



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

A difficult year lies behind us, the future is uncertain; nothing will be the same as before.

“Are we flexible and ready for the future?”

Over the past year, the Office has done a lot of work to prepare itself for the future and to provide its members with additional resources to support the individual allotment gardeners on national level. This can be done by the issue of new documents and the exchange of experiences and knowledge.

Unfortunately, the study session had to be cancelled, preventing us to discuss common important problems and so providing the national delegates with new findings to take home to solve the existing problems with additional, new approaches.

However, on the one hand, the work to adapt our statutes to today's requirements could be finished and the affiliation fees increased in order to gradually regain a balanced budget and thus remain functional.

On the other hand, the Hyphens could continue to be issued dealing with specific topics, which provided knowledge and suggestions to the individual allotment gardeners, highlighted current issues and gave them examples of good practice.

There is one thing we all have to be aware of. We cannot simply carry on as we have done up to now. “Business as usual” is no longer an option. We have to guide the allotment movement on all levels into other, new paths, but without throwing over board our past, on which our predecessors built our movement.

We have to attract new and more members, not only to compensate for internal age related departures, but to attract new interested people. I am thinking of individual gardeners, without a plot on an allotment site, people who want a different kind of gardening, such as in raised beds, in a communal plot

The offer of new forms of plots, as for example therapy gardens and school gardens, is a necessity in order to both attract these interested parties and to offer an added value to the population in general and so to remain an indispensable element in our cities.

We must then prepare ourselves for a mode of cooperation rather than a mode of competition with other organisations. In order to achieve this, we must identify areas of common interest, realise that the strength lies in

the number of members and that together we can strengthen our impact. Of course, we must trust each other to pull together in the same direction.

The further development of our specific expertise is desirable in order to become a considered as well as a confirmed and professional partner.

Even if associations and federations are increasingly dependent on professional staff, they cannot do without the support and commitment of volunteers. They must recognise the need of the hour and organise and adapt the deployment of volunteers in such a way that they feel further motivated.

So great challenges lie ahead and are waiting to be mastered.

Let us join forces to shape the future together, so that our children and grand-children can enjoy the benefits of an allotment garden plot and continue to contribute to the environment, society, fauna and flora with their plot.

In this optic I wish you all a good health, courage, and foresight, but also a bit of luck and success for 2021.

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