

World Food Stories

tasks:

Text 1:

1. Search the places that appear in the text, in the atlas or online!
2. What are the consequences of the drought for Josef Hirsch?
3. Why do these dry periods occur? Why can't nature compensate for them?
4. Which plants are particularly affected?
5. What is the further consequence of the drought for the apples?
6. What solution does Josef Hirsch aim for?

Text 2:

1. Search the countries that appear in the text, in the atlas or online!
2. What exactly does land grabbing mean?
3. Why are large investment firms so interested in land?
4. How did the lawyer Samuel Nguiffo and the peasant women fight for their rights?
5. What success have they had so far?
6. How does the lawyer Samuel Nguiffo assess the chances of women farmers being allowed to keep their land?

Text 3:

1. Search the countries that appear in the text, in the atlas or online!
2. Why did Budi and Septi choose organic fruit and vegetables?
3. What do Budi and Septi expect from consumers?
4. What has Septi done to avoid plastic?
5. Why do Budi and Septi find that the Indonesian government's current funding programs are not helpful?
6. Why, says Budi, do women farmers often have a hard time making their demands?

Text 4:

1. Search the countries that appear in the text, in the atlas or online!
2. How do many people in Cajamarca earn their living?
3. Why is the region so important to the country?

4. What consequences of mining do Yefferson Rojas describe?
5. How did Yefferson Rojas and his youth organization work for their rights?
6. What has the people of Cajamarca achieved?

Text 5:

1. Search the countries that appear in the text, in the atlas or online!
2. What ideas does Michael Hauser have to ensure that a growing population is supplied with sufficient and healthy food in 2050?
3. What is the context of the concepts of food security and food sovereignty?
4. Where can genetically modified maize be grown and where not?
5. What are the biggest problems with maize cultivation in African countries?

Text 1 - Josef Hirsch Austria

Josef Hirsch is a farmer from Harmannsdorf in Lower Austria. Twice a week he goes to the market in Vienna and sells his apples there, but through the drought period he must buy apples from farmers from the region for the first time to supply his customers.

The reason for this drought is the low rainfall due to a high-pressure area in Scandinavia. This has also caused the harvests to decrease in recent years, but this year it is particularly bad. Not only the harvest of potatoes, but also other crops are affected. Winter cereals such as wheat and barley, but also sugar beet and summer cereals such as corn and spelt are affected. An estimate of yields at this point would be frivolous. But what can be said is that the harvest will be scarce this year as well, says Manfred Weinhappl, head of the plant production department of the Lower Austrian Chamber of Agriculture.

The amounts of precipitation were measured by the ZAMAG weather station and these clearly show that this year in April there was up to 70% less precipitation than in previous years. As a result, groundwater is declining and the plants are no longer able to use it. You can think of the earth as a sparkassa. There are certain water supplies that the plants pick up. The drier years you have in a row, the less the plant can get, says Weinhappel. A wheat that has formed five ears of corn during normal precipitation, this year only forms 2 to 3 ears, explains the farmer Hirsch.

In addition to the drought, pests are becoming more common, especially with apples. In 2018, around 130,000 tons of earth apples infested with the wireworm had to be disposed of. This problem has implications for Austria's food sovereignty. Due to crop failures, the apples had to be purchased from Egypt, France, or Israel.

Despite the loss of yield, the situation is not yet threatening the existence of a farm size such as Hirsch's with an area of just under 100 hectares. But for colleagues with smaller companies, this is not so certain, says Hirsch. Günther Hirsch, the son of Josef Hirsch, is currently studying at the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences in Vienna. The drought is also a headache for him. Once he takes over his father's business, he plans to switch to smaller areas and specialty varieties such as sweet potatoes or melons.

Source: Wiener Zeitung (2019): Drought puts crops at risk.

[Climate change - Drought puts crops at risk - Wiener Zeitung Online](#) (10.4.2021)

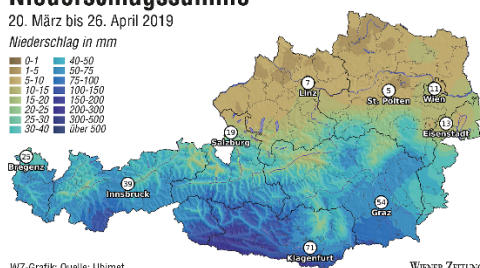
Niederschlagssumme

20. März bis 26. April 2019

Niederschlag in mm

0-1
1-5
5-10
10-15
15-20
20-25
25-30
30-40

40-50
50-75
75-100
100-150
150-200
200-300
300-500
über 500



WZ-Grafik; Quelle: Uhimet

WIENER ZEITUNG

text 2 - Samuel Nguiffo, Cameroon

The lawyer Samuel Nguiffo from Cameroon remembers the grip on his clients' land. New York-based investment firm Heracles Farms had a gigantic plan:

73,000 hectares of rainforest and agricultural land should be created 1m south-west of Cameroon eme palm oil plantation of the Investors. Heracles already had a 99-year lease in his pocket when the matter became public. The losers: 50,000 women farmers in the region who saw themselves as owners.



Samuel Nguiffo, Centre for Environment and Development Cameroon © NewsWatch Cameroon

Nguiffo and the peasants took up the fight. They complained that they founded an NGO, a non-governmental organization, and they got it right. In 2013, the business was cancelled, and the concession was reduced to 20,000 hectares. But the African lawyer knows that law is a temporary matter in his country: "The problem remains." Nguiffo is therefore now pushing ahead with a campaign to reform Cameroon's land law and better protect the population and its live hood from such interference.

According to Oxfam calculations, around 230 million hectares of land have been sold in countries in the Global South since 2001. An area about the size of Western Europe. Africa has been hardest hit so far by land purchases. Land-Matrix, a database that collects information on global land purchases and sales since its inception in 2012, lists South Sudan as the number one investor target. In second and third place are Papua New Guinea and Indonesia. Most of the world's investors come from the UNITED States, followed by Malaysia and the Arab Emirates. Saudi Arabia is also one of the top ten investors. China, too, is becoming increasingly important as an actor.

The reasons for such investments vary. Countries with poor agricultural conditions or fast-growing populations want to buy food security for the future. With the world's growing population, rising pre-e for food and agricultural commodities seems to be guaranteed, and thus hefty returns. With low interest rates, arable land has also become a popular speculative and investment object in Europe. The great run-on land, the so-called land grabbing, is therefore no longer only taking place in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Whether in Romania, Bulgaria, Estonia, Lithuania or Hungary, foreign companies control ever larger areas.

The structure of agriculture is changing. The small farmers are put under pressure by more efficient management of the large farmers. In Germany alone, around 70 percent of all agricultural are as no longer belong to the farmers who farm them.

However, industrial efficiency cannot be the only solution for food safety, poverty reduction, environmental protection, a fairer distribution of wealth and more jobs with adequate incomes. In agriculture, it is also important to protect smaller family farms. At the beginning of 2015, the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) drafted an opinion with the eloquent title: "Hunting nach agricultural land - a warning signal for Europe and a threat to family farms". The consultative body, which included employers, trade unions, farmers, and consumers, concluded that Member States should be allowed to set ceilings for the purchase of agricultural land.

Sources: Sueddeutsche Zeitung (2017): When investors rob farmers of the land. <https://www.sueddeutsche.de/wirtschaft/entwicklungslaender-gier-nach-land-1.2886878> [29.10.2020] welt.de (2016): ruthless hunting of the new, old soil treasure. <https://www.welt.de/wirtschaft/article151170043/Ruecksichtslose-Tagd-auf-den-neuen-alten-soil-treasure.html> [29.10.2020]

Text 3 - Budi and Septi, Indonesia

Budi and Septi are organic gardeners in Cangkringan) in the north of Yogyakarta at the foot of the Merapi volcano on the island of Java in Indonesia. They live with their five-year-old son in a bamboo cottage on the edge of their 800-square-metre garden. They sell their fruit and vegetables at Pasar Mila's, an alternative organic market in Yogyakarta.

Budi says: "I became an organic gardener because I was concerned) that agriculture is now mainly a business) a fast business) with ever-increasing technology. On the other hand, I see running an organic garden as something very healthy) something that is good for me and my family." Septi agrees with her husband here and says: "I came to gardening when I met Budi. I am very happy about life as an organic gardener because it is a very healthy life for me and my family but also something



Budi between his beds © Anett Keller

that I can communicate to other people. It also has to do with the desire to protect the environment. Why should we use chemical fertilizers that harm the environment if there are organic fertilizers that does not harm the environment?" Budi adds: "Our garden is about 800 square meters in size. We cultivate according to the so-called tumpangsari tradition very similar to the principles of permaculture. We make our fertilizer ourselves for example from grass cutting vegetable and food residues which we store in a special place where they become corn poster soils. We have learned this from old, experienced farmers and from younger friends who cultivate organic farming."

Many consumers ask Budi why organic vegetables are so expensive but when he explains it to them, then they also understand it: "It happens that customers ask me why a bunch of spinach costs me 5000 rupiah and not 3000 rupiah as in other markets and say but that's expensive. Then I explain to them that they can of course buy the spinach elsewhere for less money but then they do not know where it was grown in what way and by whom. And that they can, of course, decide for themselves which is more important to them. [...] What we need is a sustainable economy. For many people, only business counts the fast money. Therefore, organic farming is rejected as too time-consuming. But everything is related to all. If we provide food in a healthy way, then we will also be more sustainable in other areas of life, for example in terms of health and education." Septi wishes that many people follow her example: "I must be a good role model in the hope that something can change if we are many. That we are getting a healthy environment again because people understand why this is important. Maybe we can build a kind of eco-village here. I wish the government that it would really listen to small farmers like us. And that they really find themselves in the gardens and in the fields." Budi also describes that the current government programs do not really help the farmers: "The government, for example, conducts pro-organic cultivation but they set yield targets, which are not based on organic cultivation."

Quickly because real organic farming takes time. The people who participate in these programs do not want to make any losses and are unable to bow to these requirements. However, this is at the expense of organic farming. But the government does not want to hear about it. It is difficult for farmers to convey this. For one thing, they have their hands full in the fields. On the other hand, they know a lot, but they are not trained to pass on this knowledge, especially when they meet government officials."

He wants a holistic interest from consumers, which many would often not even know whether „organic" is really in it, where „organic" is written on it: "They want to be organic for example ' and prefer to shop in the supermarket rather than on the market. In doing so, they would find more organic products in traditional markets and especially in alternative markets and talk directly to the producers."

Septi adds: "I also wish that 'bio is more than just a trend. Because it's a way of life. Whoever buys 'bio', for example, should leave your fingers of disposable plastic. Here in Indonesia, so much of plastic waste is polluted. It is difficult to inform people about the consequences. When I shop at the market, I always go there with my own shopping bags and food containers. At first it was tedious; I could say 100 times: 'I don't want a plastic bag' I got everything packed in the obligatory disposable plastic bags. But when I talk to the market women and tell them that I want to avoid garbage, they understand it. And then I say, 'If there were ten people like me or 100, ten or 100 fewer of those bags would be in the world.' It makes me sad to see the state of our environment. But who is to make a difference, if not us, the young generation?"

I would like our customers to understand that we cannot fulfil all our wishes. Nature follows its own laws, and we follow nature, this month it gives us these fruits, at another time others. A system in which women farmers are forced to act against nature in order to satisfy every consumer is a false system."

Source: <https://suedostasien.net/unser-garten-ist-ein-bildungsort/>

text 4- Yefferson Rojas Colombia



Yefferson Rojas Arango at a conference in Vienna
© Global 2000

I come from Cajamarca in the state of Tolima, Colombia. Our community is located in the Andes. [...] 60% of the fruit and vegetables produced in Colombia come from our region. We are also a water vein of the country, as important rivers spring with us, such as the Rio Magdalena. [...]

COSAJUCA is a youth organization that advocates for human rights. Among other things, we are trying to raise awareness of planned mining projects in our community. [...]

Anglo Gold Ashanti had planned to build the second largest gold mine in Latin America. [...] This would have had a huge impact on the region, as our water resources are important for the whole country. [...] Open-cast mines for gold mining usually go up to 600 meters into the depth and form a crater with a diameter of one kilometer. Work is done 24 hours a day. We found that there are major environmental risks. In the US, rivers have been polluted by the mining industry. Mining causes a lot of greenhouse gases.

As a youth collective, we have worked to defend our territory and protect our water resources. [...] We have worked very hard with mobilization; we have organized protest marches. We have invited people to join in. We then changed the access a bit and are now doing carnival parades. We say yes to life, yes to our natural resources. You can go with the children, you can dress up, it is all cheerful. At the first protest march we had 1000 participants. The colorful parades are now taking part in 100,000 people. We also invite the people from the city to join in. We say it is not just about the people in the country, it is also about you! It is about what we grow and what is on your plate. [...]

Cajamarca decide
at a people's meeting
that the project „La
Colosa “[the name of
the planned gold
mine] should not be
carried out. We
have decided that
we will continue to



Food producers want us to continue to be water suppliers. [...] 98% of the population of Cajamarca ultimately opposed the project. [...] Our message is clear: we want to continue to produce fruit and vegetables and we do not want mining that has brought poverty and destruction to other regions.

Source: Event Report AG Rohstoffwende: "How do we make Austria fit for the future with a new raw material strategy?", 04.03.2020; Photos: <https://www.repanet.at/wp-content/--.pdf->

text 5 - Michael Hauser Kenya

How can the nutrition of a growing population in Africa be secured? What role can maize play in this? An interview with the agroecologist Michael Hauser, who works in Nairobi, Kenya.

According to the UN World Food Program, 821 million are suffering People hungry. Food production must be doubled in the fight against hunger by 2050. What do you say about these figures?



Cultivation of maize and beans in mixed culture © Hauser/EO KU

The doubling of food production by 2050 is often used as an argument for the industrialization of agriculture. Reducing crop losses, food waste and changing dietary behavior are put aside from this argument. In addition, the figures are incomplete. In our research we often find people in the same village with symptoms of malnutrition, obesity, etc. Worldwide, 2.3 - 3 billion people are

malnutrition. We must look at both sides of the problem of malnutrition. It is important to increase the supply of food in poor countries. The low agricultural yields in the Sahel and parts of southern Africa do not ensure the supply of basic food to the population there. In Europe, on the other hand, growth is the wrong thing to do. We need a global social contract for sustainable agriculture and food. This contract must include load balancing. It must make the global South and the North accountable in different ways. The EU's 'From farm to table' strategy, published in May 2020, which provides for the necessary transition to a fair food system in Europe, is an important step in this direction.

What is the meaning of the concepts of food security and food sovereignty?

Di'se concepts are interdependent. Food security is not achievable without the public's say in policy decisions that enable the sustainability and equity of food systems. Without food security, however, there is no food sovereignty. We know a lot about sustainable agriculture, but we do not use this knowledge enough. This does not mean that we do not continue to need technologies to overcome the climate crisis, improve biological plant protection and maintain soil health. What is clear, however, is that behavioral change cannot be outsourced to technology. This must be negotiated politically.

Under what conditions can maize contribute to the nutrition of an increasing population in the future?

The crop corn is sensitive, needs a lot of nitrogen. Growing maize is risky, especially on poor soils and in dry periods. Maize must be grown according to the location in order to contribute to the nutrition of the growing population.

What are the biggest problems with maize cultivation in Africa? Monocultures degrade soils worldwide. If genetic diversity decreases, the risk of pests destroying the harvest of entire areas increases. In addition, nutrition should become more diversified. If we want biodiversity in the field, we need people who eat in a diverse and balanced way. In many African countries, the dominance of white maize is maintained by price support. For governments, this creates political stability and security. The development of a sinuous dietary behavior does not bring this. Sorghum and other millet species are alternatives to maize - adapted to dry sites – but also 20 to 30% more expensive. I therefore call for smart financial incentives and basic social security to help people to eat a balanced diet, even if they live on the poverty line. Last but not least, there are difficulties in the wake of climate change. In some regions it gets drier, in others it gets wetter. Ecological processes are changing and so the dynamics of plant diseases and pests. Maize will disappear in many regions of Africa. What about the spread of genetically modified maize in Africa? The cultivation of genetically modified maize is prohibited in most African countries. South Africa is an exception. But public opinion is divided, it outweighs the camp of critics. Nevertheless, field trials are underway for dry-tolerant maize in eastern and southern Africa.

What kind of support does agriculture need to cope with the future?

Social innovations that change the balance of power in such a way that an agricultural turnaround is possible are important. Structures that are flexible enough to enable locally adapted solutions are needed. What is needed is the greening of cultivation, the decentralisation of value added and the political participation of farmers and farmers. Many young people in Africa equate agriculture with poverty. That needs to change. In order to avoid social upheavals caused by the increasing economic inequality in the context of this structural transformation, a modern, sovereign agricultural image must be promoted. So new patterns are needed in the thinking of agriculture. This also applies to the North.

Source: <https://www.suedwind-magazin.at/wir-nutzen-unser-wissen-zu-wenig>