



THE INNOVATION JOURNEY

The Eschenhof is located in a very rural area in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern in north-east Germany. The association "Gemeinsam Gärtnern e. V." was founded 10 years ago on 3.5 hectares of land on the private initiative of Nicole Bowe. The original idea, jointly with a gardening friend, was to propagate seeds, but instead the two of them got people interested in community vegetable growing.



They rented land, reclaimed it from nature and recultivated it. Now they grow vegetables together in the open and in greenhouses; a fruit meadow complements the production. Following on from a loose community of interest, a non-profit organisation was founded which today supplies 20 families with

fresh fruit and vegetables. In addition to growing together, a lot of information is provided, e.g. how to plan a gardening year, how to propagate seeds or how to preserve fruit and vegetables. In 2024, for example, workshops on wild fruits and wild herbs will be held. All club members pitch in and the harvest is distributed equally to all members throughout the year, depending on what fruit and vegetables are available in the season.

THE IMPACTS OF INNOVATION

Sustainable production is very important to the Eschenhof, which is why it is EU-certified organic and has been involved in the network of a regional brand "Schaalsee Biosphere Reserve - for Body and Soul" for many years. The association has been involved in various scientific projects and has won the German Neighbourhood Award several times. They create a sense of community for the members in the region, and also a greater sense of achievement through a broad range of crops and greater diversity of varieties than would be possible when "gardening alone".

USEFUL LINKS

<https://eschenhof-verein.de/>
<https://www.nachbarschaftspreis.de/de/projekt/2021-19217-Koenigsfeld-OT-Gross-Ruenz-Eschenhof---Gemeinsam-Gaertnern-eV-517/>
<https://www.mikrolandwirtschaft.org/s/erz5wlp/eschenhof-gemeinsam-gaertnern-e-v>