

## **New perspectives on Danish agriculture and its historical pasts**

**June 30, The Green Museum**

In recent years, agriculture has occupied a central place in public debates on environmental degradation and climate change. Forecasted to account for over 30% of climate gas emissions in 2030 and with recent discoveries of serious damage to aquatic environments, Danish farmers confront substantial challenges now and in the future, as they must tackle public criticism and demands for drastic reductions in cows and pigs, their two most important sources of income. However, Danish agriculture has not always been in bad standing. Up until the 1960s, Danish farmers used to make up and employ a significant part of the population, wield considerable social power through their organizations and political parties, and enjoy a strong cultural impact as centerpiece of a national imaginary.

Shifting historical contexts also influenced the historiography of Danish agriculture. For long, history-writing on Danish agriculture remained embedded in a celebratory narrative told by agriculture and its organizations and parties themselves. This narrative focused on the rise of farmers to economic prosperity and political importance from the late eighteenth century agrarian reforms to the height of rural culture in the 1950s. But in the 1960s and 1970s this historiography was challenged by new social histories focusing on the plight of cottagers and rural workers, as well as by Marxist political economic analysis of the transition to capitalism, while the rise of environmental history and gender studies only seemed to have a small if any impact on the field.

The point of departure for this workshop is that a new generation of students, scholars and researchers find themselves in a context that calls for new approaches to agricultural history and agricultural studies. Today's agricultural context is shaped by multiple ecological and climate crises, high-tech development, political transformations nationally and internationally, and fast changing economic conditions embedded in a global network of commodities, labor, and finance. Reconsidering Danish agriculture and its historical pasts has become imperative.

We invite newer generations of students, researchers and scholars from a variety of academic fields to present papers that explore new perspectives on and approaches to Danish agriculture, its history, present and future in a spirit of open and cross-disciplinary debate.

At least a week before the workshop, contributors should send a small paper of 5-6 pages that discusses a specific theme or perspective on Danish agriculture. Rather than providing feedback on a full paper, the purpose is to discuss and explore new approaches together. Reflections on differences to former historiography of and studies on Danish agriculture is encouraged. Depending on the number of contributors, each paper will have around 45 min.-1 hour for presentation and discussion. The one-day workshop will take place at The Green Museum, and if time allows, the sessions will be disrupted by breaks allowing for a short look at the museum's exhibitions. The Museum pays for coffee, cake, and lunch, but not for transport.