

Laudation - Special Award of Schloss Dyck Foundation to ARCHE NOAH

05. September 2014

A Handout of **Arche Noah** is titled:

"Preserving and Growing the Diversity of Cultivated Plants Biodiversity – a Source of Life for Us and Future Generations"

These programmatic aims make clear:

Arche Noah is more than a garden, more than a garden with flowers, fruits and vegetables, as we know it normally.

If you visit **Arche Noah** in Schiltern, Lower Austria, for the first time, it might happen that you pass the place, especially when you are a bit too fast.

The Garden is hidden behind a big wall along a narrow street with a big monastery on the opposite side. After finding the entrance gate, you first see a representative staircase. If you go upstairs, you see the garden, stretching out on a slope, crowned by a nice baroque garden pavilion. A beautiful situation, even if it would be "just a garden".

But you heard it before: it is more than a garden. You find it out with your first steps. Going on forward slowly, changing your views from the whole area to the plant arrangements and finally to the plants, you find out what that means "Seed - Saving " as a process .

In this garden they show you:

- the plants where the seeds come from
- the cultivated plant varieties
- the methods to collect the seeds

And then, visiting the archive building – or seed bank - they show you:

- how to prepare the seeds to keep them for a long time .

You will be very impressed by lots of glass vessels with saved seeds from all over Europe.

When you imagine that more than half of all species in the world are already lost, you can really understand why **Arche Noah** was founded in 1990 to help stopping this process of losing the basis of "creation". Therefore the name "**Arche Noah**" alluding to the bible - story of saving the live during the flood meets the real point.

Arche Noah itself is the best example for saving seed in a good and successful way. But it is also a roof - organisation with nearly 10.000 members. For everybody, who is interested in taking part in the work of saving seeds, the door is open to become a member at **Arche Noah**.

Finally the best summary for the important work of **Arche Noah** within a real beautiful garden is given in their own words. I quote from of their hand-out:

"It is to look at our cultural plants respectfully, to value gardening and farming as a cultural achievement, to consider ethically motivated consume as a contribution to organic and sustainable agriculture, to make cooking a declaration of love Let us share this vision!"

Within my last words you find the following theme to seed saving: Slow Food. But this is a special story for the next time. For now:

Congratulation to the Special Award of the Schloss Dyck Foundation!

This Award is an attestation for the relevance and correctness of your philosophy. I wish you further on much success and also much pleasure for your work!