



## Nordic Association of Agricultural Science

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### GREETINGS FROM THE SECRETARY GENERAL AND THE PRESIDENT

Dear NJF members,

Year 2025 is soon coming to an end and 2026 will be a hallmark of several new activities. NJF has recently established a new LinkedIn account ([click here to visit our LinkedIn profile](#)). We invite you to follow us in LinkedIn. Please share also your posts with us.

To stimulate the role of young scientists, NJF's board has decided to launch an abstract competition for those who have defended their doctoral dissertation recently. This is the first time that we have such a Nordic-Baltic competition, and we expect it to be repeated annually in the future.

The main activity of NJF in 2026 is the congress, that will take place in Tartu, Estonia, on October 14-16, 2026. Other activities for 2026 include, among others, a conference on peat and peatlands in Finland during the spring and a co-organised organic farming conference in Uppsala in June 2026.

NJF's member registry and website are transitioning to a new platform in January 2026, and you will receive a member survey and post from the new site. Future newsletters will also be published in a new format. So, stay tuned for further information.

*Silvia Gaiani, NJF Secretary General.*

*Jarkko Niemi, President of NJF*



*NJF's board meeting in Riga, Latvia, in January 2025.*

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### MEMBER IN FOCUS: MATI KOPPEL, ESTONIA

Mati Koppel is currently a full professor of Plant Pathology at the Estonian University of Life Sciences.

He graduated from Tartu State University in Biology-Botany in 1984 and received a PhD in Plant Production from the Estonian Agricultural University in 1992. Between 1984 and 1999 he was a researcher at Jõgeva Plant Breeding Institute. Between 1999 and 2019 he was the director of Jõgeva Plant Breeding Institute/Estonian Crop Research Institute. Since 2020, he has been a researcher at the Estonian University of Life Sciences.

#### How long have you been a member of NJF?

I am member of NJF since 2004. Between 2004-2012 and 2012-2019 I was involved in the section of Plant Protection. Since 2021 I'm a board member of NJF.

#### What is the added value of being part of NJF?

NJF has widened my networking with other Baltic and Nordic countries. NJF's seminars and congresses are bringing together people from different research



areas creating a good possibility to make new contacts. Very important is that in addition to researchers, also advisors are involved in NJF activities. This enables to keep strong connection with the agricultural practice.

### **How do you see the future of agricultural science and NJF?**

Most important is that the agricultural sector in our region is needing studies and recommendations based on local practices and deep knowledge on local conditions. I think that NJF, as an organisation joining researchers from different agricultural disciplines, will play a vital role also in the future.

### **What makes you happy?**

Meeting old colleagues and friends at NJF events is always heartwarming.

[\[Link to online version\]](#)

Photo: Mati Koppel

among professional audiences. NJF's new LinkedIn account will be an active part of NJF's communications. We invite all members to follow us on LinkedIn and to propose topics for posts that may be of interest to the members. Please follow us at: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/109690139>

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## **UPCOMING CONFERENCES AND MEETINGS IN NORDIC-BALTIC COUNTRIES**

### **Participate as a speaker in NJF Economics working group's online conference**

The working group "economy" is organizing a monthly international multidisciplinary continuous on-line scientific conference entitled "Challengers of Economics, Education and Society Development in the Nordic – Baltic Countries and beyond".

Separate webinars of this conference take place at Microsoft Teams every first Wednesday of each month from 13:00 until 14:30 EET (from 12:00 until 13:30 CET). The schedule of each seminar includes two 15-20 minutes' presentations with possibility for 20 minutes' discussion after each of them.

Researchers and PhD and master's students from Nordic and Baltic countries and all over the world are invited to participate as speakers. Those who would like to participate as speakers are invited to prepare an abstract of their presentation and to register for participation at their most suitable date by fulfilling the registration form that is available here.

Title of presentation, name of speaker and co-author(s), annotation and keywords of presentation can be sent via email to Linas Stabingis ([linas.stabingis@gmail.com](mailto:linas.stabingis@gmail.com)), who is the coordinator of this activity.

The program of the upcoming seminars and other information about the conference is accessible at the NJF website



### **FOLLOW NJF AT LINKEDIN**

**NJF has initiated a new LinkedIn account for the association.**

LinkedIn is an important social media channel

### **Online on the first Wednesday of each month**



Picture: Pixabay / Alexandra Koch

## 28th NJF CONGRESS

14-16 October 2026, Tartu, Estonia

Save the date: 28th NJF CONGRESS, 14-16 October 2026, Tartu, Estonia

### Program at glance

- October 14: Plenary session, panel discussion, welcome reception
- October 15: Parallel sessions, study trips, conference dinner
- October 16: Parallel sessions, closing session

### Session topics

- Climate change
- Healthy feed and food
- Food security and supply security
- Agroecology and healthy soil
- Technology and innovation
- Animal farming
- Sustainable development
- Agri-food economics and policies

Call for abstracts will be announced in early 2026!



**"Organics as a response to the urgent need for resilient food systems" Nordic-Baltic scientific conference, 15-17th June 2026, Uppsala, Sweden**

NJF is one of the co-organizers of a Nordic-Baltic organic farming conference. The aim of the conference is to share and discuss recent research outcomes within organic food and farming and its societal interactions, related to the urgent topic of creating a more resilient food system. We welcome

researchers, stakeholders and policymakers to take active part in the discussions.

**Abstract submission is open!** Submit your abstract by the 1st of February 2026 via [conference website](#), where further information about the conference is available.



Nordic-Baltic scientific conference:

**'Organics as a response to the urgent need for resilient food systems'**

Uppsala, Sweden, 15-17 June 2026

**Conference pre-announcement: NJF will organize a conference on peat and peatlands in agriculture in April 2026.**

Topics will include alternatives to peat in agriculture (e.g. alternative bedding materials for livestock and growing media for greenhouses), rewetting peatlands, new insights on climate impacts of peatlands and their alternatives and policy issues and how a just transition away from peat can be implemented and what do farmers and other stakeholders think about it and what are its implications to agriculture?

Follow NJF's website for further information and abstracts submission.

### **NEW: NJF's ABSTRACTS COMPETITION FOR YOUNG SCIENTISTS**

NJF has launched an abstract competition for young scientists. Three best abstracts will receive diploma and a small prize. The best abstract will receive free participation to the NJF congress that will be held in Tartu, Estonia in October 2026.

The rules of the competition in brief:

- 1) The competition is intended for young scientists. A young scientist is a person who has defended his or her doctoral dissertation after the previous NJF conference, i.e. in September 2022 or thereafter.
- 2) Study that the submitted abstract is based on, must be part of doctoral dissertation of a young scientist. However, if the doctoral dissertation





consists of separately published scientific articles, the abstract can be related also to an article that published before September 2022.

3) At least one of the authors must member of NJF. If you are not yet member, please register as a member at: <https://nordicagriculture.eu/become-a-member/>

4) The evaluation of abstracts will be based on the following criteria:

- Relevance of the topic for Nordic-Baltic agricultural science society.
- Innovativeness, novelty value and originality of the research
- Scientific quality of the study
- Societal impact of the study.
- Clarity of presentation.

5) The abstract should include the following sections: introduction, objectives, material and methods, results, conclusion. The maximum length of the abstract is 6000 characters (excluding title, authors' names and affiliations).

[Please submit your abstract by the end of January 2026 via this online form.](#)

## PAST EVENTS

### Ką pasėsi... 2025

The Agricultural Academy of Vytautas Magnus awarded medals and diplomas. The exhibition was complemented by an educational program with more than 50 seminars and discussions on topics ranging from support measures for the agricultural sector to technological and social innovation. The next edition of the event has been announced: <https://expoacademia.lt/ka-pasesi?ln=en>.

### 1<sup>st</sup> NJF Nordic Baltic Symposium: Rural and agri-food sector viability, competitiveness and resilience, Seinäjoki, Finland, 15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> of September 2025

Agri-food sector and rural areas have a key role in ensuring a well-functioning society and in securing that everyone has access to high-quality affordable food, fiber and energy. In September NJF organized a workshop, that focused on the economic viability, resilience and crisis preparedness of Nordic-Baltic agri-food sector in turbulent times. The workshop gathered about 25 researchers and other expert to discuss about the topic from the Nordic-Baltic perspective.

The program included three invited talks from three countries, and several other interesting talks. The workshop pointed out that agriculture and rural areas in the Nordic and Baltic countries share similar challenges stemming from natural and market conditions, and that risk management, resilience and crisis preparedness is a topical issue with common interests in Nordic and Baltic countries.



### International Conference "Challenging Intersections: Securing Sustainable Food Systems in Turbulent Times", 26-28 of May 2025, University of Helsinki, Viikki Campus

This Nordic Baltic food systems conference and policy forum aimed to foster interaction between food system actors, to encourage thinking across disciplines and sectors and to seek solutions to systemic challenges. Conference proceedings are available at the [conference website](#).

**International Scientific Conference "Sustainable Horticulture from Plant to Product: Challenges in Temperate Climate – 2025", Riga, Latvia, 20-22 August 2025**



The event featured a series of presentations and excursions that explored a wide range of topics, including but not limited to innovations in breeding of horticultural crops, sustainable use of genetic resources, sustainable growing for climate change mitigation, soil and balancing of greenhouse gases, plant protection, post-harvest and food processing and precision horticulture and smart farming. The program and book of abstracts are available at the [conference website](#).



### NKJ CELEBRATED 60TH ANNIVERSARY

The Nordic Joint Committee for Agricultural and Food Research (NKJ) aims to strengthen research and innovation systems in the agriculture and food

sector in the Nordic countries.

NKJ was established in 1965 as a coordinating body for the research councils within the agricultural sector in Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Finland and Iceland. NKJ is linked to the national ministries responsible for agricultural and food research, the national research councils, the Nordic Council of Ministers and Nordic researchers within agriculture, forestry, food and fishery. NKJ celebrated 60 years anniversary of Nordic Agri Research collaboration in October 2025 with a jubileum seminar and an event organized in Alnarp, Sweden. Read more about 60 years of Nordic research collaboration [here](#).

### NKJ's OPEN CALL: Funding opportunity for agricultural and food researchers

NKJ welcomes applications for funding to boost Nordic collaboration and spark new ideas across disciplines. The call aims to strengthen Nordic cooperation and inspire new, cross-disciplinary collaborations.

Deadline for network applications is 31 January, 2026. Further information is available at NKJ's [website](#).

## OPEN CALL

Calling all researcher networks in food and agriculture!

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY FOR NORDIC RESEARCHERS



### WANTED: NEW MEMBERS IN DENMARK

NJF is currently looking for new members in Denmark who are interested in being involved in NJF's activities and playing a proactive role in Denmark. If you are interested in becoming a new member or if you know a colleague of yours who might be interested in this opportunity, kindly spread the word.

New members can contact NJF's President at [jarkko.niemi@luke.fi](mailto:jarkko.niemi@luke.fi)

### NEWS FROM ACTA AGRICULTURAE SCANDINAVICA

#### Recently published articles

[Acta Agriculturae Scandinavica, Section A — Animal Science](#)

[Acta Agriculturae Scandinavica, Section B — Soil & Plant Science](#)

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