



THE INNOVATION JOURNEY

Naturbruksskolan Sötåsen is a public, upper-secondary school run by the VästraGötaland Region. The school is a boarding school with a focus on organic farming. The school offers programmes and courses in animal care, farming, agriculture, and gardening.

The school also runs a small-scale farm that includes a variety of resources, for example, research testbeds. Paula Bäckman, the area manager at the Natural Resources Administration, plays a key role regarding the development and status of the school's testbeds.

At the school, one can find testbeds of a biogas plant, a bio refinery plant, a biochar plant, solar panels, a variety of simulated vehicles, a biogas tractor, and an electric smart grid. The land and cattle at the school are available for cultivation trials and feed trials.



The design of the school's testbeds facilitates innovation and the development of new ideas and products. Paula showcases the school's testbed research findings to farmers who wish to

learn about new developments in agriculture and farm management.

THE INNOVATION IMPACT

The primary aim of the testbeds is to contribute to environmentally sustainable food production. According to Paula this can be achieved by reducing the use of fossil fuels and increasing biodiversity through sustainable farming and food consumption. The testbeds are promoted in cooperation with research and regional authorities, through open days where the sustainable solutions are demonstrated, and by including students and teachers in the testbed research projects. Teachers learn about new findings and use this information in their teaching. The school's students take part in various experiments and thus become carriers of knowledge in their work life. The school restaurant team develops new, sustainable recipes for the students and school staff.

The school is well-known in national, regional, and local newspapers. Its activities are often mentioned in the news with reports on its new areas of research. As such, the school is able to reach out to the public with its knowledge.

USEFUL LINKS

<https://www.vgregion.se/f/naturbruk/utveckling-och-innovation/>