



The role of the Royal Swedish Academy of Agriculture and Forestry is, with the support of science and practical experience, to promote agriculture and forestry and related activities, for the benefit of society. The Academy was founded in 1811 at the initiative of Karl XIV Johan and started its work on 28 January 1813.

The Academy's 214th Commemorative Meeting

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Academy President Inger Andersson

The Commemorative Meeting of the Royal Swedish Academy of Agriculture and Forestry (KSLA), January 28, 2026

The 2026 Ceremonial Meeting

Your Majesty

Your Excellency

Honorary Fellows

New Fellows

Laureates

Honoured Guests

I hereby declare the 214th ceremonial meeting of the Swedish Academy of Agriculture and Forestry open.

It is my very great pleasure to extend a warm welcome to all of you. We are also extremely grateful that Your Majesty is able to be present here today.

It is now one year since our last ceremonial meeting – a year in which we have witnessed important advances within our industries, while at the same time a dark and unsettled situation has continued to prevail in parts of the world around us.

Russia's invasion of Ukraine continues unabated and our hopes for an end to the war rest on flimsy foundations. It is our most earnest hope that the violence soon comes to an end and that a sustainable peace can be achieved.

We also see a number of international trade agreements under threat, with the serious consequences that may entail.

But we should not allow ourselves to be distracted solely by the darkness – we can also find joy in the many positive global developments, such as:

- extreme poverty in the world has receded in recent decades, although the pace is unfortunately slowing
- access to renewable energy is growing rapidly and now accounts for a significant portion of the world's electricity production
- the ozone layer is continuing to recover – a development that is crucial to our health, to the natural world and to future generations

And what is happening within the KSLA?

Later on, the Academy Secretary, Peter Normark, will present significant initiatives from the last year where the KSLA has contributed in various ways.

But first I would like to share a number of thoughts arising from the strategic framework concerning the work to be done in 2026.

Preparedness and sustainability

Security of supply will continue to be one of the most important areas for the KSLA's focus. Research suggests the importance of combining security of supply and sustainability, in environmental, social and economic terms, in the development of food supply.

An important question is therefore:

How can security of supply and sustainability be combined to create systems that are robust and sustainable in the long term?

The KSLA's ongoing work will focus on these very synergies, both for food supply and within forestry.

Preparedness and future source materials

It is important to preserve for the future experiences that are of importance to society. We do this by preserving narratives and knowledge in order to create source material that makes it possible for future generations to understand and learn how society responded in times of difficulty.

The KSLA recently released the book "Beredskap är det nya gröna" [Preparedness is the New Green], as a contribution to this important preservation work.

The Baltic and fisheries – a new area of focus

A recently created committee for Fisheries and management will work on creating the basis for sustainable models for the exploitation of aquatic resources in the Baltic and in the near North Sea region.

One of the stated aims is to strengthen the shared knowledge base between Sweden and Finland as part of the EU's common fisheries policy, with a particular focus on the Baltic herring.

Work will start with the Gulf of Bothnia together with its catchment area, where herring stocks have fallen by a half over the last ten years.

Involvement in the EU's regulatory and constitutional development otherwise features in most other KSLA activities.

Skills supply and AI

The green sector is currently one of the most technology-intensive sectors in Sweden. Digital decision-making support is widely used in, for example, silviculture, precision cultivation in the agricultural sector and the processing of plant material

This raises a number of important questions:

- What skills will the workforce of the future need to acquire?
- How can relevant training be ensured?

With regard to AI, the KSLA is focussing on collecting knowledge and conducting a dialogue on its importance within the land-based industries. A series of seminars is to be planned for 2026.

The value of evidence-based decision-making

With scientific knowledge now being questioned with increasing frequency and a tendency for simplified thinking to dominate the social debate, we as an academy have a particular responsibility.

Many of the big questions of our time concern the land-based industries, and they are often characterised by contradictory interests. It is precisely for this reason that research results have a strong and clear role to play in decision-making processes.

The KSLA will now embark on the broad implementation of a model for evidence-based decision-making as part of its work.

The great importance of the Fellows for our activities

When we look ahead to the future, we do so with the same insight that has underpinned the Academy since its foundation in 1813, specifically;

Managing forests, soil and water is managing the future.

It requires courage

It requires knowledge

And it requires a long-term approach — something which our fellows consistently demonstrate.

I wish to express the Academy's warm thanks to the three Fellows who are now stepping down from their four-year positions as section chairs:

- The chair of the Agriculture Section, Bengt-Olov Gunnarsson, who is being succeeded by Jan Rundqvist
- The chair of the Forestry Section, Lotta Möller, who is being succeeded by Mårten Larsson
- The chair of the General Section, Eva Thörnelöf, who is being succeeded by Margareta Stigson

You deserve our profound and warm thanks for your significant and important efforts.

At the same time I would like to warmly welcome your successors as section chairs, and I look forward to working with you all going ahead.

I would also like to thank all the Fellows for your commitment and your important contributions, and to extend a warm welcome to our newly elected Fellows from Sweden and abroad.

And finally: a big thank you to the staff of the administrative office for your invaluable efforts.

May we be an Academy that:

- stands firm when the debate rages
- counters simplification with facts and knowledge
- brings together important sectors of society
- and always gives expression to the long-term approach — regardless of transient trends

Inger Andersson



Academy Secretary Peter Normark

The Commemorative Meeting of the Royal Swedish Academy of Agriculture and Forestry (KSLA), January 28, 2026

The KSLA – We Make a Difference

Your Majesty

Your Excellency

Honorary Fellows

New Fellows

Laureates

Distinguished Guests

A warm welcome to this year's Ceremonial Meeting! We are highly appreciative of the fact that Your Majesty is able to be present here today.

This year we have chosen developments within our sector as the focus of this Ceremonial Meeting. We can see significant progress in a number of areas, and it is the work done within the KSLA that is helping to make a difference. Our position as an independent and membership-based arena and forum plays an important role for our sector.

The world at large and the land-based industries

Developments in the world at large mean that we continue to be faced with major challenges, both for society as a whole and for our sector. Geopolitics, with war continuing to cause suffering in many parts of the world, and resulting in threatening scenarios that represent a risk to both human life and to companies. Efforts being made in terms of the climate and biological diversity are still not sufficient for reversing the current development.

Simultaneously we are living in a time when the land-based value chains must overcome expectations concerning not only growth, innovation and entrepreneurship, but also sustainability in terms of the climate and biological diversity.

Over the course of a year that has been characterised by globally difficult developments, it seems appropriate to point out that, despite everything, we do nevertheless see some positive steps.

- Strong growth and profitability in agriculture, though with some variation between different branches
- Discussions, analyses and investigations with respect to security of supply are now leading towards a practical workshop
- A significantly increased interest in our sector among decision-makers at various levels. An increasing awareness of the importance of our sector

The KSLA

For the KSLA, 2025 has been a year of important completed deliveries. With these, we have provided decision-makers in companies and in society with a significant knowledge basis relating to important issues. The KSLA's activities are based on fantastic efforts by our fellows, and this year you have been energetic and proactive in a great many areas. We would also like to welcome our new Fellows into our circle, and we look forward to witnessing your future efforts.

There is now an updated food strategy in place for Sweden – one that also contains specific targets for important branches within the food sector. The KSLA has made a significant contribution to the government. On the same subject, our committee for the Cultivation System of Tomorrow has had a firm, concrete and innovative focus in its work of combining growth with a reduced climate footprint and improved biodiversity, and it has now summarised its conclusions in a practical handbook.

The KSLA has conducted a comprehensive programme in the area of Security of Supply. We can see here that important decisions that strengthen our preparedness are now being taken at societal and corporate levels. This concerns primarily agriculture and the food value chain, and here, the KSLA has contributed by coming up with a proposal for action that is published in one of the programme's reports. An in-depth analysis was conducted of our important value chains, especially in the livestock sector. The programme has also resulted in an historic anthology that clarifies important lessons for the future – a work of some urgency completed in only a short time. Another important element of preparedness work is represented by issues around contagion prevention. Here, the KSLA's committee has completed its work during a time marked by major outbreaks of disease, during which we have worked together with the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences to identify the need for supportive measures.

The programme has also highlighted forests as an important preparedness sector. The KSLA has been quick off the mark in identifying the importance of forests in the context of preparedness – a conclusion that is now beginning to gain traction both at corporate and societal levels.

A wide-ranging national forest survey was conducted during the year, with the KSLA having contributed by functioning as a forum for dialogue and input. It is particularly gratifying that the KSLA's committee on Evidence for the Use of Forests has been able to contribute important methodology for assessing decisions, management methods and practice in the forestry sector. Much of this methodology has been derived basically from the medical field. The committee for biological diversity has now also completed its work focussing on measuring and methods, which now allows continued, more specific work and dialogue on this issue.

The land and water committee has worked within a broad framework. Of particular urgency has been the work of assessing and extending the protection of arable land as a national land resource that is essential for food production.

In the course of the year, the KSLA has conducted extensive advocacy efforts based on work done in committees and working groups. The restoration of the natural environment affects the land-based industries in various areas. Here, we have been active in five different dialogue groups, and contributed our knowledge to those authorities that are active on this issue. The work was concluded with a seminar, here at the KSLA.

We have, on the whole, been proactive in making the knowledge that we have refined available to decision-makers on various issues. This is particularly the case with restoration of the natural environment, security of supply, European agricultural policy and strategic questions in relation to forestry. In addition to input made at an early stage of a political decision-making process, we have also played an active role in responding to no less than 15 referrals in the course of the year. One of the most long-lasting initiatives has been in the Plant Node, where we are now about to arrive at political decisions at European level on the New Genomic Technologies.

Overall, we look back on 2025 as a year of delivering on a large scale, while our reports, seminars and input have also helped to make a difference for the development of our sector.

Looking ahead

Our aim is to continue to function as a bridge between the development of knowledge based on science or experience on the one hand, and practical solutions to the challenges of the land-based industries on the other hand. We look forward to continuing with this work – work that will benefit the sector and entrepreneurs, interested parties, and decision-makers at various levels.

We are now continuing our efforts with a number of new committees and working groups: fisheries management, forestry production in a changing climate, forestry operations management systems, the future of primary production, historical projects, security of supply and AI. This is also the case in our committees on global and European issues, research and youth issues

In order for all of this to work, we also have our administrative office, which both supports us and spurs us on in the issues with which we are concerned. We have achieved great things in 2025. We would also like to express our warm thanks for donations both past and present, which make our work possible, in addition to financing the prizes that we have just awarded.

I would like to conclude by reflecting on an intensive year of activity, and by welcoming future challenges for the land-based industries. We see our role as one that will continue to be just as important in the year ahead.

Thank you all for your kind attention.

Peter Normark



Principal Speech, Robin Teigland

The Commemorative Meeting of the Royal Swedish Academy of Agriculture and Forestry (KSLA), January 28, 2026

Dare to Make a Difference — Let's Create a Sustainable Future Together

Your Majesty

Your Excellency

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Today's headlines are filled with climate change, war and geopolitical tensions, polarization, job losses, and a growing loneliness epidemic — and yet, I believe there is reason to be hopeful about the future.

Not because the challenges are small.
But because the future is shaped in a very different place than the headlines suggest.

The future is shaped in our everyday decisions.
In our everyday actions — even the smallest ones.

The future is not something that simply happens to us.
It is something that we create — every day.

And yet there are many possible futures – both ones we would be proud to hand to the next generation, and ones we would rather not.

Which one becomes real depends on the collaborations we forge, the organizations we build, and the trust we create.

For most of my career, I have worked in academia. Teaching and supervising. Chasing publications in top journals. Competing for ever-larger research grants.

But a few years ago, I realized something uncomfortable.
Staying only within the boundaries of what academia rewards was not allowing me to help create the future that I truly cared about.

A future for the next generation — for children like my son Sander, who is here in the audience today.

A future for those who will live much longer with the consequences of our choices than we will.

Stepping outside these boundaries, however, has been — and still is — difficult. It is often misunderstood. And sometimes even actively discouraged.

But I wanted to explore what would happen if we took research out of papers and into real communities.

That choice led me to Peniche, Portugal — a small coastal town just north of Lisbon.

Peniche is a fishing community.
For generations, people have lived from — and with — the sea.

It was once one of Europe's richest fishing ports,
with most jobs tied to fisheries and fish processing.

Today, like many coastal and rural towns across the globe — including here in Sweden — Peniche faces a different reality:
declining competitiveness, young people leaving for the cities,
and a community struggling to hold on to its identity and purpose.

In one possible future, Peniche slowly becomes a seasonal tourist backdrop,
its fishing heritage reduced to decoration and memory.

In another future, that heritage becomes the foundation for new jobs, new skills, and a renewed sense of pride.

It was against this backdrop that we decided to act.

So together with my other son TG and my partner Jon Erik, we created the Peniche Ocean Watch Initiative in 2018, and we asked a different kind of question.

Not: How do we manage waste and clean up the ocean?
But: What if we see waste as a trapped resource — a new source of value for the community?

What if we could, together with the locals, develop a pilot model
for a circular economy with the help of digital technologies,
rooted in community, dignity, and learning?

For me, that question became very concrete. I wanted to see whether worn-out fishing nets — essential tools at the heart of this community that ended up as waste piling up in ports or discarded at sea — could become something useful again.

My dream was simple — to 3D print a boat from fishing nets.
But many people, from Portugal to Sweden, told us this was impossible.

They said we would never be able to 3D print anything meaningful from recycled fishing nets — and certainly not something as large as a boat.

But after a few years of collaboration and hard work —
across geographical, disciplinary, and sectoral boundaries —
along with some project funding from Vinnova and Produktion2030,
we did just that.

And it wasn't just any boat.

It was a traditional rowboat from 1896 — a boat no longer in production due to globalization, standardization, and the never-ending pursuit of efficiency and economies of scale.

One Friday afternoon last spring, our project partner Woodrow Wiest at RISE downloaded a rowboat design from Sweden's digital archive -- and converted it into a digital file for a large-scale industrial 3D printer robot.

He pressed the start button — and sixteen hours later, the 1896 boat was brought back to life as the first boat ever to be 3D printed from recycled fishing nets.
And yes — it even floats.

This experience taught me that the future does not have to erase tradition.
Indeed, it can revitalize it.

But the most important part of our journey has not been the technology.
It is what digital technology makes possible.
A waste stream became a secondary raw material.
A problem became a source of pride.

Through our work at Peniche Ocean Watch, jobs have been created —
including for people often excluded from the labor market.

People are learning new skills —
with their hands, their heads, and their hearts.

I think of Ricardo from Cercipeniche — a social organization for people with disabilities —
and the smile on his face when he signed his first employment contract at the age of 36.

He now sorts and cleans used fishing nets with extraordinary care and pride.
Nets are not waste to him.
They are meaningful work.

I think of Vitólina, the bus driver,
who makes sure the Cercipeniche team arrives at our facility.
Without her, this system does not work.

And I think of Vítor, who runs the local polytechnic school —
where our large-scale 3D printer now stands —
giving young people access to skills and a future that did not exist a generation ago.

And that future is not abstract to me. My daughter, Karoline, now operates a large-scale industrial 3D printer robot at Brandworks here in Stockholm— something she never would have imagined before our work in Peniche.

So while Peniche Ocean Watch is a community initiative — it is much more than that.
It has become a platform.

A platform for experimenting with and co-creating a sustainable and resilient future, a platform that has inspired many other innovation projects across Europe and even in Hawaii.

It is also a platform for a new way of conducting research. Instead of studying a phenomenon only after it has already happened, we work with communities to create the phenomenon — and then learn from it together.

We call this activist engagement: a way of doing research in which action, learning, knowledge creation, and impact are inseparable.

Not activism instead of rigor,
but rigor through responsibility —
because reality is a much harder reviewer than any journal.

Of course, this has not been a rosy story. Trust has been tested — and sometimes broken — by people we believed shared our vision and values.

This was hurtful, and at times even made me question human nature. But it also reinforced something fundamental: trust is fragile — and without it, nothing transformative can be built or sustained. Trust does not return through words. It returns only through consistent and persistent action. And for the sake of the next generation, giving up is simply not an option.

Looking back, a clear pattern has emerged — from Peniche and also my other community experiences here in Sweden, from Lysekil and Brastad to Hofors and Skellefteå.

Wherever trust is strong and communities are resilient, three things need to be present: caring, competence, and collaboration.

First: caring.

Not caring as words or intentions,
but caring expressed through action, grounded in consistent values. Caring means asking not only,
How do we protect our land and our seas?
but also,
How do we ensure meaningful work, dignity, and belonging for our towns, our farmers, our fishers, and our foresters in twenty years' time and beyond?

Second: competence.

Not only deep expertise within one's own field,
but the ability to see systems and connect knowledge across boundaries - understanding how land and sea, technology and regulation, business models and human behavior fit together —

And then also having the ability to put that understanding into action. So that we can redesign entire value chains and ways of working, not just individual products or services.

And third: collaboration.

True collaboration requires a shared vision and shared values — across boundaries. Collaboration must be both local and international:

fishers and farmers, social enterprises, civil society and schools, public sector, industry and universities — across Sweden and across Europe —
all committed to keeping communities alive and ecosystems healthy.

In Swedish we say, “lika barn leka bäst” —
in English, “birds of a feather flock together.”

But olika barn can play even better together.
They can invent new games.

Meaningful innovation rarely comes from people working only with others like themselves.
It comes from complementarity — from building networks with others who are not like ourselves.

From people stepping into the spaces between disciplines, sectors, countries, and perspectives.

Those spaces are uncomfortable.
They are rarely rewarded.
But that is exactly where a sustainable future is shaped.

As we look forward, what we learned in Peniche turns out not to be unique — it is a preview.
The same design question now confronts not only Sweden, but the rest of the world:

Will AI hollow out work and communities — or can we design AI to strengthen them?
AI is fundamentally reshaping many of the jobs we know.
The new AI agent economy means that knowledge-intensive tasks are being transformed —
or disappearing — from technical craftsmanship to analysis, planning, and decision-making.
And as humanoids and smart robots combine AI agents with physical capability, not only
will desk work change, but the tasks that once required hands, feet, and presence will also
change.

The danger with this is not only lost employment;
it is that we lose the human skills, judgment, and relationships that machines cannot replace.
That is why the competence we choose to build in Sweden — and in Europe — is so crucial.
If we fail to understand both technology and its social context, we risk scaling
misunderstandings instead of solutions — faster, bigger, and at much higher cost.

We also risk becoming an import country for intelligence, where value is created and taxed
elsewhere.

So today, we must build our own capacity to shape how AI creates value in society.
Engineers who not only master algorithms,
but who also understand law, ethics, business models, and social context.
Social scientists who not only understand institutions,
but also data, models, and AI.

And, above all, people who can work together across these boundaries — integrators, not
“code machines”.

We should not try to copy Silicon Valley’s model — entering a Formula 1 race we cannot
and should not win.
We should do something different.

We should build on what we already do well —
education that links technology and society; strong public institutions; high social trust; and a
long tradition of pragmatic sustainability — and make this fundamental to our AI strategy.

If we do that, Sweden can become a place where AI creates meaningful work in real life —
in forestry and farming, fisheries and food systems, healthcare and welfare, cities and rural
communities.

Yet one challenge remains.
We all believe in science.
And rightly so.

But around the world, we see that knowledge and wisdom alone are no longer enough to
create a sustainable future.

The bottleneck is not only what we know —
it is whether people trust the institutions and the individuals who carry that knowledge.
And that means the future does not depend only on policies or technologies, but on how each
of us chooses to act.

So my invitation to you today is simple.
Dare to make a difference.
Not through grand statements.
Not some day.
But today — through your everyday decisions.
Who you choose to work with.
Whose voices you invite in.

Which kinds of competence and collaboration you choose to reward.
Because when individuals act with courage and connect,
they become a shared force for positive change.

And when we build on Sweden's and Europe's strengths —
our knowledge, our diversity, our traditions of cooperation —
we will not have to join Silicon Valley's Formula 1 race.

Rather, as my colleague Pär Agerfalk put it, we can drive our own "Swedish rally",
with a map that matches our terrain, with skilled map readers as well as drivers —
and with a clear sense of direction using AI and digitalization as forces for sustainable
development - not just as expensive technology experiments.

So that our speed is not just motion but real progress towards a future we will be proud of.
So in closing, let me ask you one final question:
Who creates the future?
Yes — we all do.

The future will not be decided by the words we say, but by our everyday actions.

Dare to make a difference — together.

Thank you.

Robin Teigland