



Slurry deserves to be called "valuable material"

Focus on farm manure at the 23rd joint conference "LAND.TECHNIK für Profis" by DLG and VDI-MEG on 6 and 7 February 2024 – more than 200 participants and renowned speakers – discussions on directional developments – hosted by Kotte Landtechnik GmbH & Co. KG in Rieste (Lower Saxony)

The 23rd "Land.Technik für Profis" conference on 14 and 15 February 2023 in Rieste (Lower Saxony) focused on the topic of "farm manure". The conference, organized jointly by the DLG (German Agricultural Society / Deutsche Landwirtschafts-Gesellschaft e. V.) and the VDI-MEG (AG Technology Division of the Association of German Engineers / Max-Eyth-Gesellschaft im Verein Deutscher Ingenieure e. V.), took place on the premises of Kotte Landtechnik GmbH & Co. KG. With over 200 participants – including a large number of practitioners – the event was almost sold out and covered all important aspects of the topic of manure. Renowned speakers provided important impulses on framework conditions, technical requirements from a practical perspective, nutrient efficiency and application technology as well as an overview of the technological trends of tomorrow and discussed these points intensively with the audience. A factory tour and various networking opportunities rounded off the conference.

"What has always characterized this conference is the objectivity of the discussion." In his opening statement, Dr. Markus Demmel, Chairman of the VDI-MEG from the Bavarian State Institute for Agriculture in Freising, set the tone for the upcoming discussions. And rightly so, as it later turned out, because opinions in the discussion differed widely, especially when it came to the use of new technological developments. DLG Vice President Prof. Dr.-Ing Till Meinel from the Technical University of Cologne had already deduced that this could be due not only, but at least in part, to the different backgrounds and perspectives of the participants: "The unique selling point of the conference? The two associations DLG and VDI bring practitioners and engineers together." At the end of his speech, he introduced Christian Grachtrup, the new Managing Director of the DLG Test Center Technology and Farm Inputs, who is no stranger to the industry due to his professional background in the field of manure sensors. Host Dr. Stefan Kotte in turn gave an overview of the history of liquid manure spreading as well as an outlook on the points that Garant-Kotte considers to be particularly important for the near and distant

future. In his opinion, the upcoming technology must be much more integrated into processes, which also include measures for liquid manure design. He said: "The future of slurry technology lies in nutrient efficiency and analytics as well as automation and connectivity."

Multiple influence through framework conditions

The dynamic behaviour of plants and soil during the application of farm fertilizers often stands in contrast to the rigid regulations of the legislator. Dr. Frank Lorenz from LUFA Nord-West in Oldenburg shed light on fertilization from the perspective of the needs of the plant and explained the physiological processes of manure use. Christoph Felgentreu, from the Regensburg based "Interessengemeinschaft gesunder Boden e.V." (Interest group for healthy soil), focused on the soil and made a passionate plea for soil biodiversity, which is strongly promoted by the use of farm fertilizers. Finally, Dr. Stephan Jung from the North Rhine-Westphalia Chamber of Agriculture classified the various organic fertilizers, from liquid manure to sewage sludge, in the fertilizer ordinance. He noted critically that foreseeable tightening tendencies in this regard could have relatively little to do with the reality outlined in the two previous presentations.

High demands on users and technology

Gerd Dettmer from Dettmer Agrar-Service GmbH in Kettenkamp explained how high the technical requirements of practice are for farm manure and its application and that, against this background, manure more than deserves to be called "valuable material" both in terms of plant physiology and financially. He has implemented a challenging nutrient exchange with accompanying quality management in his contracting company. Hans-Jürgen Technow from the Lower Saxony Chamber of Agriculture in Oldenburg discussed the cost side of the various options for manure processing. In his opinion, the costs are decisive for the success of these measures, but these are decisively influenced by the political and economic framework conditions.

Avoid losses and use nutrients efficiently

Susanne Höcherl from the Bavarian State Institute for Agriculture in Freising also dealt with liquid manure additives in her presentation, but against the background of reducing nutrient losses and their discharge into the environment. There is great potential here in preventing emissions from occurring in the first place. The problem with farm manure is that the ingredients and, above all, their concentration are not exactly known and the material is sometimes very inhomogeneous. Prof. Dr. Yves Reckleben from the Kiel University of Applied Sciences gave an introduction to the determination of nutrient content in liquid farm manure using NIRS technology. The advantages and disadvantages of this technology were subsequently discussed in depth. Sjoerd Elgersma from the contracting company Hofmeijer from Voorst in the

Netherlands was responsible for looking beyond the horizon to our western neighbors. He reported that, like Gerd Dettmer, advising his customers is becoming increasingly important to him and that the Netherlands has geared its system of agricultural subsidies strongly towards the use of modern technology, which can also be provided by contractors.

Application technology isnt everything

In the fourth session, Christoph Hante from Hante-Agrarservice GmbH in Velen presented his concept for slurry strip-till. In a passionate appeal, he made a strong case for the often forgotten tractor drivers, who now have much more to do than just steer. Particularly when it comes to slurry strip-till, they become a service provider for "track-true processes" in a double sense. Above all, they must be able to ask plausibility questions of the technology. Hubertus Kleuter from Kleutec GmbH in Fintel contributed a view from the start-up scene, in which – in his case with the topic of slurry hoses – old things are being rethought. Last but not least, Sören Staupe from Blunk Lalendorf GmbH in Casekow reported on his practical experience. Mixed manure, impurities and the like are particularly challenging here. In his opinion, particulate data will be replaced by process data in the future.

What about the future?

Prof. Dr. Ludwig Volk from Warendorf made no secret of his passion for the soil. He summarized how important it is to protect the soil, also in connection with the mega topic of "climate protection", and the crucial role that agriculture plays in this. He said: "Our soil is too valuable to be neglected", before Prof. Dr. Yves Reckleben once again explained the location and economic potential of fertilizers from the perspective of precision farming. In his opinion, this potential cannot be exploited, let alone managed, without data.

After a lively panel discussion moderated by Roland Hörner, Head of Agricultural Technology at the DLG Competence Center Agriculture, which touched on all the key points of the past two days, Dr. Hartmut Matthes, Managing Director of the BLU (Federal Association of Contractors) and Chairman of the Program Committee of the "Land.Technik für Profis" conference, summarized the key statements of the individual speakers once again. He reminded the audience that livestock farming is the mother of arable farming and therefore cannot be dispensed with. In summary, he essentially came to the conclusion that process optimization will become more important in the future and that the topic of farm manure should be considered more holistically in the future.

Additional infos and material available online (in German)

DLG members and conference participants can access the presentations and manuscripts from the conference on the DLG website at

<https://www.dlg.org/de/landwirtschaft/veranstaltungen/landtechnik-fuer-profis-2024>. A picture gallery of the speakers with quotes is available at

<https://www.dlg.org/de/landwirtschaft/presse/pressefotos/landtechnik-fuer-profis-2024>.

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About DLG

The DLG (German Agricultural Society / Deutsche Landwirtschafts-Gesellschaft e.V.), founded in 1885 by Max Eyth, is an open network and professional voice of the agricultural and food industry. Its aim is to promote progress through the transfer of knowledge, quality and technology. The DLG has over 30,000 members, is a non-profit, politically independent and internationally networked organization. As one of the leading organizations in its sector, the DLG organizes trade fairs and events in the fields of agriculture and food technology, tests food, agricultural technology and operating resources and develops solutions for the challenges of the agricultural and food industry in numerous expert committees.