

# **DRAFT – sent out to network on 28. Mai 2015 – DRAFT**

## **Charta for Solidarity Agriculture in Austria**

### **Präambel**

We are people, who engage for a new foodsystem, as we see the current Agriculture- and Food System as undignifying for humankind. We are humans, that want to produce, process and eat high-quality food. We work in our daily life towards a fundamental change of the way how food is produced, processed and distributed. It is our central goal to create solidarity based relationships between peasants and eaters as well as between eaters themselves. We are ready to build and sustain the structures, that are necessary to give access to good food for all people. We have the will to change the political and economical framework to make possible for all an agriculture and food system that is ecologically and socially sustainable. We want farmers, gardeners, landless and eaters, simply all human beings to have the possibility of contribute to the form of production, distribution and the pleasure of food. We want to contribute to fight the concentration of power in the food sector and to ensure democratic access to the means of production und to bring food sovereignty into practice, through practicing solidarity agriculture.

With the ressources and abilities, we have, we try to bring into practice solidarity agriculture. There are many ways to bring solidarity into agriculture, like community supported agriculture (CSA), community gardens, Community made Agriculture, food cooperatives, community farms and producer-consumer networks.

The networking workinggroup for community supported agriculture in Austria consists of engaged members, peasants and activists and coordinates and facilitates since the autumn meeting 2013 the relations between the initiatives for Community Supported Agriculture in Austria. Out of the wish to intensify this exchange and to facilitate the foundation of new initiatives and to strengthen the network of initiatives of CSA, in spring 2015 we started to formulate a charta, that is meant to be the foundation for a strong network for CSA. CSA can only progress on a basis, which is not determined by competition and profit-orientation, but from a convivium in solidarity. This charta should serve to offer a platform for a variety of initiatives and at the same time to distinct them from initiatives, that are not interested in changing the existing relations.

### **Definition**

Gemeinschaftsgestützte Landwirtschaft (CSA, Community Supported Agriculture) means a direct partnership, which is contractually defined for a certain period between one or several producers and a group of consumers. The peasants provide food for the

consumers, who allow the peasants decent working conditions and standard of living. As well the risk as the yield of the production are shared. price and product are being decoupled. The harvest-sharers or members of a CSA don't buy several products, but they contribute with their regular payments and other contributions to a common agriculture. The ones who directly work in the farm don't produce for a unsecure, anonymous market, but provide food for people with names and faces. CSA peasants and members aim at being most independent from the conventional market.

## **Three columns of Gemeinschaftsgestützte Landwirtschaft (CSA)**

### **Column 1)**

#### **Community of Consumers and Producers**

**Mutual Trust as principle:**

on the basis of a binding contribution for a season and through the openness of the farms as well as through the possibility of insight in all the farm issues there's a given base of trust.

**Mutual Responsibility:**

The community gives security and needs (Verbindlichkeit): The consumers support in advance and are allowed to participate; the producers try to constantly deliver high quality food.

**Suspension of Anonymity:**

The consumers have the opportunity, not only to get to know the producers and their farms, but also to understand them. Through regularly contact a connectedness with the food and the farmwomen and farmers emerges. These are not producing for an anonymous market, but for a specific group of people.

**Transparency through Engagement:**

The mode of working of the farm is transparent in all fields. The farms are open for contribution through the members. Through this the members have the opportunity to gain insights in the functioning of the farm and to immediately experience the mode of working of „their“ peasant.

Selfproducing and cooperations with near farms, if demanded:

The food production is done by the farms of the producers with support of the consumers. Cooperations with other farms are dependent on the decisions of the very initiative.

**Regionality:**

As a CSA-/Solawi Farm is a local cooperation of consumers and producers, the regionality is implied self evidently.

**Democratic and self organized:**

Decisions concerning the farm organisation are collectively taken by the very initiative and within democratic processes. All people involved are therefore animated, to take over responsibility for themselves and as well for the community.

**Column 2:  
Resource saving and fit for the future**

**Awareness and appreciation towards nature:**

Solawi/CSA-farms are responsibly taking care for the existing resources of the earth and for future generations. That means that they treat the land, which they farm, with awareness and the animals that live on it, with respect. Moreover they take measures to increase soil fertility to enable a cultivation on a longterm-basis. The organic diversity as well as the natural necessities for life, like e.g. water are protected.

**Promoting biodiversity:**

The sustaining and fostering of the diversity of livestock and crop plants is a central aspect. Moreover measures to enlarge biodiversity are being taken.

**Ecological Farming:**

Ecological farming is a precondition. Long transport and unnecessary packaging of products are avoided. Necessary farmsupplies are preferably being taken from the region or self produced. Through producing in line with the demands there is hardly any overproduction. If a farm is ecologically certified or not is the decision of the farmcommunity itself.

**Independent on the long run:**

CSA/Solawi Initiatives are a part of and support the creation of local supply-economies and therefore fostering foodsovereignty in the very region. The products are distributed local and directly to the consumers, which enables a independent supply with food on the long run.

### **Column 3: Commitment and Fairness**

#### **Membership for a confined period**

The membership in a CSA/Solawi or other community supported Agriculture is confined for a certain period of time. The duration of the membership is fixed in a binding (oral or written) agreement between the consumers and producers.

#### **Financial security for farmers and farmwomen**

For the period of membership the consumers comit themselves to support the farm financially and imaterially. The amount of the financial contributions is dependent on the financial need of the farm. The form of imaterial support will be jointly determined by consumers and producers. The sum of the financial and imaterial contributions are the ressource base for sustaining and continuing the farm business and to guarantee a fair salary for the rendered work.

#### **Fair supportive contributions for the consumers**

The supportive contributions are arranged ideally that way, that also persons with minor financial abilities can take part in a CSA/Solawi or other commnunity supported Agriculture.

#### **Non profit-orientation**

In a CSA/Solawi on the first place humans are nourished and no profits are gained. The peasants are being paid fairly, but the farm is not aiming at gaining profits. Therefore the financial need and the contributions have to be controlled and also levelled up- or downwards if needed. This is done always jointly by consumers and producers.

#### **Constant access to high quality food**

The producers are caring for the production of highquality food and to make it available for the consumers regularly. Time and way of distribution are jointly decided by consumers and producers.