



THE INNOVATION JOURNEY

The abbreviation VERN stands for "Verein zur Erhaltung und Rekultivierung von Nutzpflanzen" (Association for the Conservation and Recultivation of Crops). The association is based near Berlin in eastern Germany. Its aim was and is to preserve old agricultural and horticultural crops as genetic resources and thus to revitalise a piece of cultural heritage and cultural history. In 1994, a former market garden was reactivated and "forgotten" cultivated plants were grown there.



The association is financed by membership fees, donations and third-party projects, as well as the sale of seeds and young plants to allotment gardeners and small horticultural businesses. Vegetables, herbs and ornamental plants are grown for seed production. Two separate networks are dedicated to the on-farm preservation of old grain and rare vegetable varieties. Old potato and tomato varieties are offered at regional farm days and seed courses, workshops, exhibitions and conferences are regularly held by VERN and external providers in the affiliated education centre. Members of the

association are private individuals, farmers, gardeners and institutions.



THE IMPACTS OF INNOVATION

VERN e.V. makes a significant contribution to biodiversity by preserving the diversity of old varieties and underutilised crops. The organisation currently preserves around 2,000 old varieties and keeps them accessible to the public. VERN supports the development of value chains, e.g. regional processors produce single-variety products such as bread or whisky from the 'Norddeutscher Champagnerroggen' variety. Regional gardeners market fresh vegetables from old varieties as "varietal treasures". VERN has created several jobs in a structurally weak region. The association now employs various staff in its office and in the show and propagation garden for gardening and seed work, the administration of the association and the coordination of the conservation networks.

USEFUL LINK

<https://vern.de/>

<https://samenbau-nordost.de/vern-e-v/>

<https://landsorten.de/>