



Newsletter #2 June 2025

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WELCOME BACK!

Nau mai, haere mai, Herzlich Willkommen!

Welcome! to the second AgriDENZ project newsletter. It's been a busy six months since our first newsletter. In this issue, we'll highlight a few of our activities and events that have taken place over that time, as well as preview some of our plans for the next six months.

We hope you enjoy!



**Matthew
Barnett**



**Nina
Grassnick**

The Agri-DENZ project management unit

THE PAST SIX MONTHS

21 -23 OCTOBER 2024

THE INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM ON AGRICULTURAL GREENHOUSE GAS MITIGATION, IN BERLIN

The “International Research Symposium on Agricultural Greenhouse Gas Mitigation: From Research to Implementation” took place from October 21 – 23, 2024, in Berlin, Germany. The event was hosted by the German Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL), with support from the AgriDENZ project, and was co-organised by the Global Research Alliance on Agricultural Greenhouse Gases (GRA), the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), and the Thünen Institute.

Over 200 participants from more than 40 countries attended this highly successful symposium, discussing solutions for low-emission agriculture.



Attendees at the AgriGHG-2024 symposium in Berlin gather for a group photo. Courtesy Nadine Zirbes, Thünen Institute. Photo: Thünen-Institut / Nadine Zirbes

Several side-events related to GRA and CGIAR activities took place immediately afterwards.

Further information, including the book of abstracts and event photographs, can be found on the symposium website: <https://www.agrihgh-2024.de/>

25TH OCTOBER 2024

OFFICIAL PROJECT OPENING AND FIRST PROJECT STEERING GROUP (PSG) MEETING, BERLIN

As we previewed in our first newsletter, the AgriDENZ project was officially launched on October 25, 2024, following the AgriGHG-2024 Symposium in Berlin. The event, held at the BMEL offices in Berlin, was jointly hosted by the BMEL and New Zealand's Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI).

The launch brought together policymakers and researchers from various institutions, including BMEL, MPI, the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development, the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Trade, the Thünen Institute, the New Zealand Agricultural Greenhouse Gas Research Centre (NZAGRC), GFA Consulting Group

GmbH, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, Massey University and Friedrich-Loeffler-Institute. This diverse attendance underscored the robust, multi-institutional support for the project.

During the event, BMEL Deputy Director General Sebastian Graf von Keyserlingk and New Zealand Ambassador to Germany Craig Hawke highlighted the longstanding collaboration between Germany and New Zealand. Both emphasized their commitment to leveraging this partnership to develop innovative solutions for reducing greenhouse gas emissions in agriculture.

The AgriDENZ project launch was followed by the first official Project Steering Group (PSG) meeting, during which program activities for the coming year and key areas of focus for the project were confirmed. Potential activities for the second year of the project were also discussed.



L-R: Oliver Hendrickson, New Zealand Ag Counsellor to Europe; Garrett Hulse, First Secretary at the New Zealand Embassy Berlin; New Zealand Ambassador to Germany Craig Hawke; and BMEL Deputy Director General Sebastian Graf von Keyserlingk, during the AgriDENZ project official opening. Photo: BMEL

THE PAST SIX MONTHS

22 -24 OCTOBER 2024

FOOD LOSS AND WASTE (FLW) WORKSHOP IN BRAZIL

In our first newsletter, we highlighted a special two-day workshop, "Food Loss and Waste Prevention in Sub-Saharan Africa." The workshop was financially supported by BMEL and MPI through the AgriDENZ project.

Here we showcase the eighth annual FLW workshop, organised as part of the Collaboration Initiative on Food Loss & Food Waste, which was launched at the 2015 MACS-G20 meeting in Izmir, Turkey. In 2024, this meeting was held in Brasilia, Brazil, from 22 - 24 October, with funding provided by BMEL and MPI through the AgriDENZ project. The workshop was planned and coordinated in cooperation with colleagues from the Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation (Embrapa), the Brazilian Ministry of Social Development (MDS), the UN Environmental Program (UNEP), Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), GRA, and National Agricultural Technology Institute Argentina (INTA), with input from experienced local consultants.

The workshop was a great success, bringing together



Participants from Argentina, Germany, Brazil, Australia, and Mexico arrive at the 2024 FLW workshop venue.
Photo © GRA

180 participants representing 17 countries and a wide range of stakeholders, including businesses, NGOs, government officials, and research organisations.

The eventful program included five plenary sessions, four working groups, an exhibition, and a field trip. Key topics included collaborative approaches to mitigate FLW across sectors, how these efforts contribute to addressing the climate crisis and achieving Sustainable Development Goal 12.3 and developing policies and frameworks to implement effective solutions.

Further information on the workshop, and on the Collaboration Initiative FLW, can be found [here](#).

16TH JANUARY 2025

SOIL CARBON EXPERT PANEL AT GFFA 2025 IN BERLIN

At the 2025 Global Forum for Food and Agriculture (GFFA) in Berlin in January, an expert panel "Cultivating a greener future – toward sustainable use of biomass for carbon sequestration" was held. This panel was hosted by the AgriDENZ project and its partners – Thünen Institute, BMEL, MPI and GRA.

The event, which was a great success, hosted four experts from around the globe: Prof. Dr. Axel Don (Thünen Institute, Germany), Prof. Vincent Logah (Kwame Nkrumah University of Science & Technology, Ghana), Dr. Sam McNally (Manaaki Whenua - Landcare Research, New Zealand), and Dr. Virginia Pravia (National Agricultural Research Institute, Uruguay). The discussion explored the potential to contribute to climate change mitigation through carbon accrual in soils and agricultural biomass in different regions and the need to consider carbon loss mitigation. The panellists also shared regional best practices. These include biochar, hedges and agroforestry in Europe; the African Dark Earth phenomenon and indigenous practices in

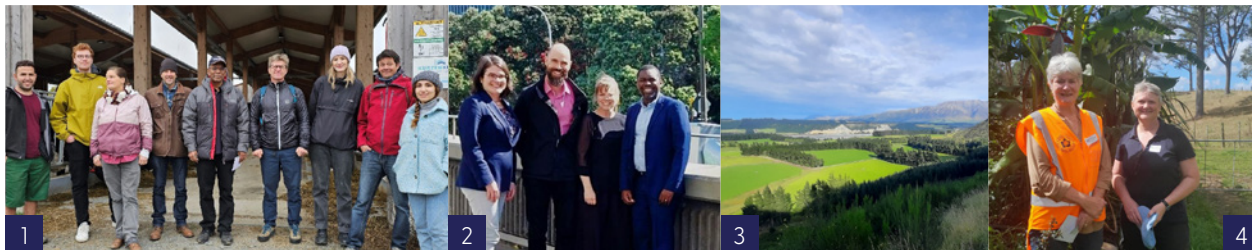


The four speakers at the GFFA2025 expert panel: (L-R) Dr. Virginia Pravia (National Agricultural Research Institute, Uruguay), Prof. Dr. Axel Don (Thünen Institute, Germany), Dr. Sam McNally (Manaaki Whenua - Landcare Research, New Zealand), Prof. Vincent Logah (Kwame Nkrumah University of Science & Technology, Ghana), are introduced by Dr. Nina Grassnick (Thünen Institute, Germany; AgriDENZ project coordinator, standing at the podium to the right). Photo © GFA

West Africa; and practices for grassland soils such as full inversion or no tillage in New Zealand and Uruguay.

Further information on the event, including a video and a copy of the presentation slides, are available on our [LinkedIn page](#) and [project website](#).

SCIENCE EXCHANGES



1. Dr. Thiagarajah Ramilan (centre) with Prof. Andreas Gattinger and members of his research team during a visit to University of Gießen organic dairy farm, November 1st, 2024. *Photo © Dr. Thiagarajah Ramilan*
2. L-R: Nina Grassnick (Thünen Institute), Matthew Barnett (NZAGRC), Winnie Switakowski (German Embassy in Wellington) and Craig Chibanda (Thünen Institute) following their meeting in Wellington.
3. Dr. Felix Seidel visited Manaaki Whenua Landcare Research in Lincoln to discuss soil organic carbon trends in New Zealand grasslands. *Photo © Felix Seidel*
4. Dr Felicitas Schneider (R) with Betsy Kettle (L) from the City to Farm Zero Waste initiative, following the composting workshop held on the 5th of April in Waitoki, north of Auckland. *Photo © Matthew Barnett*

Strengthening scientific exchange between research institutions is one of the key pillars of the AgriDENZ project. The last six months have seen a lot of activity, with four exchanges taking place to deliver against this pillar.

One of the highlights was the visit of Dr. Thiagarajah Ramilan from Massey University, New Zealand, who was supported to attend the AgriGHG-2024 symposium in Berlin in October 2024. There, he presented his work on marginal abatement cost curves (MACCs) in dairy production systems and engaged with international experts in the field. He also attended the project's opening and PSG meeting, and visited the Thünen Institute, where he shared key findings from his work and participated in fruitful discussions with researchers. Ramilan's exchange also included a visit to the University of Gießen and their Cliefarms project organic farm where he joined knowledge-sharing sessions and discussions on climate-neutral farming practices across countries.

In late November and early December 2024, Dr Nina Grassnick and Dr Craig Chibanda (both from the Thünen Institute) visited New Zealand. Nina (who introduced herself in our last newsletter) is the project coordinator on behalf of Germany. Craig leads the AgriDENZ project engagement with third countries, also on behalf of Germany. Their busy itinerary took them from Auckland to Wellington via Hamilton and Palmerston North. During the trip, they attended meetings at the Germany-New Zealand Chamber of Commerce, Manaaki Whenua – Landcare Research, Massey University, NZAGRC, and MPI, and visited Massey University's Dairy Farm facility. They interacted with Winnie Switakowski, Deputy Head of Mission at the German Embassy in Wellington. These visits provided opportunities to introduce the AgriDENZ project to stakeholders and explore pathways to strengthen collaboration between Germany and New Zealand to address the challenges of GHG

emissions from agriculture. It was also an opportunity to continue developing the project work plan.

Finally, between March and April 2025, two additional members of the project team from the Thünen Institute visited New Zealand. Dr. Felix Seidel, who leads the work package on soil carbon, spent time visiting colleagues from Manaaki Whenua / Landcare Research, The University of Waikato, and MPI. Topics covered during his visit include the potential impact of hedges / silvopasture on grasslands, methods for measuring soil organic carbon and, monitoring and management of wetlands and peatlands. Felix will follow up his visit with a series of online meetings in September and October aimed at contributing to a joint research gap analysis between the German and New Zealand partners. This work will help pave the way toward more sustainable and climate-friendly agricultural soil management.

At the same time, Dr. Felicitas Schneider, who leads the work package on food loss and waste (FLW) for AgriDENZ, engaged in activities aimed at strengthening collaborations with existing and prospective research partners. These included attending a composting workshop organized by the City to Farm Zero Waste Initiative north of Auckland, giving guest lectures at The University of Auckland's School of Environment, the University of Otago and Massey University / Riddet's Sustainable Nutrition Initiative, visiting food rescue initiatives in Auckland and Wellington, exploring food hubs in Hawke's Bay and Auckland, and exchanging ideas with representatives from Kai Commitment. In addition, she met with officials from MPI and the New Zealand Ministry for the Environment to discuss national policies and strategies to address FLW. Felicitas shared her extensive knowledge on European perspectives of FLW and had several fruitful discussions on how researchers and policymakers from Germany and New Zealand could work together to tackle FLW more effectively.

POLICY DIALOGUES ON FARM-LEVEL GHG ACCOUNTING TOOLS



Participants in the first policy dialogue discussing on-farm GHG accounting tools in Berlin on the 24th of October 2024 in parallel with the AgriGHG-2024 symposium. Photo © Matthew Barnett.

Establishing science-policy dialogues is one of the key pillars of the AgriDENZ project. Farm-level GHG accounting tools is one of the project's focus topics. A series of policy dialogues were held on farm-level GHG accounting tools to bring these two strands of the project together. The first took place in Berlin on 24 October 2024 in parallel with the AgriGHG-2024 symposium. It brought together ministry officials and scientists for an introductory discussion. The discussion covered topics such as similarities and differences between the approaches in Germany and New Zealand, issues around data access and management, and

how various tools and methods might be applied. A subsequent online meeting was held on 28 January 2025, during which New Zealand's standardised methodology, which was released on the 13 December 2024, was presented. Subsequent discussions included potential harmonisation of international methods, linkages between the on-farm methods and national inventories, and approaches to storage of data. A third dialogue took place on 12th May 2025. This dialogue focused on the approaches to on-farm GHG accounting in Germany.

MEET THE TEAM!



Kia ora. I'm Dr. Matthew Barnett, and I'm helping coordinate New Zealand's contributions to the AgriDENZ project.

I do this wearing my New Zealand Agricultural Greenhouse Gas Research Centre (NZAGRC) hat, and I work closely with staff from NZAGRC, the Global Climate Partnerships team at MPI, and the AgriDENZ team in Germany, particularly my fellow coordinator Dr. Nina Grassnick. While wearing my other hat, I'm a Senior Research Scientist at AgResearch in the Food Function & Physiology Team.

I'm enjoying the opportunity to learn a lot about international efforts to mitigate GHG emissions from agriculture and interact with researchers and policymakers from a variety of different countries.

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES AND WHAT TO EXPECT IN ISSUE THREE

- **MORE SCIENCE EXCHANGES** – New Zealand researcher heads to Germany.
- **EVENTS SUPPORTED BY AgriDENZ** – a policy dialogue in South Africa with QINISA, and a side event at the GGAA conference in Kenya.
- **THE AgriDENZ WEBINAR SERIES** is underway.

ONLINE

For more information, please visit the project website (www.agri-denz.com) or join us on LinkedIn ([AgriDENZ project: Overview | LinkedIn](#)).

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