

BINGN
Norway seminar
2nd March – 11th March 2015

Introduction

After three long winter months, we met again for the first BINGN seminar in 2015. The scent of spring was in the air at Fokhol Gård, our host for the seminar.

It was a great turnout, combining us 'old' BINGN students (now beginning our second year) with the new BINGN first year students who brought a fresh breath to the education!



Eurythmy with Jesse O'Brien

We started most mornings with a good dose of Eurythmy with Jesse from Fokhol. Combining our coordination skills and team dynamics, it was an awakening start to the lessons ahead...

Soil analysis with Berit Swensen

A year had passed since our last meeting with Berit and it was time to refresh our knowledge of the mysteries of the soil. This time we focused on the task of soil analysis with emphasis on the importance of using our own sensory perceptions. Go out and observe and experience the soil!

GMO & Embryology with Trond Skaftnesmo

This was an enlightening lecture on the 'Myths and Truths' regarding GMO's. Trond gave an easily digestible account of the history of DNA using humorous metaphors and raising concerns of the use of genetic modification. Embryology was no less fascinating; we made a journey through the process of life itself!

Farm visit – Alm Østre

It was a brisk day for our farm visit at Alm Østre; a 50 ha biodynamic farm in the heart of Stange with 24 milking cows, 70 chickens, 6 sheep, a variety of vegetables and grains. The farm is run as a foundation with three (Pierre, Cord, Reinhart) responsible for different areas of the farm. The farm boasts a farm shop and a local box scheme providing vegetables, grain and meat.



Farm visit – Graminor

We were lucky enough to get a tour of Graminor; a Norwegian plant breeding company, specializing in different grains and potatoes. It was insightful and relevant, as we had just had Trond as a teacher some days before, to see how one breeds a new variety. The process was surprisingly long (up to 12 years for potato) until a new variety is sold on the market. Impressive and challenging work for the future ahead.



BINGN Farmers

On Saturday we had time for a much anticipated meeting of the BINGN student & farmers. This was fantastically fruitful, a space for sharing our experiences of the first BINGN year from the three different perspectives (farmer, student, mentor) and with intent to strengthen this triangular framework for years ahead.

Farm economics with Jens Niebuhr

Who knew farm economics could be so interesting? It was engrossing to spend two morning sessions with Jens, introducing us to the basics of economics and its terminology. I for one am looking forward to more of this!

Farm Visit – Norderhaug

A truly inspiring place! Piet Zwart & Lea van den Berg run this 30ha farm with 50 Telemark cattle and 15 horses, integrating social therapy for children into their daily lives. Piet's passion for child development left a huge impression on the group.



Working horses with Rune Myrseth

Our last lecture for the seminar was about working horses and specifically Rune's own experience on Fokhol Gård with horses. We delved into the machines used in horse powered agriculture with humour and passion, also the process of training the horses from early development in companionship with the human.

Conclusion

This seminar was light, with time to breathe and the space to get to know the new BINGN students. We had a great mixture of theory, farm visits and all important reflection. It's amazing to think we're already in the second year, yet still so much to look forward to! Looking forward to the next seminar in Sweden in April! Happy spring!