

# Agriculture lives with, on and within nature

Agriculture is faced with a challenge: how does it strike a balance between using nature to grow and harvest crops on the one hand and satisfying increasingly diverse societal demands on the other? They are straddling the divide between farmers' profitability on the one hand and protecting nature on the other. This always depends on the individual farmer, their know-how, possible crops, the location and the available options.

## Using nature and protecting what is precious

Insects also benefit from many agricultural crops. These include rapeseed, sunflower or fruit trees. Catch crops, which are grown after the main crop to improve the soil quality, provide insects with food later on in the year and serve as shelter for game. More and more farmers are looking for approaches that foster symbiosis between different types of plants or between animals and plants.

## Maintaining landscape features

Hedgerows between fields and meadows provide habitats for many small organisms, ranging from lizards and mice to various types of bird. They also benefit farmers by storing humidity and protect surface areas and crops from wind, which prevents erosion of the upper soil layers.

In the past decades, food security was a greater priority than today. Intensive use of land and concentration on a small number of crops have led to displacement of many animal and plant species.

## Responding to diverse demands

However, the demands on agriculture and agriculture itself are steadily evolving. Plant protection products, for example, can be applied with more precision and lower dosages thanks to modern technology. This reduces the environmental impact. More diverse crops and crop rotation, as well as advances in plant breeding, also help reduce the impact of agriculture.

However, it is important to consider regional production and uses for harvested products alongside environmental and climate protection. Regional value chains with short transport distances also benefit nature. Just like the past, the future will also be about striking the best possible balance between economy, ecology and social aspects of agriculture.

Concept and realisation:



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