

THE FARMER & HIS PRINCE

A film by
BERTRAM VERHAAG
PROJECT ASSISTANT BERNWARD GEIER

PRESSBOOK

In theatres: 20th November 2014

THE FARMER & HIS PRINCE

The Team

Written & directed by	Bertram Verhaag
Cinematography	Gerald Fritzen, Waldemar Hauschild Pauli Hien, Hans Albrecht Luszkat
Editing	Melania Singer, Uwe Klimmeck, Doris Muskar
Music	Sami Hammi
Sound	Marcus von Kleist Zoltan Ravasz
Camera Assistant	Isabel Theiler, Katie Revell, Roman Linke
Sound Mixing	B.O.A. Videofilmkunst, Michael Mitschka
Translation	Bernward Geier, Alyssa Koske
Producer	Bernward Geier
Line Producer	Eva Linke
Production Manager	Jelka Hauschild
Colour Grading	Jürgen Pertack
Postproduction	Michael Sängler Film
Executive Producer	Bertram Verhaag

Technical Specifications

Runtime	82 minutes
Format	Digital english
Sound Mix	Dolby Digital
Country & Year of Production	Germany 2014

A production of DENKmal Film Verhaag GmbH, Munich
Distributed by barnsteiner-film

www.thefarmerandhisprince.com

„We cannot go on like this: taking and not putting things back. What you take out you must replace, you must give back to nature. We give nothing back now, we just take it all.“ HRH Charles, Prince of Wales

Synopsis

The film depicts a Prince, who has the vision to feed the world with organic agriculture and heal damaged nature. Alongside his charismatic farm manager David Wilson, he has been pursuing this goal for 30 years. Through poetically impressive images, this unique collaboration portrays how organic agriculture works, and the benefits that emanate from it.

Bertram Verhaag observed these two visionaries over the course of five years - through all four seasons. The Prince of Wales already felt strongly about the concept of organic and sustainable farming long before the word *sustainability* was on everyone's lips. More than 30 years ago, he realised that other farmers could only be swayed to cultivate their land without poisons and in harmony with nature, if they were presented with a practical example. This example turned into an exceptional success and now, farmers from all over the United Kingdom travel to the DUCHY HOME FARM, to gather the courage and knowledge they need, to convert to organic themselves.

Prince Charles appears in an entirely unusual light, which forces the viewer to throw all prejudices towards him and organic agriculture overboard.

„Is this what paradise looks like? With lush poetic images, Bertram Verhaag takes us on a trip to southern England, to Prince Charles' organic farm. Be prepared to dismiss a many preconceptions after seeing this film; preconceptions against Prince Charles and against organic agriculture.“



The Protagonists

HRH Charles, Prince of Wales

The success story of the DUCHY HOME FARM has its roots and beginnings in the year 1985, when Prince Charles was looking for a new farm manager, with whom he could put his ecological visions into practice. Back then, the Prince had no practical experience whatsoever in agriculture or gardening. „The only trees I had planted were very official ones in very official holes!“

Charles realized right away that David Wilson shared with him an exquisite and profound curiosity to strive for extraordinary innovations, and had just as many burning questions as he did. This common ground was an important basis for their journey to find answers and solutions to these questions.

There were many who smiled about Prince Charles becoming a „green“ Prince - others simply declared him crazy. With his typical British humour Prince Charles describes his journey into the world of organic farming:

„The experts have been quite polite in my presence, but one can only guess what their thoughts were about this latest demonstration of mental derangement, once they were out of sight. But we started with the conversion of 30 hectares to organic farming.“

Prince Charles has dreams, but he is far more than just a dreamer - he is a man of action. It was neither naive romanticism, nor a spontaneous

impulse that inspired Prince Charles to get engaged in organic farming. The idea ripened over the years and as he says, he followed his intuition from which he could not escape. During these beginnings in the mid eighties he had one particular objective: sustainability.

Highly decorated with prestigious environmental awards, the Prince is committed to the protection of rainforests, questions of climate change, and to the conservation of threatened animal and plant species, many of which have come to find a safe haven on his farm.

„Agriculture is not just as any other business. Agriculture is very different from other economic activities, because it has the long term responsibility for the precious life necessities we get from nature.“

„We must realise that we are, ourselves, very much a part of nature, and not just separate from her. I felt very strongly that we were in danger of compromising the future productivity of the soil, if we didn't take trouble to maintain its health.“

„I have battled and battled to try and encourage people to understand how important the small family farmer is - all around the world. These are the people on whom genuine food security depends. We cannot put all our trust in giant operations and huge industrial systems, because they have within them the seeds of their own destruction. That is why the development and protection of the small farmer is crucial, but everywhere, all around the world, they are being driven off the land as we speak.“



David Wilson

David Wilson is farm manager of the Duchy Home Farm at Highgrove and had initially been trained in conventional methods of agriculture. In 1985 Prince Charles chose him to run the DUCHY HOME FARM and so, David Wilson accompanied and shaped the process of converting to sustainable, organic agriculture. In the wake of this collaboration he became a close confidant to Prince Charles in terms of his ecological endeavors.



„I was very lucky to come to this job, and then having the opportunity to try a system of farming that was very different. The Prince of Wales had a vision, and he also had a real unease about intensive farming systems, and it just gave us all an opportunity to learn together. Which we've done and we certainly continue learning, that's for sure.“

„We have a very spoilt Western society, where cosmetic perfection is everything, which means that we have a real problem.“

„The Western model of food production is totally insecure. It will implode at some point in the future, unless we adopt more sustainable methods of farming.“

Dr. Vandana Shiva

Dr. Vandana Shiva was born in Dehradun, India in 1952. She is a scientist and social activist, and has received many awards for her involvement with environmental protection, women's rights and sustainability. In 1993 she was awarded the Right-Livelihood-Award - more commonly known as the 'Alternative Nobel Prize' - for placing women and ecology at the heart of modern development discourse.



„I call him ‚my friend who is the peasant Prince‘, because I think he thrives most on the land. His heart and soul is totally with the Earth.“

„His nails will always have a little dirt underneath. He is not a manicured Prince. He's a ‚dirty Prince‘ in the sense of dirt and soil being part of both his physical being as well as his soul. I think it has been very carefully developed that Prince Charles should be made to look like he is some kind of a ‚loony‘ on the fringe. Only because his ideas are so sane in an insane world.“

Dr. Auma Obama

Dr. Rita Auma Obama was born in Nairobi in 1960. She is a germanist, sociologist, journalist und author. Auma Obama studied in Germany from 1980 onwards and graduated in the nineties. She is the older half-sister to US-President Barack Obama. Following positions in England, she eventually returned to Kenya, where she has been engaged with the humanitarian organization CARE for many years. In July 2010 she joined the Jacobs Foundation board of trustees, and is furthermore the initiator and chief executive of the SAUTI KUU foundation.

„He was criticized for his ideas - or not even criticized, but people questioned it and weren't really impressed.“

„I am impressed that over all these years he kept committed to what he believed in and now he really is one of the pioneers of what we are now calling ‚bio-agriculture‘.“



Prof. Dr. Hartmut Vogtmann

Up until 1967 Hardy Vogtmann studied agriculture and food science at the ETH Zurich. He was appointed professor for agriculture at the University of Kassel in 1981, where he also held the first chair for organic farming in Germany. Vogtmann is regarded as THE pioneer for organic agriculture in Germany and beyond, and has acted as an advisor to Prince Charles since the 1980s. From 2000 to 2007 he headed the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation. Following this engagement, he presided the environmental foundation EuroNatur for three years and since 2012 he is president of the German League for Nature.

„When I met His Royal Highness, it was more to acquaint him with the idea of organic agriculture. He had the feeling that we needed a different kind of farming, but he didn't exactly know what kind. And our idea was to show him organic farming and that he would catch fire with it - which he did - but he was still uncertain. So he sent his private secretary and his veterinary over to Germany and we showed them some very good examples here. They came back and said, ‚Sir, I think we can do it!‘“



Bertram Verhaag Director and Producer

For over 30 years, Bertram Verhaag has been making documentary films with his own production company, DENKMAL-FILM. Those three decades have seen the realisation of roughly 130 productions, including eight feature-length films.

During the 1980s, his proximity to the Upper Palatinate area of Bavaria motivated him to make five films exploring the proposed nuclear reprocessing plant at Wackersdorf. The best-known out of these five was „SPALTPROZESSE“ (SPLITTING THE ATOM), whose title refers not only to the process of nuclear fission, but also to the deliberate splitting of the population into supporters and opponents of the nuclear facility.

Verhaag's latest film on genetic engineering „SCIENTISTS UNDER ATTACK - GENETIC ENGINEERING IN THE MAGNETIC FIELD OF MONEY“ was screened to great acclaim in German and Austrian cinemas. „SCIENTISTS UNDER ATTACK“ is a documentary thriller on the independence of science. It illustrates the fate of scientists, who investigated genetic engineering, and were mercilessly punished through defamation and the withdrawal of research funds after publishing GM-critical results. Statements from scientists themselves suggest that 95% of those conducting research in the field of genetic engineering are funded by the industry. Merely 5% are independent. This situation is clearly incompatible with principles of freedom of thought - and with democracy. The question is: Can we, the public, still trust our scientists? Over the past twelve years, Verhaag has made nine films on genetic engineering. However, given the frustrating nature of the topic, he sees it as vital to also illustrate the other side of the story by portraying people who have consciously chosen to produce food in an **ecological, holistic and sustainable** way. In doing so, his aim is not only to provoke thought, but also to encourage viewers to take action. These films have garnered an impressive array of awards over the past years. For example, „THE FARMER WHO HEARS THE GRASS GROWING“ has won nine accolades so far, including „Best Ecological Film 2010“.

In June 2013, Bertram Verhaag was awarded the prestigious B.A.U.M environmental award, for his persistent film work.

Verhaag creates productions that **serve society as a whole**, making DENKmal a truly „social business“. He sees himself as an active participant in the movement towards **more humanity, respect for nature, sustainability and courage to intervene**.

His evocative works helped to defeat the plans for a reprocessing plant at Wackersdorf and to drive forward the movement against nuclear energy. His films on genetic engineering have encouraged countless people to actively engage with, and resist this deeply flawed technology. „LIFE RUNNING OUT OF CONTROL“ has served as a catalyst for the establishment of a citizens' movement, and was - and still is - the foundation and backbone for the ever-growing GM-free regions.



Director's Note

I was instantly captivated by the idea of making a film about one of Europe's most renowned organic farms - the DUCHY HOME FARM and its royal proprietor Prince Charles. We could only realize this project thanks to Bernward Geier and his valuable contacts to the Royal Household.



We were convinced of the project's potential and were sure that an exclusive permit for shooting on an exemplary, royal organic farm could only mean that we were bearing a diamond in the rough. It would be foolish to let this opportunity slide! So we started shooting with no funds and no TV-backing whatsoever - at our own command and especially at our own expense.

Altogether we shot for five years, documenting many exceptional situations on and around the farm, accompanied by charismatic farm manager David Wilson, who was able to convey the scope of the Prince's vision with his unmistakable

British humour. 35 years have passed since Prince Charles implemented his vision of agriculture, which is now highly respected and exemplary not only for England, but for the entire world.

The Prince counted on a mode of agriculture that was free of poisons and genetic modification, and encompassed species-appropriate livestock husbandry. This visionary idea fell into place long before the word *sustainable* was on everyone's lips, at a time where the term *organic* was still connected to *muesli munchers*.

During our shoots a representative of the Royal Press Office had to be present at all times, vigilant over every spoken word, but otherwise remaining unobtrusive throughout. Prince Charles was available for two interviews, and in both of them he speaks of his views on agriculture with a clarity that is largely unknown to the public and sheer breathtaking. And thus, this diamond in the rough developed into a multifaceted, sparkling brilliant. To our dismay we are not allowed to show the film outside of Europe or in England - by groundless order of the Royal Press Office, which is probably trying to prevent Prince Charles from gaining any more prominence as the *green Prince*.

Despite these hindrances, we are proud to say that the film will finally open in German cinemas this Autumn, offering many people the chance to come see for themselves. Sometimes filmmaking and organic agriculture have more in common than one may think - it takes one step at a time, and in the end, quality will prevail.

Bertram Verhaag – Filmo/Bio

BERTRAM VERHAAG has been making documentary films for over 30 years and is one of a few filmmakers who continues to engage unflinchingly with political, environmental and social issues. His multiple-award-winning films bolster democracy and educate people - in the broadest possible sense, by focusing on protagonists who, themselves, engage with important social issues. They encourage the viewers not to submit to the idea that „there's nothing I can do about it anyway!“

Born in Sosnowitz (Upper Silesia)

Study of sociology and economics

Three years freelance worker at the department of urban development in Munich

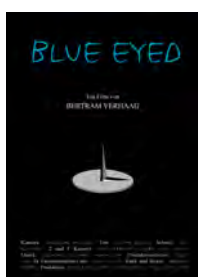
1972 – 75 Munich College of film and TV

1976 Foundation of DENKmal-Film together with Claus Strigel

As a producer, author and director, he has realized over 130 films for cinema and television.

Filmography - a selection

- 2014 The Farmer and His Prince
- 2013 Of Lucky Cows
- 2013 The Beloved Cattle
- 2012 The Ecobrewery
- 2011 The Agricultural Trader
- 2010 Scientists Under Attack
- 2009 The Farmer Who Hears the Grass Growing
- 2009 Percy Schmeiser – David versus Monsanto
- 2008 Life in Plastic ...
- 2008 Pensioners Inc.
- 2007 The Farmer and the Earthworms
- 2007 Sekem – Born of the Sun
- 2004 Life Running Out of Control
- 2002 86 000 Seconds
- 1997 Living on the Borders
- 1996 Blue Eyed
- 1991 The Eighth Commandment
- 1989 Residual Risk
- 1987 Nuclear Split



Selected as
„ONE OF THE OUTSTANDING DOCUMENTARIES OF THE YEAR“
by the
ACADEMY OF MOTION PICTURE ARTS AND SCIENCES, LOS ANGELES

Awards – a selection

1st Price for Best Long Production, Goias, Brazil / Certificate of Creative Excellence, Elmhurst, USA / Best Film of the Festival, Orlando, USA / International Federation of Journalists Media Award: Special Recommendation / Audience Award, Maremma Documentary Festival, Pitigliano, Italy / Best Film by a German Filmmaker, Black International Cinema Film-/Video Festival, Berlin / Findling, DOK Leipzig / CIVIS Award / Audience Award I.D.F.A., Amsterdam, Holland / Audience Award, Palm Springs, USA / Golden Cable for Innovation / Adolf-Grimme-Award / German Youth Video Award / Award of the German Film Critics / Silver Dove Leipzig / Award of the City of Freiburg, Munich and Salzburg / Golden Lynx for best journalistic achievement, Ökomeia / Audience Award, International Filmfestival Eberswalde / Award for Environmental Conversation and Stewardship, Arpa Film Festival / Hoimar von Ditfurth-Award, Ökofilmtour / Best Ecological Film, Greenscreen, Eckernförde / The Columbus Institute for Contemporary Journalism Award / Best of Show, Indie Film Fest / Environmental Great Prize for the best work in the category environment, CineEco, Portugal / Prize of the President of Nitra, Agro FilmFest, Slovakia / Award of the Minister of Agriculture, Life Sciences Film Festival, Czech Republic / Beste Director, Yosemite Film Festival, USA / Horst-Stern-Award for Best Nature Film, Ökofilmtour / International Jury Award – Grand Prix, T-Film Festival, Czech Republic / Prize of the Youth Jury, Green Screen Festival, Eckernförde / Nominee for the German Nature Film Award 2014, Darßer NaturFilmFestival

Team Biographies

Bernward Geier (Idea and Networking)

He provided the idea to this film and acted as a *door-opener* to the Royal Household, organized filming permits and accompanied the project with the utmost commitment from beginning to end.

Bernward Geier studied cultural history at the UNAM in Mexico City, followed by a degree in agriculture at the University of Kassel/Witzenhausen. He served as the director of the International Federation of Agriculture Movements (IFOAM) for 18 years and has authored numerous books on organic agriculture. In 2006 he founded the communications agency COLABORA - Let's work together (www.colabora-together.de)

Gerald Fritzen (Director of Photography)

Telling stories through images – true stories about people and the regions they live in – has fascinated him since an early age and shaped his career choice: director of photography. He has worked as a freelancer since 1991, and has been responsible for the camera work in countless documentaries and TV-features.

DENKmal-Film has been working with him for 12 years, and values him as a fast, precise and sensitive cinematographer, who is able to anticipate and capture every situation he encounters.

Waldemar Hauschild (Director of Photography)

Following his graduation from the University of TV and Film Munich in 1985, Waldemar Hauschild has always been a close collaborator to DENKmal-Film. Since then he has shot for over 80 documentaries and TV-features - 21 of which have been decorated with awards. His filmic flexibility and ability to adapt, as well as sensitively react, to the unforeseen situations documentary filming poses, have made him a valuable and irreplaceable asset to the team.

Melania Singer (Editor)

Since 1998 Melanie Singer works as a freelance editor for TV-formats such as DANNI LOWINSKI (SAT1) or ASCHENPUTTEL (ARD).

To begin with, this film was just another job to her - she hadn't worked on a documentary since SOMERMÄRCHEN, but then Prince Charles and David Wilson changed her life with a few thoughts on clover.

Organic agriculture is not a luxury for princes - it's our only chance.

Sami Hammi (Music)

Music has always had a prominent place in Sami Hammi's life. After gaining extensive stage experience with the Bad Tölz Boys' Choir, he attended the music high school of the Regensburg Cathedral Choir, where he received intensive musical tutoring - attending singing classes and learning to play the piano, violin and oboe. The first composition assignments for film projects started coming in straight after his graduation from high school. Subsequently, he attended the Rotterdam Conservatory, where he studied composition and piano, followed by an internship with Digital Editors Music in Munich. Sami Hammi has been working as a freelance composer since 2003; further facets of his work include orchestration, arranging and music preparation for various projects.

Organic Agriculture



In its various forms, organic farming enjoys a long-standing tradition. Biodynamic farming was introduced by Dr. Rudolf Steiner in 1924 and the origins of organic-biological or environmentally-adapted farming also date back well into the last century. The guiding principle of organic farming is management in harmony with nature. Here, the agricultural holding is mainly perceived as an organism comprising the components man, flora, fauna and soil. More than other methods of cultivation, organic farming aims to achieve a closed nutrient cycle. The farm is to establish its own feed and nutrient bases, preserve and enhance soil fertility, and keep animals in a manner conducive to their welfare.

Source: www.bmel.de



Number and agricultural areas of organic farms in Germany

In 2013, 23.271 farms in Germany (8.2% of all agricultural holdings) managed an area of 1.060.669 hectares in accordance with the principles of organic agriculture. In comparison to the previous year, the number of organic farms rose by approximately 1.0%, whilst the area of organically cultivated land increased by round about 2.5%.

According to the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL), 6.4% of all agricultural land in Germany was cultivated organically in 2013.

The Federal Government aims to increase the proportion of Germany's organic farmland to 20%.

Source: www.umweltbundesamt.de



THE FARMER & HIS PRINCE

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