



## Thirst for knowledge – Ways to Sustainable School Lunches

**The Challenge** Adiposity and disposition towards violence among young people, increasing rates of diet-related illnesses, impoverishment of the cultural landscapes, and fewer and fewer knowledge of nature and landscape; all these are consequences of the same problem. Although a few years ago books like “Futter fürs Volk” (food for the people) and “Die Suppe lügt” (the soup lies) pointed out the grave problems for the future of our society, it took some time until the general public developed an awareness of these problems. But the reasons are obvious. Quickly send a text-message, download a new ringtone, and alongside devour some convenience or fast food – unfortunately, the lunch break of many pupils looks like this or similar.

Bad nutrition and inactivity lead to more and more overweight young people. Another important problem is the decreasing contact to nature and little knowledge of our environment and our daily life. Many pupils today know more cell phone tunes than bird songs; they can name more TV-stations than flowering plants. But nature experience and knowledge of our environment are fundamental for a greater environmental awareness and consequently for motivation and readiness to act environment-friendly and sustainably. Most of the pupils do not know that by choosing certain food one can contribute to environment protection.

**The Project** The objective of this model project is to give pupils and preschoolers impetuses for a sustainable way of life. It deals with future-oriented behaviour not only regarding the pupils’ own health, but also regarding nature, environment, and sustainability.

- NatureLife-International and the project partners believe that understanding the ecological context is a basic prerequisite for nature conservation.
  - It is a very important challenge to teach relations between nutrition, exercise, landscape, and local environment.
  - The project partners count on a combination of different members of society. Only if we manage to make aspects on sustainability become an integral part of different parts of society, we will be able to successfully safeguard the ecological future of younger generations.
  - Countrywomen and farmers, hunters, winegrowers, environmentalists and beekeepers, fishermen and gardeners, but also cooks, butchers, bakers and other multipliers take part in the project.
  - Pupils visit farms, meadow orchards, fields, and vineyards, and farmers and countrywomen come to the schools.
  - The project has famous advocates – one of them the successful chef Eckart Witzigmann.
  - The project “Wissenshunger – Wege zu einer nachhaltigen Schulverpflegung” (Thirst for Knowledge – Ways to Sustainable School Lunches) fights against the decrease of knowledge in more than one way. The project lasts two years, and at the end a compendium will demonstrate how interested all-day schools are able to realise the ideas about sustainability step by step.
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- In collaboration with many partners and local activists, NatureLife-International implements the project in various model schools in Baden-Württemberg, e.g. in Obererdingen, Brackenheim, Tübingen, Freiburg, and Marbach.
  - These schools exemplarily implement sustainable school lunches and explain the connection not only between nutrition and protection of biodiversity, but also between ecology and economy. Owners of local restaurants or parents use local products to prepare delicious and healthy lunches for the pupils. The aim is to establish a regional value added chain as well as a consumer information chain from the farmers to gastronomy and finally to the pupils as consumers.
  - Besides the school lunches themselves, the project also focuses upon the



connection of landscape, agriculture, healthy nutrition, and exercise as well as regional circles, biological diversity, nature experience, and resource protection.

**Measures and Achievements**

- Development and publication of teaching units for preschool workers and teachers
- Development and publication of painting, story, and nature experience books for preschoolers about local habitats, water, fruit orchards, and healthy nutrition
- Training of multipliers
- Workshops and seminars in various model schools
- Start of an awareness campaign inter alia in consumer magazines

**Literature**

- *Futter fürs Volk* (food for the people). V. Angres, C.-P. Hutter, L. Ribbe (2006). Droemer Verlag München (in German).
- *Die Suppe lügt* (the soup lies). H.-U. Grimm (2005). Klett-Cotta (in German).

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