

Collection Summary

ID Number: CS 378

Title: Longo Mai

Extent: 1 Folder(s)

Span Dates: 1980-1982

Language: English

Geographic Location: Various

Abstract: This collection consists of articles about the community.

Historical Notes: The network of European communities known as Longo Mai, which recently celebrated its 40th anniversary. Longo Mai, like so many communes of the era, sprang out of a widespread movement amongst soixante-huitards, the hippies and radical students and workers of the 1968 revolts, to create an alternative society by going back to the land. Two leftist groups, Spartakus based in Austria and Hydra in Switzerland, joined forces at a meeting in Basle in 1972, in which it was decided to found "European communities for young people" in rural areas suffering from depopulation. A year later the group acquired a farm at Limans, in Provence, where it now runs a larger farm incorporating three restored hamlets. The network currently comprises 10 co-operatives, five of them in France and the others in Germany, Austria, Switzerland, the Ukraine and Austria. Together they house and provide a livelihood for about 200 people. All of them are working farms, except for La Filature de Chantemerle, in the French Alps, a spinning mill which processes wool from the other communities and from neighboring farmers. Most of the farms produce a wide range of subsistence produce including cereals and livestock, and specialise in one or two cash crops, for example organic vegetables at the Mas de Granier, near Arles, wine at La Cabrery in the Luberon, timber and carpentry at Treynas in the Ardeche. What makes Longo Mai more remarkable is that it not only runs these farms, and achieves a high level of self-sufficiency, but also finds time to maintain full frontal political campaigns. Within a year of acquiring the first farm in 1973, activists at Longo Mai in Switzerland helped start the "Place Gratuite" movement which provided a welcome for some 2,000 refugees from Pinochet's coup d'état in Chile. More recently Longo Mai has spearheaded a campaign against the servile working conditions imposed on immigrant seasonal agricultural laborers in the European Union, notably Spain, and the ecological damage caused by industrial-scale production of fruit and vegetables. And residents of the various farms have been active in campaigns against, for example, seed protection, nuclear power, anti-microchipping of livestock (see pg. 11) and currently the proposed airport at Notre Dames des Landes near Nantes. Longo Mai also has its media outlets. The community at Limans operates a free radio station, Radio Zinzine, and mails out a weekly broadsheet called L'Ire des Chênaies (Oakgrove Rant) whose nearest equivalent in the United Kingdom is or rather was the Brighton-based newssheet, SchNews. Longo Mai also provides a base in France for the European Civic Forum, which publishes a monthly bulletin, Archipel, in French and German, but not in English. Although clearly on the anti-capitalist left, Longo Mai does not tow a party line, or subscribe to any rigid political viewpoint. There is no guru laying down a philosophical or religious orthodoxy, nor has there ever been. As one resident puts it, any tendency to dogmatism is checked by the practical requirements of living in a community. The agricultural and productive life of the collective is the framework in which its political views and its relations with the outside world are grounded. Unlike Voltaire's Pascal, the inhabitants of Longo Mai maintain that you can cultivate your garden and change the world and perhaps you must do one to achieve the other. **Sources:** [Longo Mai](#)

Selected Search Terms

Subjects: Communal living; Collective settlements; Housing, Cooperative; Collective farms; Commune; Collective farms; Libertarianism; Anarchism

Administrative Information

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Contents	Date	Container	Folder	Location
Communianity: A Translation Journal of the Communities Building Man's Future. Japan: International Communes Network. no. 56 (December 1982)	1982	Filing Cabinet	Folder 1	Filing Cabinet 15-A
Grinstead, Lesley, tr. "Too Longo." Undercurrents (June-July)	n.d.	Filing Cabinet	Folder 1	Filing Cabinet 15-A
Letter from John Noyce about the Community. (August 2, 1980)	1980	Filing Cabinet	Folder 1	Filing Cabinet 15-A