Participatory approaches offer scientists, advisors and growers a space for dialogue.

An initiative in this context in Sweden is the project *Plant nutrient utilisation in organic tomato production*. 

**Birgitta Båth**

Department of Crop Production Ecology, SLU, Uppsala, Sweden

**Elisabeth Ögren**

Swedish Board of Agriculture, Uppsala, Sweden
Leafy plants in the beginning of the season created problems with delayed harvest and nutrient deficiencies. And there was a great interest in testing plant grafting but this technique increased the problem with leafy plants.

The aim of the project was to:

• restrain growth of grafted plants in the early part of the season through manipulating the fertilisation regime

• match fertilisation and crop requirements at different growth stages, level of yield and local conditions

• avoid soil nutrient imbalances developing
During the project, yield of tomatoes increased by 49% on average.

An on farm project based on soil and plant analyses was conducted. For fertiliser planning the group developed a ‘help tool’ – a computer-based programme.

There was also an increase in nutrient use efficiency.
An inventory of heavy metals in soils and plants was performed.

The inventory did not confirm the fear that heavy metal concentrations are high in organic greenhouse soils.

Neither was the EU limits for human consumption exceeded in any case.
When the group celebrated its 10th birthday, each member was asked to state in one word what the group and its work meant.

The responses were: Solidarity, Enjoyment, Knowledge, Development, Fellowship, Re.thinking, Rewarding. Inspiration, Co.learning, Privilege.