



RECLAIM THE FIELDS



ASSEMBLY 2018 - BULLETIN 13

INTRO

Since its first edition the “Reclaim the Fields” (RtF) Bulletin is a way to exchange and circulate information within the RtF network and to make RtF and its ideas visible where it’s still less known.

This Bulletin contains the outline and minutes of the meetings which took place during the last assembly in the Rocalet collective in southern France. Furthermore you can find texts and other contributions from local networks and stars of the RtF constellation.

The texts published in the Bulletins reveal the diversity of the considerations and opinions that meet within RtF, and aim to feed reflection and mutual debate. The texts are the author’s responsibility, and don’t represent any position of RtF as a whole.

We need editors, translators and people that want to work on layout, and we wish you to send articles, drawings, notes, invitations to actions etc.! Note that it will be online and spread in many countries. Articles should be max. 2A4’s (Times New Roman, font size 10). You can write in the language you prefer. We’ll be happy if you can send it in several languages if possible.

Thank you for sending your notes, articles and contributions!
„bulleticks“ bulletin@lists.reclaimthefields.org

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PART 1: WHO ARE WE?

We are a group of peasants, landless and prospective peasants, as well as people who are taking back control over food production. We understand “peasants” as people who produce food on a small scale, for themselves or for the community, possibly selling a part of it. This also includes agricultural workers.

We support and encourage people to stay on the land and go back to the countryside. We promote food sovereignty (as defined in the Nyéléni declaration) and peasant agriculture, particularly among young people and urban dwellers, as well as alternative ways of life.

In Europe, the concept ‘food sovereignty’ is not very common and could be clarified with ideas such as ‘food autonomy’ and control over food systems by inclusive communities, not only nations or states. We are determined to create alternatives to capitalism through cooperative, collective, autonomous, real-needs-oriented, small-scale production and initiatives. We are putting theory into practice and linking local practical action with global political struggles.

In order to achieve this, we participate in local actions through activist groups and cooperate with existing initiatives. This is why we choose not to be a homogeneous group, but to open up to the diversity of actors fighting the capitalist food production model. We address the issues of access to land, collective farming, seed rights and seed exchange. We strengthen the impact of our

work through cooperation with activists who focus on different tasks but who share the same vision.

Nevertheless, our openness has some limits. We are determined to take back control over our lives and refuse any form of authoritarianism and hierarchy. We respect nature and living beings, but will neither accept nor tolerate any form of discrimination, be it based on race, religion, gender, nationality, sexual orientation or social status. We refuse and will actively oppose every form of exploitation of other people. With the same force and energy, we act with kindness and conviviality, making solidarity a concrete practice of our daily life.

We support the struggles and visions of la Via Campesina, and work to strengthen them. We wish to share the knowledge and the experience from years of struggle and peasant life and enrich it with the perspectives and strength of those of us who are not peasants, or not yet peasants. We all suffer the consequences of the same policies, and are all part of the same fight.

Therefore, the second step we undertake is union work: this is seen through the militancy that we express in the very debate in which our movement takes part or supports through our efforts. In this way we build networks of militant alliances with students, urban activists, farm networks, consumers, migrants.



PRESENTATION OF THE RTF WORKING GROUPS

Please tell the people around you who participate in RtF dynamics to subscribe to the European general list, because most of the important infos are passing through this list. You can find the subscription page for the European general list at our homepage: reclaimthefields.org → get involved → email lists or at: https://reclaimthefields.org/?page_id=43

The RtF network is divided into working groups which each focus on a different part of organization. The international camps and other RtF activity is a result of all of these working together.



CARROTS

They have the task to prepare the logistics and the content of the next assembly. The place where the next assembly will take place is already found! The assembly will be in Mondeggi Bene Commune near Florence in Italy. Even though the first big task, finding a place for the assembly, is done, there's still work to do. At our next assembly place, Mondeggi, there's a pellet stove that has to be installed and some construction work has to be done to fix the houses, so skilled people (carpenters, joiners, masons, plumbers...) are invited to Mondeggi! Furthermore, the content for the next assembly has to be prepared, and everyone is welcome to join to help to make the next assembly possible!
carrots@lists.reclaimthefields.org

FINANCES

The aim of the finances working group is to manage the money we have and the bank account in Switzerland. The idea is to recover after each assembly the money we spent for it. The state of the current finances is positive. However, we will not have too much money for sure, so if we imagine supporting groups under repression, organize more assemblies, pay for transport or organize RtF camps, it would be good to get ideas how to raise more money, for example to organize soliparties or making callouts to foundations. This is the task of the assembly and all RtF people, not of the finance group.

WEBTOOLS USED IN RTF NETWORK

Crabgrass Platform created by Riseup
Crabgrass is used by different RtF groups (like Carrots, Bulletin, Finances...). It would be good if people who want to be involved in one of these groups learn how to use the platform. During the assembly there is a little workshop on how to use Crabgrass.
<https://crabgrass.riseup.net/rtf>

MAILING LISTS

There are about 20 mailing lists (European general mailing list and thematic mailing lists). A new one has been created for the Cabbages which are responsible of organizing the RtF camp. Furthermore, 2 new admins for the Carrots mailing list have been found.
<https://lists.reclaimthefields.org>

WEBSITE

The website reclaimthefields.org has been revived! Even though it's still partly under construction you can receive all the important information there. There are still more people needed to maintain the website, so feel free to join the website group!
<https://reclaimthefields.org/>

BULLETIN

The Bulletin is one important voice of the RtF constellation. Usually there is a Bulletin group for each Bulletin - it's composed by people who have done already a Bulletin and also new people who just join at the European assembly.

The Bulletin contains: a summary of the assembly, calls for actions linked to RtF, texts and reflections but also songs, crosswords, games... Be creative and send us your contributions for the next Bulletin!!!

Usually the Bulletin appears at least in three languages. Even though it was hard to find motivated people for the creation of this year's Bulletin we are happy to publish complete, or nearly complete, versions for at least four languages as well as versions with the most important and some region-specific selected content in three to five additional languages. The texts published in the RtF Bulletin involve only their authors responsibility and don't look to represent any general positions for RtF. We aim to use non-gendered language for all texts published in the Bulletin.

The translation of the texts is not the work of the Bulletin group. There is always help for/with translation needed. If you have time and pleasure, please contact us! There is a Bulletin mailing list to communicate inside the group as well as a Crabgrass group. bulletin@lists.reclaimthefields.org

SEEDS

This group had a climax in Turino meeting in Italy, where a specific meeting on seeds took place in order to create education material, write zines and organize a big seed swap a few days before the European meeting. Some texts were written and put online, but the complete kit didn't take shape. This was because there are many things already existing on this issue so it appeared that it's not really relevant to have something done only by Reclaim the Fields. It's seems more interesting to have local groups working on this issue with people around rather than virtual European RtF group about seeds. It was decided not to have seeds working group but to try to have time at every assembly/camp for

people to speak about that and bring seeds along. There is still an existing mailing list, to share infos and news: solidarityseeds@lists.reclaimthefields.org

Access to Land

Access to land is a large area of struggle for Reclaim the Fields. A working group focused on access to land has changed over time. See the precious Bulletins for the full history: https://reclaimthefields.org/?page_id=31
There is now a project that began in January 2015 to collect information about the situation of access to land by country and about different projects that already exist and how those projects access the land. The aim is to have database and to make it accessible by country, with a search engine for (classified by legal structure, locality, rural/urban) information about the access to land.



FARM NETWORK

Farm network of collective projects has been a large part of the efforts of different Reclaim the Fields stars in the constellation. A farm network exists in France, called Fourche et champs libre, and in the UK, called Woolfing. They began to support people to learn skills with farms that share values of struggle. They listed several farms that wanted to participate in this network – woolfing periods – for people really wanting to learn without going through the traditional farming school system (to learn dynamics on agriculture, fighting dynamics, collective living etc.). There was a proposal at the European Assembly in January 2015 to make time at the next assembly to have a time to exchange between these two networks and speak about how to expand it to other countries.

knowing the constellation

This is a short presentation of some of the Reclaim the Fields constellation stars that had parts of them participating in the last RtF gathering. These are only a small part of all the projects involved with RtF, because we didn't receive a description from all groups and communities participating in RtF action. You can read a more thorough presentation of some of the stars in the later pages of the Bulletin.

Collective farm of Bond

The collective farm or Bond in southeastern France is a community of 10 friends that set up an abandoned house. The people grow food to live off; they produce their own seeds, traditional types of plants and do guerrilla gardening. They also have goats and make their own cheese. They connect with other people from the valley, like the local baker, collecting extra stuff from them. The people from the collective have made a map of local abandoned farms and apple orchards.

The collective wanted to be autonomous, but realized quickly that autonomy is isolating, so its members are now thinking of complementary partial autonomy with connections between different spaces in the area. In the future the group will move more south to another place to be with friends, where the land is more suited to their plans. It wants to pass the place set up to another collective so the space can live on and their work will not be rendered useless.

La ZAD Notre-Dame-Des-Landes (ZAD NDDL)

The ZAD (Zone À Défendre = Zone to Defend) of Notre-Dame-des-Landes is a land occupation in western France against the construction of an airport. It has many collective spaces, a newspaper and a radio channel among other things. Around 50 people take

part in the production of food in 6 organized groups, each working on a type of food (onions, potatoes, sunflower etc.). There are 2 orchards, a garden for medicinal herbs, a collective vegetables garden and also a "therapeutic" garden where people that fight addiction work. Another group who maintains and fixes the machines help the gardeners. Some people also started experimenting with vegan agriculture.

The production is used to support local fights, protests, squats and migrants. Some of it is distributed to non-market places for free donation, and all the earnings go to collective fund of the ZAD NDDL and other projects. The people from the ZAD NDDL also swap products with other local producers. There is a group that covers accountancy; financially it works on exchange and free donations, but people outside the movement also contribute with money.

Not only people living in the ZAD NDDL take part in these projects. People are warmly welcomed to join several collectives, non-profit projects or form new ones. The ZAD NDDL encourages people to help transforming scrap into agricultural machines and to support translating a book about ZAD NDDL into English.

"Seme ta ZAD" is the agriculture project and a star of RtF.





Rocalet

Rocalet is a collective in southern France having 37 ha of land, part of which was funded by a kickstarter campaign. There are two owners at the moment, but the aim is to make an association to own the land for long term lease (99 years), which would mean that responsibilities of taxes and control of land is on the renters: the lease cannot be ended unless the association is dissolute. All control of the project is of the people that are involved in the project.

The project started one and a half years ago with the idea to have the house as a collective space and people living there having their private spaces. It is aiming towards self-sufficiency. In the house you can find a zine that details on how people are organized. Rocalet is also a pedagogic space: people come and organize workshops for longer periods. Last year the grange floor and roof was built with a lot of help, and the grange is to be used for different kinds of gatherings.

The land is facing south, which means that it has a great position for gardening, food forests, building tree houses, aqueducts and other stuff. Rocalet is looking for people who want to build cabins, and more people to live there either short-term or long-term.

Ariege

A collective in southern France has a naked piece of land acquired and owned collectively to get lands out of private propriety. The community planted trees and other plants, but still needs help from people motivated to do agricultural work as soon as possible, so it invites people to come to the farm. The people of the collective see it as a project for lifestyle and political aims, but also as a source of money with the perspective of autonomy. Ariege started as a collective of farmers who fight norms and regulations, and they build a network of farms for mutual help.

La Remoutariere

La Remoutariere, also in southern France, is a collective of 10 people - 7 adults and 3 children - living on a farm with 30 ha of land, half of which is cultivable and half forest (mostly chestnut). For now, 3 ha of land is cultivated for non-market destination, mostly to cover the collective's own needs. There is also someone who saves seeds planted with direct seeding method, and the seeds are sold to an association called Grains des Pays. La Remoutariere are part of Fourche and Champ Libre which is a network created within the RtF. People are invited to visit or live in La Remoutariere.



Utopia garden in Grenoble

Utopia garden in Grenoble, eastern France, consists of two pieces of occupied land in university of Grenoble, where people live and grow vegetables. The fight against the administration of the university started 12 years ago and is still going on, though now there are not so many people involved anymore. The utopia garden has links with another self-sustained group doing similar things in the city. People are invited to visit!

Cultivă Orașul / Grow the City

Cultivă Orașul is a collective of 4 persons gardening in the city Cluj, Romania. There is an orchard and two vegetable gardens and this year a third garden will be started to work on. They are not owned, occupied or rented (except for one), but the land is used according to informal agreements with the private owners. Last year the collective organized a gardening school: the people saved seeds and helped other groups to find patches of land to start gardening in the city. This year an urban CSA (community supported agriculture) will be started producing vegetables for at least 25 weekly vegetable and fruit boxes. For the future, the aim is to work with other groups or producers that grow clean food to create a cooperative in the city.

The people of Cultivă Orașul have several dilemmas regarding their work. They try to make a living out of gardening but don't want to make prices inaccessible. It is also difficult, although necessary, to work with people that are not politically active. Cluj is a city that is rapidly "developing": a lot of gentrification processes are going on, land is very expensive and every piece of land is hunted by developers. This is why it is a political incentive to save any free plot to garden in the city.

task system. There is one person in charge of contacting projects: they ask what work is needed, if food is available and other details. This summer the bike tour will start at the North coast of Spain and continue cycling along the coast down to Portugal. People are welcome to join the tour! More information can be found from the bike tour's web page: www.ecotopiabiketour.net

Ausbau Trebbin

Ausbau Trebbin is an isolated former farm halfway between Berlin and Szczecin. One hectare of land is inhabited by a handful of people. Most of them are living in one of the two and a half left houses of the former four-sided farm, but there are also some people living in trucks and trailers. Highest priority is to renovate the living house in a sustainable way by using traditional techniques to restore the old building structure using natural materials. A subsistence garden provides food, fruits from shrubs and the trees around the houses are used to produce fruit wines and some sheep graze between the trees. The main aim of it is to create a place for living for several people and generations and to create a wood workshop in order to create a way out of the dependence of wage labour.



Ecotopia bike tour

The Ecotopia bike tour is a self-governed bike tour every summer. The riders go from project to project in Europe, helping out at farms and places where they stop. They have communal rocket stoves that are built in the beginning of the tour and carried on rotation

Schöpfwerk Eberswalde

Schöpfwerk Eberswalde is an open, self-organized, DIY space where there are workshops for sewing, screen printing, linoleum and wood printing, soap making and mate lemonade making as well as a photo labor, a painting atelier, a small library, an info shop corner and a kitchen to prepare Kitchen for All. Each Tuesday and some Thursdays the workshops are open for everyone. Each Wednesday afternoon opens the self-organized FairCafé where fair-traded coffee, tea from a formerly squatted and now self-organized tea manufactory in the south of France as well as self-made cakes are served for free price. Every second Sunday there happens an antifascist movie screening. From time to time there happen info events concerning radical perspectives on ecological, mostly agriculture, forestry and energy, but also

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pure political and social theories and gender topics. It's aimed to provide non-institutional education for all.

So, whenever you are around, maybe in Berlin and want to discover the back land, feel free to visit or even present your projects or struggles!

SW_EW-Info@onenetbeyond.org

Dodo ry

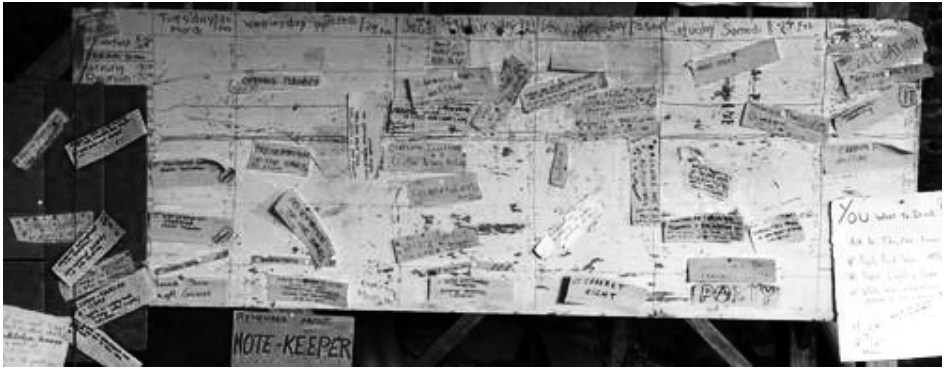
Dodo is Finnish environmental organization with an aim towards building a sustainable society by affecting urban lifestyles. It aims to affect big environmental questions through grass root changes in peoples lives. Dodo has developed its own communal urban gardens in Helsinki and Oulu, consulted others on creating and maintaining them and has organized open events with all kinds of workshops, talking circles, making food out of surplus goods and other program around the topic.

This year there was Reclaim the Fields -action group created in Dodo with a prime directive of making Reclaim the Fields known here in the Northern corners of Europe and unite Finnish local activity as a part of larger international context.



BEET THE SYSTEM

PART 2: THE PREVIOUS RTF GATHERING IN ROCALET



In February a group of around 70 people met over six days in the Rocalet community in Tarn, France. We represented different land projects and forms of resistance across Europe - from France, Germany, Romania, Poland, Slovenia, Switzerland, Italy, Ireland, Belgium, Spain, Finland, Great Britain...

We shared skills such as welding, crafting, chainsaw maintenance and fermentation in practical workshops, and ideas, knowledge and experiences in discussions about RtF related topics. Our amazing interpreters and advanced equipment allowed us to overcome the language barrier, and so everyone could take part in the conversations. We updated each other about what's going on in different projects, and took time to think of what we need and want from the RtF network and how could we improve its functioning. One day we had also visitors from a close by collective against RFID chips on animals, to give us a presentation of their project and struggles. At the seed exchange corner people could get

new seeds for themselves to plant and share their extra ones to others. The last night of the camp we had a cabaret with performances prepared by the participants and a party with pancakes and live music. On top of the diverse program, also a spontaneous protest was held in Vabre and Albi, as we received the information about the eviction of the anti nuclear power protest camp in the Lejuc forest in Bure.

We want to thank the Rocalet collective who hosted this meeting and all the RtF working groups who helped to organise it. Thanks to Bla collective who borrowed us the interpretation equipment, and to Fou rapin for coming with their mobile bakery. Big thanks also to all the individuals who made the program more interesting with their awesome workshops.

A REFLECTION ON HOSTING THE RTF-ASSEMBLY

This is a personal opinion and doesn't represent the collective experience. First of all, I have to say that it was great, thank you all!!

I was in the Carrots group with another person who lives with me in Rocalet. After a few months of sending mails to places and not getting any answers and not having an idea where else we could ask, we proposed to host the assembly ourselves. It was clear that we would have to do a lot of work. The grange, the space where the meetings would happen, had nothing more than a floor and a sheet-metal roof. No doors, no windows, no heating, no insulation. Finally we got another option to host the assembly, la Selba in the Spanish Pyrenees, but logistically it would have been even worse and it seemed impossible for the group of Carrots.

Well, that meant diving into another huge construction project, after having had first time pressure to put the floor in the summer for le Bal des Meutes and then the roof in the autumn because the floor would get fucked through out the rainy winter months. New windows had to be digged in the wall, frames, windows, doors, stairs and a stove had to be built and the walls had to be fixed. Also outside of the grange there was a lot of stuff to do. We called out for help via the RtF network and got a bunch of people coming. Somehow we managed with all the support to be ready for the assembly. It was really amazing to see how people just took on responsibility for the tasks and did them in creative and competent ways.

Looking back, these weeks costed us a lot of energy. I don't know how long it would have taken us to do all that stuff without having that date to be ready. A year? So thanks to the assembly, Rocalet made a huge step forward. Now we have a space for events!! feel



like it is important to always have a balance between the practical work and progress and the social work. When we had meetings, the only things we talked about were practical. Before we used to have regular contact with people from the village, but it stopped when we started working on the grange. Lots of facilities have no point if there is no proper collective intention behind them. I heard somebody saying during a discussion on community life: "It's like building two walls: one is your house and other projects, the other one are your friendships, the mental health and the discussions. One doesn't work without the other." We kind of got out of balance and now we deal with the consequences. But that's ok. The social component has to now catch up with the practical one.

RtF also brought us a lot of new friends. Every now and then we get a mail or we meet somebody saying: "I heard about you via RtF..." On the long term, I think the social network that we built within RtF will be a "wall" as good as our grange project. So in that sense: if you read this and are interested in anarchist, anti-oppression community agriculture life on the countryside, welcome to visit or live with us!

Bizzou
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BALANCE AND TENSIONS IN THE COLLECTIVE GARDENS

This text is a summary of a discussion held in the meeting in Rocalet. We talked about the extent of subsistence reached in different projects and what it implies, why some choose to produce for others apart from their network, and how they find a balance between the different people in the collective in terms of time and investment.

Farm of Joran:

The people within the project have different levels of involvement. Some people receive salaries, so they work the most and also in the production that is sold via weekly vegetable baskets. Some members of the collective are only interested in self-subsistence and work in the gardens with a changing presence. There are also so called «satellite» people who are only implicated in one project, for example tofu. In this project the different wishes, cultural forms and philosophies are coexisting and seem to be compatible. Commercial production and self-subsistence are not necessarily separated and are not creating any problem for now.

We reckon that as we are motorized, half a day per week on average in the fields is enough to have access to the subsistence part. We also have a zone with a more ecological approach that is more experimental and not meant to be productive in terms of selling.

However, we underestimated what taking care of a farm and a piece of land meant; on top of farming it is also administration, maintenance of paths, edges, buildings etc, and taking care of neighborhood and of people.

We have found it important to keep on communicating and updating each other about our feelings, misunderstandings and possible frustrations. Our tool for that is the «weather point», which means that at the beginning of the meetings we share how are we doing at the moment and where are we concerning the project. This helps to understand each others emotional situation. Main misunderstanding or tension is that the people who are not salaried, who are usually activists or doing paid labor somewhere else, would like to be more involved but have difficulties to free some time from their other activities, whereas the salaried people are doing more than they would actually want. For instance, some people don't manage to do their part on the fields as they are participating in meetings and collective workshops.

Rocalet's garden:

Rocalet garden only started in March last year, with the goal of self-subsistence in terms of vegetables. Two people were really motivated to do things and the others liked the idea. There were



lots of seedlings and seedlings and lots of time was invested in starting and organizing the garden. The other members of the collective were asked to help but the help given was not enough to relieve the gardeners. Tension came up within the collective, linked to unequal time spent in the garden and to the access to the production. After this experience, we are now more conscious about how much work a garden represents.

«Rouge et Noir» garden in la ZAD:

The gardening in Rouge et Noir is collective. There are about 5-6 referents who work an estimated one day per week or a little bit more. Also, Wednesdays are

open working days for everyone and there is usually 5-20 persons working. The work is manual, it works like that and the atmosphere is good!

However, we have problems in figuring out what to do about some constraints, like following the lunar calendar, while always having to defend the place. The integration of exterior people with theoretical knowledge is also sometimes delicate in a system already established. For example, sometimes the vegetables that don't look practical at all to cultivate from the point of view of an exterior person with theoretical knowledge are still working the best for the gardeners for other reasons.



Self-sufficiency in the ZAD of Notre-Dame-Des-Landes is based on many specialized collectives that complement one another instead of a radical autonomy that is way more complex. The exchange networks allow an economy of scale. For example, the potatoes collective has six people working one day per week and it can supply more than 200 persons in potatoes and give donations.

Case of a project in Southeastern France

In this project there has been a conflict between a mandala garden and a more rational way to cultivate. Simplification is a good way to avoid some sources of conflicts; by giving a more accessible and easy methods to the gardeners and exteriors help the conflicts are less likely to arise. Every inhabitant has an individual surface and a part of the collective garden. On the collective part cultivation is simple, and the individual parts give a change to experiments that can sometimes give interesting results that are then set up in the collective part.

Cluj garden:

People working at the Cluj garden have different experience of gardening and the working investment is unbalanced within the collective. There is a desire to go toward something more simple. Since there are few people involved, it takes them about four days a week to maintain the gardens. The desirable would half a day or even one day per week, but it doesn't seem possible at the moment. The Cluj garden is a project with a high level of autonomy, seeds and seedling production, building some of the tools and using minimum mechanization (we just have one small two-wheel tractor).

Some general reflections:

Often enough, exterior help is necessary for the farming project to function well. Simplifying cultivation makes the collective work easier, but aren't we falling into an excessive rationalization? The economy of scale means compromises that can lead to a loss of sense and repetitive work. However, at the same time it can also free some time for the other fights.

It's hard to find a balance between political involvement and farming obligations when we know that the work is going to be put on some other individuals of the collective if our first commitments are not answered. In consequence, we don't feel legitimate to fight «outside».

As a final general conclusion, not only we have to anticipate the time that a farming project is going to take, but also to make sure to keep communicating when the collective meets difficulties.



DISCUSSION OF GENDER AND AGRICULTURE

During the meeting in Rocalet, we took some time to talk about the question of gender in relation to agriculture. It was mostly a space of sharing personal experiences. Here we want to give you a short summary of some of the things we talked about. However, this text is just a small part of the discussion, just some words that have stayed in the memory of some of the people who participated that day.

There were several people who had experienced situations where a difference in roles or tasks had been made according to the assigned gender. Even if this was perceived as not being exactly the same working within a collective as it was in commercial agriculture, the mere fact that people would be organized besides capitalism, for example in a collective, doesn't necessarily stop the reproduction of inequalities, roles, etc. stemming from patriarchy.

For example, on a collective farm the women were more taking care of the children while the men were doing more work in the agricultural project. Another example was from one person assigned female who related that they had spent two years in agricultural apprenticeship on a farm and several times asked to be taught the use of the tractor, but the boss didn't show them. When a new apprentice, assigned male, appeared, they were immediately shown.

However, forced roles can happen the other way around too. A person seen as a woman mentioned that they sometimes felt not being "feminist enough" if they spend a lot of time in the kitchen, although often that's what they enjoy doing.

Apparently, if there is a difference in the physical strength or the experience some

people have, that can lead to situations perceived as oppressive. Here, it is most often men that take the roles of the oppressor. However, we can also observe similar problems in the relationship between several men, for example against men that seem to be weaker, just as in the relationship between men and women or other people perceived as female, trans, intersex or queer.

"Let me do it.", "You have to do it like this.", "This is how to fix it!", are expressions often heard which at the same time as being oppressive can stop people from going on and doing and making their own experience, and in that way from learning, finding the solution themselves or their own way of doing something, that might have been different but not worse. It would be more pleasant if help would be offered instead of imposed, that way it being less authoritarian, for example by saying "do you want me to tell you/show you this..." or "I personally do it like that". These phrases give the possibility to pass knowledge and therefore avoid people struggling to find a way of doing something in an effective way if they could just have been informed, but don't forcefully create strong hierarchies.

In the discussion it was also pointed out that there is a connection between economical requirements and the valorization of certain tasks and expertise compared to others. In patriarchy and capitalism a higher value is given to some tasks over others. In general the tasks that are traditionally assigned to women are devalorized and economically less valued than tasks traditionally performed by men: cooking, cleaning, child caring on the one side while driving the tractor, building a house, bringing building materials on the other. In a collective we have to be careful to not fall into the same logic.



Hermann Garden, Helsinki 2013 (CC BY 2.0, flickr.com/photos/dodoorg)

In our surroundings we have also witnessed a higher visibility and valorization of aggressive or violent acts showing force, such as riots, spectacular direct actions, wild fights and being imprisoned after an action, while self-caring and taking care of others, like getting some rest, taking care of oneself, healing, cooking, organizing solidarity and going to pick someone up from prison, are less visible and get valued less.

Another important point we talked about was the question of how to react facing a situation where we observe certain, for example sexist, behavior that needs to be addressed. If one feels like talking with the person acting oppressively, it is important to think about how to bring the critique forward so that a chance is given for it to be received and integrated. One possibility could be asking another person who has a close relationship to the one acting oppressively to talk to them. A vital aspect in this kind of difficult communication is making the difference between „that behavior/expression of yours was perceived

as sexist/an aggression/oppressive“ and „you are sexist/ an oppressor...“, although as one usually identifies with their actions, the person might not actually feel the difference every time.

We were lucky to finish our little discussion with a summarized quote of Tibetan wisdom: „It can happen that we think of compassion as smooth, kind, sweet, polite, avoiding conflict, not speaking even one word louder than the other...but, in a certain situation compassion can lead to an act of violence, of destruction, of speaking loudly. Every situation must be looked at differently, individually.“

Accounting for the manifold ways sexist oppression can appear in our life, discussion rounds like this one are always valuable and a step towards a free society. Together we can take care to keep a close look on all sorts of situations we live, see the world through the eyes of another, and support each other by sharing our experiences and analysis. Thanks to everybody who participated.

THE CHALLENGES OF ACTIVISM IN EASTERN EUROPE

Due to a feeling that more attention should be paid on the big difference of conditions for struggle in the east and the west of Europe, a discussion was organized to talk about the situation of the three eastern Europe countries which were represented in this gathering. The main points that came up in this discussion are following:

Slovenia:

There are a few anarchist groups in the main cities of Slovenia. It is difficult to build stable collectives because there is a lot of turn over of people, and the western European methods don't necessarily fit in the social and cultural situation there. In 2014 there was an uprising against political elite, where anarchist movements held several groups and got recognised on a political level. In addition to the movement's difficulties in relation to the political environment, it is also struggling with internal problems because of ego issues and people who want to keep the control.

Poland:

In Poland there is a lack of tradition of leftist struggle. It is a religious country and the general environment is hostile, very supportive of capitalism and full of different kinds of fascism and nationalism. Even when you can count on people to do some actions it is mainly with a legal approach - media orientated and NGOs orientated. The term communist is badly perceived in Poland, and in Romania and in Germany it is practically a swear word.



The Białowieża Forest on the Polish-Belarusian border is one of the oldest forests left in Europe, but now the trees there are being cut down. Tenants', workers' and trade union and anti-fascist movements are the most joined but the interest for climate occupations is almost non-existing. The few people engaging with these things have a cold case. There is too much to do considering the amount of people dedicated, so it is easy to burn out when trying.

With the workers' and tenants' unions there is also an informal hierarchy. In the past there has been a division between this block and decentralised actions. 60% of agriculture land is small farming and the farmers are victims of the change made by capitalism. Now there is a new donation program in Poland, that gives you money to start a new business if you agree to selling your land. Half of the farmers do that, but the other half is resisting a lot, more than

the anarchists. Recently they spent 400 days blocking fracking and refuse to leave their land. Despite some historical struggles it's still difficult to get many farmers active on a political level.

Romania:

In Romania there is also a lack of people having a traditional culture of struggling. Rosia Montana, where a successful and from reclaim the fields supported protest against gold mining took place in 2013, didn't have an antirepression group, so many groups were fined during actions and now people are afraid to join actions. A supportive group would be needed. There are no political squats in the country; you need to pay rent everywhere. What people do is that they work in the west of Europe to have money and time back in Romania to do political work. There is no place to go dumpster diving, because everything is already recycled. The consensus decision making is hard in the Romanian groups, but workshops are done to train on that issue and work differently.

Last year there was an uprising against corruption and the party who came in power. There were not enough people to organise it, so it didn't spread widely. Nationalists were recuperating the movement, and the few times that people tried to challenge it with an anarchist flag it was not well received. There was a consensus on nonviolence and that was well respected, but since there was no agitators. 20 people excluded from the protest couldn't do much. In Rosia Montana people were doing wild protests but now it has been cleared and recuperated in the same way.

In Romania it's hard to find people interested both in agriculture and in politics. The political activists don't put energy in gardening and vice versa. One person was working



with an association in la Via Campesina network. Furthermore there's an association called Ecoruralist that does a lot of lobbying but is not radical.

What now?

As a conclusion to the discussion, the people from these eastern countries tried to come up with ideas of how could Europe be made equal and how the people from the western Europe could best support the east. They said that a long changing work together east-west would be the most useful thing. Right now it's hard to ask for help and the cultural differences make communication even harder, so people from these countries should interact more. There's many difficulties with bank accounts being fined in the east, so a proposition to find ways to send financial support from west to east was made. It was also pointed out that there should have more contact with people from Ukraine.

PART 3: NEWS FROM THE CONSTELLATION

Free the Soil

meeting

13-14 OCTOBER 2018, HAMBURG, GERMANY

Let's free the Soil together!

On the 13-14 October we will organize the first international Free the soil meeting in Hamburg, Germany and we encourage all of you to join. The meeting is open to both groups and individuals who would like to take part in organizing the mass action in 2019 and/or the agricultural and climate camp around the action.

In 2019 a mass action will take place in northern Europe to shut down a fertilizer production plant to stop the destruction where it's happening and dismantle the legitimacy of the agricultural industry. The action will be an act of mass civil disobedience, using our bodies and collective determination to overcome barriers and close down one of Europe's biggest fertilizer production plants. In the days leading up to the action, a climate and agriculture camp will be organized in close proxim-

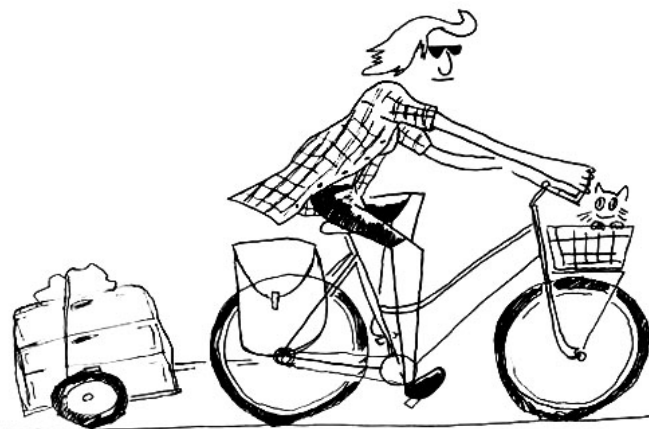
ity to where the action will take place. We would like you to take part in making this happen!

The 13-14 October will the first big international planning meeting. There groups and individuals from northern Europe can meet up and plan both the camp and the action. The suggested action plan and site will be presented, working groups will be created and together we will form a mass action.

We hope that you and your group will come to the meeting, participate in the planning, mobilize to the action and camp and participate in both. Please let us know if you are coming to the meeting, so we can arrange sleeping places and food. You can sign up by writing to freethesoil@riseup.net, we have a PGP key.

overgrow the government.





Ecotopia
Biketour
SPAIN PORTUGAL
SUMMER 2018

Ecotopia Biketour

The Ecotopia Biketour is a self-organized, international community that has been organizing a yearly bicycle tour in different regions of Europe since 1990. During the tour we visit environmental and social projects and practice forms of activism and sustainable living. We cook communal vegan food, practice consensus decision making, and share skills by doing workshops. Ecotopia Biketour is for anyone interested in traveling by bike, community life, DIY, an ecological lifestyle, and/or learning by experience. If this sounds good to you, feel welcome to join us!

We are usually a group of 20-40 cyclists. Most people join for between 2 weeks and 2 months and are participating for the first time. We rarely cycle all together; some people go ahead in the morning and mark the route with arrows on the road. People then follow in small groups at their own speed and rhythm. We support each other and keep distances at a level that everybody and every bike can manage. Don't worry if you have never travelled by bike before.

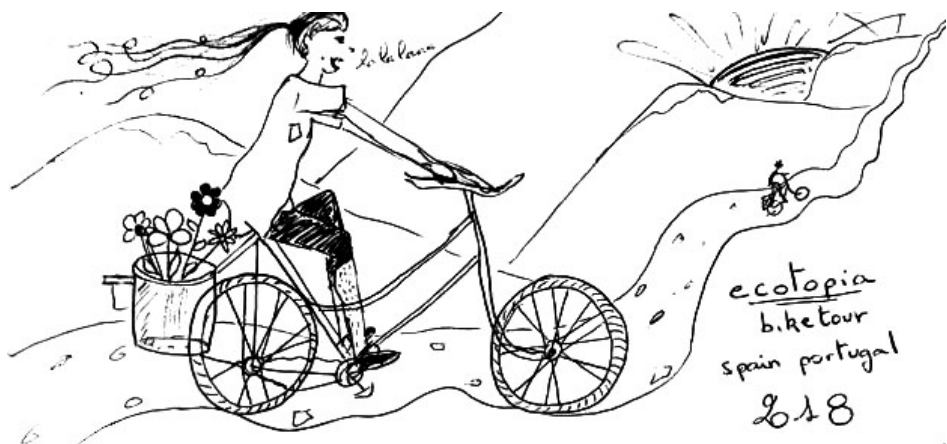
We try to create a non-hierarchical environment by rotating responsibilities, sharing skills and respecting personal needs. People can sign up for daily tasks (cooking, pulling a

trailer, marking the route, etc.), but everyone can decide individually how much they want to do. We gather as a group every few days to talk about how everything is going and to collectively make decisions. One of our core values is to create a non-discriminatory environment.

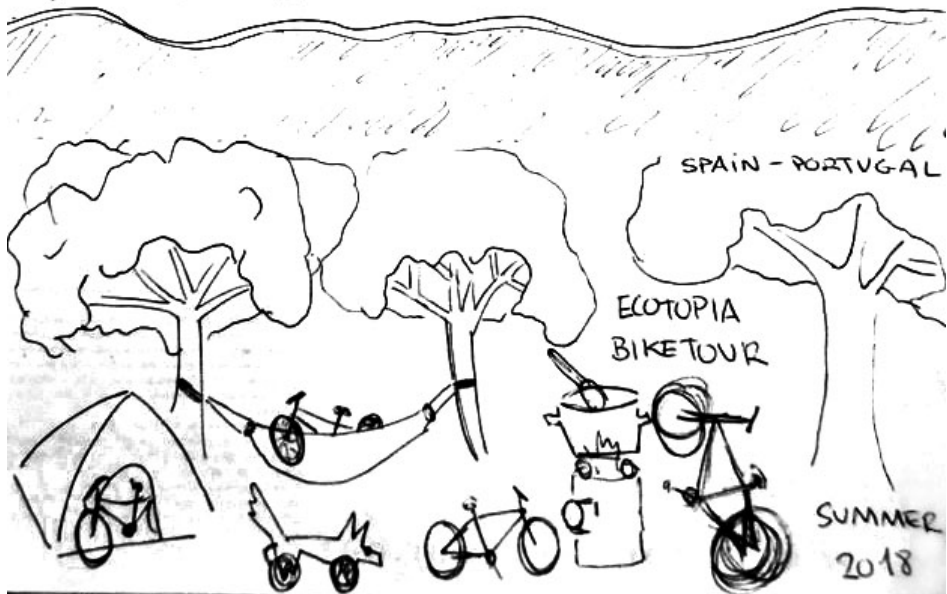
We cook communally with portable stoves, carry all our equipment ourselves, try to buy local and organic food and dumpster dive where possible. We suggest a donation of 3-5 € per day to cover food costs, but people who cannot give this donation are also welcome to join.

This year, our theme is "Reclaim the Fields". Starting the 28th of June in Pamplona/Iruña, we will follow the northern coast of the Iberian Peninsula via Vitoria-Gasteiz and Bilbao (mid July), Gijón/Xixón (end July), A Coruña (mid August), Vigo (end August) until Porto (early September).

If you have some questions or have recommendations for projects, groups and events for us to visit on the way or would like to help preparing the tour, please write to 2018@ecotopiabiketour.net or join our mailing list in our website: www.ecotopiabiketour.net.



ECOTOPIA BIKE TOUR 2018



A RURAL OCCUPATION in FRAGUAS

Fraguas is a project of communal rural renovation in the mountains in the north of Guadalajara, Spain. Since spring 2013, a group of people, the Association of rural inhabitants of the northern mountain, have been rebuilding the ruins of the ancient village based on agroecological values, collective self-governance and the will for opening new living spaces in a zone which suffers a lot from abandoning.

During the last years, they have been cleaning the streets and the paths, maintaining the fruit trees, rebuilding houses, improving the entrances and the water network from the springs... They have strengthened the relationships with the surrounding villages while making the project grow and get stronger with the help of numerous united persons.

The local community council of Castilla la

Mancha is the owner of the mountain where the village is situated. During a short term of exchanges about the multiple possibilities that have been shared with the group of the brave young ones, the local community council started a judicial process aiming to depopulate and demolish Fraguas again and to punish the new occupants with a 24 year jail sentence and a 63500€ fine.

Until today the new occupants, full of dignity and hope, have kept working in the village and have initiated a campaign of defense in order to keep Fraguas being a place where the ancient savoir-faire and the future's utopias can meet, where action makes the doubt vanish and the hope be alive, and where people fit in their personal, social and global ecosystem with respect. We encourage you to visit the project (fraguaspobladores@gmail.com) and help to spread the information.



HOW CAN YOU HELP FRAGUAS PROJECT?



BY COMING TO FRAGUAS

We keep rebuilding, we keep planting our garden, we keep defending the land in an eco sustainable and self-sufficient way.



WITH ECONOMICAL SUPPORT

- By organizing solidarity events to rise up funds. If you feel like and/or have the strength to do so... JUST DO IT!
- By donating, as usually, as much as you want.

IBAN: ES15 1491 0001 2430 0008 1648

BIC/SWIFT: TRIOESMMXXX

Address: Triodos Bank, 5 José Echegaray, 28232 Las Rozas, Madrid.

Name: Teresa Sánchez-Fayos



BY SPREADING THE WORD

By email, Whatsapp, social networks... Do as much as you can in order to make the situation in Fraguas known everywhere. Thanks to you, we will stop the demolition of the village.

Facebook: Fraguas Revive

Gmail: fraguaspobladores@gmail.com

WE CAN'T GO TO JAIL FOR REPOPULATING A VILLAGE!

WE MUST NOT LET ANOTHER VILLAGE TO DISAPPEAR!

¡WE NEED YOUR HELP!



FRAGUAS SE QUEDA

FRAGUAS WAS DESTROYED ALREADY ONCE. WHAT'S DEAD, MAY NEVER DIE!



MONDEGGI, a farm without bosses

Year 2014. Before being replaced by the Metropolitan City, the Province of Florence formalizes the will to get rid of the “Villa di Mondeggi Compound”, located in the municipality of Bagno a Ripoli. With one of its last acts, the Province authorizes Mondeggi Lapeggi I.L.c. to the disposal of its property. The company was responsible from 2002 to 2009 of a bankruptcy management of the estate and for accumulating debts for more than one million euros. Short-sighted and deaf towards the population’s requests to valorize the social purpose of the public good and redesign the territory in a participative way, the Metropolitan City of Firenze inaugurates a season of notices of sale and auctions ignoring citizens’ commitment to keep it in a collective form. However, no buyer is found.

The last public notice made to collect expressions of interests on purchasing the Compound expired on 30th of November 2017. Amongst the proposals received, Ruffino I.L.c., an historical name in Italian oenology and already owner of Poggio Casciano Manor, may had advanced the most interesting one. But who are we exactly talking about?

Is all gold what shines?

Ruffino s.r.l. controls 100% Tenute Ruffino s.r.l., and in 2011 has been completely sold to the American corporation Constellation Brands Inc. However the control is not direct but through three societies registered in Luxemburg and a trust registered in Delaware, in United States, owned by Sands Family. As Luxemburg and Delaware are notable tax



havens, known for their secrecy and for the tax advantages offered to companies, the choice to place there the registered office for the European activities could be motivated by taxation reasons.

According to an American study on 258 companies analyzed, Constellation Brands is the 37th worst taxpayer, although we're talking about an alcoholic drinks empire that generate 7 billion dollars a year. In the north-west of Mexico, the group Corona-Modello owned by Constellation Brands, plans to transform 20.000 million cubic meters of water into a billion cubic meters of beer a year in Mexicali, a semi-deserted zone where, till now, peasant agriculture has been resisting intensive agriculture and desertification process.

The seed and the sprouts

In this desert of credibility regarding potential buyers of Mondeggi, in total absence of perspective and foresight from local administrations, facing the carelessness since many year for the almost two hundred hectares of farm, a new seed is sprout on the uncultivated lands, in the park, between the farmhouses, the vineyards, the olive trees, the pastures and the arable land, and now since four years are sprouting.

We're talking about an estate saved from the abandonment and speculation, we're talking

about an experiment of popular and participative custody, we're talking about Mondeggi Fattoria Senza Padroni. This experience started concretely in 2014 joining women and man, peasants and citizens, people from Florence and all over Italy, in a path of construction and sharing of lands, olive trees, knowledge and space. It's the reconstruction of the social, human, affective and political fabric, around an estate that has been the symbol of the bad management and bad synergy between public and private. In Mondeggi we're experimenting a new way of surviving this system and consolidating the conception of the land as a precious good and a source of food and human relations.

What future for the land, the people, Mondeggi

In Italian, private is past participle of deprive. Sell Mondeggi means do without the opportunity of valorizing the social function of a public good and the crossroad of experiences of life, knowledge, horizons, without putting profits first of all, without pointing at the productivity at every cost. Together we want to continue to build and enlarge the use of the spaces and lands, sharing more and more paths and projects. We simply want to go on sharing.

Isn't it evident how this is opposite to the verb deprive?

Follow us on: <https://tbcfirenzemondeggi.noblogs.org/>





ZAD of NDDL, what's up?

What is the ZAD of NDDL (Notre-Dame-des-Landes)?

Notre-Dame-des-Landes refers to a project of airport building on the lands of the commune of the same name. This project is over 40 years old and threatens the biodiversity and fertile lands of the area, while promoting a fossil fuel organized world. Therefore, for the last ten years, the area of the project has been occupied in order to prevent its execution. The ZAD (Zone A Défendre, literally Zone/Area To Defend) was seriously threatened in 2012 by the launching of the «Caesar Operation», whose goal was to evict all occupants out of the area, but it failed thanks to the massive support of citizens from France and abroad.

A few weeks ago, the government announced the abort of the project. Some occupants, however, want to remain on the area in order

to keep on making the things that they've been doing and living the way that they've been living on for the past decade, without necessarily going legal. The ZAD represents about 3 400 acres (16 000 000 m²) of biodiversity rich and fertile lands, inhabited by on average 200 to 400 people spread out on 60 different locations/living communities within the territory of the ZAD.

What's hot right now? (ever since the abort of the airport building project)

Part of the occupants want to legalize the ZAD in order to stay there long term and feel safe, which overall leads to the necessity of a negotiation with the (National) State, in order to fix the terms of this legalization. What's to be discussed is the future of the lands, alternative projects growing on those lands (legal or not), and the houses and shacks that were built there.



In this regard, the State demanded the NDDL occupation movement to make «efforts», which led to the cleaning of «the road of the chicanes» (in French, «chicanes» designates «a serie of obstacles disposed along a road in order to make it more difficult to drive on it following a straight line»). This road was built after the announcement of the Caesar Operation in 2012. It was made up of decadent houses and extravagant art pieces, all from «waste» materials reflecting the resilience of the ZAD along with its creatively binding energy, and therefore held a special symbolic place in the heart of many occupants.

Moreover, this road was a highroad to the circulation of many occupants, while it is today guarded 24/7 by policemen. They film people, prevent many to cross the road etc. And ever since 2012, it is the first time that the police is officially present on the ZAD, mobilizing around 400 cops, drones and helicopters. Overall, it's stressful for all, inhabitants and occupants along.

Negotiations will start next week at the prefecture of Nantes which is the biggest city nearby. Persons from all horizons in the movement, legalizer and non legalizer, will be participating. But this does not exclude the possibility of an expulsion after the 1st of April, a date marking the end of the «winter truce».

Shacks have been burnt down recently. What happened exactly?

The shack that was burnt down was a tower at the entrance of the «road of the chicanes», a big shack that allowed to easily and quickly close the road. We don't exactly know who did

it, but it certainly wasn't an accident. There was a lot of wind that night and the combustion happened very quickly. It isn't the first time that such a thing happens on this road, which leads to a lot of incomprehension, in part of both the movement and civil society in general.

In addition, other shacks on the «road of the chicanes» have been dismantled by the occupation movement, but the atmosphere was tense and even getting physically violent sometimes. Nobody was happy to dismantle this road, but much pressure came from both inhabitants who wanted to be legalized, and neighbours of the ZAD who had struggled against the airport project as well but who did not see a point in maintaining the «chicanes» on the road ever since the State capitulated to build the airport and instead just wanted to use the road «normally» again.

The week of dismantling the road was horrible. Occupants preferred to do the job themselves, because they were aware of the value of these shacks and because they wanted rather to dismantle them than to have them smashed with a bulldozer.

Why would there not be any more reasons to stay?

There is a difference between the occupied territory on one side, and the road on the other side - that belongs to the Notre-Dame-des-Landes commune and its citizens, people who supported the struggle but want to use the road again and came to give a hand and «clean it». The dismantling concerned the «road of the chicanes» only, not the whole territory of the ZAD.





Is there a possibility that no one would be expelled? Is it a proposition made by anyone at all within the negotiations?

Within these negotiations, red lines have been drawn. One of them is that if only one person was to be expelled, if only one shack was to be destroyed, then negotiations would stop and we would stop everything, «everything» here meaning the efforts made so far to facilitate a dialogue with the State. This is to be true now, but also in the future, i.e after the end of the «winter truce» even if the government threatened to expulse all who would not be legalized after the 1st of April.

How many people are currently engaged in the negotiations?

There is one representative for each composing part of the struggle (those composing parts being for example Via Campesina, The Rioting Naturalists, etc.), and three representatives of the ZAD as a whole. In this regard, a total of eleven persons have been designated to form «the negotiation team». Within this group, three people talk directly to the Prefecture in the name of the whole ZAD, not on

their own nor in any of the composing part of the movement they are attached to, and three other persons can replace them if needed.

In the case of a non-expulsion decision, what is the mandate of the «use of the land» group in regard to the repartition of the lands?

It is a tricky question. We really don't know what will happen... whether the ZAD will become the owner of the lands directly, or get a «emphyteusis» with the State. The emphyteusis is a type of contract in regard to which the ZAD would rightfully use the lands for a period of time between 18 and 99 years after what, if use not questioned again, it would own those lands.

What we hope for is that an entity coming from the Struggle would obtain the right to use the lands, and that decisions would be taken in GA (General Assembly) in respect of common management based organization, so nobody would be labelled «owner». At least this goes for the official ZAD discourse. This would appear to be a better option in comparison to creating an association who would sign such contracts. Indeed, in the case of an association, if any illegal activities

were to be observed by the State, then the State would be able to sue the presidents of the association which in France concerns 3 to 5 designated people. This means that it would have a serious pressure way the whole movement in order to obtain what it wants, whatever this would be. In order to reduce the power of that pressure, one solution would be to make sure that those designated presidents of the created association would not own any valuable goods, like lands, buildings or money, susceptible to be ceased in the case of a trial.

However, things are even more complicated if you consider that the GA is not even recognized as fully representative of all occupants, because it is so hard to make your voice heard there if you do not have friends in the other composing parts of the movement.



If the State is the owner, can it have its say on the use of the lands? Will it impose special requirements?

The «emphyteusis» makes the GA of uses the «owner» within the period of time specified in the contract. This is not true only if the State can prove that the mandates of the GA compromise its ownership. However, on the ZAD there are many illegal things: a pirate radio, weed, shacks built without a construction permit...

If the terms of the ZAD are accepted, will there be problems with the demands of the State?

Nobody agrees on this subject. Some want to remain illegal and keep squatting, as they are against the principle of a

governing State. Others think that going legal would allow them to keep what they have already built.

The State already tried to evict you and you resisted. Why would you choose to go legal now then? Do you think that the police has become stronger now?

Opinions are divergent. Some think that, indeed, because the airport building project was abandoned, the struggle will surely benefit from less support than before.

On the other hand, there are many who supported the struggle not only against the airport project but also against «its world». Therefore, some hope to count on those supports and keep on promoting non-legalization.

Finally, a third group of people think that even though we can keep on counting on the support of non-legalizer, it is best that an association would get the authority, and that the occupation movement would unofficially squat the lands being under the official authority of the association.

The interest of the State in all that is that there wouldn't be talk about a ZAD anymore, meaning that there would be a semblance of «return to normal». No matter what illegal activities would carry on, the State would close its eyes on it. «Sème Ta Zad» (literally «Seed Your Zad») does not want to legalize its activities and wants to carry on non-market production.

Does a collective ownership have meaning? Is there a problem with the very notion of «ownership»?

The owner-option would result in creating





a «donation fund», which would cost an astronomical amount of money: 2000€/ha for 1650ha of land and the houses on top. This is certainly an option the State would be interested in! We can ask for the money from Lush which is a Belgian natural non-animal-tested handmade-cosmetics brand.

What guarantees that the association would not evict the occupants?

The association would constitute a counter-power in itself, but these are things that are still in discussion. The association would act as a screen gathering people from different composing parts of the struggle who don't individually have any mandate to make decisions different from those of the GA of uses. There are already some issues related to this GA of use in terms of how the influence and powers of everyone and every group involved operate, and it doesn't seem like something that will change overnight.

How can we help you? In what regards? Maybe by not judging you too quickly considering how tricky the situation is and that we are not experiencing what you are on the field, etc.?

Firstly, there still is a callout for settling projects on the ZAD - self-sufficient, merchant or squat oriented. Secondly, material support is welcome (palets, nails, etc.), as well as vigilance and reactivity in order to come and support. It's always comforting to know that there is a lot of support everywhere.

In Spring for instance, the «take» of land is organized on the ZAD, and physical support will be needed there because it could come to confrontation.

Certain composing parts of the movement will be scared to lead this action in times of negotiations. It helps if you support this action in your communities because of the weight they have in the movement. You can explain how important it is that «Sème ta Zad» would control all lands of the ZAD, especially in order to allow new settlings to take place. This is what contributes to maintain a favorable «balance of power» in the duration of negotiations. In that sense, there is a callout for decentralized actions. Those are crucial; if nobody stands ready to act, the ZAD will simply have no weight in those negotiations.

How does a new project settle in on the ZAD? What are the conditions?

There is a «welcome» group organizing mediation between the ZAD and aspiring NDDL projects. One can also simply settle, meet people, live there on a daily basis and propose new things.

Also, squats have opened around the ZAD in places where it's possible to imagine ambitious actions. Of course, fascist ideas are out of order... Those are the conditions.:





COMMUNAL URBAN GARDENING IN HELSINKI

In Helsinki individual allotment gardens are a common hobby in summertime, and also communal gardening appears here and there. However, in this article we will elaborate only a few most notable garden communities best known to us, as they are open and easy to approach for new people and are probably most interesting to the people from the RtF network. Information about other gardens can be found at the website of urban gardening <https://kaupunkiviljely.fi/brief-in-english/>.

Grass roots activity in Finland is generally speaking quite tame. The city of Helsinki has been mostly happy about urban gardening happening in its lands and even made a manual for people about how to take such initiative. Even though the communities mentioned here are in good terms with the city, their activity is self-organized, non-commercial and low-threshold. In similar way both of the squats functioning in Helsinki at the moment, Kumma and Makamik, are nowadays legalized and pay rent, but the city doesn't

interfere much with their activities. However, the squatter and anarchist scene are quite apart from the gardeners. From gardens one can find activists, local green thumbs and curious wonderers.

Dodo's Urban Farmers started as a working group of the Dodo organisation in summer 2009. That year Dodo had a theme of "Cities and Food", and among other things it was researching how to grow food in the cities. DUF established a guerrilla garden to Pasila, and the following year the activity expanded to urban gardens all around the city: the Bag Garden of Kalasatama was established, crib work gathering was organized and box gardens were built on housing cooperatives' yards. In 2012 as part of World Design Capital Year there was an initiative of building a big greenhouse in the urban space of Turntable, another working group of Dodo. Dodo's Urban Farmers started to rent a space in the abandoned part of the rail yard in Pasila from the Finnish Transport Agency, and for some



time the space that had originally started as a guerrilla gardening was also rented. However, the renting was stopped later, as someone from the agency destroyed it, unaware of the garden being legal, and at that time the garden was grossly underutilized anyway.

In **Turntable** there are nowadays lots of open work gatherings during summer, where for example growing boxes, irrigation system, electricity system and solar panels have been built. Turntable welcomes everyone also to take work shifts in its garden and provides all necessary tutoring to unexperienced volunteers. Dodo also helps to tutor new agents with gardening and does lobbying to the city. Dodo gets public subsidies from the Ministry of Education and Culture, and the rents event budget of Turntable are paid mostly with money gained from renting the space to private events. In this way the events can stay free, which is one of Turntable's manifest's most important messages. More information of Dodo and Turntable can be found on their websites <https://dodo.org/english/> and <https://kaantopoyta.fi/>.

Hermann Garden is an urban garden located in the Hermann park. The area used to

belong to a local prison, but when dwellings were erected to the zone the park was excluded from the prison and became public. The place had been an edible plant garden also when it was a part of the prison, and old plants such as rhubarb, raspberries, oregano and lots of wild herbs had abided there. In 2012 lots of people from the neighborhood started their own guerrilla gardens and soon after that established communal ones too. When the public city plan of the area was created, the city took into account the existence of the urban garden and so it could peacefully continue its activity. However, the land had to be renewed, as a heavy metal quantity exceeding the threshold limit values was found in the measurements conducted by the city,





but the city took this as their responsibility and outlined the gardens by planting berry bushes around it.

Troughout the summer 2018 there is a work gathering in the Hermann Garden every Wednesday at 18 and every Sunday at 16. It is easy to blend in the work, as more experienced gardeners are happy to tutor the newbies. The harvest is divided between the workers as it gets ripe. Nevertheless, the garden is open to people to work on their own also outside the planned work gatherings. The garden has its own Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/560301447376832/>) for discussing the affairs of the lot.



Syötävä puisto (edible park) is a communal urban gardening and culture event space that is located in Mustikkamaa in Helsinki. It was established in spring 2014 as a part of Paikan tuntu (the feeling of place) project of Maaseudun Sivistysliitto (countryside high culture union). Perennial berry bushes and fruit trees were planted in work gatherings, and open land plantations and edible mushroom plantations were established in the workshops held by students, urban gardeners and different NGO:s. For a couple of years there have also been chicken during summers.

After the end of the project Maaseudun Sivistysliitto continued for a year as the background organization of the garden but stopped then, and it was unclear whether it was possible to keep the garden running. However, this year it was transferred to be coordinated by the city's Culture and Youth Department. Many associations organize workshops and courses in the park about urban gardening, permaculture, wild herbs and nature. In summer 2018 there is a work gathering every Wednesday at 17-20. Other

events will be published in the website <https://msl.fi/osallistu/taide-ja-kulttuuri/syotava-puisto/>.

Berry guerrilla is also a community whose objective is to increase edible gardening in cities, but it isn't limited to any specific area. It was established first in 2016 in Gothenburg, where it started first as a crowdfunded guerrilla gardening, and later the city agreed to support the association by providing materials. Last autumn Berry guerrilla started its activity also in Helsinki. In Hakaniemi around Tokoinranta guerrilla berry bushes were planted, of which some were unfortunately removed by the park keepers. Now the association is being registered in Finland too. Berry guerrilla has its own neighbourhood circle that plants gardens close to its members' home areas, but the main aim is to cultivate berry bushes in particular to visible places in the city centre available for everyone, like at sight seeing places, common recreation areas, dating places and by jogging routes. Along guerrilla gardening the legal ways are also intended to be used: there is pending a complaint of Tokoinranta planning, where the city is asked to change the Sargent's cherries to edible ones so that the gardening organizations nearby can take care of them. A collaboration with Google maps is under planning, where the fruit trees and berry bushes around the world would be marked in the map so that everywhere also non-locals could easily find their way to them.

According to the experience of the Berry guerrilla -people the approach to guerrilla gardening is much more negative in Finland than in Sweden, so here the planting is done at night time under the protection of the darkness. During winter the meetings are open when future activity is being planned, but in summer they are not announced publicly due to their illegality. If you want to get to know Berry guerrilla, don't hesitate to contact through Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/BerryGuerrilla/>. You can participate in the events also nonrecurringly, but especially locals are encouraged to commit to the action. There's numerous ideas, but the berry bushes require regular maintenance and the community needs active members. So don't just tell your ideas to other people, but start to put the ideas to practice yourself!



THE STRUGGLE OF THE "FAUT PAS PUCER (mémé dans les ordis)" collective

Nathalie & Pierre

In France, the animal husbandry requires to identify each one of your farm animals: cows have IDs, and since 2010 sheeps and goats have had two ear-tags, one of which must contain an RFID chip. The identification system began at first with one tattoo and then there was one ear-tag, without chip. Animal chipping is a way to standardize agriculture and peasantry. It is also the result of a totalizing will, because this managing frenzy of wanting to know everything that happens on your farm at any moment is only possible with computerization. Even if the arguments to justify a managerial and bureaucratic logic to handle the herds are about health, in the end it is just about the management of our lives.

In 2007 a first text was written by people against electronic identification of farm animals. Since then, collectives have been created in almost all departments in which there is sheep and goat rearing. In these collectives there are farmers, but not only - there are also other people against the global normalization and computerization. In 2013 there was a meeting with all those collectives, and 6 or 7 meetings have happened since that time. Some of them are close to an agricultural union called Confédération paysanne, and others are more independent.

Nathalie and her partner had a farm control in 2013, and they received the controller with a hundred people who came to support them. The fact that there were lots of people strengthened their refusal to put RFID chips

on their sheep and to follow the administration's diktats. In consequence, the state cut out 20000€ of their subsidies. However, a solidarity reaction settled: people from everywhere wrote letters to administration, organized concerts and meals, sold potatoes in support, and this way the farm got 15000€ back. To continue the struggle they went to the institution's building representing the agricultural administration with 80 people and some animals, to insist on the fact that they would not get their herd radio-chipped. After that they had no problem for three years and got their subsidies back. Later the head of the administration changed and they had a new control, and again there were hundred people to host the controller. Now their case is being reviewed. They already have an interdiction to move or sell the livestock, and there is a threat that the herd might be slaughtered.

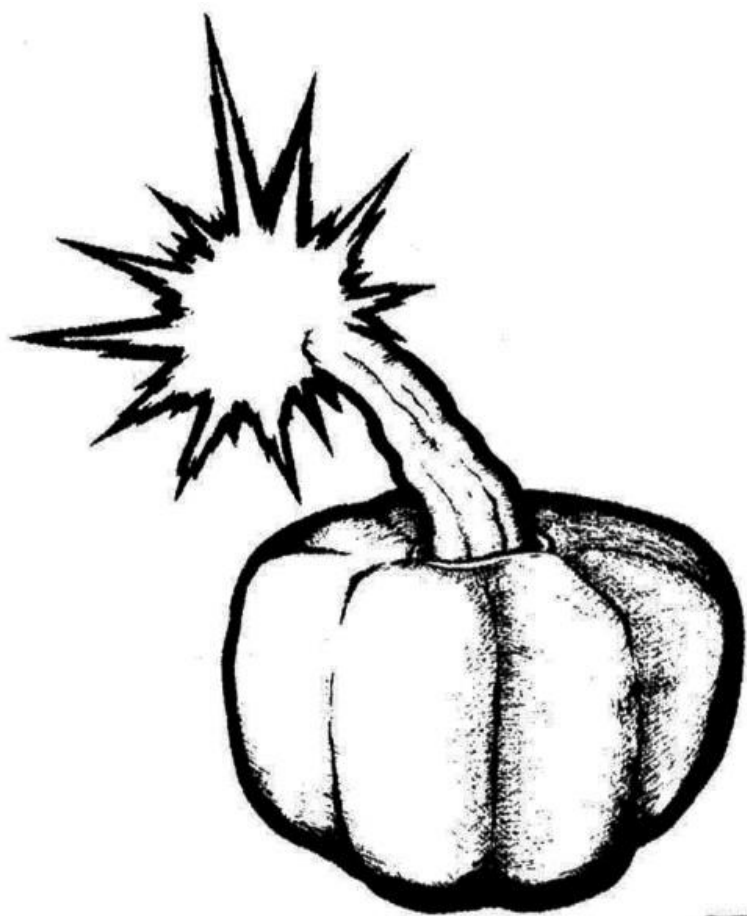
If there is identification, you have to wonder who is identifying. In this case it is the state who wants to standardize and unify the "national herd" or the "European herd" to be able to control it "in real time". This goes along with a right to life and death over the livestock and a right to seize the herds incorrectly or not at all identified, being based on the logic that untraceable livestock is the same as toxic. Herd slaughters on sheep and goats apparently have never been done on the only base of the absence of RFID chips, but on cows it has already happened.

Basically, the managerial arguments about health are fake; you can track shit, but it won't prevent from diseases or anything. We should stop producing shit in first place instead of trying to make shit traceable. This is even more true now that the extreme genetic selection and intensive farming weakened the livestock. Traceability has nothing to do with quality. Knowing where and how an epidemic started doesn't mean you solved the problem. On the contrary, we should wonder about what's the kind of farm and production where the diseases appear; we should think in a different way of the breeding selection and the problems of the agricultural industry and go back to the basics. What is really happening is called sanitation marketing, meaning the eradication of small farms in the name of nuisances created by the industrialization of husbandry! In case of an epidemic, mass

cullings help dealing with the overproduction and pursuing the "structural change", which practically means increase of the farms' size.

Movements against the electronic chip appeared in other European countries also, such as Italy and Germany. "Faut pas pucer" tries to connect with them, but some got faded away quickly. It's tough because since we don't live on our production in the actual economic context, we don't know how to do without the subsidies. We don't have enough imagination and we are too individualist, so it's hard to make the links to reach an international protest. The farmers' problem is that they work alone, they learned to do what they were told, they don't have a solidary instinct and they face their neighbors' misunderstanding when they rebel. A common opinion is that "it's normal to follow the law if you get subsidies"... Hence the collective and support are so important. The state must know there's a lot of people following this struggle, because the numbers enable to keep a balance of power. To start with, we should have more people living at our farms! It is important also to explain our refusal and to stay critical to the society we live in. It's difficult to make people listen since it questions a lot of things, but we have to make links with other people's livings.

Another collective called Écran total was created about the refusal to get our lives managed, administrated, and from the observation that the problem isn't only farmers' concern. In this collective there's all kind of professions affected by computerization: social workers, printers, carpenters, plumbers, unemployed and a lot of education workers. A call came out from the collective "l'Appel de Beauchastel", against digital school. The demand is not to use informatics tools in education. We realized with "Écran total" that digital technology is very efficient to avoid any protest against it. Now there's also the "Hors norme" collective against management by norms, that was created from the meeting of a few active people in agriculture after Jérôme Laronze's murder. In this collective we have a reflection about how to keep an agricultural activity outside the administration.



squash!
the state!

*RECLAIM THE FIELDS

.....is a constellation of people and collective projects willing to go back to the land and re-assume the control over food production. We are determined to create alternatives to capitalism through cooperative, collective, autonomous, real needs oriented small scale production and initiatives, putting theory into practice and linking local practical action with global political struggles.



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