# Bio-Saalberghof Berghaus

## 1. Introduction

The Bio-Saalberghof of Rasmus Berghaus was national prize winner 2008 in the competition "Agriculture creates cultural landscape" in Germany. All the animals live at the farm according to organic standards. The Bio-Saalberghof is a certified agricultural organic enterprise, runs the European bio label and is a member of the organic farming organisation "Biokreis" since 2014. Next to cattle, chicken, ducks and pigs are also kept. The pasturage is an important component for the quality of the meat of the red Höhenvieh. The products are directly distributed to an in-house bakery partially owned by the family. The enterprise is based on a conclusive and transparent system of sustainability, regionality and species-appropriate care in organic quality.

## 2. Promoter profile



**First Name**

Rasmus

**Last Name**
Berghaus

**Birth Year**
1968

**Gender**
Male

**Education**

Master baker; agricultural practitioner, has not completed any agricultural apprenticeship, but learnt everything according to the principle of "Learning by doing" and from his parents.

## 3. Farm Profile











**Address**
Ihnestraße 14 58540 Meinerzhagen

**Country**
Germany

**Farm area in hectar**
110.00

**Date of establishment of the farm**

1897

**Date since when the promoter owns/rents the farm**
Wed, 01/01/2003 - 12:00

| NUMBER OF WORKERS | **FAMILY MEMBERS** | **EXTERNAL WORKERS** |
|---|---|---|
| **Full time** | 0 | 2 |
| **Part time** | 2 | 0 |

**Farm description**

Mr Berghaus revitalized the dormant agricultural enterprise (approximately 5 ha in agricultural and silvicultural lands) of his parents as his first daughter was born in 2003. He started with 2 ha of agricultural land and 4 ha of leased land. He converted 2 ha of his own forest into a pasture. This was possible with a special permission. He has constantly cultivated extensively and used the funding possibilities in the frame of the nature protection contract. The enterprise has grown yearly by approximately 5 to 10 ha. He was offered lands that were considered inferior in other people's eyes.

In 2010, he was offered 30 ha at once for lease, since the farmer, who was adjusting his enterprise at the time, was convinced of the method of cultivation of Mr Berghaus.

He also took over this surface and decided to commit himself from now on to agriculture in full extent. In order to achieve this, two further selling points of the bakery run by the family were abandoned. Today it only operates in one segment: the baked goods as well as the own products from the agriculture and regional goods from the established, regional network.

The herd of cattle comprises approximately 45 pieces (20 mother cows, one bull, and breeding stock). During summer time, there is pension cattle on the fields as well. The herd is then counting around 130 animals.

**Website and social network links**
Website

# 4. Multifunctional/sustainable farming and European Agricultural Landscapes (EAL)

**Multifunctional & sustainable farming Key Words**
Biodiversity
Direct sales
Quality/Organic/Certified production
Traditional land use

**Free Text**

The enterprise is located in the landscape conservation area of Sauerland mountains, more precisely in the South of the Märkischer Kreis and in the western part of the Sauerland. in Volmetal starts its passage through the North-West here. In the North, the district is limited through the Ruhr valley, while the southern part of the district is very hilly. Towards the East, the Ebbe mountains stretch. To the West, the municipality is surrounded by the Bergische Land. The highest elevation in the urban area is situated 652 m high near the Nordhelle bei Valbert, the enterprise location. The Nordhelle is the highest elevation in the Märkischer Kreis.

The cows on the farm are fed by home-grown organic hay and organic haylage, organic cereals and organic potatoes.

The cows and beef cattle are in the pastures from May until November. Since November 2014, the enterprise is the member of the Biokreis (https://www.biokreis.de/index.php).

At the farm, all the animals are kept in species-appropriate manner: pigs and chickens move around straw and have a lot of space to move.

Laying hens, ducks and geese are kept in free-range husbandry with a lot of outlet and grazing area and there is a swimming pond for the ducks.

They are fed with home-grown organic cereals, organic potatoes, soja and pea middlings as well as bread remnants from the bakery. The feeding of the bread remnants to the pigs and the poultry led to the creation of separate agricultural enterprise, since it does not comply with the organic guidelines. Even though the bread remnants originate from their own bakery.

The enterprise implemented the principle of reasonable regional business in full consequence. The combination of agriculture and direct sale and the family bakery enterprise constitutes with current regional cooperations a very stable family enterprise and thus strengthens the economy on-site.

School classes and kindergarten groups also come regularly to the enterprise in order to directly experience the agriculture and the nature.

Through this kind of agriculture, the enterprise contributes to:

- Preservation and strengthening of the biodiversity;

- Preservation of traditional domestic animal breeds;

- Preservation of traditional cultivation techniques;

- Reduction of the soil erosion;

- Promotion of the value of the landscape;

- Production of qualitative, safe and healthy food.

**Advice/Recommendation**

"Site, cultivation system, animal breed and marketing have to be consistent!"

"Public relations and awareness of an educational task by schools and kindergartens is very important. We practice it with passion!"

# 5. Considerations, skills/competences involved and queries/questions

**General considerations**

It is essential for a farmer to deal with the specific site conditions on-site: climate, altitude, soil qualities. These are restrictions but in the majority of cases also special chances.

Within 7 years, Mr Berghaus started from 0 to 100 and built up a full lively hood in the agriculture, and this not against but towards the nature and the cooperation / conjunction of agriculture, nature protection, species protection and landscape.

Even if duration of 7 years seems short for an agricultural business project, Mr Berghaus shows crucial competencies to be successful in the field of organic and regional production as well as in sale within regional added value chains.

He not only respects but highlights the landscape and shows a model of adapted agriculture to the specific location and area. He follows an integrated approach of sustainability for farming, nature and landscape.

In any case, it is important to be well informed about the existing resources. At some point, it is necessary to focus and concentrate. Like Mr Berghaus did in concentrating on just one own shop for selling his products.

| **Strengths** | **Weaknesses** |
|---|---|
| • Several pillars.<br>• Arguments in the marketing.<br>• Nature protection.<br>• Existing customers from the enterprise of the bakery. | • Dependence of funding. |
| **Opportunities** | **Threats** |