SAVE
f o u n d a t i o n

Safeguard for **A**gricultural **V**arieties in **E**urope
Sicherung der landwirtschaftlichen ArtenVielfalt in Europa
Sauvegarde pour l'Agriculture des Variétés d'Europe

Arca-Net: an Europe-wide online directory of institutions showing rare livestock breeds and old cultivated plants

Arca-Net is both travelling guide and information portal

The realisation that "man can only protect what he knows well" has been the trigger for the Internet presence of Arca-Net http://www.arca-net.info. Rare and endangered livestock breeds and old cultivated plants have meanwhile disappeared from agricultural production units but they continue to live on numerous Ark-farms, livestock parks, variety gardens, open-air museums and other institutions. Arca-Net makes these institutions known and initiates visits. Moreover, Arca-Net offers well-understandable background information and sensitises for the topic of conservation.

Arca-Net is international

Arca-Net is a database-supported Internet presence with comprehensive search functions and numerous extension options. Arca-Net is available in English, French, German and

Italian. It shows possibilities to experience old breeds and rare cultivated plants in the whole of Europe: In the beginning of year 2013 over 600 institutions in 46 European countries, from Iceland to Malta North-South and from the Azores to the Caucasus West-East. A google map to zoom with all the locations is also on the website: www.arca-net.info. The actualisation process by the institutions themselves is of course password-protected and not openly accessible. Arca-Net will thus be a Europe-wide network of institutions in the conservation sector.

Arca-Net is extendable

As mainly institutions with livestock breeds were recorded in the starting phase of the database, priorities have now shifted towards the extension of the plant sector, including variety gardens, arboreta and other institutions in the area of cultivated plants. Thanks to relational databases (RDB), Arca-Net has all possibilities for extension. The offer of sales products such as seedlings, young plants or sausage products, wool and furs can also be included and will increase the motivation to visit an Arca-Net institution.

Arca-Net in detail

The search site is the heart of the Arca-Net in the Internet. Here, the user may select any combination of factors. The selection of a country, animal species or even breed name facilitates specific search. The list with the results offers a direct link to detailed information. Here, interested users do not only find the complete address of the institutions, but also far-reaching information on infrastructure, opening hours and entrance fees. Housing conditions for animals are described, all endangered breeds kept in an institution are listed and deposited in a pop-up window with detailed information. To facilitate the journey, an individual site map and a predefined link to a route planer is integrated in the website to generate the route to the envisaged destination.

User prompting has deliberately been kept simple. Easily understandable symbols are used, and a help pop-up explains all symbols. Even less-experienced Internet users will be able to cope quickly.

Arca-Net is for everybody

The Internet is accessible to large parts of the public. Thus, all target groups can be addressed: persons and families interested in general in environmental issues and nature protection, school classes, friends of rural life, everybody has free access to Arca-Net. Arca-Net is thus active PR-work. It is planned to link Arca-Net broadly in the future, e.g. to tourism organisations, regional associations, nature protection circles and many others more.

Arca-Net is versatile

The database in the background of Arca-Net can be extended for other purposes not or not only presented on the Arca-Net website. Some institutions, for example, may also be used as rescue stations. Some database elements such as descriptions of the breeds or stock numbers can be useful in other contexts.

=> Internet presence of Arca-Net: http://www.arca-net.info