

WORLD DRAFT CATTLE SYMPOSIUM



MARCH 8 - 10, 2024

Preliminary Schedule
Version Date: January 10, 2023



ABOUT THE SYMPOSIUM

On March 8-10, 2024, the first [World Draft Cattle Symposium](#) will take place in Lorsch, Germany. The aim of the symposium is to provide a comprehensive and interdisciplinary overview of the current state of research and knowledge on the topic of cattle traction (with bulls, oxen as well as cows) in agriculture, transportation, irrigation and crop-processing. At the same time, it will discuss important new concepts regarding the future relevance of draft cattle as working animals in a global context and also as part of a sustainable future.

The conference will be divided into three parts:

MARCH 8: PAPERS / POSTERS

Day 1 of the conference will be dedicated to a broad variety of poster and paper presentations covering the broad range of the conference. Our effort is to bring people from many backgrounds, locations, viewpoints, and strengths together for learning, discussions, and networking on many cattle topics. This first day of the conference will be **hybrid**: virtual as well as in person. All sessions take place in sequence. *For more details, see page 9-11*



VIRTUAL CONFERENCE DAY:

To follow the sessions live but from home (virtually), **register using the registration form** and click the "I will attend virtually" button. We will send you all necessary information about the conference schedule, any changes if they occur, and the Zoom meeting invitation for your time-zone. The sessions will be held in Central European Time ("CET"). *Remember: this virtual conference day is free of charge!*

MARCH 9: PRACTICAL WORKSHOPS / DEMONSTRATIONS

Day 2 gives all live conference participants a comprehensive and practical insight into the various areas of cattle traction, including cattle behavior, training, traction systems and machinery. All sessions take place in sequence.

The conference day will end with an opening ceremony of an international exhibition called "**Joch-Joug-Ayoko. A cultural history of the yoke through the millennia**". *For more details, see page 12-13*

MARCH 10: FIELD DAY

An optional live workshop day is being offered as part of a large-scale public field day that will provide additional hands-on opportunities. Conference attendees will also have the opportunity to view a variety of draft animal demonstrations, including equine, bovine and caprine. *For more details, see page 14*

REGISTRATION FEE

Conference attendance in person is only **EUR 25** (USA \$26.54) to be paid *in cash in Euros* at the beginning of the conference. The fee will be mainly used for providing food and drinks during the coffee and lunch breaks. All conference merchandise articles will be value-priced but also in cash Euros. *There is no fee for virtual participation.*



REGISTER HERE



Please register in advance for in-person *and* virtual conference participation:

<https://kloster-lorsch.de/freilichtlabor/tagungen/world-draft-cattle-symposium/registration-form>

ABOUT THE CONFERENCE HOST

Only 40 minutes from Europe's largest airport, Frankfurt am Main, or within a train ride from Frankfurt, lies the [Lauresham Open-Air Laboratory in Lorsch, Germany](#). Lauresham is an extended part of the UNESCO World Heritage Site Lorsch Abbey (State Administration of Palaces and Gardens Hessen) and conveys to the interested public the culture of rule and everyday life of the time around 800 AD. In addition, the Open-Air Laboratory is a place of science and since the very beginning, research into historical cultivation methods and traditional knowledge has played a central role. The aim is to learn from the past for a more sustainable future.

Over the years, numerous cooperations with universities from Germany and beyond have been developed and the Open-Air Laboratory has become an institutional member of EXARC (an umbrella organization of archaeological open-air museums and experimental archaeology) as well as AIMA (the International Association of Agricultural History Museums). The lynchpin of much of the research is the total of six trained draft cattle, which are used to cultivate the historic arable fields, but also to winnow hay and carry out transport and timber work.

In 2021, the focus of the project was expanded even further when a regional award of the "Landscape in Motion" competition enabled the initiation of several 'lighthouse' projects located outside the museum area, including a teaching and experimental field for animal traction in the 21st century and a draft cattle powered forestry project on sensitive soils. During the pandemic, the Open-Air Laboratory was the host of the virtual congress "Draft Animals in the Past, Present and Future" which brought together more than 450 people from 18 countries. The World Draft Cattle Symposium is the next logical step to move forward and to promote the cause of cattle traction around the globe.



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A personal note from the conference organizer

When I first came into contact with the world of draft cattle over ten years ago, I would never have believed the importance that this topic would one day have for me. Not only did I gradually become an advocate for the positive impact of draft cattle in agriculture or silviculture, but I also became a draft cattle farmer and trainer myself. It is with great pleasure that I get to teach people about working with draft cattle each year, and I am pleased that the demand for this all-important traditional knowledge continues to grow. Draft cattle can be so much – working companions, community builders, and securers of livelihoods.

Through networking in ALHFAM, AIMA, EXARC, the German and French draft cattle working group, but also through the exchange with colleagues from all over the world, I realized how important it is to bring draft cattle more into the focus of public discussion - not as an echo of the past, but as part of the solution for a better future. The people who still work with draft cattle in so many parts of the world need to be given a loud audible voice of support, there needs to be active advocacy for innovative and animal-friendly harnessing practices, and finally, there needs to be active work on preserving and expanding the traditional knowledge of working with cattle.

Keeping all of this in mind, I would like to state emphatically that the timing for a gathering such as the planned World Draft Cattle Symposium could not be better. It is the right time because there are enough people to create a momentum that can actually bring change. But it is also the right time because in many parts of the world the number of draft cattle is decreasing dramatically, a lot of knowledge is lost every year and therefore there is no time to lose. Let us therefore join forces to face this challenge!

Claus Kropp

Leiter Experimentalarchäologisches Freilichtlabor Lauresham
Manager Lauresham Open-Air Laboratory for Experimental Archaeology

Staatliche Schlösser und Gärten Hessen
State Administration of Palaces and Gardens Hesse

UNESCO-Welterbestätte Kloster Lorsch
UNESCO World Heritage Site Lorsch Abbey



CLAUS AND HIS FAVORITE DRAFT OX AND WORKING COMPANION DAVID

QUESTIONS?

Please contact our conference coordination team: worlddraftcattlesymposium2024@gmail.com

CONFERENCE PATRONS



WENDELL BERRY

Wendell Berry is a renowned American writer, farmer and environmental activist. In his works, such as *The Unsettling of America* and *Jayber Crow*, he criticises the industrialised agricultural sector and advocates sustainable, local farming.

As a proponent of agrarian culture, Wendell Berry emphasises the importance of a harmonious relationship between humans, nature and animals. He is committed to organic farming and small-scale farming structures. He also has a great appreciation for the use of draught animals, whose use can counteract the cultural impoverishment of the soil and soil erosion, while at the same time bringing rural communities together.

Wendell Berry is a visionary who calls for us to take responsibility for our planet and our communities.

See also:

<https://www.neh.gov/about/awards/jefferson-lecture/wendell-e-berry-biography>

<http://www.healingharvestforestfoundation.org/forest-understories/taking-draft-animals-seriously>



TANJA BUSSE

Tanja Busse is a German journalist, author and presenter, working for several German newspapers such as *die Süddeutsche Zeitung*, *Neue Westfälische* and *Die Zeit*.

She has written several books, including *Die Wegwerfkuh* (*The Throw Away Cow*), *Das Sterben der anderen* (*The death of others*) regarding the loss of biodiversity and solutions, and *Fleischkonsum. 33 Fragen und Antworten* (*Meat Eating: 33 Questions and Answers*), her thoughts on meat consumption. Together with Frank Adloff she edited an essay collection on the rights of nature *Welche Rechte braucht die Natur? Wege aus dem Artensterben* (*What rights does nature need? Ways out of species extinction*)

Tanja Busse moderates discussions and conferences on the topics of agriculture, sustainability, nutrition, ecology, and resource efficiency. She is curator of the Schweisfurth Foundation and the Future Foundation for Agriculture, and fellow at the DFG Research Centre "Futures of Sustainability" at the University of Hamburg.



HELENA NORBERG-HODGE

Helena Norberg-Hodge, linguist, author, filmmaker and pioneer of the new economy movement, is the founder and director of **Local Futures**, and the convener of **World Localization Day** and the **Planet Local Summit**. She is author of the inspirational classic *Ancient Futures*, and *Local is Our Future* and producer of the award-winning documentary *The Economics of Happiness* and of *Planet Local*. She is the founder of the International Alliance for Localisation, and a cofounder of the International Forum on Globalization and the Global Ecovillage Network.

Helena is a recipient of the Alternative Nobel prize, the Arthur Morgan Award and the Goi Peace Prize for contributing to “the revitalization of cultural and biological diversity, and the strengthening of local communities and economies worldwide.”

www.localfutures.org

<https://worldlocalizationday.org/>

www.helenanorberghodge.com



CHRIS SMAJE

Chris Smaje is a small-scale farmer, writer and social scientist who lives in Somerset, southwest England. He is the author of *A Small Farm Future* (published by Chelsea Green, 2020) and *Saying NO to a Farm-Free Future* (published by Chelsea Green, 2023). Previously, he taught sociology at the University of Surrey, England.

<https://chrissmaje.com/>

SPONSORS

The sponsors of our conference make it possible to support selected conference presenters and participants with a travel grant in order to maximize the reach and scope of the conference.



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GLOBAL DRAFT CATTLE NETWORK



**HELP SPONSOR THE FUTURE OF SUSTAINABLE
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Do you want to help fund fellow conference participants and presenters? We have ideas how your support, no matter what size, can assist our participants.

Please contact us: worlddraftcattlesymposium2024@gmail.com

The Worth McClure Fund For Promoting Draft Cattle



All of us who enjoy working with cattle can think of someone who was important in guiding our first steps and supporting us in our learning. This fund is intended to honor those mentors by passing on to new people the support that they offered in the past. The fund is named for Worth McClure, who was an example of this kind of mentor.

Worth was born in 1918 in the state of North Carolina, USA. The farm where Worth grew up was powered solely by oxen; there were no tractors, petroleum powered machines or horses. Oxen were used in the fields and woods, and for pulling wagons for human transportation. Where ever he lived, Worth always had a team or two of oxen and he delighted in sharing his enthusiasm and his skills with anyone who was interested.

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

(Conference schedule and the timeslots are preliminary and may change)

DAY 1 : MARCH 8 : PAPERS / POSTERS

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



Barbara Corson, USA

Retired Animal Pathologist

Barbara Corson holds a doctorate in Veterinary Medicine. She completed a residency in large animal veterinary pathology at New Bolton Center, (University of Pennsylvania) in 1996, after which she worked as a diagnostic pathologist for the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture. In 2013 she retired from the PDA and went to work as the historic farmer for the Colonial Pennsylvania Plantation. Now retired, Dr. Corson continues to pursue her life-long interests in historical and educational agriculture in various organisations.

Title of the keynote:

Cattle and Community: why we need both



Paul Starkey, UK

Senior Research Fellow, MERL

Paul Starkey is an international consultant in animal traction and rural transport and a Visiting Senior Research Fellow at the Museum of English Rural Life (MERL), University of Reading, UK. He has worked worldwide (over 150 countries visited) and has a wide-ranging photographic record of working animals and technologies.

Title of the keynote:

Appreciating working cattle worldwide, their cultural heritage and their future importance



Jim Slining, USA

Director of Historic Collections and Exhibits, Tillers International

Jim Slining is a lifelong student, practitioner and teacher of draft animal power and historic trades. As a self-professed agrarian, Jim studies historic farm tools to understand: their design philosophy, the reasons and circumstances for their historic favor, the skills required for their optimal use, and their potential application in diverse communities today.

Title of the keynote:

Forcing Resilient Models of Agriculture through Draft Animal Power

MARCH 8: SESSIONS

SESSION 1:

A VALUABLE LOOK INTO THE PAST - CREATING RELEVANCE FOR TODAY

Section 1: Archaeology / Osteology

Speakers include:

Phoebe Liu, *University of Sheffield, (UK)*

In Search of Draught cattle: an identification method

Minghao Lin, *Shanghai Jiao Tong University, (China)*

The early history of cattle traction in North China through diverse lines of evidence

Fabienne Pigiere, *Royal Holloway University of London, (UK)*

Investigating pathologies in wild bovids to assess pathological indicators of traction

Audrey Crabbé, *University of Groningen, (Netherlands)*

Ploughing through Pathologies: Traction related bone deformations in cattle as indices of political economies in early empires, Hittite Anatolia as a case study

Claus Kropp, *Open-Air Lab Lauresham, (Germany)*

Connecting the dots: Interdisciplinary Draft Cattle Research and Experimental Archaeology

This section will also offer a broad variety of poster presentations - to be published soon.

Section 2: History, Museum Collections and Archives

Speakers include:

William G. Clarence-Smith, *SOAS University of London, (UK)*

Draught Animals in Balkan transport, c1300-1914

Debra Reid, *Curator of Agriculture and the Environment, The Henry Ford, (USA)*

Bovine Yokes and Collars in Museum Collections

Barbara Sosič, Inja Smerdel, Gregor Kos, Žiga Rehar, *Slovene Ethnographic Museum, (Slovenia)*

Curating and Preserving the Cultural Heritage of Oxen and Yokes in Slovenia

Cozette Griffin-Kremer, Associate Researcher, Centre de recherches bretonne et celtique, UBO Brest, (France)

Paths of Transmission: Using Draft Cattle and Recording Skills

This section will also offer a broad variety of poster presentations - to be published soon.

Section 3: (Archaeological) Open-Air Museums and Living History Farms

Speakers include:

Pete Watson, Director: Howell Living History Farm, Mercer County Park Commission, (USA)
Towards a culture of training and curating skills. The role of Living History Farms

Fokko Bloema, Archaeon, (Netherlands)

Draft Cattle and Public Engagement in Open-Air Museums

This section will also offer a broad variety of poster presentations - to be published soon.

SESSION 2: FACING REALITIES AND FINDING SOLUTIONS

Section 1: Case Studies

Speakers include:

Boniface Okumu, Oxen Clinic Uganda

Survey Northern Uganda

Vlad Dumitrescu, Photographer, (Romania), Ioana Baskerville, Romanian Academy

Survey Romania

Simataa Joseph, Farmer / Conservationist, (Namibia)

Survey Namibia

D.K.Sadana, M. Din, S. Das, M. Shrivastava and T. Motilal, ILSI and RRAN/WASSAN (India)

Challenges in reinvigorating draft animal power in India, and some opportunities

M. Din, M. Srivastava, S. Das, T. Motilal, Revitalizing Rainfed Agriculture Network / Watershed Support Services & Activity Network (India)

Present Status of Draught Animal Power and their Utilisation in Rainfed Regions of India

Kevin Cunningham, Shakefork Community Farm, (USA)

Oxen-powered vegetable growing and market gardening

Raymundo Vento Tielves PhD., Félix Ponce Ceballo PhD., Joel Pacheco Escobar MSc., Andrés Loreto Díaz Pita MSc, (Cuba)

The use of animal traction in Pinar del Río Province, Cuba

Eamonn McDonagh, Vegetable Farmer, (Ireland)

Agriculture and market gardening with draft cattle in Ireland

This section will also offer a broad variety of poster presentations - to be published soon.

Section 2: New Concepts

Speakers Include:

Tim Harrigan, (USA)

The Role of Draft Animals in an Agroecological Approach to Appropriate Scale Mechanization

Antonio Perrone, (Italy)

Draft Animal Power versus Photovoltaic: a Technical and Economic Comparison

Paul Schmit, *Schaff mat Päerd*, (Luxembourg)
New animal-drawn machine concepts for future-oriented agriculture

Wolfgang Ehmeier, *Farmer*, (Austria)
The use of animal traction in an operational context

This section will also offer a broad variety of poster presentations - to be published soon.

Section 3: Changing the Public Perception

Speakers include:

Ruth Burke, *Assistant Professor of Art*, (USA)
Domestic Rewilding (A Living Land Acknowledgement)

Lynn Miller, *Editor: Small Farmers Journal*, (USA)
A Prayer for Oxen. Working cattle held both as revered and essential



CATTLE FARMER PHILIPPE KUHLMANN HAYING IN SOULTZEREN, FRANCE



BONIFACE OKUMU FROM UGANDA DURING A OXEN CLASS AT TILLERS INTERNATIONAL (USA)

DAY 2: MARCH 9: PRACTICAL WORKSHOPS / DEMONSTRATIONS

SESSION 1: STARTING THE CONNECTION: CATTLE BEHAVIOUR AND TRAINING

Section 1: Observation of natural behaviour as the basis for the ongoing process of training and relationship

Main Speaker:
Astrid Masson (Germany)

Section 2: Options for Transfer in communication between people and cattle. Developing trust and respect

Main Speaker:
Anne Wiltafsky (Germany)

Section 3: Sharing one language: use of body language, visual signs, whip and voice commands

Main Speaker:
Drew Conroy (USA)

SESSION 2: FINDING THE RIGHT SOLUTIONS

Section 1: Yoke, Collar, Harness, Shoe

Expert panel with practical presentations, including yoke-making and blacksmithing of ox shoes

Speakers/Presenters include:

- Philippe Kuhlmann, *Farmer and Forester (France)*
- Claus Kropp, *Manager: Laresham Open-Air Lab (Germany)*
- Rolf Minhorst, *Animal Scientist and Ox-Collar expert (Germany)*
- Frank Trommer, *Blacksmith Master (Germany)*
- Boniface Okumu, *Oxen Clinic Uganda (Uganda)*
- Elke Treitinger, *Veterinarian (Germany)*
- Michel Nioulou / Gilles Pequignot, *Yoke Maker (France)*

Section 2: Implements

Expert panel with practical demonstrations of various implements for agriculture, transport and forestry

Speakers/Presenters include:

- Paul Schmit, *Schaff mat Päerd (Luxembourg)*
- Peter Herold, *Agricultural Engineer (Germany)*
- Pascal Durand, *farmer trainer (Prommata International)*

SESSION 3: BIOGRAPHIES WRITTEN IN BONE: HOW THE WORKING LIVES OF DRAFT CATTLE AFFECT THE SKELETON

Main speakers:

- Matilda Holmes, *Archaeozoologist (England)*
- Barbara Corson, *ret. Veterinary Pathologist (USA)*
- Claus Kropp, *Manager: Open-Air Lab Lauresham (Germany)*

SESSION 4: CURATING COLLECTIONS: PAST AND PRESENT IMPLEMENTS

Main Speakers:

- Deb Reid, *The Henry Ford (USA)*
- Barbara Sosič, *SEM (Slovenia)*
- Pete Watson, *Howell Living History Farm (USA)*

EXHIBITION OPENING EVENT

Exhibition: "**Joch-Joug-Ayoko. A cultural history of the yoke through the millennia**"

(Venue: Lauresham Visitor Information Center, 7pm)

Join us on an exciting journey around the world and through time to discover the history of the yoke. Find out what changes the use of the yoke in agriculture has triggered in human history and what significance yokes still have today in the everyday life and folklore of different cultures. The focus is also on the variety of different yoke shapes and the sometimes extremely impressive craftsmanship with which they were made. We will finally also trace the word history of the yoke and its various meanings in religion, as field-measure as well as in law.



Yokemaker: Ion, Holbav (Romania)



Yoke detail from the collection at the Slovenian Ethnographic Museum

DAY 3: MARCH 10: FIELD DAY

March 10 is a public field day event at Lauresham Open-Air Laboratory for Experimental Archaeology. The conference also offers optional workshops for conference participants:

LOGGING WITH DRAFT CATTLE

Main Presenter/Speakers:

- Philippe Kuhlmann, *Farmer and Forester (France)*
- Arne Oppermann, *Farmer and Ox-Logger (Germany)*

FIELD DAY

The public Field Day will include presentations of the following:

- Testing prototypes and new machinery
- Cattle behaviour
- Training techniques
- Agriculture
- Market gardening
- Ox shoeing
- Chain making
- Historical Agriculture and Experimental Archaeology
- Yoke making

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

Alongside the Workshops and Field Day activities, participants will find many experiences, interpretive opportunities with staff at Lauresham, local food vendors, purchasing opportunities at the museum-shop, and more.

JUST FOR YOU: PICTURE YOURSELF IN LAURESHAM

During the Field Day you will find international artist Lauren Muney of "Silhouettes By Hand" (USA), ready to create your silhouette portrait using *only scissors* - in the traditional manner seen across England, Germany, and France in the 18th -20th centuries. Lauren's work can be seen in the Symposium logo and many other places. A special farm background is being created for this event.

She will also auction animal silhouettes - proceeds will go towards the Worth McClure Fund for Promoting Draft Cattle, which is a travel grant fund to help people participate in this conference.

