverse: In addition to the legal protection and the recognition of the value of allotments, the question on how we can find an adequate answer to the new wishes of our members and society has become a new challenge.

Cooperating, reacting together if new challenges appear, exchanging experiences in order to find solutions, acting together in order to convince politicians, national and international authorities of the value of the allotments for all, optimizing and extending the services offered and supporting our members remain today, as in the past, our tools even though, of course, they have to be modernised.

Nowadays gardening ranges among the most appreciated leisure time occupations. “Urban Gardening” is today on everybody’s mind. However, often people forget that the allotment garden movement is the most sustainable form of “Urban Gardening” and that the allotments do not only give their members an appreciated compensation after a stressful working day along with healthy food, but that they make a regular and sustainable, as well as very often, voluntary contribution to society. One should be aware, for example, of their improvement of the social cohesion by the integration of migrants, elderly people, disabled people.....Moreover the allotment gardeners support the communes by the rent they pay and reduce the communes’ financial burden for the maintenance of green areas. Additionally they contribute to nature and environment protection, as well as to the protection of biodiversity by a regular sensitisation and a nature friendly gardening.

In order to strengthen the allotment garden movement we must together over the next years:

- Open up for new federations in Europe and worldwide.
- Improve and extend the services offered by the Office according to the desires and wishes of the federations. The elaboration of an optimal garden advice service for all is a first step in this direction.
- Make the existing examples of good practice much more known so that all the federations and associations can take into consideration the new desires of the members and the citizens in the best possible way.
- Underline the strengths and the contributions of our movement to society and nature with common activities.
- Reinforce the lobbying on all levels and especially reach the aim that the recognition of the value of the allotments in the social area and for the environment by the European Commission on 8th May 1990 will lead to concrete measures, which will be beneficial to all allotment gardeners. Contacts to this effect have already been taken up with the EU Commission and the European Parliament.

These are only a few examples of the many ways that we have to consider over the next years.

We also have to react together over the next years against possible attacks and we have to underline the manifold advantages of our movement. It cannot be accepted that allotment gardens are the first to be closed down when the development of more profitable projects is considered.

“The allotment gardens are not a nostalgia, but they are a hope”. All allotment gardeners, politicians, authorities and the whole population have to realise that: „Grün ist nicht alles, aber ohne Grün ist alles nichts” (green is not everything, but everything is nothing without green) as said so adequately Hans-Herman BENTRUP.

With this in mind I address you my best wishes of good health and success for 2016.

Malou WEIRICH
Secretary General of the International
Office du Coin de Terre et des Jardins
Familiaux