

Taking your farm into the future

Image: W. Helber



Bavaria is traditionally predominated by family farms, which are relatively small compared to the farms in the North and the East of Germany. Technological progress has made the work easier, there are fewer physically demanding tasks in stables and fields. Which enables today's individual farmers to manage greater surface areas and more livestock, on average, than they used to. That is another reason why the number of active farms has seen a continuous decline over the past decades. At the same time, there is a steady decline in the number of animals and the cultivated area across Bavaria.

Framework conditions and agriculture are changing

Food security used to be a priority in the past decades. Our farmers' main responsibility consisted in producing and selling plant- and animal-based products in line with the market's quality requirements. Political ambitions and societal desires change over time. Nature protection has moved up on the agenda, and the responsibilities are more complex.

International trade is gaining momentum, and Bavarian farmers are increasingly having to contend with foreign competitors, who produce according to different framework conditions. They are rising to this challenge by applying a range of strategies. One approach consists in keeping expenses low through smart production processes, in order to be competitive. Farms which are able to process their own basic commodities such as cereals or milk on-farm can generate more added value. Ramping up the necessary capacities, however, usually requires considerable expense and effort.

Tapping into niche markets as an option

Some farmers, driven by the values they believe in, have started to experiment with new crops and exotic plants: You can find the occasional Bavaria-grown ginger, quinoa, lupins, aronia berries or safran. There are also producers who grow passion fruit, papaya, coffee or cocoa in large greenhouses, using residual heat from biogas plants for example. The word "niche" already implies, however, that not all Bavarian farms will fit. Finding the best way forward tailored to the given farm is a huge challenge.

Concept and realisation:



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Landwirtschaft Herrsching

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