



MIND MAP

AGRO-PERMA-LAB: SEEDS

We would like to use the support from Community Seed Banks Academy (CSBA) to conduct a comprehensive, 3-stages project titled "Agro-Perma-Lab: Seeds".

The first stage would be the preparatory action Agro-Perma-Lab Synergies: case studies of farm-based seed homes and seed saving practices in agroecology. The second stage would be the training for Leaders-educators of emerging Community Seed Homes and Cooperatives. The third would be a two-tier test action: 1. Building Kaczawski Seed Home, 2. Producing open-source visual and written toolkits on community seed homes.



SEPTEMBER
2020

RO-PERMA
LAB
SYNERGIES

CASE
STUDIES

PREPARATORY
ACTION

AGRO-PERMA-LAB: SEEDS

PREP ACTION

**AGRO-PERMA-LAB SYNERGIES: CASE STUDIES AND DESIGN
TOOL FOR ECOSYSTEM SEED HOMES AND EXCHANGE**

The aim of this preparatory action is to document what is being done by community seed savers within agroecological territories of Lower Silesia (Poland). These seed savers belong to Food Sovereignty Network and our aim is to make their knowledge, experience and inspiration more widely available to beginner seed-savers.

We also aim at encouraging inter-generational seed knowledge exchange. In addition we want to learn what opportunities, challenges and risks they encounter socially, economically and communally (in terms of collaboration) and understand recommended practices.

METHODS

The research will be based on a structured "appreciative enquiry" questionnaire - a tool, which APLab developed for Agroecological Farm Research Toolkit last year, and which will be adapted to document in prose, video and photos systems, standards, issues, creative solutions, practices and views of experienced grassroots farmer seed savers.

We will focus on 3 most relevant examples from Lower Silesia region. We already know some more advanced and community-based seed-savers, and will network to learn about and identify others.

As part of the research of how farmers organise their seed homes and what challenges and opportunities they encounter we will further develop the research methodology, questionnaire and selection criteria. The template we develop based on feedback from session to session, will then be made available for volunteer research contributions or auto-diagnosis of seed homes in other regions.

We will choose our case studies to demonstrate diversity of models, approaches and scales of organising seed homes, using criteria

1. scale of seed saving (no of varieties and volumes of seeds)
2. appropriate technologies and infrastructures
3. collaborations with community, institutions and other growers/farmers
4. sustainability of processes and operations
5. types of knowledge involved in managing the seed homes
6. types of challenges encountered
7. vision, ethics and farming philosophies behind Seed-saving (permaculture, organics, agroecology) etc.

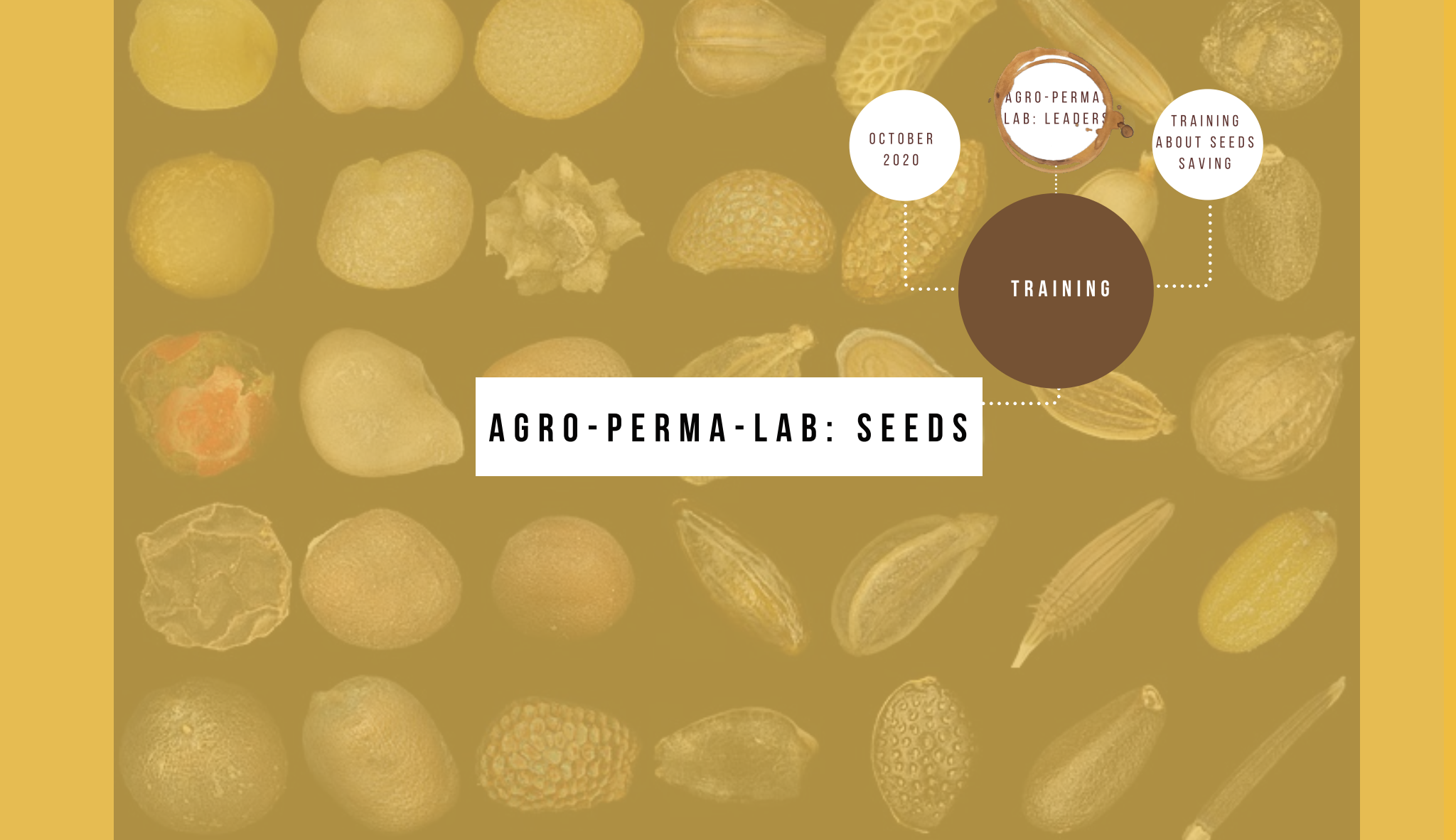


DOCUMENTATION AND REPORTING RESULTS

1. Identification of seed homes within network (asking for recommendations, newsletter, FB announcement; In-Situ Seed farms working with National Seed Bank); this preliminary research will also feed into latter recruitment for the Seed-Saving training, training materials, will help us identify Polish trainers and develop further Test Action of building a Kaczawski Community Seed Home.
2. Preliminary phone-call interviews and research of interest; arrangements of farm/seed home visits.
3. Developing and improving the Seed Home and Seed-saving questionnaire and research methodology (to be available open-source later for volunteer researchers)
4. Choice of 3 Seed-savers to be visited and interviewed based on best practice models we will have identified; completion of 3 one-day research visits in the region
5. Analysing and organising the documentation and data, editing short videos and creating a catalogue of good practice. Making summaries available to collaborators (voluntary researchers, self-diagnosing seed-farmers).
6. Enabling a platform for people to contribute their seed-homes' stories to our database and mentoring volunteer researchers of supplementary seed homes (beyond 3 case studies). We may involve and train up an additional voluntary coordinator to help with this from Nyeleni Network.
8. General analysis and reflection on our findings based on submitted and collected case studies, editing of short video-interviews for basic use by APLab SEED training participants as part of the preparation for the training.
9. Using the findings to work on the Training programme and the Test action.

AGRO-PERMA-LAB: SEEDS

The place of the preparatory action within the three-phases Agro-Perma-Lab: SEEDS project: We will use findings from the preparatory action to work on the programme of the training and to precise the actions of our Test Action. We will also finalize the publication from the Preparatory Action phase during the test action phase, when we will publish an open-source, downloadable publication with descriptions of case studies, tools for research and diagnosis of seed homes, etc. We already have experience in preparing auto-diagnosis tools and case studies descriptions, our last publication can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/ycwh8eb2>



OCTOBER
2020

AGRO-PERMA
LAB: LEADERS

TRAINING
ABOUT SEEDS
SAVING

TRAINING

AGRO-PERMA-LAB: SEEDS

TRAINING

AGRO-PERMA-LAB: LEADERS

The main aim of "Agro-Perma-Lab: Propagating seed leaders-educators of Community Seed Homes' and Seed-savers' Networks" is to empower Polish seed educators and community activists and equip them with skills of using educational and organisational strategies for the development of future CSBs.

We also aim at enhancing local community in Kaczawski region, encouraging participation not only from leaders, but also of people who are beginners in seed-saving, at the same time enabling intergenerational knowledge and skills exchange.

TRAINING

AGRO-PERMA-LAB: LEADERS-EDUCATORS OF COMMUNITY SEED HOMES' AND COOPERATIVES

Trainers

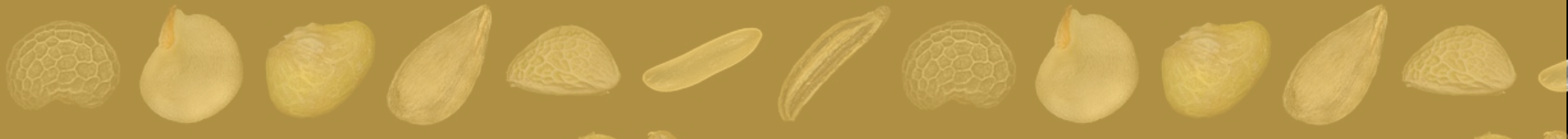
- Dr Denise Dostatny (1st day) - technical skilling up; seed-saving standards for community groups 3 online trainers from allied organisations/project (Arche Noah, Seed Cooperative, EcoRuralis) (webinar);
- experiences and insights from mature Community Seed Projects Joanna Bojczewska (2nd Day)- facilitating Community Seed Homes
- Weronika Koralewska (3rd Day) with 2 seed-farmers - MasterMind sessions on participants' projects development and Community Toolkit on CSB Process & Design

Target group - not for leaders only!

12 seed educators, savers and activists, as well as community leaders and social innovators (urban and rural) working to develop practical applications in agroecology & permaculture. We will also invite up to 8 participants from the local community around Bird Valley (our location), in order to enable the process of sharing perspectives, learning from each other (beginners vs. experienced seed savers), as well as to start the dialogue between farmers from non-agroecological field with agroecology and permaculture.

Place

Ptasia Dolina (Bird Valley), Lower Silesia, Poland. Called "The House of Creative Meetings"; a permaculture smallholding with seed-saving, food growing and food sovereignty and animal husbandry activities with strong local and community orientation



Methods

- Non-formal transformative education methods,
- Experience sharing - Circle Dialogo de Soberes - Dialogue of Different Types of Knowledges
- Master Mind
- sessions Summaries and introductions of sections by participants
- Community and solidarity building elements;
- Developing three aspects of competence: knowledge, values and skills

Documentation and evaluation

- Draft Toolkit in Polish: Community Seed Home building & community
- process Summary,
- notes from sessions by rotating participants.
- recordings of online presentations from abroad (later added subtitles),
- record of ideas and projects being developed by participants,
- short reports about implementation of their skills and from follow-ups,
- feedback sessions and anonymous surveys

AGRO-PERMA-LAB: SEEDS

The place of the training within the three-phases Agro-Perma-Lab: SEEDS project: We will use findings from the preparatory action to work on the programme of this training. During the Test Action, we will use the design from the training to build the Kaczawski Seed Home. What is more, during the Test Action, we will publish the final publication which will also include insights from the training.



AGRO-PERMA-LAB: SEEDS

TEST
ACTION

BUILDING
A LOCAL SEED HOME

NOVEMBER
2020

KACZAWSKI
SEED HOME

VIDEO AND
WRITTEN
PUBLICATIONS

MIND MAP

KACZAWSKI SEED HOME

Building on from the preparatory action, training exchanges and the Seed Home Master Mind session around design, construction and operational processes for Community Seed Homes in Poland our aim will be now to construct and design a physical community Seed Home for Kaczawski region, at Ptasia Dolina community farm, in Lower Silesia. During this test action we will also finalize our toolkit and publications from the whole three-stage

Through this test action we want to address several aims:

- 1. Piloting:** an A-Z participatory process with local inhabitants for creating Kaczawski Community Seed Home and Seed-Savers' network and co-managing this type of Commons' space resource that can serve as an example locally and nationally. All participants of Agro-Perma-Lab project can join (trainees, interviewees, researchers) the hands-on construction and opening celebration, to help and learn. In addition, Farm owners at Ptasia Dolina will identify and invite local seed-savers. Some farm-based Seed Homes exist already in Poland, and the project aims to start mapping those; however, not many have a bottom-up community governance principle in them, and they are either individually owned or institutionally managed. We aim at supporting the creation of the 'Commons' space and resource. We hope, the Kaczawski Community Seed Home Test Action will bring together a network of interested seed-savers and growers, but also other supporters, the help of local CSO and authorities, thus sparking the emergence of farm-based 'micro-seed-homes' too (one idea is to provide easthetic hand-made wooden seed boxes with tiny seed jars from that would prompt individual seed collections). As the project unfolds and becomes visible, Ptasia Dolina farm owners declared intention to investigate collaboration and funding opportunities for educational work during local events and winter and spring seed swaps for the long-term and to work with the group of core-custodians.
- 2. Demonstrating:** practically implementing, documenting and learning from construction process and making it available to others in the form of a short step-by-step design and construction design film and Community Seed Homes'Toolkit in Polish
- 3. Networking and inspiring:** completing the case studies publication (online and PDF) to promote the project and creating a simple online form and list for 'subscriptions' of Seed-Savers from the region and further afield, based on Auto-Diagnosis Seed Home Questionnaire from Preparatory Action
- 4. Scaling potential:** synthesising APLab Seed training and design for other organisations and community groups based on the whole 3-stages project model: Prep.Action, Training and Test Action. This way we can actually scale up to other regions and multiply the outcomes.
- 5. Follow-up:** connecting all who participated in the project in months following the training and test action (participants, voluntary researchers, interviewees and trainers)



TEST ACTION

AGRO-PERMA-LAB SEEDS: KACZAWSKI SEED HOME AND PUBLICATIONS

DESIGN

In general the Test Action will have the largest synthesising input on APLab part and the largest involvement on the part of Ptasia Dolina farm and Kaczawski region and community.

The plan of the physical design and construction of Seed Home will emerge as a synthesis of:

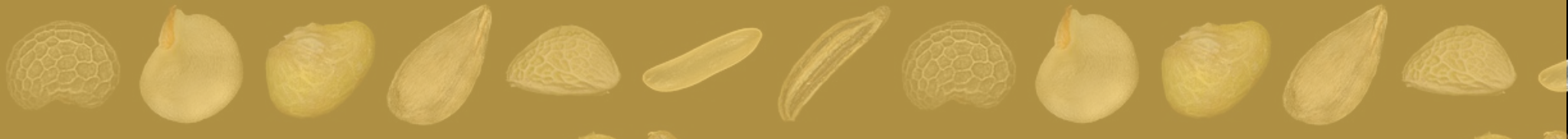
- submitted Case Studies' (formal and voluntary researchers in the project) input from the preparatory phase;
- Input from external trainers presenting on international CSB projects and from guides and toolkits on Community Seed Homes in English,
- from participants' input during 2nd and 3rd training day in particular,
- from Ptasia Dolina farm owners own research and conversations with most engaged community members,
- design will also include a 'scenario' of different processes,
- from technical to community meetings, events and education - this will be done as part of the training.

CONSTRUCTION

- farm owners will be responsible for providing half of necessary materials, overseeing the handy-man / carpenter in preparation of materials and supporting him to integrate with the group and 'lead' the construction on the day of the training (in fact they employ few local craftsmen already)
- the construction, apart from shelves, doors, walls of the room, will involve several traditional and hand-made elements engraving on wood labeling elements; creating an information board, developing the catalogue system. All these elements will be created as a 'template' during the training and then the specific aesthetic and material choices will be made by farm owners and community in their own time (between training and Test Action)
- local ceramics artisan will be asked to create storage containers. Not all seeds may be stored in such containers, but this will be dependent upon design. Some part of the group may part-take in supporting the making of those ceramics containers to lower their cost, and some may be additionally donated by the artisan as part of his contribution and self-promotion.

Place

As in the case of training, the location of our test action will also be Ptasia Dolina (Bird Valley), Lower Silesia, Poland. Called "The House of Creative Meetings"; a permaculture smallholding with seed-saving, food growing and food sovereignty and animal husbandry activities with strong local and community orientation



TEST ACTION

AGRO-PERMA-LAB SEEDS: KACZAWSKI SEED HOME AND PUBLICATIONS

Visual Toolkit:

- during the construction a film will be made to provide a summary step-by-step guide on different elements of Seed Home construction,
- the film will be integrated with visual material from Preparatory Action - from visits in other Seed Homes on farms,
- films will be available open-source online

PDF Community Seed Homes Toolkit for design, construction and community management:

- we will translate largely sections of available documents in English and update them with specifications from Poland
- appropriate case studies will be provided
- the PDF will be available free of charge but we will encourage donations for APLab training development

Community Seed Homes' network in Lower Silesia and in the whole of Poland:

- depending on the number of submitted Seed Homes' auto-diagnosed case studies we will create an appropriate inventory (map or a list) of Seed Homes with short-stories about the places and people,
- Auto-diagnosis questionnaire, updated and adapted from the preparatory phase, will be made available with instruction how to use it will be added. People will be able to submit examples of their Seed Homes thus growing the networking
- through email group and an online meeting we will engage everyone who took part in the project, checking-in, find out about progress and challenges and get feedback.

DOCUMENTATION AND REPORTING RESULTS

As mentioned before, there are several outcomes that we expect that will document our work:

- Design with costs-calculation and record of materials for the Kaczawski Seed
- Home Video
- Toolkit on construction, CSB Design, community management and construction
- Toolkit with case studies
- Questionnaire for auto-diagnosis and Seed Homes' submissions online
- Map of Seed Homes in Lower-Silesia and in Poland with case studies' input on www.agroekologia.edu.pl
- Photos from the construction workshop and of the complete project
- Feedback session some time after the project's completion online with all different participants





AGRO-PERMA-LAB: SEEDS