

**BINGN**  
**Finland seminar**  
**13 August – 20 August 2015**

**Introduction**

After a summer break of 10 weeks since the last seminar in Norway, we meet again in Finland. The last time the BINGN A's were here was in autumnal October 2014, now it certainly was a full summer feeling! The weather was incredible; blue skies and scorching sun and of course the wonderful Finnish people.

**Catering, Food Waste & Communities with Janne Länsipuro**

We jumped right into a deep and troubling subject; food waste. Janne gave us an overview of our global food system; based on importing of foods from across the globe in order to feed us and our animals and then we over consume and create waste, the situation seems pretty dire. But there are solutions to these problems; using 'non-products', for example parts of plants that are often discarded. Local food systems based in the communities producing it. We then split into groups to discuss what is waste? How do we eliminate it? A great stimulating start to the seminar!

**Cereals with Clemens Gabriel**

Clemens started off by presenting us with 9 different cereals in their harvested forms, we then had the task to describe them with all our senses and attempt to identify them. We then went through the different growth stages of the plants from germination, tillering and eventually ripening. Later we went out in the field to identify and analyze the density of crop in the field and test the moisture content in order to know when to harvest and the best conditions for storage. This was a huge and fascinating introduction to the world of cereals, I can't wait for more!

**Goetheanistic Painting with Teija Kettunen**

For the BINGN A's this would be our second session with Teija, the last time we focused on the colors blue and yellow and now we focused on two of the Biodynamic preparation plants; Yarrow and Chamomile. Firstly we painted the plants using just 3 colors, playing with the light, warmth & air surrounding the plants. Next we took charcoal for a more realistic drawing of the plants but also focusing on light & darkness. I feel these sessions with art are essential for a farmer to gain a deeper understanding of the subjects they are working with, be it plants or animals.

**Local & Global Economy with Marika Lohi**

We spent two sessions with Marika on the subject of economy, what it is and how does it relate to our lives? We made different exercises including mapping our own 'local economy', exploring the impact of giving and receiving money and working with case studies from the U theory. All in all this was a very social and interactive way to grasp the huge subject of economy.

**Tree Care & Pruning with Jussi Ingervo**

We meet Jussi for the second time to explore the subject of tree care. This time we focused on apple trees. At Kaarnaranta there are many old fruit trees, some more neglected than others. We split into three groups and began working on the trees, important points included; keeping the tree dry at the base, grass grazed/cut, prevent shoots coming from the base, dry out the roots, scrape off the moss on the bark, the crown has space to breathe.

### **Farm Visit – Metsälän Luomutila**

It was a sunny, but chilly morning. The night temperature had been down to two degrees! We met Verena & Jukka Arponen Morgenstern who run this 9 ha farm focusing on strawberry and blueberry which they mainly sell through food coops and self pick. Sweeter strawberries had none of us tasted even their varieties are polka and bounty, the biodynamic situation *has* an effect on the taste! We got a good introduction of how to prevent the insects from damaging strawberry crops. The garden blueberry bushes had few of us seen before and impressed us as he told about how to grow them and all his tricks.

<http://www.metsalanluomutila.fi/>

### **Farm Visit – Tapola Camp Hill**

We met with Jani Schulz at Tapola Camphill for a tour of the farm there. The farm is 58 ha in total including rented area. Tapola was started in 1974 and Jani can notice the difference in the soil after 40 years of biodynamic farming. There are 8 pigs for Christmas, 28 sheep for Easter, 14 milking cows and they are expecting 120 chickens. There is a vegetable garden, greenhouses and fruits and berries. The farm does not sell any of its products, they are consumed by the villagers and coworkers living within the community. There are workshops include a dairy and a herb workshop where the villagers participate in the daily activities.

<http://www.tapola-camphill.fi/>

### **Biodynamic Preparations with Henri Murto**

We arrived at Rekolan Tila on Monday evening and were greeted by Henri and Jonah. It felt like meeting old friends. Over the next few days we had some sessions with Henri about the Biodynamic preparations; we started off by looking at the compost preparations which had been already made and were in their 'ripening' positions. We then went on to focus on the silica horn preparation, we gathered around a barrel of silica infused water and each took it in turns to stir; this was a social and joyous occasion. Our next session involved the compost preparations and we each plunged our hands deep into the scorching compost to place the different preparations. These preparations are an integral part of the Biodynamic farming organism and hands on sessions like these are crucial to the grasping of this big topic.

### **Combine Harvester with Clemens Gabriel & Jonah Rekola**

Firstly we looked at the history of the combine harvester with Clemens and then went to experience the real thing. Jonah, his father and Clemens took us through all the parts of the machine, the whole process of harvesting and the inevitable factors of repairing. For me this was an eye-opening experience and a great step into understanding this integral part of the farming machinery.

### **Engines with Oliver Schouw**

Oliver Schouw is a second year BINGN student and for this seminar he taught us all about engines! From the simple 2 stroke diesel engine to the 4 stroke petrol engine, Oliver took us on a journey through the world of combustion. With simplified visual explanations, we all begin to grasp this sometimes overwhelming subject and for me the foundation has been solidly made for further study.

### **Conclusion**

Sun, sauna, Suomi! What a great summer seminar, with a fantastic mix of bathing, eating and learning we certainly experienced the delights of a Finnish summer. I can't wait to experience this country and its people again, delightful.