

# Newsletter 2009

IVA-Farm, Jalovik, Central Serbia

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Dear friends and supporters of IVA-Farm,



Also this year we want to surprise you with our yearly newsletter. It'll give you an overview on the happenings and developments of the farm in 2009 and also a preview on the planned activities for 2010.

We wish you a happy new year 2010 with a lot of health, life energy, and happiness. And we thank all the helpers and supporters of our IVA-farm.

In the beginning of the year a credit change in an interest free loan and the foundation of Fond Biodinamika, Kultura i Ekologija stood in the middle of our activities. With the help of the foundation, founded to develop IVA-farm into a centre of education in Biodynamics, we gave in May and September a seminar for the production of the biodynamic preparations, which we try to continue on a yearly base. Present were farmers, chairmen of other foundations and local certification houses for organic agriculture.

These meetings, that were already planned for five years, Vivienne prepared for years. Almost all the necessary wrappings for the preparations could be found locally. Except for the valerian preparation that we got from friends in Romania, Laslea since valerian doesn't grow naturally in our regions and has to be grown by us, all preparations could be made in those 2 meetings through the help of us IVA-farmers. Every farmer gets his part, when we dig them out in spring. Both preparation-meetings lasted a whole day and contained a walk round the garden and farm, practical production and digging of the preparations, question-round and lunch. The preparing for the meetings were pretty stressful but we got rewarded with the many interested questions and enthusiasm of the participants.

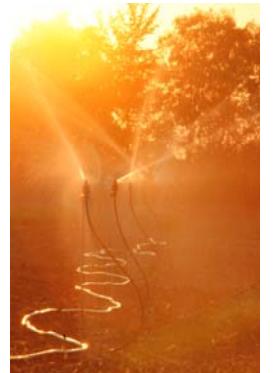


The agricultural year started for us with a very dry spring. Happy about the early possibility to sow and to plant, it came to an early tomato-planting-record of the beginning of April. Due to early soil warmth and summer like temperatures in May these tomato plants gave indeed fruit at the end of May, beginning of June. The first joy soon disappeared when rain was failing for 3 months until a flood like rain mid June hit the ground and caused a lot of damage. The following drought until end of November – in October were still temperatures of 32°C to be measured – made an end to our market season already in August. Although we had a big variety of cultures at the start of the market we had to disappoint our customers with this early end of the market season. The problem is though, that we are one of the few producers of organic (and the only ones of biodynamic) vegetables and that we have too many customers, that we with two full man powers can not cover the whole market.

Our irrigation system was completely installed in August and we found out that our 600m<sup>3</sup> water reservoir was insufficient and that we would have to dig a whole lake. But the system functions and the main leads of 300m is dug into the soil. On a surface of 2,5ha are now 170 rainers that spread the water like a fine rain.



In spite of the extreme weather it was a good year for rye and hay harvest. At some parcels there were 3 hay cuts of red clover/grass mixture and an additional cut of fetches and wild meadow hay with herbs. We were helped by our friend Lazar alias Ciga<sub>1</sub> from the neighbour village Zvezd with cutting and baling the winter reserves and for loading we got extra help from our neighbour Bojan and Dragoljub alias Ciga<sub>2</sub>. Because of high temperatures we mainly had to work at night.



Since we expanded our surface this year to 7ha and probably to 10ha in 2010 we will need a stronger tractor in the future, also because a lot of fields are on the slope of the hill and often left with the rests of the corn culture that was harvested by hand in stead of the harvester so we have troubles to plough the 3m long hard sticks under.

In May Cyriel Kegels, the father of Boudewijn, came from Holland to start the renovation of the stable since the ceiling was about to come down and new plans for a better interior were made. Patrick from California –who wanted to come by for some days but stayed for a month – helped with the alterations. The building activities continued in October when Cyriel returned with Wim Rikken, friend and building engineer together we could renovate two rooms in the house, the goat stable, the pig stable. A lot of additional improvements were made like shelves in the shed, big doors

in the ambar. The goat stable is the nicest. Mangers, boxes, milking place etc. are made out of light but strong ash wood. Now our 6 goats and 7 sheep and the 5 little ones can enjoy their new-old accommodation.

We lost 3 animals, but we also acquired 4 new ones: an excellent milking goat and 3 mangulice pigs with pedigree papers. Next to that our pig Fine got 7 mangulice with stripes like wild ones.



good at us. He loved to do all kind of garden works and turned out to be a vegan, but excellent cook and freed Viv for a long time from kitchen works.



Apart from Bosnia and Serbia we got help from all over the world via the WWOOF network: America, Brazil, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Germany, France, Switzerland, and a trainee from Holland that studies Fair Trade.



Unfortunately a good colleague died on 21.11.2009, the day of our house patron Holy Michael, that is celebrated in the orthodox Serbia. Her agricultural fields were at the slopes of the Kosmaj mountain, 60km south of Belgrade. With respect we look back on her work, especially because she achieved a lot in the ministry for the laws for organic agriculture.

Now, in the beginning of the year 2010, we started already with the warm beds for the young plant production. In time of the spring works is planned an extension of the buildings with a machine and hay shed. After that other building activities are planned: the 3<sup>rd</sup> room of the house must be finished, an enlargement of the swine stable with 2 boxes and a pig house at the edge of the pig-swamp and probably a sheep stable from straw bales. Before the May excavation of the preparations we want to make a double wall preparation box and some when a pump house so our water pump is protected from rain and thieves.

We are looking forward to the birth of new lambs and goats that bring us a lot of joy since our volunteers like to caress them continuously.

We send you warm greetings,  
Viv i Bou

