

The landscape of factory farming

In the Danish region Himmerland, the modern agriculture typically is an enclave of buildings which, at a distance, look like a factory. Perhaps this is what modern agriculture is to day: A factory farm.

In the past, the farms were filled with life. Both animal production and crop cultivation included labour-intensive processes. The fields were smaller squares surrounded by windbreak belts, and scattered around the farms small houses were located as accommodation for the servants.

Now, this is all gone. The factory or farm is surrounded by huge grain fields. The farmer owns a lot of machines, but typically only a few people are employed on the farm to serve these machines. Many country houses have been demolished. The farm no longer has a need for housing the workforce. The employees commute by car from the nearest city.

The development of the landscape pays a high price for the intensive agriculture. The idyllic smallholdings, the winding earth

roads and the cheerful country houses are gone. In the modern economy there is no space for nostalgia. Every corner of the farm's occupancy must be exploited. This is a condition of existence.

But the agricultural landscape that we are taking for granted today will continue to develop in the coming years. Who had – just twenty years ago - imagined the many white wind turbines? Who had imagined the existence of the large areas of energy wood?

Unilaterally the consumers are pointing towards a desire to buy goods where ecology and sustainability are attached more importance compared to the price. These years a lot of farms again need to change the production.

The public subsidies for agriculture is prolonging this death struggle for the industrial agriculture, but perhaps it is only a matter of time before new forms of agricultural production will shape our environment in a new direction?



A landscape north of the village Gudum, Himmerland, July 2018