

THE FARM-SCHOOL BUZURUNA JUZURUNA IN LEBANON AND THEIR LOCAL BANK OF PEASANT SEEDS

Since 2016, the Buzuruna Juzuruna farm-school of agroecology has been developing and innovative work in Lebanon for the collection, conservation and distribution of more than 240 local peasant seeds and for the spreading of knowledge. The 2022 [Catalogue of seeds, seedlings and natural treatments](#) produced on the farm shows the extraordinary results of their work, as well as presenting the focus and ongoing activities.



The farm-school is located in Saadnayel, a village near the city of Chtaura and the border with Syria, in the Beqaa Valley, well known as one of the most fertile areas in the world in ancient times and cradle of Mediterranean agriculture. This region today hosts more than 360,000 refugees from the conflict areas in Syria.

Buzuruna Juzuruna (*our seeds are our roots*) is a non-profit association made up of twenty expert members determined to offer their contribution to a new model of agriculture based on the principles of agro-ecology and the sustainability of communities and local ecosystems. The products and sales of the farm-school are reinvested in the project to achieve its agroecological goals and financial stability. Through its activities, documented on his Instagram page, the Buzuruna Juzuruna Farm School has achieved important results that have drawn attention in Lebanon and internationally.



The ecological management of the farm

The farm occupies an area of 2 hectares where it keeps and grows a large number of seeds, raises animals such as poultry, goats and sheep, manages a dozen beehives, produces food, fertilizers, compost and natural inputs. The Buzuruna Juzuruna team estimates that in Lebanon 95% of inputs are imported and by producing natural seeds, fertilizers and pesticides, the farm demonstrates that there are local alternatives that improve the environment, as well as being accessible to all producers. The farm has more than 300 crops including multiple varieties of vegetables and cereals, fruit trees, aromatic plants, flowers. The farm has solar panels that run some of the electrical equipment and a well that pumps water up to 90 meters deep, to avoid using contaminated local surface and groundwater. The farm also rents additional spaces, such as the ten hectares that in 2020 have allowed to expand its crops and meet the objectives of a specific project.



The local bank of peasant seeds

An extraordinary result of the farm-school is the management of a bank of 240 varieties of local seeds. Since 2017, the farm has recovered the



region's native varieties from the farmers, storing the collected seeds in the *seed house*, a construction built with 40-centimeter-thick earthen walls that keep the seeds fresh, ensuring the survival and multiplication of species sometimes rare and endangered. Some of these seeds are grown on the farm to multiply their number and observe their behavior and resistance to the weather. Of each variety, the farm saves about 1 kilo of seeds, distributing the rest through donations, exchange or sale, so that they can be reproduced and cultivated by local farmers, and used to create urban gardens or family gardens in refugee camps. In general, all the products of the farm, such as fruits, vegetables and herbs obtained from the seeds, are sold at cost price.

The spreading of knowledge

The Buzuruna Juzuruna team develops the work of the farm as an *ecological agricultural laboratory*, to experiment and spread both varieties of local products, as well as techniques and knowledge related to sustainability and food security. In 2018, with the support of external specialists, they wrote in Arabic and distributed [13 booklets on sustainable agriculture techniques](#) on topics that reflect the work of the farm: Arboriculture (pruning, grafting, cutting); Seed selection and production; Fertilization, composting and recycling; Disease and pest management; Beekeeping; Cultivation and use of aromatic plants; Food processing and canning; Cereal crops; Cosmetics and natural soaps; Bakery; Renewable energy and electricity; Eco-Construction. In addition, the team produces the annual illustrated catalogues of seeds, seedlings and natural treatments available on the farm. Taking advantage of these materials and ecological practices ongoing in the farm, the team conducts training courses for local producers, agronomy students or young farmers, groups and families living in refugee camps. It also organizes workshops and exchanges with farmers from Jordan, Tunisia, Algeria, Egypt, Palestine, Iraq, Syria and other regions of Lebanon.

The social and solidarity impact

Collaborating with NGOs from different countries and international organizations, the association Buzuruna Juzuruna develops permanent activities to support the Syrian refugee communities in the Beqaa Valley. In particular, it supports Syrian and Lebanese families to establish their own gardens, ensuring training, seeds, plants, natural treatments made on the farm and technical assistance for one year. It also develops training courses for refugee farmers and future trainers on agroecology issues. Since 2017, the association collaborates with the [Amel Organization](#), developing support activities for refugee communities and establishing more than 475 collective gardens in the Beqaa Valley and other territories in southern Lebanon.

The work and impacting results of Buzuruna Juzuruna are documented in articles published by organizations and magazines, also reporting interviews with its associates. Their vision for the future envisages continuing to expand the impact of ecological agriculture based on inputs and natural products, developing quality certification methods that are accessible to local producers, continuing to support refugee communities in Lebanon and investing in the exchange of knowledge with farmers from neighboring countries to generate a wide dissemination of agroecology approaches and techniques. Within this framework, the Buzuruna Juzuruna team is also betting on the great challenge of reducing the current dependence on external grains, investing in local species that can best ensure an efficient and sustainable agri-food system.



Among the international recognitions received, in 2020 the [Buzuruna Juzuruna farm-school](#) received the *Danielle Mitterand Award*, which has contributed to disseminating information and celebrating their high-impact achievements.

To know more

[Catalogue 2022 pdf in Google Drive](#)

[Article in Amel Association International](#)

[Article in Amel Association International](#)

[Article in Ici Beyrouth](#)

[Article in The Public Source website](#)

[Buzuruna in cargocollective.com](#)

[Article in agendaculturel.com](#)

[Article in infogm.org](#)

[Article - United Nations Lebanon](#)

[Article in globe-reporters.org](#)

[Burujuna-juzuruna.pdf in fondationdaniellemitterrand.org](#)

[Burujuna-Juzuruna.pdf in coordinationsud.org](#)

[Buzuruna Juzuruna - CCFD-Terre Solidaire](#)

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