

Preface

Capital increase creates new opportunities

Dear Sir or Madam,

Last year, the non-profit Claas-Stiftung celebrated its 25th birthday. At the time of its establishment, it was the first foundation of its kind with a focus on promoting young talent in the field of agricultural technology.

The Claas-Stiftung maintains a lively network with schools, universities and other educational institutions in Germany and abroad, promoting projects and collaborations. Around 500 prizewinners have received awards to date and a total of more than 2.5 million euros in funding has been awarded since the foundation was established.

In its anniversary year, the company CLAAS set a significant milestone in the financial endowment of the Claas-Stiftung. We are delighted to have received the largest donation to the capital stock since the foundation was established, bringing the foundation's assets to almost 20 million euros. This 40 percent increase will enable us to further expand our scope and activities. And since agricultural technology is a global topic, we have a particular focus on internationality. We are delighted to now be able to play an even greater role in transnational projects and facilitate exchanges between universities, colleges and their students from as many countries as possible. We will keep you up to date on developments. But first, in this issue of our newsletter, you can read about what has moved us in the anniversary year 2024.

With warmest regards,

Sylvia Looks Frank Klüsener

Claas-Stiftung Executive Board



A 25-year-old plane tree was planted to mark the foundation's birthday on 28.05.2024.

25 years of the Claas-Stiftung

Looking back on the anniversary year

The Claas-Stiftung was established under the patronage of Helmut Claas in 1999. "It has developed steadily over the past 25 years," says Cathrina Claas-Mühlhäuser, Chair of the Board of Trustees. "With its diverse initiatives, it supports research in agriculture and agricultural technology and makes the possibilities and prospects of modern agricultural technology tangible - especially for the younger generation, but also for the general public. This was a matter close to my father's heart and is still close to mine today."

In the anniversary year, outstanding theses from the departments of Agricultural Sciences and Engineering were once again awarded scholarships and other prizes. In this special year, the award ceremony took place in an appropriately festive setting. Among others, guest of honor Professor Giovanni Molari, Rector of the University of Bologna (Italy), discussed the importance of transferring science into practice and the future challenges of agriculture in his speech. In this context, he emphasized the importance of the interaction between universities and foundations.

The young talents then received their awards after the winners of the four main prizes had presented their theses to the audience in short talks. Prizes with a total value of around 75,000 euros were awarded. The awards were presented by Cathrina Claas-Mühlhäuser. In her speech, she spoke in advance about the role of the Claas-Stiftung in connection with the current global challenges: "The promotion of education, science and research is the mission of the foundation, but conditions have changed in the past 25 years, and they continue to change."



Keynote speaker Giovanni Molari.



Board of Trustees, jury and award winners together with representatives of the universities.

Today, agriculture is facing major challenges such as climate change and a shortage of skilled workers. With its various initiatives, the foundation is helping to support students, fund research projects and get schoolchildren interested in agricultural and technical topics." The next award ceremony will take place on 26.11.2025.

Video of the award ceremony



Cathrina Claas-Mühlhäuser presented the first prize of the Helmut Claas Scholarship to Ferdinand Andreas Orth.

Alumni celebrate reunion

To mark its 25th anniversary, the Claas-Stiftung invited former award winners to an alumni reunion. The guests from Germany, Great Britain and Italy came together in the historic CLAAS machine depot in Herzebrock to meet up again after many years. Another alumni reunion is to take place at Agritechnica 2025.

Further information, photos and moving images relating to the 25th anniversary of the Claas-Stiftung and details of the 2025 anniversary competition can be found on the Claas-Stiftung anniversary pages.



The alumni meeting in the historic CLAAS machine depot in Herzebrock-Clarholz.



The teams of the Field Robot competition shortly before the start.

21st Field Robot Event

Twelve teams from all over Europe - two joint winners in the end

The 21st edition of the international Field Robot Event took place in Erwitte in summer 2024. Various tasks in five challenging disciplines awaited the more than 100 participants.

Instead of GPS navigation, which was not permitted this time, the teams relied on 3D cameras and laser scanners to navigate their robots through a maize field in the first discipline. In the second discipline, the task was to determine the exact number of maize plants, with both accuracy and time being crucial.

In the third discipline, the robots were sent to a meadow surrounded by bales of straw, where they had to recognize weeds and determine their position. This was followed by the fourth discipline, in which the robots had to remove the weeds. Here, the teams had the opportunity to develop and apply creative methods for weed control.

The competition concluded with the freestyle task, in which the teams had to formulate an agricultural task themselves and present it to the jury. This task was assessed in terms of its agricultural relevance, complexity, implementation and presentation.

At the award ceremony, Hubertus Paetow, President of the DLG, Professor Dr Burkhard Wrenger from the OWL University of Applied Sciences, Professor Dr Stefan Stiene from Osnabrück University of Applied Sciences and Robert Everwand from Agrotech Valley Forum e.V. presented the trophies and certificates. Professor Dr Stiene was impressed by the achievements of the participating teams and emphasized the importance of the progress shown for the future development of agricultural machinery.

This year, two teams shared the overall victory in the end: the Technical University of Braunschweig and the Schülerforschungszentrum Südwürttemberg. Both teams impressed with their outstanding performance and innovative approaches in the various competition disciplines. The next Field Robot Event will take place in Milan (Italy) in 2025.

Mini robot competition

School teams turn the corner

After the teachers had first familiarized themselves with the mini robots, the mBots2, in a training course six months earlier, the focus was on the student teams in June 2024.

Four schools from the districts of Warendorf and Gütersloh were represented to put their programming skills to the test. A total of 10 teams of pupils competed against each other and first had to "turn the corner" in order to be able to "count peas" afterwards. Another exciting competition task awaited them after a hearty snack: "Attention obstacle!"

All the tasks could only be solved by programming the small robots correctly. This was the only way they could drive on a black line, recognize obstacles and come to a stop in the right places. Another exciting and new aspect for many was that there are different (programming) paths to reach the destination.

Over the past five years, the Claas-Stiftung has equipped a total of twelve schools in the districts of Warendorf and Gütersloh with mBot2 kits. The mBot2 is an important component of project-oriented learning, which is increasingly being implemented in schools.

This year's competition was organized by Malte Schön's team from the Technical Education Centre in Harsewinkel. The team was supported on site by Dr Sergej Stoetzer from Makeblock Education, who knows all the tricks of the trade and was therefore able to provide the participants with excellent support.



The lesson for all participants: The mBot2 can only find its way with the right programming.

News in brief

+++ The new Deputy Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Claas-Stiftung since June 2024 is Dr Thomas Barrelmeyer, responsible for the global development of self-propelled harvesters at CLAAS. Dr Hermann Garbers took his well-deserved retirement after almost 25 years on the Board of Trustees of the Claas-Stiftung.



+++ Mechthilde Becker-Weigel, editor-in-chief of Bauernblatt Schleswig-Holstein, is a new member of the Helmut Claas Scholarship jury. She succeeds Dr Angela Werner in this function.



+++ Anniversary competition "Transformation in Agriculture": On the occasion of its 25th anniversary, the Claas-Stiftung is offering prizes with a total value of max. 75,000 euros to sustainably honor the activities of the Claas-Stiftung. The closing date for applications is 21.02.2025.

You can find all the details under Claas-Stiftung - Anniversary Competition.



+++ Sponsoring activities at elementary school in the Bad Saulgau region: The Claas-Stiftung covers the costs of the children's magazine MATSCH! published by Landwirtschaftsverlag for one year. The magazine can be used in lessons and gives children an unbiased understanding of modern agriculture, environmental and nature conservation, animal welfare and animal protection. It also explains in a child-friendly way how food is produced and the importance of healthy eating.

+++ Foundation network: 27 foundations in the Osnabrück region have set themselves the goal of improving the flow of information among each other, implementing common goals more effectively in cooperation, achieving financial, personnel and informal synergy effects, learning from each other and sensitizing the general public to socially relevant topics. The Claas-Stiftung has also been part of the network since 2018 in order to jointly implement agricultural technology and STEM topics within the network.