



Pandemic regulations must equate agricultural diversity with food

Bonn, 25.4.2020 – Most seed festivals and seed-exchanges were not able to take place this spring. They are even more important than the internet as a source for the spread of traditional varieties of vegetables and associated knowledge. Now, the second important way of increasing the use of such varieties – the exchange and sale of seedlings – will be heavily curtailed by the current pandemic rules, the Umbrella Organisation for crop and livestock diversity warns.

The issue is not about “specialised markets” as a hobby for conventional gardeners, but the conservation of biodiversity and therefore is the basis of food and nutrition. Because of this, the sale of seedlings of varieties from which seeds are saved for re-use by gardeners and farmers should in principle be allowed during the pandemic, just like food, the Umbrella Organisation insists.

In many places those seedlings are not allowed at farmer's markets and other events. Hardware stores or garden centres are not the way to solve the problem, because they mainly sell modern hybrid varieties.

In an ever growing number of the more than six million garden plots in Germany, old varieties are being grown and cared for, because in addition to the conservation of diversity, they are especially well-suited for those who wish to grow their own and foster a diverse ecosystem. These positive developments should now be reinforced during the current seedling season by establishing the same pandemic rules that cover food.

More about the Umbrella Organisation for crop and livestock diversity (in english): <https://kulturpflanzen-nutztiervielfalt.org/node/29>

Contact: Susanne Gura 0049 177 669 1400