

PRACTICE ABSTRACT

SHARING EXPERIENCES FROM: AUSTRIA

Laying Hens in Biodynamic Orchards

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After years of specialization, the reintegration of livestock into apple (or other fruit) orchards is a challenge. The following steps for the best how-to-get-started can be recommended based on the Apple Hen experience of recent years:

- Be aware of regulatory constraints (guidelines marketing channels (e.g. direct application of manure in orchards), regulatory guidelines (e.g. number of hens which is considered as threshold for “commercial egg production”))
- Provide an animal friendly mobile stable (examples in the Apple Hen handbook), the size of the barn should be adapted to the number of hens, available manpower, marketing opportunities and own consumption of eggs.
- Feed costs have a major impact on profit - consider the unfortunately often contradictory aspects of cost-effective feed and covering nutritional requirements at the same time. Make sure that the feed has a suitable structure and size in addition to adequate ingredients, depending on the type of laying hen (pullets, spent laying hens). Take care not to overstress spent laying hens: Hens are creatures of habit - after buying in, make sure the feed and drinkers are similar to those on the original farm!
- Design attractive egg cartons.
- Take advantage of local training courses on organic poultry farming to get a trained eye for the needs of the laying hens.



**FIND OUT MORE ABOUT MIXED'
NETWORK FROM AUSTRIA**





ABOUT MIXED IN AUSTRIA

In Austria MIXED is implemented by BOKU (University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences Vienna) and based on a still ongoing FiBL-project with Demeter farmers of the organic fruit producer platform 'Von Herzen Biobauern', which will be expanded by including additional farms.

ABOUT THE PROJECT

MIXED (Multi-actor and transdisciplinary development of efficient and resilient MIXED farming and agroforestry systems), an EU-project, is supporting the development of European Mixed Farming and Agroforestry Systems (MiFAS) that are more efficient and resilient to climate changes.

7M€ BUDGET	19 PARTNERS	10 COUNTRIES
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Although in Austria small-scale agriculture is clearly dominating, the specialization of farms continues to progress. Fewer and fewer farms practice both animal husbandry and arable, vegetable and fruit farming. This leads to a concentration of the different branches in some regions with decreasing resilience of the farms.



MIXED partners from Austria:

