



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations



**The International Treaty**  
ON PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES  
FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

**Views, Experiences and Best Practices as an example of possible options for  
the national implementation of Article 9 of the International Treaty**

*Note by the Secretary*

*At its [second meeting](#) of the Ad hoc Technical Expert Group on Farmers' Rights (AHTEG), the Expert Group agreed on a revised version of the [template](#) for collecting information on examples of national measures, best practices and lessons learned from the realization of Farmers' Rights*

*This document presents the updated information on best practices and measures of implementing Article 9 of the International Treaty submitted by Norway on 21 June 2019.*

*The submission is presented in the form and language in which it was received.*



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## **Template for submission of**

### **Measures, Best Practices and Lessons Learned from the Realization of Farmers' Rights as set out in Article 9 of the International Treaty**

#### **Basic information**

- *Title of measure/practice* **Norwegian Seed Savers (KVANN)**
- *Date of submission* 20<sup>th</sup> June 2019
- *Name(s) of country/countries in which the measure/practice is taking place* Norway
  
- *Responsible institution/organization*  
**Norwegian Seed Savers**  
[post@norwegianseedsavers.no](mailto:post@norwegianseedsavers.no)  
<http://www.norwegianseedsavers.no/>
  
- *Type of institution/organization (categories)* independent non-profit member organization
  
- *Collaborating/supporting institutions/organizations/actors:*  
**Norwegian Centre for Genetic Resources**  
Norwegian Institute of Bioeconomy Research (NIBIO)  
NIBIO, Postbox 115, NO-1431 Ås. Phone: + 47 406 04 100  
E-post [post@nibio.no](mailto:post@nibio.no) [www.nibio.no](http://www.nibio.no)

#### **Norwegian Agriculture Agency**

Address: PO Box 1450 Vika, NO-0116 Oslo, Norway

Visitors: Oslo Stortingsgt. 28, 0161 Oslo

Phone: (+47) 78 60 60 00, [postmottak@landbruksdirektoratet.no](mailto:postmottak@landbruksdirektoratet.no), [www.landbruksdirektoratet.no](http://www.landbruksdirektoratet.no)

#### **NordGen – the Nordic Genetic Resource Center**

Box 41, SE-230 53 Alnarp, Sweden Phone: +46 40 53 66 40

[plants@nordgen.org](mailto:plants@nordgen.org) <https://www.nordgen.org/skand/>

#### **Overhalla Klonavlssenter AS (Cloning potatoes for distribution to farmers)**

<https://www.overhallaklon.no/miniknollproduksjon/>

Gnr 43 Bnr 99, 7863 Overhalla

Local sister organizations as Community Seed Banks in Europe and USA. Countries with collaboration: Sweden, Denmark, Estonia, England, Finland, Scotland, Switzerland, Austria, USA, Canada.

KVANN – Norwegian Seed savers have established collaboration with some Norwegian plant reserves and plant museums, such as Oslo Tøyen University plant museum and botanical garden, Trondheim botanical garden, Ringve botanical museum, Væres venner “The world garden”, as well as a series of other NGOs working with permaculture, seeds and plants in Norway:

#### **Økologisk Norge (Organic Norway)**

Address: Engebrets vei 3, 0275 OSLO, Phone: +47 24 12 41 00



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[info@okologisknorge.no](mailto:info@okologisknorge.no) <http://okologisknorge.no>

**Spire**, Address: Mariboegs gate 8, 0183 Oslo, Phone: 23 10 95 93 [post\(a\)spireorg.no](mailto:post(a)spireorg.no)

**Solhatt Ecological gardening AS**, [info@solhatt.no](mailto:info@solhatt.no), Phone: +47 40 67 30 74 <https://solhatt.no>

**Efferus Veksthus (Green House)** <https://www.facebook.com/EfferusVeksthus>

**Norsk permakulturförening**, (Norwegian Permaculture Association) Address: Maridalsveien 120 0461 Oslo, [www.permakultur.no](http://www.permakultur.no)

## Description of the examples

### Mandatory information:<sup>1</sup>

- *Short summary to be put in the inventory*

The Norwegian Seed Savers (KVANN) is an independent non-profit member organization established in 2016, into which several former 'plant clubs', originally initiated by the Norwegian Centre for Genetic Resources, were integrated. KVANN has a cooperation agreement with the Centre and receives annual grants from the Norwegian Agriculture Agency. The overall objective is to promote sustainable use of plant diversity for private use in Norway and to enhance public awareness and knowledge about plant breeding, conservation and sustainable use of domestic crops and plants. Main activities include distribution of seed and plant catalogues through which members can exchange breeding material among themselves. These catalogues also include plant genetic resources held by the Nordic Genebank (NordGen) and research stations of the Norwegian Institute of Bioeconomy Research (NIBIO) system. KVANN also puts emphasis on raising knowledge and awareness about the need to protect traditional plant varieties and seeds, and organizes regular training courses and seminars on seeds, plant diseases, fruit grafting, potato seedlings etc. In addition, the association currently has the national responsibility to manage the distribution of potato seedlings to hobby growers in Norway. It engages with museum gardens and other public and private gardens for demonstration and awareness creation purposes.

- *Brief history (including starting year)*

Norwegian Seed Savers was established in 2016 and given the Norwegian name KVANN after the old Nordic plant, called Kvann (*Angelica Archangelica*). The name is also an abbreviation for "Kunnskap og Vern Av Nytteplanter i Norge" (Knowledge and protection of domestic plants in Norway) The association has grown rapidly since the start, and includes more the 500 members from all parts of Norway as of December 2018.

- *Core components of the measure/practice (max 200 words)*

Norwegian Seed Savers is a Norwegian Community Seed Bank (CSB) with a mandate to support and work for sustainable use of plant variation for hobby growers in Norway. Its main focus is on free exchange of genuine varieties of seeds and healthy plants between its members. The genetic material for plant breeding should primarily encompass varieties that normally are not for sale and not commercially available. The association distributes two seed and plant catalogues a year, where members exchange such breeding material between themselves. The catalogues also include seeds from the Nordic seed bank, NordGen and from local plant stations within the NIBIO system. The association currently has the national responsibility to administer the distribution of potato seedlings in Norway to hobby growers. KVANN also plays a great emphasis on raising knowledge and

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<sup>1</sup> This mandatory information is required in order for the measure/practice to be included in the Inventory.



awareness about the need to protect old plants and seeds, and organizes regular courses and seminars in the use and protection of seeds, plant diseases, fruit grafting, correct use of potato seedlings etc. The association is currently developing its organizational structures in order to organize a growing number of members, tasks and requests for national and international cooperation.

- *Description of the context and the history of the measure/practice is taking place (political, legal and economic framework conditions for the measure/practice) (max 200 words)*

Norwegian Seed Savers (NSS) was established in 2016 as a joint association for the former plant clubs initiated by the Norwegian Centre for Genetic Resources in 2006. The former groups were amalgamated into one organization. NSS is a Norwegian NGO with a freer connection to the Norwegian government than the former Plant Groups. KVANN is still maintaining a clear mandate in the annual working plans of the Centre. KVANN also holds a formal cooperation agreement with the Centre. In 2017 and 2018 KVANN received annual grants from the Norwegian Agriculture Agency on 50.000,- Norwegian kroner. KVANN's engagements are regulated by the Agency's strategic plans for protection of genetic resources in Norway. KVANN has a steering board with 7 members. The annual meeting is open for all members, and is KVANN's highest decision making body. As KVANN has taken over the responsibility to administer distribution of potato seedlings from the Centre for Genetic Resources, it has realized that such public bodies not always are willing to pass on the appropriate economic resources with the tasks given to the NGO. KVANN has discussed this problem with the Norwegian Agriculture Agency and will take such problems up the Norwegian Parliament to enhance public responsibility here.

- *To which provision(s) of Article 9 of the International Treaty does this measure relate*

- Art. 9.1
- Art. 9.2a
- Art. 9.2b
- Art. 9.2c
- Art. 9.3

**Other information, if applicable**

- *Please indicate which category of the Inventory is most relevant for the proposed measure, and which other categories are also relevant (if any):*

| No. | Category  | Most relevant <sup>2</sup> | Also relevant <sup>3</sup> |
|-----|---|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1   | Recognition of local and indigenous communities', farmers' contributions to conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA, such as awards and recognition of custodian/guardian farmers |                            |                            |
| 2   | Financial contributions to support farmers conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA such as contributions to benefit-sharing funds   |                            |                            |
| 3   | Approaches to encourage income-generating activities to support farmers' conservation and sustainable use of PGRFA  |                            |                            |

<sup>2</sup> Please select only one category that is most relevant, under which the measure will be listed.

<sup>3</sup> Please select one or several categories that may also be relevant (if applicable).



|    |  |   |   |
|----|--|---|---|
| 4  | Catalogues, registries and other forms of documentation of PGRFA and protection of traditional knowledge   |   |   |
| 5  | In-situ/on-farm conservation and management of PGRFA, such as social and cultural measures, community biodiversity management and conservation sites   |   |   |
| 6  | Facilitation of farmers' access to a diversity of PGRFA through community seed banks <sup>4</sup> , seed networks and other measures improving farmers' choices of a wider diversity of PGRFA. | x |   |
| 7  | Participatory approaches to research on PGRFA, including characterization and evaluation, participatory plant breeding and variety selection   |   |   |
| 8  | Farmers' participation in decision-making at local, national and sub-regional, regional and international levels   |   |   |
| 9  | Training, capacity development and public awareness creation   |   | x |
| 10 | Legal measures for the implementation of Farmers' Rights, such as legislative measures related to PGRFA.   |   |   |
| 11 | Other measures / practices   |   |   |

- *Objective(s)* To promote sustainable use of plant diversity for private use in Norway and to enhance public awareness and knowledge about plant breeding, sustainable use and protection of seeds and domestic plants.
- *Target group(s) and numbers of involved and affected farmers*<sup>5</sup> KVANN's target groups are private hobby growers and farmers. The number of members is 530 (December 2018). Other target groups for awareness etc. are the general public, politicians, public management, farmer's associations, educational institutions, youth, and green sentiments in cities.
- *Location(s) and geographical outreach* KVANN has members all over Norway. It is a national association with local groups emerging.
- *Resources used for implementation of the measure/practice*  
A membership fee of 200 Norwegian Kroner (NOK) in 2018 and 530 members, plus 50.000 NOK from the government have given some economic leave-way for the organization. Its annual budget for 2019 is 400.000 NOK, which includes monetarization of some of the free work by its steering board. With no human and economic resources for administrative tasks, the board members have to use too much time on administration to the detriment of strategic work and outreach etc. The board's prime focus is on annual seed and plant catalogues, knowledge-raising courses and meetings and member and public meetings in gardens, plus conservation of plants in (public) gardens, plant reserves and domestic gardens. This engagement has definitely raised public awareness about the need to preserve old genetic plant recourses and promote the use of a wide variety of plants in order to cope with the coming climate change. Several thousand seeds and plants have been distributed and are grown locally over the whole country. (No precise counting has been made yet.) More than 30 meetings, courses etc. are held annually. 10 different plant reserves, museum gardens and private reserves are

<sup>4</sup> Including seed houses.

<sup>5</sup> Any classification, e.g. of the types of farmer addressed, may be country-specific.





engaged directly with the organization. An increased public economic and technical support would greatly improve the results of our work and engagement.

- *Other national level instruments that are linked to the measure/practice*  
The Government of Norway's policy for and economic support to farming has of course a great impact on the use and protection of old Norwegian plant recourses. In the view of KVANN, far more public and private economic recourses must be used in order to promote organic farming and sustainable land use. According to KVANN, the Norwegian government is currently cutting back on its budget for plant stations and educational institutions for such purposes. There is no longer any Norwegian breeding of vegetables.
- *Are you aware of any other international agreements or programs that are relevant for this measure/practice?*  
Internationally, KVANN relates to the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture. There are programs in the European Union to promote the work of Community Seed Banks and related engagements, including research. There are also private funds supporting such work, but KVANN has not been able to engage with these organizations yet.

### Lessons learned

- *Describe lessons learned which may be relevant for others who wish to do the same or similar measures/practices (max 250 words).*  
One lesson is certainly that such organizations as KVANN must be clear on its prime mandate and focus and be willing to put its first priorities here. Secondly, it is important to build up a sustainable organizational structure, which is not dependent on individuals. Long-term sustainability must rest on good economic management, sound administration, and accountability, both in the practical work as well as in principles. Modern organizations should also be able to communicate well with the general public and its core constituencies. Modern digital platforms have to be used and managed well. KVANN has also experienced a growing interest among young people for green themes and gardening. Both old plants but not the least exotic sorts are in high demand. Communal gardening is popular, and communal action as a whole should be used much more to promote green values. It seems like people are tired of talk and talk about problems, and want to engage in practical work and solutions. Thus, common practical solution, steered by people with good knowledge and solid engagement is perhaps the best answer to our challenges in this field today.

### Further information

- *Link(s) to further information about the measure/practice*

KVANN/Norwegian Seed Savers exchange is linked up on: <http://Norwegianseedsavers.no>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/planteklubben/>; <https://www.facebook.com/KVANN.org/>