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The DLG was founded in 1885 with the goal to implement scientific and economic knowledge, technical novelties and organizational competence into practice. Above 130 years later, nearly 3,000 voluntary and 250 full-time employees just as more than 30,000 members still have the same goal: Impulses for progress. Despite the long persistence, progress is not a rigid ritual for the DLG, but rather a goal that has to be redefined to survive.

In keeping with this tradition, we did that again in 2017. With the ten theses "Agriculture 2030", we have faced the challenges of feeding a growing world population while protecting natural resources and respecting social goals. At the same time, for agriculture, this means increasing productivity, reducing environmental damage, and organizing arable and livestock farming in ways that are supported by a broad social consensus.

For arable farming, this implies that the focus must be return on a holistic approach and moving away from the falsely emphasis on short-term optimization of the profit margin. This requires site-adapted designing crop rotation using a well-filled toolbox.

In the area of rapeseed cultivation, Germany is second in the EU ranking, behind France, with 1.225 million ha in 2018 (AMI 2018), which corresponds to about one-ten of the arable land. Rapeseed is an all-rounder in use, as it fills the plate, tank and trough, almost without competition, because main and side products complement each other. Of the 3.7 million harvested tonnes, around 1.5 million tonnes of rapeseed oil, 2.2 million tonnes of rapeseed cake and extraction meal are produced. 0.5 million t of rapeseed oil are annually used in human nutrition.

But even in terms of arable farming, rape has hardly any other crop, despite or precisely because he is not self-sufficient and thus can be only cultivate in a wide crop rotation. He has highest demands on the soil and the supply of nutrients. Rape is particularly important in crop rotation with a high cereal content, as it promotes the structure and biological activity of the soil as well as the humus content through roots and remaining straw. Winter rape, for example, can take up released amounts of nitrogen in the autumn.

However, the high standards also include a high level of occupational and crop protection intensity. Especially here, the toolbox is restricted by unilateral prohibitions in the field of neonicotinoids and thus repealed the balance, especially since there are no alternatives. At the same time, rape cultivation within the EU is characterized by very volatile prices. Reasons for this are strong international competitors, including other oil-producing plants. In addition, extreme weather conditions, as in the past year, make cultivation even more difficult. According to the German Federal Statistics Office, only 0.917 million ha were drilled with rap in 2018, which corresponds to a decline of 25% compared to autumn 2017.

Possibilities that counteract the described trend are the expansion of the toolbox for example with mechanical weed control, which involves spaced planting and precision farming technology, thus combining old-fashioned and innovative methods. An opportunity in the marketing is to replace imported soya by rapeseed cake as an energy and protein supplier.

In order to stop the decline in cultivation due to restrictions in fertilization and crop protection as well as the increase in crop rotation diseases, emphasis is needed on research, breeding and testing for alternatives in crop protection. Furthermore it takes also new editions of pest damage thresholds, breeding against diseases and fertilization experiments in combination with growth models based on weather forecasts. A wide range of measures is the