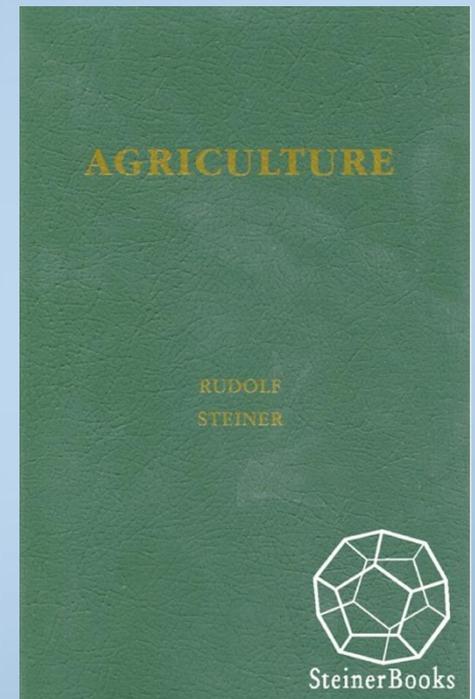


Emil Mohr

Demeter Standards

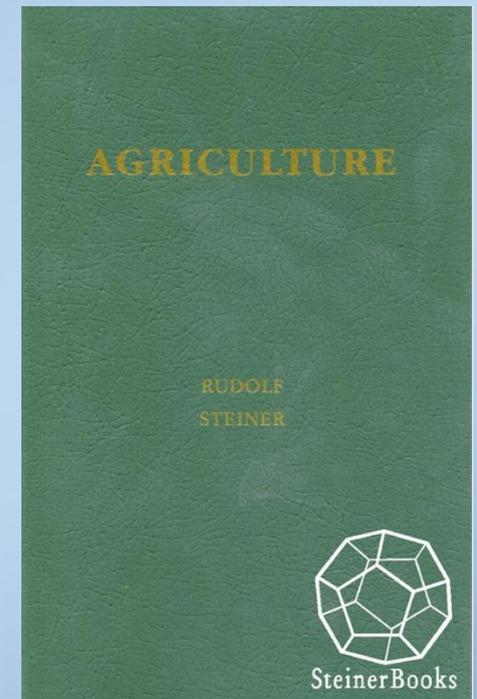


Nordisk Biodynamisk Forum

Fokhol, November 25th, 2023



How Demeter standards are expressed in the context of what Rudolf Steiner communicated for agricultural practice.



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Demeter was introduced as a "communication symbol" between farmers and consumers.



In 1951, the Biodynamic Association in Norway registered *Demeter* as a protected trademark for biodynamic products – without detailed standards and control system.



Norwegian Demeter-standards, 1986:

The work with biodynamic farming is a continuous process where the goal is to design contemporary farming methods adapted to the individual farms. The basis for the work is the advice given by Rudolf Steiner, research results and practical experience.

The individual nature of biodynamic farming processes does not allow for a definition of *biodynamic quality* based on general guidelines. The labelling will therefore in the strictest sense not be an expression of biodynamic *quality*, but to give the consumer assurance that certain minimum requirements are followed.

The biodynamic preparations

The biodynamic spraying- and compost preparations (500-507) are an essential part of the biodynamic agricultural method, and it is assumed that these are used in accordance with the advice given by Rudolf Steiner and later research and practice.



Demeter International



Production, Processing and Labelling

*International Standard for the use and certification of Demeter,
Biodynamic and related trademarks (as of: Oct 2022)*

All products that carry the Demeter and Biodynamic trademarks are produced and processes according to these standards and are inspected and certified by the responsible authority in the respective countries.

The standards define what the biodynamic preparations are and how to use them

The following materials are used in the production of the biodynamic preparations and the estimated quantities of organ material required per acre.

Tab.: 24 / Materials for the production of the biodynamic preparations

| Preparation | Material | Animal Organ | Quantity/year |
|---|----------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Field Sprays | | | |
| Horn manure | Cow manure | Cow horn | 1 Horn / ha (*1) |
| Horn silica | Quartz meal | Cow horn | 1 Horn / 25 ha |
| Compost Preparations: | | | |
| Camomile | Flowers | Intestine (2*) | 30 cm / 100 ha |
| Oak Bark | Bark | Skull (3*) | 1 skull / 300 ha |
| Dandelion | Flowers | Peritoneum (4*) | 30 x 30 cm / 100 ha |
| Not affected by Regulation (EC) 1774/2002: | | | |
| Yarrow | Flowers | Stag's bladder (5*) | 1 bladder / 250 ha |
| Stinging nettle | whole plant | none | |
| Valerian | Flower extract | none | |

Demeter- Standards

■ All organic manures (stable manure, compost etc.) are to be treated with the compost preparations. In the event that a farm has not own composting or composted stable manure, e.g. extensive pastoral farms it is obligatory to spread a composite preparation (such as cowpat prep, barrel compost, prepared 500 etc.) as a substitute on those areas, which receive no prepared manure in the course of the year.

■ All productive areas of the farm must be completely covered with the spray preparations every year. This requirement does not apply to unused or other permanently nonproductive areas.

Demeter- Standards

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- All productive areas of the farm must be completely covered with the spray preparations every year. This requirement does not apply to unused or other permanently nonproductive areas.

Are the Demeter-standards for use of preparations in accordance with the advice given by Rudolf Steiner and subsequent research and practice?

Today I would like to indicate some general guidelines for working with things that can be added to the manure in small doses – in addition to what we take out of the cow horns – so that the manure can become vitalized and can transmit the vitality to the soil where the plants will grow.

Are the Demeter-standards for use of preparations in accordance with the advice given by Rudolf Steiner and subsequently added to research and practice?

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| Camomile | Flowers | Intestine (2*) | 50 cm / 100 ha |
| Oat | " | Skull (3*) | 1 etc. ... |

I am going to mention specific things, but let me emphasize right from the beginning that if one or the other of them is difficult to find in an given area, it is possible to replace it with certain other things. There is only one case in which substitution will not be possible, because what is so characteristic in the particular plant is not likely to be found in the same way in any other species.

About yarrow and chamomile

As I said before, if these two particular plants are difficult to get, you could substitute something else, although it's really better not to, and the dried herbs work just as well.

In the Agricultural Course there are many examples where the advice is a starting point for further development, and the advice is not presented as unambiguous and mandatory under all circumstances.

Discussion after fourth lecture

Does it matter whether you use cow manure or horse manure or sheep manure?

Cow manure is undoubtedly the best material for this procedure, but it might not be a bad idea to investigate whether horse manure could be used too. If you want to use horse manure for this purpose, it would probably be necessary to wrap the horn with some hair from the horse's mane, so that those forces can be brought into play, since the horse has no horns.

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Only positive effects from the use of preparations?

Einar Grepperud:
Avoid the use of silica preparation for beetroots for not to promote flowering.





The word “dynamic” means change, development or movement. Something dynamic has moving force or effect. The opposite word is “static”.

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The biodynamic preparations

The biodynamic spraying- and compost preparations (500-507) are an essential part of the biodynamic agricultural method, and it is assumed that these are used in accordance with the advice given by Rudolf Steiner and later research and practice.





demeter



**Certified or
non-certified?**

Will farms not be Demeter-certified in cases where:

- ✓ **horse manure preparation is used instead of cow manure preparation?**
- ✓ **Calendula is used instead of chamomile?**
- ✓ **Silica preparation is not used for certain crops after your own consideration?**

All products that carry the Demeter and Biodynamic trademarks are produced and processes according to these standards and are inspected and certified by the responsible authority in the respective countries.

- ✓ **Is it only in Norway that there are challenges to adapting farm operations to international Demeter-standards?**
- ✓ **Will credibility and trust in the Demeter labelling be undermined – in Norway and internationally – if it is made more known that it is "not so absolute with what the standard say and how the practice is carried out"?**

It must be reasonable to ask whether the current Demeter-standards are in accordance with the advice given by Rudolf Steiner, and whether the detailed standards are a barrier to support the method. Three questions are relevant in this context:

Has time "stood still" when it comes to the further development of biodynamic agriculture that Rudolf Steiner pointed out the importance of?

Is the impulse beginning to solidify in a regulatory framework that makes the method irrelevant in time and not very practicable beyond the needs of a limited number of farmers?

Is the importance of international Demeter-standards emphasized more than being able to communicate to consumers that operations are organic and linked to anthroposophy?

- **Changes to this standard must be approved by the Members' Assembly of the Biodynamic Federation Demeter International by an absolute majority.**

If *Nordisk Biodynamisk Forum* experiences the same challenges and concerns as presented here, that the detailed standards do not reflect the intentions of the Agricultural Course and that detailing and requirements for practical implementation do not stimulate broader support among farmers and consumers, there is the question of whether a unified forum should initiate a process to raise the issues for relevant partners (in the first instance Standards Committee).