

BINGN
Sweden seminar
21st April – 28th April 2015



Introduction

Spring had certainly arrived at Skillebyholm, with birds singing in the blossoming apple trees and flowers carpeting the forest floor. This was our third BINGN seminar in Sweden and seventh in total! It feels like coming 'home', to a space of known faces, great teachers and beautiful surroundings. A perfect place for learning, creating and reflecting.

Arts / Games with Lea Vogel

Each morning after breakfast we had time for 'Arts'. This became a time for 'Fun & Games'! With the energy from our fellow BINGN-A student, Lea Vogel, we could all awake our senses and move our bodies in a variety of activities building bonds between the Bingnfamily!

Animal Anatomy with Wilbert Beyer

Our visit lecture was delving into the anatomy of animals, particularly focusing the cow. Wilbert took us through the differences of our anatomy to the various animals, implying the human being has a bit of everything, while animals are specialists in certain areas. We had a chance to take a closer look at a cows Uterus, dissecting and discussing the organ. This was a great introduction, but only scratched the surface of this fascinating subject.

Farm Economics with Clemens Gabriel

At our last seminar in March we had an introduction to farm economics with Jens Niebuhr, now we could explore in depth this subject. We were lucky enough to be able to use Ola Aukrust's farm accounts, in order to get to grips with the layout and terminology of the

accounting system. It's becoming clearer how important this area is for a farm and how necessary it is to be aware and understand the economic system.

Applied Mathematics with Clemens Gabriel

In these sessions we worked on real farming situations using applied mathematics. For example how to work out the amount of hay you need for the winter based on the area of land, animals to feed and time. This was very exciting and extremely useful in terms of planning the next season and preparing for the years ahead.

Crop Rotation with Wijnand Koker



We had three sessions with Wijnand learning about the role of crop rotations in the farm organism. We used our practicing farms as examples, discussing the benefits and drawbacks of the crops used and their relation within the system. With Wijnand's background in BERAS project, he had a huge amount of knowledge and experience to share and it was delivered in a clear and understandable manner. A really fantastic subject delivered by a fantastic teacher!

Farm Visit – Uppmalby Gård

Between the sheep and the chickens, we were met by Sonja & Harald Speer in the courtyard of the farm, Uppmalby Gård, a quaint 20ha farm with a huge diversity. Harald took us on a journey through the ups and downs of the terrain and history of the place. Through the orchard and pasture, fields and greenhouse, this farm is bursting with life! We spent time in a permanent pasture area hearing about the importance of such areas for biodiversity. A great place teeming with life and a fantastic example of small scale farming surviving in modern agriculture.



Slaughtering & Butchering of Animals with Oskar Rosengren



This was the second time meeting Oskar, last time the topic was lactic-fermentation, now onto animals! We had the privilege to be part of the whole process of the slaughtering, butchering and consuming of goat kids. The slaughtering took place at Sörbro Gård, the farmer performed the slaughtering and we took over with Oskar for the skinning and removing of organs, it was incredible to work with the anatomy of the animal so close. After everything was removed we let the carcasses hang for a few days, we then went on to butcher them, learning all the different cuts of meat and different ways of preparing and conserving. I think this whole process is extremely important to be a part of, especially for farmers, to gain a deeper understanding of 'The Animal' and our connection with them.

Animal Observation with Peter Muller-Temme

We have met Peter several times now, previously learning about Meteorology and weather observation. This time he presented his work with animal observation, from his book 'Bondens Öga'. He has created such a framework to work with the observation of milking cows; observing when they sleep, eat, excrete etc. and also to look closely at the manure, in consistency and quality. These methods are all tools in order to understand ones animals and develop awareness for the overall health of the farm.

Biodynamic Preparations with Thomas Luethi

A key part of the Biodynamic method is the preparations and who better, to take us through them, than Thomas Luethi! We started with the horn preparations, exploring the different horns of animals, why do cows have horns? Why are deer horns different? The two horn preparations are used at different stages of plant growth; the humus preparation will be sprayed at the early growth stage of plant development and the silica preparation at the maturing stage. We next looked at the different plants used within the compost preparations and have now the task of following these plants in their individual development through drawing.



Conclusion

This seminar was packed full of fantastic theory, incredible teachers, great practical skills and still time to breathe. Maybe we are getting used to it? All in all a brilliant seminar, always a pleasure to be at Skillebyholm! The next time we meet will be in the fjords of Norway at Sognjord- oghagebrukskule in June, can't wait!