

# Pastoralism in Austria from AREC's point of view

## SWOT analysis and synergies of multiplier events

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## Styria:

- Irdning-Donnersbachtal head quarter school, administration E&R
- Stainach-Pürgg organic farming

## Upper Austria

- Wels/Lambach organic farming

## AREC – School for life research for the future



- **Agrarian College:** *Agricultural Management, Environmental and Resource Management*
- **4 Research institutes:** *Livestock Farming, Plant Production and Cultural Landscape, Animal Technology and Environment, Organic Farming and Farm Animal Biodiversity*
- *Situated in the middle of Austria*
- *District Liezen/Styria, District Wels/Upper Austria*
- *~300 employees, 402 students/203 young women*

## Department Sheep and Goats

### Research objectives:

- Influence of forage quality and feeding intensity on feed intake and milk productivity
- Production systems for top-quality lamb meat (*Mountain sheep and Merino sheep*)
- Examining the economic parameters in *Boer goat* breeding
- Assessing the recultivation of alpine pastures with “*Boer goats*” and sheep.
- Analyzing the ecological and economic impacts of extensive pasture management systems for the preservation of cultural landscapes.



## (Inter) national projects

- **Interreg Alpinet Gheep:** Alpine RegionNetwork for the promotion of sheep and goat farming for a sustainable development in the Alpine region
- **LIFEstockProtect (ASP):** Improving livestock protection for the direct benefit of wolf conservation in the German-speaking countries
- **AgriEnvironment (HigherKOS):** Sustainable Agriculture in the Light of European Environment Targets
- Life **WolfAlps:** Coordinated actions to implement coexistence actions between the wolf and human activities
- **Sheep Grazing Management** Project Hauser Kaibling (EU Leader, since 2008)  
Cooperation “**Ennstal Lamm** “ (brand): “*Genuss\_Region\_Ennstal\_Lamm*” ( part of Austrian’s gourmet regions)  
Project partners: Agricultural District Authority, Municipality Haus im Ennstal, Hauser Kaibling Cable Car Company, Styrian Sheep Breeding Association  
**2023:** 09 June – September: up to 2020 meter sea level , ~ 700 sheep, shepherd family with herd dog  
sheep grazing on the ski slopes, landscape management, summer tourism (“**Styrian Alp Lamb festival** 30. July)  
Main problem/challenge: “*Moderhinke*” (mould limp) - claw disease

# Dep. Sheep and Goats- Teaching and further training

## Collaboration between research, education, practice & advisory services

- **Knowledge transfer** (sheep & goat conference every 2 years)
- **Annual specialized courses** for agricultural workers: pasture & flock management, fencing, etc.)
- **New research** findings are disseminated to relevant stakeholders and adapted into the **school curricula** (science days for agrarian schools every year), Diploma thesis for “Matura” (A-level graduation), University)
- **Teaching** at schools and training centers across Austria (LFI; Rural Training Institute).
- **Publications** research community & practitioners (“Der Landwirt”, Podcasts, Social media, ...)
- Partner in the voluntary advanced training course for agricultural workers with focus on alpine pasture and herding at the **Grabnerhof Agricultural Vocational School**, international cooperation

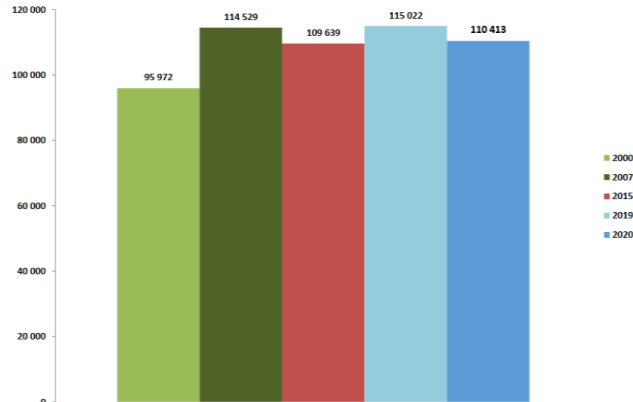




# Teaching programmes, life at alpine pastures in Austria



Anzahl der Schafe auf Almen in Österreich



Quelle: BMLRT, AMA, INVEKOS-Daten, Stand Juni 2020.

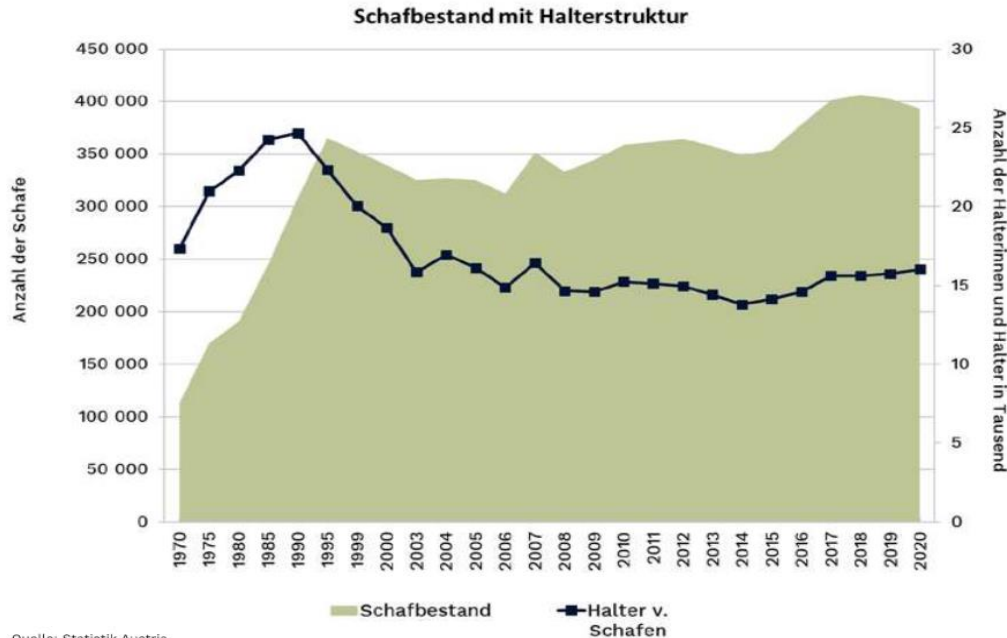
- „Alm/“Alpe“ important role in Alpine area
- Central element of mountain agriculture (multi functionality); Alpine inspector
- 8.081 alpine pastures, 937.522 hectare (2014),
- 4.816 alpine pastures with herdsmen/305.600 hectar, 7.205 shepherds (INVEKOS 2020)
- ~16.400 sheep farms (2021/ÖBZ), ~ 402.350 sheep, average herd size 25 (ÖSTAT, December 2021), sheep at alpine pasture 110.413 (BML 2020)/ 107.169 (2021)
- <https://www.almwirtschaft.com/Almwirtschaft/oesterreichische-almwirtschaft.html>



## Situation of extensive sheep farming in Austria

- Extensive grassland management has led to an **increased importance** of sheep and goat farming in Austria, particularly as a **side business at alpine pastures**.
- Milk and meat processing and marketing occur in larger dairy and meat processing companies, as well as through direct sales to consumers.
- **Different sheep and goat breeds** are utilized based on their intended purpose and location, in contrast to cattle and pig farming.

## Structures sheep population and sheep farmers 1970-2020



- **green area:** sheep population is increasing
- **black line:** number of sheep farmers is stagnating

Source:

[https://www.burgenland.at/fileadmin/user\\_upload/Downloads/Umwelt\\_und\\_Agrar/Umwelt/Tiergesundheit/Downloads/Grundlagen\\_der\\_Schafhaltung\\_2021.pdf](https://www.burgenland.at/fileadmin/user_upload/Downloads/Umwelt_und_Agrar/Umwelt/Tiergesundheit/Downloads/Grundlagen_der_Schafhaltung_2021.pdf)

# Extensive sheep herd management in Austria/ SWOT Analysis

<b>Internal Analysis</b>	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
	Potential of interested people	not recognized as a separate profession No long-term guarantees (job opportunities, further training, financial resources /funding programmes)
	Training modules with experts	Small herds need to be stocked up to be profitable, short time in Alpine areas (3 month)
	Sharing know-how, best practice examples	Solutions for herd protection
	Offer of training courses started, adapted to different target groups (amateur farmers, career changers)	Many issues / intensive training
	Stimulating interest by promoting training opportunities, practice (e.g. voluntary ecological year on political agenda), Green Deal, Management of Protected areas, new jobs/practical experience	lack of basic agrarian knowledge, different general education and social background, idealism versus reality
<b>External Analysis</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
	Increase in sheep farmers, diverse and small-scale	Change of funding structures/agrarian policy, compensation of resources, regulations
	Ambitious newcomers	Collapse of sheep farming due to problems with large predators or other unforeseen situations
	Multifunctionality of land use, landscape conservation and management, multiple benefits, protection against natural hazards through grazing of steep mountain slopes	New priorities in land use management, land abandonment
	Market for products (high quality, niche products), added value through combination with tourism	Natural hazards, climate change, social conflicts, diseases, no resilience

# Extensive sheep farming/herd management in Austria

## Synergies

- **Ecological transformation:** change of lifestyles, appreciation and valorisation of environmental friendly products, making the offers visible, adapting them and support new ideas
- **Cooperation & networks:** initiatives and projects, high level expertise + training farms AREC & Grabnerhof, HAUP, LFI, ...internat. collaboration



# Multiplier Events/ Synergies

## Synergies in Austria

- **Several events in cooperation with HAUP** for different stakeholder groups, (Agrarian Center Rotholz/Tyrol, Salzburg, claw keepers & -trainers, Seminar „*Herd protection for small ruminants*”, etc.)
- **Science Days** at AREC: Agrarian students 21st, 28th June 2023
- **Implementation in school curriculum** (AREC/teachers for practical training; **coordination meetings with teachers**), further agrarian schools, promotion events
- **Cooperations** Grabner Hof (sharing resources), Chamber of Agriculture, Federal State Tyrol, Austrian Association for Sheep and Goats/ÖBZ) Austrian Center for Bear Wolf Lynx, LFI

# Impressions



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## Links

<https://raumberg-gumpenstein.at/forschung/forschung-aktuelles/viel-interessantes-bei-der-schaftagung.html>  
[www.alpinetgheep.com/Alpenschaefer.html](http://www.alpinetgheep.com/Alpenschaefer.html)  
<http://www.oebisz.at/bildungsveranstaltungen>  
<https://lifestockprotect.info/>  
[www.fachschulen.steiermark.at/cms/beitrag/12006008/105467552#tb6](http://www.fachschulen.steiermark.at/cms/beitrag/12006008/105467552#tb6)  
[Österreichzentrum – Bär Wolf Luchs \(baer-wolf-luchs.at\)](http://www.baer-wolf-luchs.at)  
[Grundlagen einer professionellen Almbewirtschaftung | LFI Tirol  
http://www.oebisz.at/bildungsveranstaltungen](http://www.oebisz.at/bildungsveranstaltungen)  
<https://www.oebisz.at/ueber-uns/schaf-und-ziegenhaltung-in-oesterreich>  
[https://www.schladming-dachstein.at/de/Alle-Veranstaltungen/14.Steirisches-Almlammfest ev 453139](https://www.schladming-dachstein.at/de/Alle-Veranstaltungen/14.Steirisches-Almlammfest-ev-453139)  
[https://www.ennstalwiki.at/wiki/index.php/Genuss\\_Region\\_Ennstal\\_Lamm](https://www.ennstalwiki.at/wiki/index.php/Genuss_Region_Ennstal_Lamm)

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