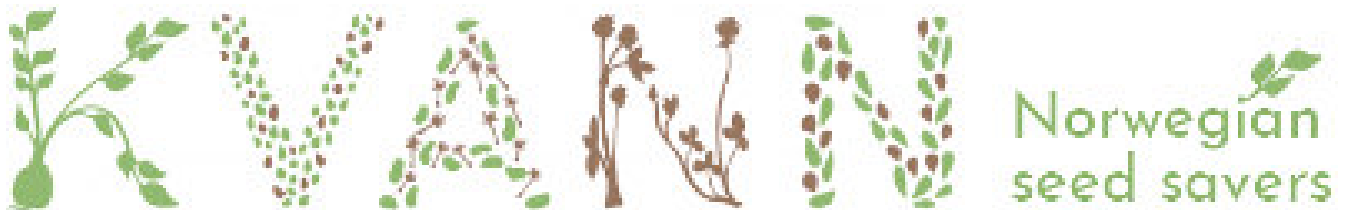


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MEMBER

KVANN Living Lab

Living Lab KVANN-LL | Norway



KVANN (Norwegian Seed Savers) coordinates a nationwide Living Lab network across Norway with more than 50 historical gardens, dedicated to the on-farm conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources. Our initiative bridges scientific knowledge and grassroots practices, integrating seed saving, cultivar testing, and agroecological methods from the Arctic to the southern coast. We bring together farmers, gardeners, agricultural schools, researchers, local and regional municipalities, and policymakers to foster the development of resilient, low-input food systems. By connecting ex situ collections with dynamic on-farm use, KVANN strengthens biodiversity and community-based innovation in agriculture.

Aim

The aim of the initiative is to promote the conservation, sustainable use, and local adaptation of plant genetic resources through participatory testing, selection, and knowledge exchange. We work to empower local actors, adapt cultivars to diverse climates, and foster resilient, agroecological food systems.

Background information

Since 2016, KVANN has been appointed by the Norwegian Ministry of Agriculture to serve as a national bridge between gene banks and end users. Our Living Lab activities began with revitalising Schübeler's historical gardens, gradually expanding into a collaborative network of urban and rural farms across all agro-climatic zones of Norway. We've built strong links with Nordic and national institutions, promoting in situ conservation and engaging citizens in testing landraces, open-pollinated cultivars, and underutilized species. Our governance includes dedicated plant science and international committees, ensuring strategic coordination and active participation in research and policy initiatives. Over the years, the organization has evolved from a focus on on-farm conservation to embracing participatory research and trials, collaborative selection work, co-learning activities, and the development of regional diversity centers and living collections of edible plants.

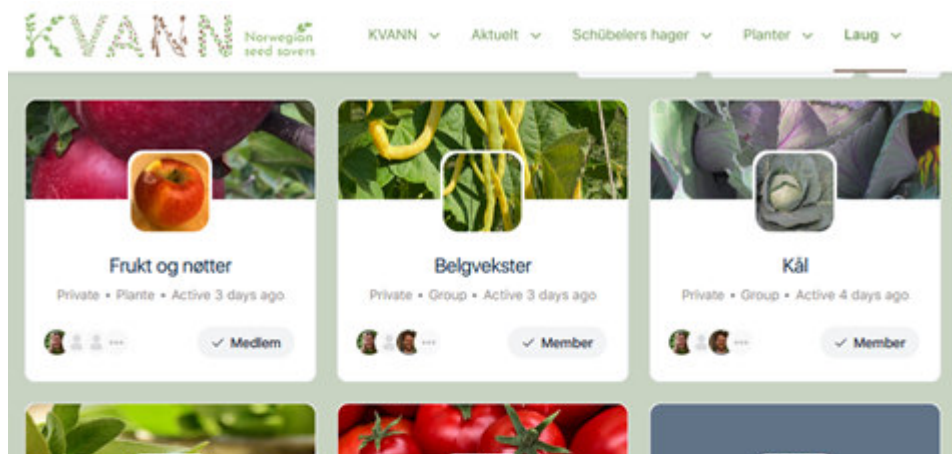
Funding structure

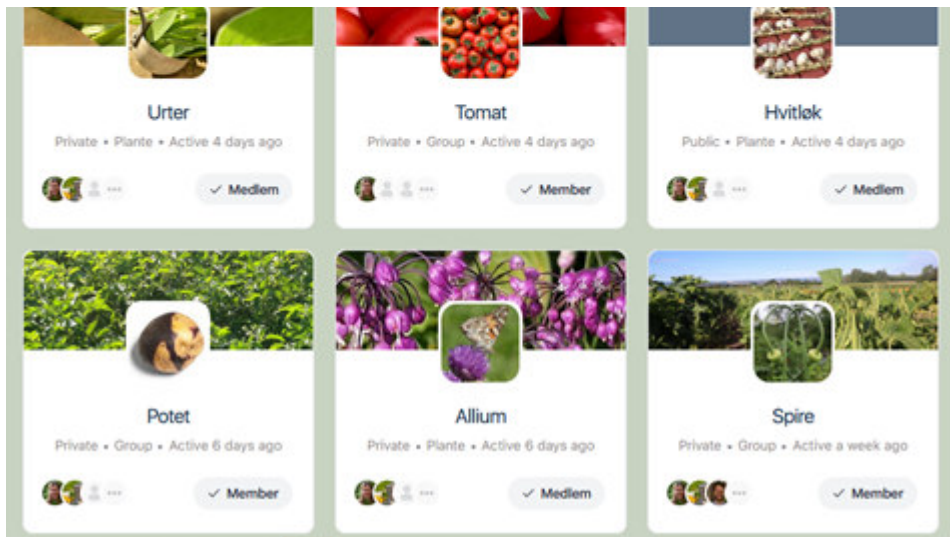
Funding is secured through membership and participation fees for activities like seminars and workshops, donations, base funding from the Ministry of Agriculture and regional authorities, and project grants.

Activities

- **Knowledge co-creation and sharing**

- Connection and information via the website: [KVANN.no](https://kvann.no) ;
- [YouTube channel](#) for educational videos and webinars;
- Crop-specific guilds (e.g., perennial vegetables, berries, legumes, etc.) with expert moderators.





Crop-specific guilds with expert moderators. Source: KVANN

- **Agrobiodiversity management:** Sharing and exchange of seeds, bulbs, and scion wood, distribution of virus-free seed potatoes to thousands of users across Norway.
- **Living collections:** Established large collections of perennial herbs, vegetables, and fruits that serve as demonstration gardens, such as the *Væres Venner* community garden (1000+cultivars) or the *Ringve Allium Collection*, Trondheim (~100 species, 400+ cultivars).
- **Conservation & crop rescue:** *Angelica archangelica* var. *maiorum* conservation and coordinated selection; Svedjenepe (*Brassica napus*) revival in Finnskogen.
- **Outreach:** Biannual exhibition at *Markens Grøde* agricultural fair (~9000 visitors/year). Annual participation at the Hagemessen garden fair (~20,000 visitors/year).

Methods, stakeholder engagements and tools

Stakeholders:

Private growers and gardeners, farmers, agricultural schools, researchers, policymakers, public institutions (museums, historical gardens, and universities).

Methods:

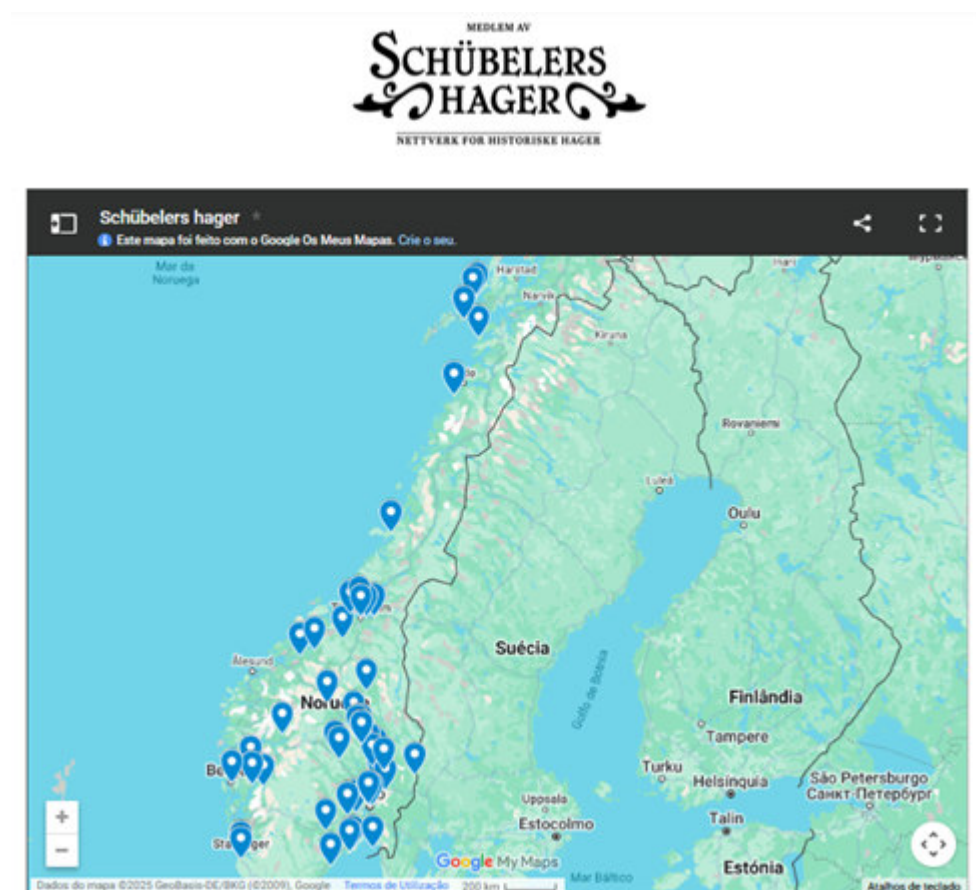
- Multi-actor approach, with participatory co-creation both online (thematic guilds) and place-based field activities (open-field days and workshops);
- Collaboration with public institutions (agricultural schools, research institutions (Norwegian Genetic Resource Centre) and universities (University

of Tromsø);

- Social learning & dissemination (webinars, practical courses, open-days, publicly available videos and articles).

Achievements

- **The collection:** Norway's largest edible plant collection is maintained by the KVANN Living Lab members.
- **Virus-free potato distribution:** Each year, KVANN distributes 3,000 mini tubers of ten different old (and occasionally newer) potato varieties from the national potato archive in Overhalla.
- **A network of historical gardens:** More than 50 historical gardens across the country.



Network of historical gardens. Source: KVANN

Publications

Schübelers garden **video:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?...>

Contact

Website: <https://kvann.no/>

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

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