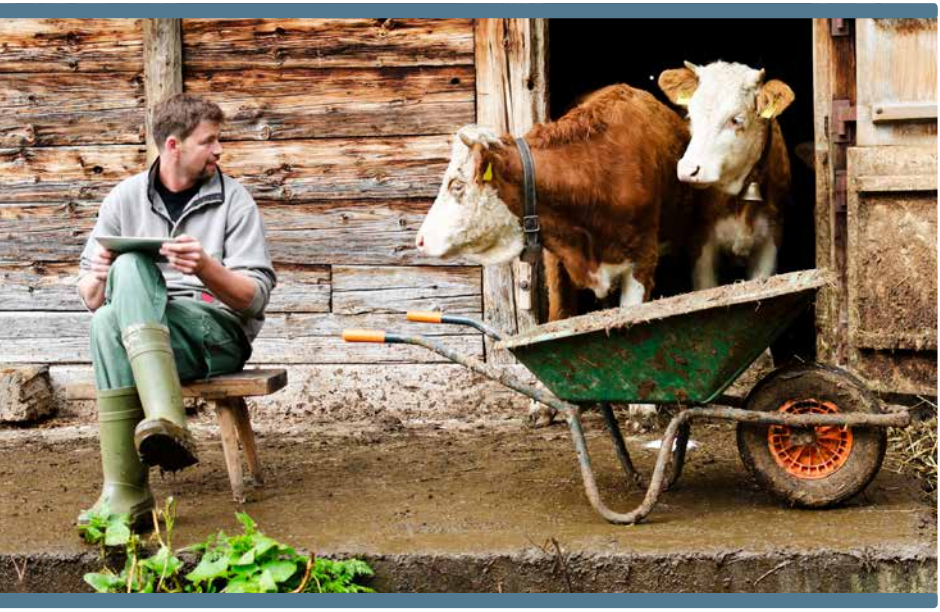
Bern University
of Applied Sciences



RISE – mutually sustainable

How can the sustainability of an agricultural operation be measured holistically? RISE is an instrument which farmer and extensionist can use to develop strategies for creating added value which benefits both the operation and society.

▸ School of Agricultural, Forest and Food Sciences HAFL

Supporting agricultural operations in their development

What is RISE?

An agricultural operation is sustainable if it is sufficiently profitable, environmentally friendly and offers good living conditions to those who work and live on the farm. With RISE (Response-Inducing Sustainability Evaluation), Bern University of Applied Sciences BFH has developed a method for agricultural education and extension with which the sustainability of agricultural operations can be measured holistically and, together with the farmer, improved. The goal is always to support the operations in their development, to build knowledge and to foster cooperation.

The RISE software has been tested around the world, is available in seven languages and can be used both on- and off-line. RISE is also a research, consultancy and educational programme at BFH.

How does RISE work?

The evaluation is based on ten topics with 46 indicators reflecting the ecological, economic and social aspects of the operation. The most important data source is a discussion with the farmer.

The evaluated data is presented in a radar chart and serves as the basis for the feedback discussion during which the RISE-trained extensionist demonstrates the operation's potential and makes concrete suggestions. Significantly, RISE is not used to monitor production standards but allows trends and developments to be analysed on individual farms or across a whole region.

Why RISE?

RISE is part of Bern University of Applied Sciences and has an international network. The team of scientists at RISE has 17 years' experience in sustainability analysis, monitoring, training and consultancy. The RISE specialists were inter alia involved in drawing up the guidelines for sustainability analysis in the agriculture and food industries (the SAFA Guidelines) for the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). So far, more than 3,300 agricultural operations in 57 countries have been evaluated using RISE.

RISE is continuously being improved and can be used for analysis, the development of various scenarios or statistical evaluation.

Improving sustainability – nationally and internationally: a HAFL specialist in conversation with a milk producer in Mexico

Where is RISE used?

Education and extension

Both students and extensionists use RISE and contribute to the development of the method. For example, more than 70 pieces of assessed coursework, including numerous BSc and MSc theses, have been written on the subject of RISE. Advisory organisations and companies such as the Research Institute of Organic Agriculture FiBL, SEGES (Denmark) or Bioland-Beratung (Germany) use the instrument for organic and conventional farming.

Research and development

The RISE experts at Bern University of Applied Sciences continuously develop the method in joint projects with other research institutions, development organisations, foundations, etc. The universities of Aarhus, Hohenheim, Rhein-Waal and ESALQ (Brazil), FiBL, ZHAW, the Gebert Rüf Stiftung, the Swiss Federal Office for Agriculture and the German development organisation GIZ are just some of the members of the RISE network.

Sustainable purchasing

Food companies such as Nestlé or Danone use RISE to identify possible risks and, where necessary, to support their suppliers in the area of sustainability.

What we offer

- RISE 3.0 software usable both on- and off-line. Automatic access to updates and new functions. Secure data storage.
- Training and support of RISE users.
- Consultancy: conducting evaluations of operations, comprehensive sustainability reports, development of learning and collaboration platforms.

Further information

RISE 3.0 is accessible at www.farmrise.ch, where you can log in as a guest and test the software.

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