

38th International Congress in Vienna

The subject of the meeting was:

“The expert advice of the future considering sustainability and responsible resource management

The responsibility of allotment gardeners towards future generations and the ecological conservation of the ground put at the disposal”

This subject was discussed in great detail in workshops after having heard lectures presenting national practices.

The resolution joined as appendix was adopted with unanimity.

The next international congress will be organised in Gradignan (France) in 2019. It will have following subject:

“Sharing ground / Soil in all of its forms”



**Office International
du Coin de Terre et des Jardins Familiaux a.s.b.l.**
association sans but lucratif

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

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**XXXVIIIth Congress of the
Office International du Coin de Terre et des Jardins Familiaux**

Vienna 17th – 20th August, 2016

**The expert advice of the future considering sustainability and responsible
resource management**

**The responsibility of allotment gardeners towards future generations and the
ecological conservation of the ground put at the disposal**

Resolution

The delegates of 2,000,000 allotment families from Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Great-Britain, Japan, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland **acknowledged that:**

Already two decades ago, their allotment garden federations recognized the need to pay more attention to a more active nature protection. The Office International du Coin de Terre et des Jardins Familiaux has developed a number of projects over the past years, such as "Organic Gardening", "Ecological Gardening" and the "Soil Analyses" in an effort to make individual allotment gardeners aware of these issues.

The use of expert advice is one of the most important cornerstones of the federations' work, carried out within all allotment garden associations.

Expert gardening advisers in fruit growing and horticulture have been working in individual allotment associations to implement projects and to pass on their knowledge to individual gardeners. They educate not only the associations' members, but often also people within the communities. Their activity thus has significant relevance beyond garden borders.

At the same time there is a high demand for their level of expertise: not just background knowledge, but up-to-date skills are required. A high level and up-to-date specialist competence is rightly expected of expert advisers. Social competence, learning skills and methodological expertise are sought after. The ability to focus on people while taking into consideration differing levels of knowledge as well as individual preferences and needs is a challenging task.

In several national federations, people can obtain a diploma as "certified gardening advisers" after successfully completing the appropriate coursework.

The delegates underline that:

the Office intends to create a network, that all gardening advisers of the national federations can use, to access the latest information and we strive also to provide assistance in the training of new consultants.

Nature protection alone is no longer sufficient in these times; we must focus more attention on the issues of environmental protection on the allotments. Allotment gardeners in the national federations must develop a sense of responsibility for the ground and land put at their disposal. Gardening advisers must therefore also be mobilized for other future tasks. They must in fact accompany the allotment gardeners to reach this aim.

This 2016 Congress has addressed the topics of: "The responsibility of allotment holders towards future generations with respect to the environmental conservation of ground and land allotted to them" and, subsequently, "Expert advice of the future considering sustainability and responsible use of resources" in a very professional and detailed manner.

Sustainable gardening is a new awareness. Expert advises given by the national federations must therefore place even greater emphasis on this subject. It is about inspiring allotment gardeners to challenge their thinking, their actions and their consumer behaviour, to question what they are doing with their garden and the effects of their gardening-related consumption. Those who focus on protecting local wildlife and biological diversity when gardening will increasingly be asking themselves: what impact does my gardening actions have on resources, the environment and nature?

During the discussions the delegates agreed that:

besides current subjects like pest management and organic gardens, issues concerning

- sewage disposal, protection of groundwater, economical use of water,
- waste separation and waste prevention,
- preservation of green spaces in urban areas to ensure good air quality, must also be addressed.

Awareness must therefore be raised among the allotment gardeners of how their actions and concrete steps contribute not only to safeguarding the art of gardening as a cultural heritage, but also to protecting the environment, nature and its many species.

For this reason it was decided that:

the Office International du Coin de Terre et des Jardins Familiaux should work out a new module for expert gardening advisers.

It should deal with “advanced training measures considering sustainability” in addition to the existing training policies. This module should be formulated in such a way that it can be adapted according to the different national necessities.

The delegates also agreed on the necessity to have and integrate new allotment gardeners into the existing allotment community. Also in this area expert gardening advisers bring a precious contribution by giving the new allotment gardeners the necessary information.

As a conclusion the delegates of the member federations agree that it is a long term aim to realize the networking of the national expert garden advisers on an international level. They are absolutely convinced that an international network of expert advisers will have a positive influence on the whole allotment movement.



Wilhelm WOHATSCHEK
President

Malou WEIRICH
Secretary general