



Dornach, 9th April 2019

Research project:

Biodynamic compost preparation plants in and tropical and subtropical countries

Dear Participants and Friends,

At the science conference of the Section for Agriculture in Dornach in September 2018 we began a research project to discuss the use of plants for compost preparations in biodynamic agriculture and horticulture in tropical and subtropical regions, and to find new solutions where necessary. We met again in the International Working Group for biodynamic preparations in February 2019 in Dornach.

In all those places where it is possible to grow the "original preparation plants" from the Agricultural Course, we recommend using these for making the preparations. We believe it is important that, where possible, the compost preparations should be made on each individual farm or at least in the corresponding region and that the plants for making the preparations should be able to be cultivated on the farm or in the region. But what should be done in those areas where some of the plants do not grow well or flower? Can we find other plants there as substitutes? Valerian (*Valeriana officinalis*) is a particular problem for us in this respect, as in many tropical regions it does not flower, or only very sporadically. What can we do about this? In some places, it may be possible to achieve something by altering the growing conditions. Does valerian grow better in the nearby mountainous region? Is there any experience of using other species of valerian or other appropriate substitute plants?

We would like to develop the international network of preparation plants in order to exchange views and information on experiences with all the preparation plants.

In October 2018, a small group of botanists travelled in southern Brazil and southern Chile at the invitation of João Volkmann and studied ten different native species of valerian there to date. This is the start of a long research journey. On 24 March 2019 at a "valerian research day" in Dornach the current results were presented and compared with other European species. Another research trip and another "valerian research day" in southern Brazil (Porto Alegre region) for the end of October 2019 are planned. Other experts from other countries (e.g. India) are involved.

If you would like to join this research project, we request that you fill in your details and experiences in the form accessible via the following link:

<https://www.sektion-landwirtschaft.org/index.php?id=10586&L=0>

We will keep you informed about the project and its findings and look forward to the exchange. If you have any further questions about the project or the cooperation, please feel free to contact the Section for Agriculture or the project manager Jürgen Momsen (juergen.momsen@t-online.de).

With many thanks and best wishes,

Jean-Michel Florin (Head of the Section for Agriculture) & Dr. Jürgen Momsen (project management)