

Exchange of experiences with experts from the SPD-state parliamentary group, NRW, in the school of the regional allotment gardeners

- Presentation of the research project “FEW-Meter”
- Healthy nutrition from allotment gardens

Werner Heidemann, director of the regional federation from Westphalia and Lippe

What is it about? Within the framework of the research project "FEW-Meter" (Food, Energy, Water), studies are being conducted in Germany and France, Great Britain, Poland and the USA, which are assessing the efficiency of "urban agriculture".

This is what the members of the state parliament Annette Watermann-Krass, Inge Blask and André Stinka, are interested in. As members of the Technical Committee for the environment, agriculture, nature and consumer protection – they want to address the subject areas of "healthy nutrition, fair and regional cultivation" in the future. The experts met for a first kick-off meeting in the school of the regional allotment gardeners on August 7th 2020.

Urban farming is a generic term for the food production in urban areas. Worldwide, the small-scale cultivation of fruit and vegetables in the cities is increasing. Urban agriculture takes many different forms: These include community gardens in New York City and London, , but also roof farms, aquaculture, kitchen gardens and therapy gardens are conquering the cities. Allotment gardens have always been places of self-sufficiency, which have been experiencing a renaissance at the turn of the millennium. Allotment gardens belong to the social and ecological network of a city, they are in many ways part of the “good climate” in the urban district and places of nature experience. It is clear that allotment gardens are also part of urban agriculture.

Project coordinator Runrid Fox-Kämper, Institute for Regional and Urban Development Research (ILS), presented the overall project.

How efficient and sustainable is urban farming?

How much is harvested over the year?

How much water and energy is used?

Questions upon questions, to which the researchers want to find reliable answers.

But biodiversity, the gardening experience, the use of harvested products, fertilisation and plant protection are also topics that are being investigated.

In cooperation with the research partner ILS (Institute for Regional and Urban Development Research) and the regional association, allotment gardeners from Bochum, Dortmund, Münster and Lünen will record their harvested products in 2019 and 2020 and document their horticultural and ecological activities. They are supported and advised on site by our gardening expert and assistant at our regional school in Münster, Stephan Grote.



Photo: Exchange of experiences in the school of the regional federation of allotment gardeners: from left to right Annette Watermann-Krass, MdL, Stephan Grote, research assistant of the regional federation, Runrid Fox-Kämper, Institute for Regional and Ur

Under the leadership of Wilhelm Spieß, chairman of the regional federation, a constructive exchange of views with the members of parliament, the scientific assistant of the parliamentary group, Leonard Wessel, the project manager Runrid Fox-Kämper and the project experts Stephan Grote and Werner Heidemann followed. We would like to see more politicians and decision-makers support "healthy nutrition, fairer trade, regional cultivation, self-sufficiency and allotment gardens". That was an encouraging kick-off. More information on the project:

<http://www.fewmeter.org/de/home-3/>

<http://www.fewmeter.org/en/research-team/org/en/research-team/>