



**BERAS** *implementation*

*Baltic Ecological Recycling  
Agriculture and Society*

A faint, light-colored map of the Baltic region, including parts of Scandinavia and Eastern Europe, serves as a background for the text.

# BERAS

For people  
who eat food



# Are we eating OUR PLANET?

According to the UN, the food sector is responsible for 50% of the global climate change. The main problem is how we produce our food. With today's industrialised agriculture we destroy our fertile land and threaten biodiversity of plants and animals. This means that ecosystems, which all life depends on, disappear.

To feed the world we need to use our resources more carefully. More than half of our agricultural land is used for meat production. This consumes land, water and energy, often in areas that used to be covered by rainforest. Industrialised animal farms also produce huge amounts of manure that are not returned to the soil, but leak out into lakes and seas and cause dead sea beds. This type of intensive meat production threatens animal welfare, the environment and the possibility to produce enough food for everyone.

The food sector today is also totally dependent on non-renewable fossil fuels. They are used to produce artificial fertilisers, when we instead could use natural fertilisers provided by the farm. We transport our food and fodder for animals around the entire globe, which adds to greenhouse gas emissions.

We are in fact eating our planet. What can we do to change this?

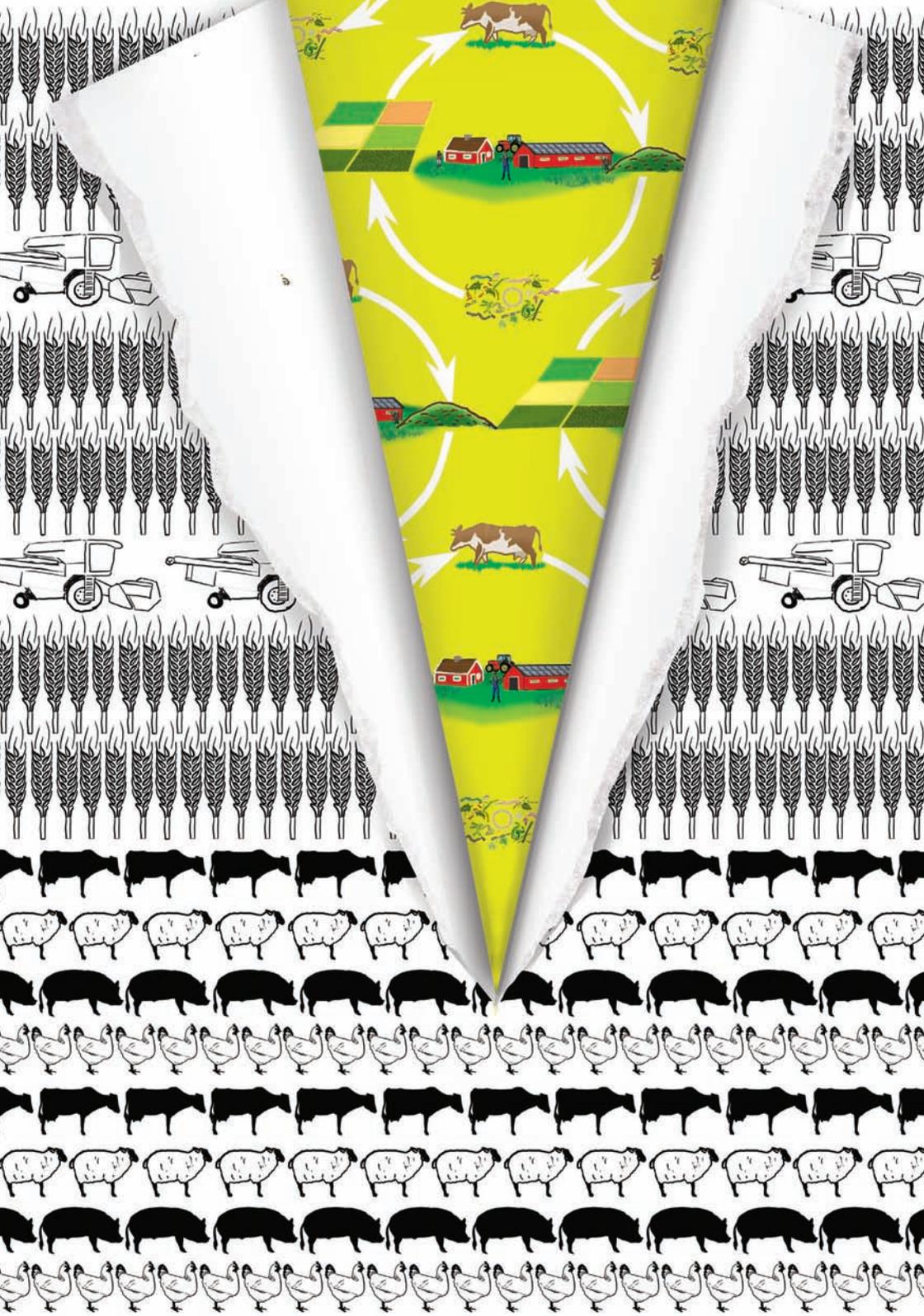


# GOOD news

The diversity of plants, animals and living organisms in the soil is essential in agriculture and in the ecosystem as a whole. If we handle these resources carefully, we can restore the balance between what we take and what we give back to the Earth. It is time to shift the agricultural system from destroying to rebuilding the Earth's resources.

At BERAS, we engage in the food sector from farmer to consumer. We present an ecological alternative with practical examples that we know work and contribute to sustainable food production and a cleaner environment. **Ecological Recycling Agriculture** shows a balanced way to farm our land, **Sustainable Food Societies** inspire cooperation for vibrant local communities and **Diet for our Green Planet** invites you to eat for a better environment.

Read on to learn more about how everyone who eats food can make a difference.



# WE CAN feed the Earth

What we need is a systemic shift in agriculture from linear flows to recirculation. Instead of causing environmental problems, such as nutrient leakage, climate change and soil degradation, agriculture can be part of the solution.

In Ecological Recycling Agriculture (ERA) we recirculate renewable resources by integrating crop production and animal husbandry. The ERA farm produces the fodder for its animals and the manure from the animals goes back as fertiliser to the soil. Having a variety of crops alternating on the fields (crop rotation) and including nourishing plants, such as clover, helps building up the soil and increases biodiversity.

The challenge is not only to feed a growing population, but also to feed the living soil where we grow our food. With ERA we can do both, without exhausting the Earth's resources.



# Celebrating the FARMER

In a Sustainable Food Society dedicated people come together to cooperate for a vibrant local community. It is being done with care and attention for both animals and nature.

The idea is to stimulate a local and sustainable food production, starting with the work of the local farm, which is supported by all actors in the food chain. The farmer delivers grain, milk and meat. Bakers make bread of the grain, dairies cheese of the milk and butchers sausage of the meat. Shops make this food available to us. Restaurants, cafés and schools serve food made from these products. Governments and researchers can make vital contributions to making this happen.

A key to making the Sustainable Food Society function and prosper is to make sure that the farmers get appreciation and fair compensation for their work. This is done by strengthening the local network of actors in the food chain.

The Sustainable Food Society gives us a healthy environment, good quality food and supports a prosperous life in rural areas.

# What you eat MATTERS

The environment can be saved if we all pitch in – our conscious choice of food makes a difference.

But what does it mean to be a conscious consumer? It means taking the extra step to find out where your food comes from and how it is produced. And it means reflecting on your food habits.

Here is a quick guide to a Diet for our Green Planet.

- Choose food that is organically produced, preferably from ERA farms. Then you say no to chemical pesticides and fertilisers. Instead you say yes to healthy food, fertile soils, animal welfare and a positive environmental impact.
- Eat less meat. Meat production is highly area and resource consuming. However, there is room for animals on the farms. Just not more than the farm can feed. When you do eat meat, choose meat from cows and sheep, which eat clovergrass. Pork and chicken are often fed with grains and soya that could have been for human consumption.
- Choose seasonal and local produce. You will contribute to shorter transports and a more vital local community where local farmers can sell their products. What you get in return is fresh food and the knowledge where it comes from.
- Reduce waste. We throw away huge amounts of food every year. See if you can change your food habits in any way that will reduce your waste. Every effort counts!

Choosing a Diet for our Green Planet is not only good for you, but also for the environment. Remember, what you eat matters.



# BERAS Implementation Partners



SWEDEN  
Södertörn University  
[www.sh.se](http://www.sh.se)



Biodynamic Research  
Institute, [www.jdb.se/sbfi](http://www.jdb.se/sbfi)



Södertälje municipality,  
[www.sodertalje.se](http://www.sodertalje.se)



Swedish Rural Network,  
[www.landsbygdsnatverket.se](http://www.landsbygdsnatverket.se)



Swedish Rural Economy  
and Agricultural societies,  
Gotland: [www.hush.se/i](http://www.hush.se/i)  
Kalmar: [www.hush.se/h](http://www.hush.se/h)



FINLAND  
MTT Agrifood Research  
[www.mtt.fi](http://www.mtt.fi)



Centre for Economic  
Development, Transport  
and the Environment  
for Uusimaa, [www.ely-keskus.fi/uusimaa](http://www.ely-keskus.fi/uusimaa)



Finnish Environment  
Institute,  
[www.environment.fi/syke](http://www.environment.fi/syke)



University of Helsinki,  
Department of Agricultural  
Sciences,  
[www.helsinki.fi](http://www.helsinki.fi)



ESTONIA  
Estonian University of Life  
Sciences,  
[www.emu.ee](http://www.emu.ee)



Estonian Organic Farming  
Foundation (EOFF),  
[www.maheklubi.ee](http://www.maheklubi.ee)



LATVIA  
Latvian Rural Advisory and  
Training Centre, [www.lkic.lv](http://www.lkic.lv)



LITHUANIA  
Aleksandras Stulginskis  
University  
[www.lzuu.lt/pradzia/lt](http://www.lzuu.lt/pradzia/lt)



Baltic Foundation HPI,  
[www.heifer.lt](http://www.heifer.lt);  
[www.heifer.org](http://www.heifer.org)



Kaunas District Municipality,  
[www.krs.lt](http://www.krs.lt)



POLAND  
Institute of Soil Science  
and Plant Cultivation –  
National Research Institute,  
[www.iung.pulawy.pl](http://www.iung.pulawy.pl)



Kujawsko-Pomorski  
Agricultural Advisory Centre in  
Minikowo, [www.kpodr.pl](http://www.kpodr.pl)



Polish Ecological Club  
in Krakow, City of  
Gliwice Chapter,  
[www.pkegliwice.pl](http://www.pkegliwice.pl)



Independent Autonomous  
Association of Individual  
Farmers 'Solidarity',  
[www.solidarnoscri.pl](http://www.solidarnoscri.pl)



Pomeranian Agricultural  
Advisory Center in Gdańsk,  
[www.podr.pl](http://www.podr.pl)



GERMANY  
Leibniz-Centre for Agricultural  
Landscape Research, [www.zalf.de](http://www.zalf.de)



DENMARK  
The Danish Ecological Council,  
[www.ecocouncil.dk](http://www.ecocouncil.dk)



BELARUS  
International Public  
Association of Animal  
Breeders "East-West"

# JOIN our network

The BERAS concepts have been developed through two transnational projects part-financed by the European Union and Norway within the Baltic Sea Region Programme, BERAS (2003 – 2006) and BERAS Implementation (2010 – 2013). These concepts are the results of common efforts by partners from eleven countries in the Baltic Sea Region.

BERAS develops and implements practical examples where farmers' experience, research, innovation and entrepreneurship from a multi sectorial engagement flow into realistic fully integrated ecological alternatives for the whole food chain from farmer to consumer.

BERAS is building alliances for a systemic shift in the food sector. It involves national and local authorities, universities and research institutes, advisory services, ecological and environmental NGOs, farmers and farmers' organisations, food chain actors and finance institutions. Following the conclusion of these EU projects, BERAS International Network has been formed.

Contact us and read more at [www.beras.eu](http://www.beras.eu)



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[www.beras.eu](http://www.beras.eu)

BERAS Implementation (2010-2013) is a transnational project part-funded by EU (Baltic Sea Region Programme 2007-2013). The project has a scientific basis and a partnership and supporting network with competence within the whole food chain. Among these are 24 project partners from 9 countries around the Baltic Sea and 35 associated organisations with representatives also from Russia and Norway.

The BERAS Implementation project has designed concepts to combat eutrophication of the Baltic Sea. These concepts, **Ecological Recycling Agriculture, Sustainable Food Societies** and **Diet for our Green Planet**, are also relevant for numerous other environmental challenges on a global scale. This brochure focuses on what we eat, how food is produced and what each of us can do to make a difference.



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**Baltic Sea Region**  
Programming 2007-2013

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