

## Post graduate courses provided by Ruralia Institute, University of Helsinki

*Post graduate courses in organic farming and food systems in Finland are now provided by Ruralia Institute, University of Helsinki. The planning work began early 2005 and the first post graduate course was held in May 2006. The courses are provided in close cooperation with different institutes. They are offered as a part of Ruralia Institute's EcoStudies academic education planning activities.*

**R**uralia Institute, University of Helsinki, located in Mikkeli is the only institute in Finland which offers academic education in organic farming and food systems. There are professorships for ecological crop husbandry and animal welfare at the institute. The basic studies of organic farming and food systems started in 2001 in a study programme called Eco Studies (see p. 16). The institute is part

of the Mikkeli University Consortium with nine professorships. Several MSc-programmes and training programmes for post graduate students are running or will be started.

It is important to develop post graduate education of organic farming and food systems, because researchers need deeper understanding of the organic context. Also at the present situation there is a lack of courses for post graduate students on the field of organic farming and food systems in Finland. Activities for improving the situation are the result of close cooperation with different parties inside and outside of University of Helsinki. It is also useful to develop student exchange in the Mid Nordic Region so that the existing possibilities better can be utilized.

For planning and piloting of post graduate courses in organic farming and food systems a project has started in early 2005. This project will continue until mid 2007. The activities are offered by Eco Studies/Doctoral Studies – PhD-project, which is a part of ProMidNord – Sustainable Development in the MidNordic Region – an EU-funded project.

### Aims of the project

The aims of the EcoStudies/Doctoral Studies-PhD-project are: Planning and building a cooperation network which supports a) post graduate studies in organic farming and food systems and close by subject areas, especially in the

Mid Nordic Region. The goal is to offer post graduate courses. b) to develop student exchange at high school- and university level of organic farming and food systems or close by subject areas.

### Target groups

The target groups include post graduate students of organic farming and food systems or of subject areas close by, or students aiming to become post graduate students, and other academic personnel involved in the research of organic farming and food systems.

The other target group of the project includes students involved in the student exchange programme especially in the Mid Nordic Region.

### Contents

Building a cooperation network has started in the first part of the project by clarifying the potential co-actors. To the main focus areas of the post graduate course-planning activities have been chosen:

1. Agroecology as a base of organic farming and food systems
2. Organic crop production
3. Welfare of animals.

Subjects will be chosen from these main focus areas for the course planning.

The following courses are planned so far:

- 1) Assessing Animal Welfare which took place 15th to 21st of May 2006 in Helsinki,
- 2) Sustainable Nutrient Economy

*Forts. på sid. 19*

#### ProMidNord – Sustainable Development in the MidNordic Region

ProMidNord is a project initiative of the MidNordic Committee to the Interreg IIIB -programme.

The project consists of five different work packages, which all aim to strengthen the potential and attractiveness of the whole region.

#### Project duration:

August 2004 – July 2007

#### The five areas of co-operation:

- 1) Strengthening the MNR as a macro-region and introducing joint Spatial Development as a method
- 2) Environment and eco-competitiveness
- 3) Sustainable Energy Development
- 4) Youth, Regional Development and Democracy
- 5) Culture and cultural heritage as a means for sustainable development.

<http://www.promidnord.net/>

larna inom stödsystemet skulle kunna utnyttja halvträdor effektivt vid kvickrotsbekämpningen. I den gårdsvisa rådgivningen har skärpningen av kraven på utfodringen av ekodjur förorsakat mycket extra planering. Av samma orsak har det hållits många kurser om odling av arter och rybs.

### Väl genomfört via köket

Ekorestaurang kan man i Finland bli genom trappsteg. Före beviljande av officiellt certifikat kan en restaurang eller ett daghem göra reklam för att man är på trappsteg 1, 2 eller 3. T.ex. en restaurang som är på andra trappsteget måste ha fyra ekoprodukter i daglig användning och dessutom fyra andra ekoprodukter i regelbunden användning. Det fjärde

steget motsvarar de officiella kraven och de serverade matportionerna är helt ekologiska.

Ekotrappstegsprogrammet genomförs av Suonenjoki ekokökscenter i norra Savolax. De har redan lyckats få med 160 kök i programmet. I programmet har getts mycket råd såväl om ekoproduktionens målsättningar som om direktiven, både till köksvärdinnorna och till kockarna. Verksamheten började i Savolax, men numera kan rådgivning i ämnet fås i hela landet och många lantbrukscentraler är med i verksamheten. ■

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*Heikki Koskimies har verkat som ekorådgivare från år 1987 i Södra Österbotten. Han har också varit verksam inom den statliga Forskningscentralen för jordbruk och livsmedelsekonomi – MTT på försöksstationen Partala. Inom Luomuliitto är han sedan tre år verksam som utvecklingschef för rådgivningen vid sidan av sin tjänst som ekorådgivare inom lantbrukscentralen Södra Österbotten.*

Översättning från finska: Bertel Riska

## Nordiskt nätverk blir nordisk-baltiskt

Under två intensiva dagar den 8:e och 9:e juni träffades representanter från Sverige, Danmark, Norge, Finland, Lettland, Estland och Litauen på Ultuna och arbetade med en ansökan till Nordforsk. Riktlinjerna för ett större nätverk inom ekologiskt lantbruk och uthålliga livsmedelssystem drogs upp. Samverkan mellan de nordiska länderna inom nätverket AGROASIS ([www.agroasis.org](http://www.agroasis.org)) kommer att utökas med partners i de baltiska staterna. Syftet är att bättre dra nytta av de olika ländernas specialiteter genom att erbjuda studenterna ett bredare nätverk och kursutbud samt uppmuntra till interdisciplinära samarbeten och helhetssyn. Stipendier för doktorander att vistas hos och forska tillsammans med forskargrupper i medlemsländerna är centralt i nätverket. Samarbete inom interdisciplinära kurser inom ekologiskt lantbruk och uthålliga livsmedelssystem är ett annat viktigt inslag. För mer information, kontakta Charlotte Lagerberg Fogelberg ([charlotte.lagerberg@cul.slu.se](mailto:charlotte.lagerberg@cul.slu.se)) eller Sofie Kobayashi ([sok@kvl.dk](mailto:sok@kvl.dk)). ■

## Post graduate courses... (continuing from p. 17)

in Agro-Food Systems 16th to 21st of October 2006 and 3) Animal Ethics which will be offered in May 2007.

### Organisation

Ruralia Institute, University of Helsinki will carry out the project. The leader of the project is research leader Jouni Kujala and special planner Jukka Rajala is responsible for the planning activities. The three years course planning activity and course piloting is financed by EU Interreg IIIB Baltic Sea programme. ■

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*Jukka Rajala is special planner at Helsinki University Ruralia Institute in Mikkeli since 1990. His activities are planning studies of organic farming and food systems, producing study material and spreading information of organic farming by publishing activities and via Internet.*

### Web addresses

**Doctoral studies:** [http://www.mtkk.helsinki.fi/ecostudies/doctoral\\_studies](http://www.mtkk.helsinki.fi/ecostudies/doctoral_studies)

**Eco Studies:** <http://www.mtkk.helsinki.fi/ecostudies/english.htm>

**Ruralia Institute, University of Helsinki:** [http://www.mtkk.helsinki.fi/english/eng\\_index.htm](http://www.mtkk.helsinki.fi/english/eng_index.htm)

**Mikkeli University Consortium:** <http://www.muc.fi/en/info/index>

**ProMidNord – project:** <http://www.mittnorden.net/english/promidnord.4.8c5488105e7a3ff7480001376.html>