

Regional Climate Partnerships

Local added value with sustainable, non-GM soya

With Donau Soja, soya gets a domestic, a regional, a European face. Regional climate partnerships promote regional players. Regional animal feed cycles strengthen domestic agriculture and protect the climate. They offer local businesses the opportunity to build up new income sources, with benefits for farmers, producers and consumers.

Soya is in demand in animal feed, primarily because of its high protein content. Ten years ago, the quantities of soya beans, which were processed in the German-speaking world, were hardly worth mentioning. In the meantime, Donau Soja has been able to expand regional value chains with its partners and members. In 2012, about 5,000 ha in Germany, 37,000 ha in Austria and about 2.6 million ha in Europe were used for soya bean cultivation. This number has increased tremendously to 87,146 ha in Austria, 44,800 ha in Germany and over 5.1 million ha in Europe by 2023.

Soymeal, toasted soybeans, soya cake – all of these products require different processing and have different uses in animal feed. Soya cake is an optimal feed for laying hens because of its fat and protein ratio. Soya cake is also used as feed for cattle, breeding sows and in pig fattening. In addition to its suitability as feed, soya cake is particularly characterized by the possibility of regional production.

Sustainable soya from Europe for Europe

In a regional climate partnership, farmers produce their soya locally. They deliver it to an oil mill in the region or jointly operate a toasting plant. The soya products also remain in the regional value chain: they are used on the farmers' own farms or by other farms for their laying hens or in pig fattening.

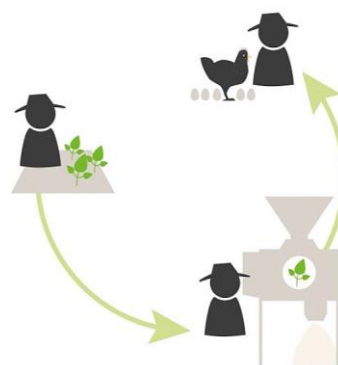


Figure: Small-scale regional soya value chain. Soya is produced regionally, processed on site, and fed as toasted soybean or soya cake in the region.

Donau Soja-certified soybeans are processed in 21 primary processing plants in Austria and 45 plants across Europe (as of 2024). Six of these farms are farmer-owned primary processors, which means they process soya for their own needs only. The Austrian laying hen sector is a prime example of a regional circular economy: Only Donau Soja feed is used for eggs sold in Austrian food retailers, >50% of the beans fed come from Austrian fields and are regionally processed.

Especially the production of soya cake is a good example of a holistic utilization of the soybean, as well as the closed small-scale regional cycle. The process takes a maximum of 40 minutes and is considered energy efficient.



Best Practice Beispiele

MH Agrarhandel (Styria, Austria)

Due to a worldwide shortage in the supply of non-GM soymeal, the founders of MH Agrarhandel decided to use regional soybeans to feed their laying hens since 2012.



The soybeans are heated in their own toasting facility and then pressed. The soybean cake contains 45% crude protein and about 11% fat. The fed chickens and pigs have excellent performances with the help of this feed. About two thirds of the processed product come from conventional farming and one third from organic farming. About 90% of the customers are laying hen farmers and about 10% are pig farmers. The conventional soya to be processed comes from a 30 km radius, the organic soya from a 250 km radius.

Großschedl Ltd. (Styria, Austria)

The Großschedl family processes Donau Soja soybeans from about 80 farmers in the region. The processed beans are exclusively Donau Soja-certified. The beans are cleaned, peeled, crushed, extruded and pressed. The products are soybean oil and soybean cake, with the soybean cake containing up to 48% crude protein and 7-10% fat. The processed products are used for laying hen, pullet production and pig fattening.



Common soya feeds on the market

Soya cake	Soya cake contains about 37-50% crude protein and about 6-17% crude fat. It is usually used in feed mixtures for laying hens or breeding sows, but is also used in multiphase feeding for fattening pig or poultry.
Soya bean, full-fat and toasted	The full-fat soybean has a crude protein content of 38-42% and a crude fat content of 19-22%, which leads to a very high nutrient density. It is mainly used in the feeding of breeding sows and laying hens.
Soya hulls	Soya hulls are known for their high crude fibre content (approx. 33%). They are therefore ideal for feeding breeding sows, among others.
Soya oil	Soya oil consists of 98% crude fat and therefore contains a lot of energy and linoleic acid in a highly utilizable form. It is used as a supplement to laying hen feed.

Towards Regional Climate Partnerships with Donau Soja

Regional Climate Partners set out together to build a new proximity: regional cultivation, local mills and toasting facilities at the farm. Certified, non-GM, with a quality label. So that we can rely on the quality with certainty. Good for us in Europe. And also good for the Amazon.

About Donau Soja

Donau Soja is a non-profit, independent and member-based organisation based in Vienna. The vision of Donau Soja is a sustainable, safe and European protein supply. To achieve this, Donau Soja supports, among others, the sustainable production of soya in Europe and the development of regional value chains. The two labels Donau Soja / Europe Soya stand for non-GM soya products of controlled origin and quality from the Danube region and from Europe. Donau Soja unites over 280 members in 25 countries.

Website: www.donausoja.org