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RESOURCE [ENG]

For students and employees of Wageningen UR

no 6 – 29 October 2015 – 10th Volume



**INTERNATIONAL
EDITION**

Lavishing praise

Review committees generous with 'excellent' | p.12

2 > labour of love

>> AB + VINYL

Ab de Leeuw, archive manager at Facilities & Services

'You have to be quick, otherwise they are gone'

He has 6000 of them in his hobby room and the cellar. Oh, and another 3000 doubles in the bedroom. LPs collected since his teens. 'I especially love psychedelic music from the years 1965-1975,' explains Ab de Leeuw. So why LPs? Because of the sound of course, and the beautiful sleeves. Call it romantic if you like. And there is no end to it. 'There is so much music you have never heard.' Which is why he gets up early at weekends for yet another jumble sale.

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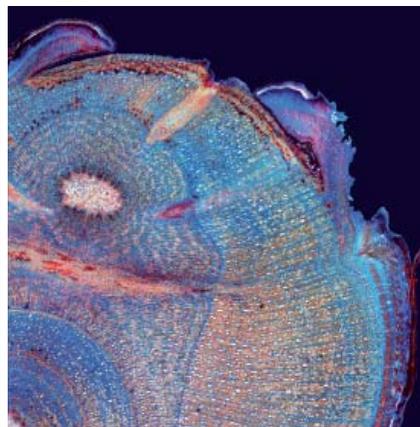
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TIMBUKTU RANKING

On Radio1 today I heard a boss at Nuon defend his company because it is at the bottom of the list of environmentally friendly energy providers.

Lists, lists, lists. How empty life would be without them. The magazine that lies before you is full of them. A new list lands on our desks every week. A Shanghai index or a Timbuktu ranking. Three weeks ago we should really have run hotfoot to the newsagent to buy a copy of *Trouw* with its Sustainable 100. All nonsense of course. Most rankings are just a marketing ploy. Nice to read, but above all a way of selling newspapers.

Take *Trouw's* list. What is it based on actually? Louise Fresco doesn't understand it either. She has gone down 35 places since she became our president, although her ideas haven't changed at all. Luckily, *Opzij* magazine has a list too, which names Fresco as the most powerful woman in science. Institutes, companies, journalists and politicians go through these lists, picking out the results that suit them. It's one way of keeping each other busy. And of taking each other for a ride.

Never mind, we'll soon be reading about where we can buy the best *oliebol*. Yummy!

Edwin van Laar



>> Studying on tick? Nothing to be afraid of! | p.24

AGRIFOOD TRAIN TO CHINA

- Goods train often returns to China empty
- Transport of food and flowers possible

It is quite feasible to transport food and flowers from the Netherlands to China by train, says LEI researcher Xiaoyong Zhang. She presented her findings to a trade delegation from China on 28 October 2015, with the mayor of Rotterdam Ahmed Aboutaleb and King Willem-Alexander in the audience.

Zhang was present at the opening of YuXinOu Railway between Rotterdam and Chongqing last year. There she heard that goods such as laptops are transported from the Chinese industrial city to Rotterdam in just 13 days. And that is much faster and not much more expensive than shipping them.

Zhang asked what is in the trains on the return journey from



The terminal of the YuXinOu Railway in Chongqing.

the Netherlands to China and got a surprising answer: often nothing. This prompted her to look into whether the Dutch agrifood sector could make use of the train connection. 'The Chinese can import their vegetables, fruit, flowers and milk powder from other countries too,' says Zhang. 'It is of no interest to them to work out whether fresh products can be

transported by train. The question is: can the Netherlands afford to lose out on this market?'

Of course there are some problems to be addressed. Zhang: 'The train passes through a region where the temperature goes up to 45 degrees in the summer and down to -45 in the winter. Flowers and fruit need to be transported at roughly stable temperatures

and humidity levels. But there are containers available for that.'

The next step, the storage and distribution of goods on arrival in Chongqing, needs to be sorted out too. Customs at the train terminal in the Chinese city is not licensed to authorize imports of products such as fruit, vegetables, meat and milk powder, but such a license has already been applied for. 'In parallel with our study the Rabobank is studying the possibilities for transporting goods from Chongqing to the rest of China. That looks very promising too.'

This week other Wageningen researchers are in China to tell King Willem-Alexander and the delegation accompanying him about their work. The delegation visited the Sino-Dutch Dairy Development Centre, as well as the COFCO Eco-Valley near Beijing. Wageningen UR is a partner in both these projects. There was also an excursion to the Loess Plateau (see page 10). **KG**

TEACHER OF THE YEAR TO BE ANNOUNCED ON FOUNDATION DAY

- Voting possible until 6 November
- Foundation Day offers bigger stage

Who is the best Wageningen teacher of 2016? As of today, students who have completed at least one year will be able to vote for their favourite teacher. This year, for the first time, the winner will be announced on Foundation Day in March instead of during the Student Council's New Year's reception.

The Wageningen University Fund is pleased with the new platform for the award ceremony, says Daniëlle Grashuis. 'Foundation Day is a festive occasion with many guests from the university and beyond,' she explains. 'Wageningen values good teaching highly and we will now be conveying that message. This platform gives the Teacher of the Year Award more cachet and the teachers the attention they deserve.'

Grashuis emphasizes that the change

was made in consultation with the Student Council. 'The students could also appreciate that the award deserves a bigger stage.' They also see it as an opportunity to give the New Year's reception a more informal character. Grashuis hopes that the students will turn up in force to the Foundation Day because 'this is a prize that is awarded on behalf of the students. Fortunately, Foundation Day will be celebrated in Orion this time, which makes it easier for students to come along.'

The digital voting booths will be open until 6 November. Students have until then to vote for the teacher who they consider to be one of the best in Wageningen. Afterwards, a student jury will decide on the top five teachers and ultimately pick the winner. The jury is hoping for some surprising new candidates this year. See the interview on page 25. **LvdN**

OVER SIX PERCENT MORE FIRST-YEARS

- Biggest increase is in Master's students
- More students from outside the EU in particular

The latest figures show that 2779 new students have enrolled at Wageningen University this year. This time last year there were 2616. This is an increase of over six percent.

The figures are of students who are enrolling at Wageningen for the first time. They exclude first-year Master's students who did their Bachelor's here, for example.

The biggest growth is in the Master's programmes, where the number of new enrolments rose by 12 percent from 1116 to 1253. There was a particularly big increase in the number of students from non-EU countries. The number of first-year Bachelor's students grew by four percent, from 1418 in 2014 to 1469 this year.

The total number of students at Wageningen University is up eight percent, at 9885. Just over half (5092) are studying for a Master's degree. **LvdN**

CORPSE IN DIJKGRAAF HARD TO IDENTIFY

- **Death by natural causes**
- **Denture or DNA research needed**

A person lay dead for some time in a room in the Dijkgraaf star-shaped block of flats. The body was discovered on Friday, 16 October. Residents smelt a strange odour and had not seen their neighbour for some time, so they phoned the building manager, who contacted the police.

The police were soon able to determine that the person had died from natural causes. Whether the deceased was the room's occupant has still not been officially confirmed. That is because the state of the body was such that identification by a member of the family was no longer possible. However, those involved are now assuming that the deceased was the man renting the room. Biometric analysis, for example dental evidence or DNA tests, should give a definitive answer.

The room's occupant had lived there for eight years. Another person on the same corridor had last seen him in August. 'He was looking rough. I was about to go on holiday and no-one else was around. So I popped round especially to ask him if everything was OK. He said that he had stomach problems.' The neighbour can't remember if this was the last time he saw the man. It was certainly the last time that he spoke to him. **KG**

COLUMN|KEES

Love and Science

The biggest threat to love is marriage.

When love is reduced to marriage vows there is no more freedom. Underlying the vows is the fear that you might do or think something sinful. Is that 'yes' the gateway to happiness and nice surprises or does it squeeze your life into a socially acceptable framework of mortgage, children and smartphone?

There is no true love without freedom. Genuine science and love have a lot in common. You can get carried away by them; they can give you butterflies in your tummy or a eureka moment. You can love someone till death do you part, and you don't stop being a scientist when you retire either. On the contrary: many scientists blossom after retiring, when they can look back on their career. That is when wisdom comes, in freedom. If you subject love to scientific study you'll get stuck; you'll never be able to deconstruct love. And the other way round too: no matter how great your love of science, the nature of true 'knowledge' cannot be grasped.

And so science too faces a big threat: tenure track! Twelve years to get to a personal chair. One rung up the ladder every three years. Tenure track offers you the prospect of a permanent contract if you meet transparent quality criteria for teaching, research and management. Tenure track is an excellent springboard for your career in Wageningen UR.

But... if you don't make it, you can in theory be dumped. Does that stimulate genuine science or are you being squeezed into a virtual, socially acceptable framework?

No genuine science without freedom. **K**



in brief

>> EVENING LECTURES

Staff worried

Plans for early evening lectures are worrying support staff as well as students. This came out at the '24/7 education' meeting held by the WUR Council on 15 October. A few dozen students and members of staff put their heads together in a room in Orion to brainstorm about work stress. The discussion focused on the possible introduction of lectures between five and eight pm. The students in attendance were against this and the support staff viewed it with alarm too. The WUR Council will pass on all the comments to the executive board.

RK

>> IMARES

To Marine School

Imares staff from three locations will move between 9 and 13 November to the former Marine School in Den Helder. The roughly 65 researchers involved currently still work on the

island of Texel and two other locations in Den Helder. The new location has been thoroughly renovated in the past few months. The main change is a new wing including laboratories, climate chambers and a company canteen. Imares is renting the building for ten years from the owner, Port of Den Helder. Besides Den Helder, Imares also has locations in Ijmuiden and Yerseke. **RR**

>> DUIVENDAAL

Underground carpark

A large underground carpark for 400 cars may be built under the new Duivendaal. The carpark is intended to cater for some of the cars parked in the town centre. According to Martijn Rauwers of Gieling Consultancy in Ede, hired by owner Wageningen UR to supervise the planning for Duivendaal, a serious candidate has applied to run the carpark. The plans also include detached buildings around the edge of the terrain, in keeping with the existing listed buildings along Duivendaal lane. The middle of the plot would house a hotel and 't Venster cultural centre. **RK**



MIXED FEELINGS ABOUT GRASSHOPPER LOLLIES

- Insect lollipops fun for Halloween
- 'It suggests there is something scary about eating insects'

Are insect lollipops a good idea? They are on the shelves now at Albert Heijn. Professor and insect ambassador Arnold van Huis has mixed feelings about that.

It is Halloween on Saturday. And insect lollipops are for sale at Albert Heijn supermarkets. See-through flat lollipops with a grasshopper or a few worms inside them. Meant as a joke. 'Trick or treat!' and then you get the shock of your life if you are kid coming face to face with a grasshopper or worm. What a laugh!

It is not a new idea for Van Hu-

is. Such things have been going on in the US for some time, he says. He can see the funny side of it. But he is not exactly thrilled about it. 'This suggests there is something scary about eating insects and I don't like that. But it won't really do much harm.' Now he is retired Van Huis travels around the world as an ambassador of insect food.

'Our attitude to eating insects is changing fast. Nowadays when I ask at a lecture how many people have ever eaten an insect, half the audience raise their hands,' he adds. 'It is starting to become quite normal. Even if it is mainly still a question of insect protein being processed into burgers rather than of eating a whole insect. That is one of the tricks for getting people to eat insects.' **© RK**



PHOTO: GUY ACKER

ALGAE FACTORY NEEDS 5 MORE YEARS RESEARCH

- AlgaePARC has done good research in the past five years
- But who will fund phase 2?

Five years ago it still cost six euros to produce a kilo of algae, and now that figure has been halved, stated research director René Wijffels of AlgaePARC during the centre's evaluation on 8 October. This has

been achieved through better temperature control in the algae reactor tubes, increased photosynthesis, raised productivity of the algae, and the use of free sources of CO₂.

Production costs can probably be further cut by one euro per kilo, not including the costs of biorefinery. The test facility has taken some innovative steps in that area too, though. To get the useful materials out of the algae, the cell walls have

to be broken open. Research partner Dyadic has tested enzymes in AlgaePARC which break open the cell wall fast. An alternative approach is to 'milk' the cell wall, leaving it intact. This approach has technological advantages.

Wijffels sees good prospects for foodstuffs and livestock feeds based on algae. The production of biodiesel from algae is not profitable yet, however. It will take another

five to ten years, he estimates, to develop competitive algae-based products. Wijffels is keen to form a consortium with science institutions and companies to do another five years of algae research. But who will take the initiative? Potential financiers such as the ministry of Economic Affairs, the top sectors, the companies involved and the EU are still pointing at each other at the moment. **© AS**

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OVERPASS FOR BICYCLES CROSSING AT HOEVESTEIN

- **Municipal council rejects campus ring road**
- **Campus may get three entrances**

If the Nijenoord Allee is widened, there should be an overpass for crossing it between the Hoevestein star-shaped block of flats and Leeuwenborch, says a comfortable majority of the Wageningen municipal council. Such a crossing is not included in the current plans for turning the Nijenoord Allee into a dual carriageway. A mistake, says the council. The crossing is essential for students cycling between Leeuwenborch and campus or going to the Bongerd to play sport.

Apart from this, the council (except for the CDA and VVD parties) has agreed to widening the Nijenoord Allee and that part of the Mansholtlaan that is not already a

dual carriageway. This puts an end to the idea pushed by the provincial authority of having a ring road around the campus. Opponents say that such a road would be too disruptive for the peace and nature in the Binnenveld area. Traffic studies also show that the current congestion around campus can be tackled without this road.

Opting for a wider Nijenoord Allee means that the campus will get a new entrance to the north via Bornsesteeg/Kielekampsteeg. The two projects are linked. This means that the shortcut through the Binnenveld will be facilitated. The existing road will be improved and a separate cycle path added.

The plan also includes the construction of a roundabout in the form of an overpass at the Bornsesteeg. Cyclists and local traffic will use the roundabout while an underpass will take through traffic underneath it. Thousands of cy-



clists travelling to and from campus are currently causing delays and unsafe situations on a daily basis. Cyclists will get priority on the roundabout.

There will also be such a multi-level roundabout at the current main entrance to the campus on the Mansholtlaan. Wageningen UR may even get the long desired western entrance to the campus. Rien Bor, the leader of the Local Party (Stadspartij) and a former Wagen-

ingen UR employee, obtained an undertaking from the municipal executive that they would investigate whether the new bus lane could be used by Wageningen UR staff as well.

The provincial authority still has to approve Wageningen's plans. The Mansholtlaan is a provincial road and the province will be covering a large part of the project costs, estimated at a good 20 million euros. **RR**

'ALL THOSE LISTS...'

Nice news?

'I'm not terribly interested in those kinds of lists. You never know exactly how that kind of ranking is drawn up and who is on the jury. So for example, I've slid right down the sustainability ranking since I became president of Wageningen UR, whereas what I say about agriculture, nature and the environment has not changed.'

How does that happen?

'Apparently people assess what I say differently. All those lists... Look, if a prize or distinction means something for Wageningen UR, I'm happy about that. I went to the ceremony for the World Food Prize recently in the US, where the English translation of my book *Hamburgers in Paradise* was being presented. For the first time Wageningen UR was visible at that ceremony and we were acclaimed as a leading university. That is useful.'

Of all the lists you've been on, which one were you proud of?

'The shortlist for the Libris literature prize. Okay, that is a subjective jury prize too but I felt very honoured to be on the list. That kind of literature prize is much harder.' **AS**

Who? Louise Fresco

What? Chair of Executive Board

Why? According to *Opzij* magazine, the most powerful woman in science. And earlier in the month at 97th place in the Sustainability Top 100.



ETHICAL HACKER ON CAMPUS

- **IT holds theme week on cybersecurity**

Next week an ethical hacker will be demonstrating the risks you run when using public wifi networks. This is just one of the activities that make up a theme week about cybersecurity run by the IT department.

IT aims to alert students and staff to the digital risks they run and the value of the information held by Wageningen UR to the outside world. Besides the demonstration there will be talks on espionage by the Dutch government's intelligence and security service (AIVD) and on cybercrime by the police's digital detection department.

Early in October about 15 percent of staff members fell for

a security test by IT. They opened a suspicious email attachment and were then shown a warning film. If it had been a genuine threat their computer would at that point have been infected with a virus. This is the third time IT has conducted this kind of test. On a previous occasion 20 percent of the student and staff recipients gave their login names and passwords on an unknown website. **RR**



STRONG FLAVOUR ALONE DOES NOT BOOST APPETITE

- **Five to ten percent of seniors living independently are undernourished**
- **Improve appearance and texture as well as taste**

Elderly people probably enjoy their food more if various aspects such as texture, taste and appearance are improved at the same time. This is the message of Esmée Doets and Stefanie Kramer, researchers at Food & Biobased Research, in a review published in the journal *Food Quality and Preference*.

Of all seniors living independently without care provision, around 5 to 10 percent consistently eat too little, says Doets. In old people's homes and nursing homes, undernutrition – inadequate intake of energy and protein – is a problem for 20 percent of the residents. There is also an unknown number of seniors with 'qualitative undernutrition'. Deficiencies in specific

nutrients such as vitamin B12 and vitamin D are quite common too. So for some time now researchers have been looking for ways of making foods more appetizing for old people. Without much success, it appears from the review conducted by Doets and Kremer. They say this is because most efforts focus on boosting the flavour of the food. But adding higher concentrations of flavourings does not necessarily make food any more appealing to seniors. 'I would prefer to focus on enriching several sensory aspects at the same time,' says Doets. An example could be mashed potato with added green herbs. This creates a richer taste as well as looking nicer. Initial research showed that this approach led to greater enjoyment of the food.

Environmental factors can help boost appetites too. The packaging of a product and the memories it evokes contribute to how much it is enjoyed. But factors such as where people eat and



the company they eat with have an impact too. Unfortunately, says Doets, much of the research on this topic focuses on young adults, while the results could be quite

different for seniors. Only now that the population is ageing is there a growing interest in the elderly. 'Companies see the use of it too now.' **RR**

ETHIOPIAN FARMER HAS NEGLECTED SOIL

- **Plant waste is used as livestock fodder**
- **Manure is used as fuel**

Soil fertility in Ethiopia is declining at an alarming rate because farmers there use too little manure and plant waste as fertilizer. They use the manure as fuel and plant waste as fodder. This finding comes from research by Abebe Nigussie published in *Waste Management*.

Nigussie, who works in the Soil Quality department, studied what Ethiopian farmers and market gardeners do with the waste flows on their farms and what effect that



has on soil fertility. To find out, he interviewed 220 farmers and growers of ornamental plants. The farmers use as much as 80 percent of the manure on the farm as fuel and 85 percent of the plant waste

as fodder. They also sell some of their waste matter. As a result no more than 10 percent of the manure and plant waste at the most is left over for soil improvement. The ornamental plant growers use

about 40 percent of the waste matter to improve the soil. Even that is too little to maintain the – often minimal – soil fertility.

To ensure that more manure and plant waste is ploughed back into the soil in Ethiopia, sustainable alternatives are needed to using manure as fuel and plant waste as fodder. Solar panels could replace the manure as a source of energy, but alternative fodder is not available.

Another possibility would be to make use of urban waste. In cities now a lot of nutrients end up on the rubbish dump. The farmers should make more use of this waste to enrich the soil in the countryside, advises Nigussie. **AS**

DRONES DON'T DISTURB BIRDS

- Drone experiment in preparation for salt marsh project
- Mud motor should speed up growth of salt marsh

In principle, drones should be a good way of monitoring nature in the Wadden region. But surely they would disturb the birds? Not really, it seems from an initial experiment by Imares marine ecologist Martin Baptist.

Baptist had a drone fly at a height of 100 metres above exposed mud flats off the coast near the hamlet of Koehoal, north of Harlingen. The birds' movements prior to, during and after the drone flight were observed from the dyke. The results showed that the drone had hardly any visible effect on the behaviour of the bird on the mudflats. 'At any rate, not at that spot and that time,' says Baptist. It is not clear, for instance, what impact a drone has on large numbers of birds. Waders forage clustered together in large numbers at 800 to 1200 metres from the dyke. Our drone flights went out as far as 500 metres from the dyke.'

There was a reason for carrying out the test at Koehoal, as this is the place where

the mud motor project will start next year. The mud motor will use mud from nearby Harlingen harbour to bolster growth of the salt marshes off Koehoal. Baptist is the manager of this nature construction project. 'Every year, a million cubic metres of clean mud is dredged from the harbour. That mud is ideal construction material for helping the salt marshes to grow.'

The mud motor is a variant on the sand motor, which has been used to create a peninsula off the South Holland coast as part of the coastal protection system. The idea is to spread mud in the vicinity of the salt marsh and let nature do the rest. The natural accretion of mud in the salt marshes is expected to increase by a factor of two as a result, from the current one to two centimetres a year to two to four centimetres.

Drones will monitor this growth process closely using photogrammetry. Baptist: 'Photogrammetry means that you fly over an object several times, taking photos. That gives you pictures of the object taken from different angles. If you perform some calculations, you then get the height of the object.' The Koehoal drone has been used to create such a detailed digital terrain model. The mud motor will start operations in September 2016. **RR**



PHOTO: IMARES

Wadden research with drones: hanging out on a windswept dyke and staring at screens.

VISION <<

'The link between processed meat and cancer was already known'

Eating processed meat such as ham and sausages increases the risk of cancer, announced the IARC, an agency of the World Health Organization, this week. The report caused quite a furore in the Netherlands. But this link has been known for a long time, says Ellen Kampman, professor of Nutrition and Disease. She thinks it's a good thing that attention is being drawn to that link once again.



Is it odd that the WHO is publishing that report now?

'Of course this link is not new; we've known this for years. But it is good that other experts have taken another good look at the literature, and have drawn the same conclusions. And it makes a difference that an influential organization such as the WHO is saying this.'

The results have been misinterpreted here and there. Red and processed meats are suddenly being presented as just as dangerous as asbestos or smoking.

'I've been seeing that confusion too. These things are indeed in the same category, but that doesn't tell you anything about the strength of the evidence or how carcinogenic something is. Red meat is definitely not as dangerous as smoking.'

Will the report change anything about the advice we get about healthy eating?

'No, the recommendation will stay at maximum 500 grams of red meat a week. That means eating red meat not more than five times a week. You should also keep your consumption of processed meat as low as possible. I've been trying to highlight that recommendation for years and it's nice that it is now getting so much attention.'

And is it clear why meat raises the risks of cancer?

It appears that ferrous iron in red meat can damage the lining of the gut. Research has been done on that in Wageningen too, by Sander Kersten's current group for instance. The way we prepare meat at home makes a difference as well. Charred meat contains substances also found in cigarette smoke. Luckily an experiment we did in Ede showed that the Dutch are not fond of that kind of extremely well-done meat.

Keep it that way! **RR**

THE YELLOW RIVER IS NO LONGER A MUD FLOW

- Dutch King inspects Loess Plateau erosion control
- Barren landscape green again in 15 years

In the eighties and nineties of the last century, the Loess Plateau, the upstream part of China's Yellow River, was the world's most eroded region. The river even derives its name from it. 'The sediment load was sometimes as much as one kilo per litre water. Really it was more of a mud flow,' says professor of Soil Physics and Land Management Coen Ritsema. This week, during the Dutch Trade Delegation's visit to China, he showed King Willem-Alexander how the erosion came about.

Together with the Institute of Soil and Water Conservation (ISWC) and other Chinese and European partners, Ritsema set to work in the mid-nineties. They mapped the hydrological and soil processes that are the driving forces behind the massive erosion and made recommendations concerning the design of catchment areas and the conservation of soil and

water. 'Agriculture on the steep slopes of the Loess Plateau and free-roaming goats that eat everything in sight are two things to be avoided,' says Ritsema.

Since that first project, cooperation between Wageningen UR and the ISWC in Yangling has been ongoing. Projects are ever bigger and increasingly global. 'In a relatively short period of 15 years,' says Ritsema, 'greenery has been returned to the heavily degraded and barren landscape and natural conditions have been restored. The sediment load of the Yellow River has been dramatically reduced. The region looks totally different.'

Despite this success, the research work is not coming to an end. On the contrary, the long-term cooperation was ratified on Tuesday 27 October, during the visit by the Dutch Trade Delegation, with a Memorandum of Understanding. 'The erosion has been reduced,' explains Ritsema, 'but one of the consequences of the restoration of greenery is that less water is now available downstream. Precisely when the demand for water is ever increasing.'

✎ RK



PHOTOS: WU ZONGKAI

Wuqi County, part of the Loess Plateau, before and after the erosion was controlled.

CARRIERS OF WEST NILE VIRUS BREED HERE

- Hybrid mosquito can transmit the virus directly
- Birds in northern Europe not infected yet

Both the two types of mosquito which transmit the deadly West Nile virus to birds and humans are found in our bedrooms, discovered PhD candidate Chantal Vogel. And they interbreed. That increases the risks of a virus infection.

The West Nile virus, which comes from Africa, is advancing from southern Europe but has not reached the Netherlands yet. Most people are not made ill by the virus but the sick and the elderly can suffer from flu-like symptoms and a small proportion become dangerously ill. The virus is spread by the common mosquito that frequently disturbs our sleep at night. There are two biotypes of this mosquito: *Culex pipiens pipiens* and *Culex*

pipiens molestus. *Pipiens* has a preference for birds as hosts and spends the winter above ground. *Molestus* bites mammals, including humans, and prefers to spend the winter underground. In the Netherlands it favours the Amsterdam metro, for instance.

So far both types of mosquito bite us but do not transmit the virus. This is because there are no infected birds in the Netherlands, and because the two types of mosquito do not interbreed, or

so it was thought. But Vogel has now proven that the two types definitely do interbreed. Between 6 and 15 percent of the mosquitoes she caught or was sent turned out to be a cross between *pipiens* and *molestus*. These hybrids are dangerous because they may be able to transmit the virus directly from birds to humans. For this reason the risk assessment procedure for West Nile virus must now be tightened up.

✎ AS

Online we saw offence being taken. At nude paintings, at twitter meetings and at mistaken programme names. Got an opinion? Join the online discussion or mail resource@wur.nl.

REACTIONS ON...



RESOURCE-ONLINE.NL

THE NAKED TRUTH

.....
An exhibition of highly realistic nude paintings in Impulse triggered complaints. The complainants feel that a reception area is no place for challenging artworks.

Online people are saying that it is mainly at lunchtime that they are unhappy about the paintings. 'Nor are they the most appetizing pictures to hang in a canteen,' says **Whut**, referring to the adjacent Restaurant van de Toekomst. Elsewhere, the artworks can count on enthusiasm. **Promovendus** thinks it is good that the manager of Impulse is pushing the boundaries. 'A university is exactly the place where it would be wrong to avoid any form of expression that is potentially offensive.' **JH** supports him or her. Dutch people should not be afraid that now and then someone might feel insulted when they are simply expressing themselves normally. He thinks that is a cowardly attitude. Nonetheless, the opponents are in the majority online. For example, **Ed** feels that the paintings are being forced on him for six weeks. Generating discussion, he feels, is not

a legitimate aim. 'So, under the guise of prompting a discussion, would you hang photos from warzones showing dead bodies riddled with bullet wounds lying on the street?' Suffice it to say that the discord rumbled on. This discussion was concluded by **Wakker Vlees** who was thin on arguments but very honest. 'Surely no one wants to see a photo of a withered old person in the bathtub when they are trying to enjoy their food?'

IS TWITTER TRENDING?

.....
Wageningen UR held an interactive Twitter master class on food supply that was broadcast live. Opinions vary about the dialogue it gave rise to - its value and quantity.

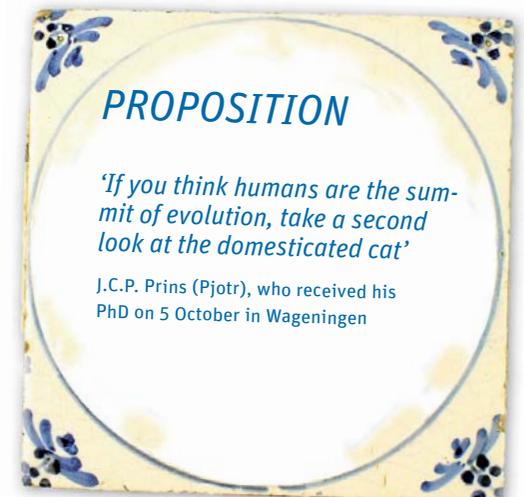
Twitter, Twitter, Twitter, grumbles **Sam**. 'Nonsense like this is and always will be just a gimmick.' More people are moaning about 'communication groups' that are just a hobby and fail to ask themselves what their public really wants. **Erik Toussaint** thinks this is a lame way of dismissing all innovation. 'I still remember similar cries when the first websites were launched. So I understand your reaction. Like you, I would also like to see something before I believe it but sometimes you simply have to take the plunge and do it.' And the first brave dodo who swims against the tide of grumbling immediately finds an ally. **Peter van de Broek** found it a particularly interesting meeting. He would have liked to have heard about it earlier. And **Peter D** writes: 'I was also there. Interesting phenomenon and it may well work in future. For now, it was still in its

infancy and we didn't get very far.' That's nice to hear. We'll twitter!

LOVE GETTING A LIFT

.....
Study association Alchimica will be hitch-hiking to Leuven in twos and threes. They felt it was about time they organized another exciting activity.

The post on Facebook immediately causes a ruckus because Resource is erroneously calling the members microbiologists. That's a sore spot. Recently, in an artwork on the campus the term 'molecular sciences' was used. Fortunately, differences are soon set aside. Online people say they think the hitch-hiking trip is a fantastic idea. 'Belgium is a great place to hitch-hike,' says **Lifter**. 'Did it myself recently. Better than in the Netherlands.' **Marlies** too thinks it is a fun plan, but how original is it that it warrants Resource writing about it? 'The Christian associations in Wageningen have been organizing hitch-hiking weekends for years.' **RR**



Great scores for Wageningen research

The quality of research at this university is getting better and better, if the evaluation of the Peer Review committees is anything to go by. They declared a full 20 chair groups 'excellent'. Cause for celebration. Although you could be justified in wondering whether the Peer Review scores are subject to serious inflation.

text: Albert Sikkema

Every six years about 60 foreign researchers descend on Wageningen to assess the quality of research here. In advance of their visit they receive a big packet of paper from the graduate school and the chair groups in question – their self-evaluations – and they spend their four-day visit talking to research directors, full professors, academic staff and PhD candidates. Then they make recommendations to the schools and assess the chair groups on their research quality, relevance to society and viability. A high score boosts the professor's standing and can help the group get new research proposals approved and funded. Low scores mean awkward questions from management and a lower position in the academic pecking order.



There are a couple of striking things about the latest evaluation. One is that this time 20 Wageningen research groups were considered excellent by their international colleagues. Six years ago only nine achieved that rating. At that time most of the excellent groups were either in the Experimental Plant Sciences (EPS) graduate school or in VLAG, the school for Food Technology, Agrobiotechnology, Nutrition and Health Sciences. This year there are excellent groups in almost all the graduate schools. Only the Wageningen Institute of Animal Sciences (WIAS) lacks a group rated excellent in all three areas.

HARD TO COMPARE

But that does not necessarily mean the WIAS is not doing as well as the other schools. It is hard to compare the assessments of the graduate schools. For one thing, the evaluation of the animal scientists was demonstrably more stringent than those of other graduate schools. The WIAS committee only awarded a 1 (excellent) if a research group was 'one of the most influential research groups in the world in this specific field.' 'We believe other committees are less strict,' writes committee chair Barbara Cannon in the report.

The committee which assessed the EPS was severe too. During the oral presentation in June the committee chair expressed his irritation at the late submission of the self-evaluation, which left the committee with too little time. So the EPS was 0-1 down before the grading even started.

'The groups which had a low score last time have improved or disappeared'

Other committees, by contrast, were in high spirits. 'The food was great and this is the most exceptional graduate school we have ever seen,' declared committee chair Volkmar Wolters, referring to the Production Ecology and Resource Conservation school (PE&RC). His committee was 'pleasantly surprised' by the high standards. Alan Irwin, who assessed the Wageningen School of Social Sciences (WASS), was 'extremely impressed' by the unique position of the social sciences in a life sciences university. 'You are ahead of the game,' he said. And that's enough to give you a 1-0 headstart.

Another striking difference is the degree of importance committees give to obtaining prestigious grants – Veni, Vidi and Vici grants from the NWO and ERC grants from the EU. While one committee may see this as a condition for academic excellence, another may not. This is because academic fields vary in how unusual it is to obtain such prestigious grants. For this reason the committees wanted to compare the Wageningen groups' records with those of similar research groups in other countries. Using this benchmark makes it possible to assess just how exceptional a Nature publication or an ERC grant really is. It is precisely in this international comparison that many Wageningen groups stand out.

And many groups have improved since six years ago. These groups took the advice of the previous peer review committee to heart and got their papers published in better journals.

INFLATION

Johan van Arendonk, Dean of Science at the university, is very satisfied with the results. 'Broadly speaking we have done a great job. The supervision of PhD candidates is outstanding and the academic staff are committed: all the committees noted this.' What is more, observes Van Arendonk, many of the groups have worked hard to improve the quality. 'The groups which had a low score last time have either improved or disappeared.'

You could, however, argue that there is a certain inflation at work in the evaluations. As many as 20 of Wageningen's 90 groups are excellent. That might be logical, given Wageningen UR's high scores in the international rankings, but it might be an exaggeration too. Groups which score a 2 on three counts fall in the 'very good' category, and form the majority. Not a single group is rated 'unsatisfactory' – a 4 – for quality or relevance, but from the commentary you can deduce that a 3 – officially 'good' – actually means cause for concern. Sometimes a 3 is a result of a change of professor, with a delay in the

EXCELLENCE IN SIX YEARS

Six years ago, the Public Administration chair group was given a poor rating by the international Peer Review committee. This year it is deemed excellent. What is the secret? Professor Katrien Termeer explains.

'The last time we were assessed we were only three years old. We had some research ideas but we didn't have much to show for them. So we got a 3 for quality of research and for relevance to society. The group was disappointed for a few days but then the young researchers said, come on, next time we'll be excellent. And that resolution has been achieved.

We started publishing more strategically, only in journals with a high impact factor. We managed to get published both in the key journals for public administration and in the interdisciplinary journals in the field of food and climate. So we started making a contribution in both worlds. We also made sure we set up our projects in dialogue with policymakers and the business world, so that relevance to society was built into the project.

It was crucial too that the group arrived at a shared theoretical narrative. Six years ago members of staff all had their own theories about public administration. Now we have a shared theoretical model showing the criteria which governance has to meet on the issues which we study. That is a tremendous help because we now work together on a shared narrative.'



succession or a change of course – something committees are not fond of. But sometimes there is more to it than that: an outdated line of research, too small a group, too few publications or PhD students, or a lack of talent on tenure track. These are indications that in reality the designation ‘good’ is no longer good enough.

LESSONS

But regardless of whether a group is excellent, very good or just good, all the groups are offered suggestions for improvement by the

committees. Bracketing those suggestions together, you can extract some general lessons for the university. Several of the committees point out that a relatively large proportion of the PhD candidates and postdocs appointed are Wageningen graduates. Is this ‘inbreeding’ justified, or do we ignore better, external candidates? Van Arendonk: “The question is whether we get the best PhD candidates and postdocs. To do that you need to recruit openly and do more than publish an advert.”

The committees also advise the chair groups to collaborate more in order to explore new

fields and have more impact. And the PhD researchers must learn to position their research in a wider research and social context.

Finally, the social relevance of Wageningen research could be further increased. Van Arendonk: ‘Many groups have wrestled with the question of how to draw attention to their social relevance. The committees say: it does not mean you have to do applied research. No, what you must do is fundamental research that is in tune with the wider society, because what is needed there is fundamental knowledge. So you must carry on investing in that.’

HIGHFLYERS, CLIMBERS AND STRAGGLERS

We shouldn’t compare the chair groups with each other, but it is okay to compare them with themselves. So we compared their scores six years ago with the latest ones.

Six top-scorers from six years ago have held their positions: Microbiology (Professor Willem de Vos), Entomology (Marcel Dicke), Nematology (Jaap Bakker), Plant Production Systems (Ken Giller), Nutrition and Genomics (Katrien Termeer) and Evolutionary Biology (Ben Scheres). And then there are 12 groups which have worked their way up to the top: Molecular Biology (Ton Bisseling), Forest Ecology (Frits Möhren), Nature Management (Frank Berendse), Food Technology (Harry Gruppen), Process Technology (Remko Boom), Organic Chemistry (Han Zuilhof), Physical Chemistry and Soft Matter (Jasper van der Gucht), Toxicology (Ivonne Rietjens), Education and Competence Studies (Martin Mulder), Operations Research and Logistics (Jack van der Vorst), Public Administration and Policy (Katrien Termeer) and Aquatic Ecology (Marten Scheffer). If we round up the half points in the WIMEK evaluation of 2014, then Environmental Policy (led until recently by Arthur Mol) and Environmental Microbiology (Fons Stams) join the highflyers.

But who has made the greatest progress in the last six years? One candidate is the Farming Systems Ecology group (led by Pablo Titonell). Six years ago this group almost brought up the rear with a mere 3 for research quality and relevance. In the new list their scores have gone up across the board. Nobody, however, has risen as dramatically as the Public Administration group (Katrien Termeer). This group was among Wageningen’s lesser gods in 2009, and is now ranked among the excellent.

And of course there are also groups that shine less brightly. Biosystematics is still bringing up the rear, as is Sociology of Households and Consumption (Hilde Bras) and Economics of Consumers and Households (Gerrit Antonides). Land use (Adri v/d Brink) gets lower scores than six years ago, and the groups working on Food Quality (Vincenzo Fogliano) and Information Technology (Bedir Tekinerdogan) are beset with teething or transition problems.

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PERC GRADUATE SCHOOL

chair group	professor	quality	relevance	viability
Forest Ecology	Möhren	1	1	1
Nature Conservation	Berendse	1	1	1
Plant Prod. Systems	Giller	1	1	1
GIS & Remote Sensing	Bregt	1	1	2
Mathematics	Molenaar	1	1	2
Resource Ecology	Prins	1	1	2
Soil Biology & Quality	Brussaard	1	1	2
Horticulture	Marcelis	1	2	1
Crop Systems Analysis	Struik	2	1	2
Farming Syst. Ecology	Titonell	2	1	2
Farm Technology	Van Henten	2	2	2
Soil Geography	Wallinga	2	2	2

WIAS GRADUATE SCHOOL

chair group	professor	quality	relevance	viability
Animal Breeding & Genetics	Van Arendonk	1	2	2
Experimental Zoology	Van Leeuwen	1	2	2
Host-Microbe Interactions	Wells	1	2	3
Adaptation Physiology	Kemp	2	2	2
Animal Nutrition	Hendriks	2	2	2
Animal Production Systems	De Boer	2	2	2
Cell Biology & Immunology	Savelkoul	2	2	2
Aquaculture & Fisheries	Verreth	2	2	3
Behavioural Ecology	Naguib	2	2	3
Human & Animal Physiology	Keijer	2	2	3
Veterinary Epidemiology	De Jong	2	2	3

VLAG GRADUATE SCHOOL

chair group	professor	quality	relevance	viability
Food Chemistry	Gruppen	1	1	1
Food Process Engineering	Boom	1	1	1
Microbiology	De Vos	1	1	1
Organic Chemistry	Zuilhof	1	1	1
Phys. Chemistry & Soft Matter	Van der Gucht	1	1	1
Nutrition, Metabolism & Genetics	Kersten	1	1	1
Toxicology	Rietjens	1	1	1
Nutrition & Health	Kok	1	1	2
Nutrition & Epidemiology	Van 't Veer	1	1	2
Physics & Phys. Chemistry	Van der Linden	2	1	3
Sensory Science	De Graaf	2	1	3
Synthetic Biology	Martins dos Santos	2	2	1
Food Microbiology	Zwietering	2	2	2
Biobased Chemistry	Bitter	2	2	2
Bionanotechnology	Velders	-	-	2
Bioprocess Engineering	Wijffels	2	2	3
Nutrition & Pharmacology	Witkamp	2	2	3
Food Quality & Design	Fogliano	3	2	2

WASS GRADUATE SCHOOL

chair group	professor	quality	relevance	viability
Education Studies	Mulder	1	1	1
Operations Research & Logistics	Van der Vorst	1	1	1
Public Administr. and Policy	Termeer	1	1	1
Business Economics	Oude Lansink	1	1	2
Forest & Nature Conservation	Arts	1	1	2
Rural & Environm. History	Frankema	1	1	2
Management Studies	Omta	1	2	1
Marketing & Consumer Behaviour	Van Trijp	1	2	1
Development Economics	Bulte	2	1	1
Cultural Geography	Minka	2	1	3
Agricultural Economics	Wesseler	2	2	1
Strategic Communication	Feindt	2	2	1
Water Resource Management	Hellegers	2	2	1
Knowledge Technology Innovation	Leeuwis	2	2	1
Philosophy	Verweij	2	2	1
Law and Governance	Van der Meulen	2	2	2
Rural Sociology	Wiskerke	2	2	2
Sociology of Development	Büscher	2	2	2
Health & Society	Koelen	3	1	3
Sociology of Consumption	Bras	3	2	3
Economics of Consumption	Antonides	3	3	3
Information Technology	Tekinerdogan	3	3	4
Land Use Planning	Van den Brink	3	3	3

EPS GRADUATE SCHOOL

chair group	professor	quality	relevance	viability
Entomology	Dicke	1	1	1
Molecular Biology	Bisseling	1	1	1
Nematology	Bakker	1	1	1
Plant Dev. Biology	Scheres	1	1	1
Phytopathology	Thomma	1	1	2
Biochemistry	De Vries	1	2	1
Genetics	Zwaan	1	2	2
Plant Physiology	Bouwmeester	2	1	1
Biophysics	Van Amerongen	2	1	2
Plant Breeding	Visser	2	1	2
Virology	Van Oers	2	2	2
Bioinformatics	De Ridder	2	2	3
Cell Biology	Janson	2	2	3
Biosystematics	Schranz	3	2	3

Entomology, Nematology, Genetics, Plant Breeding en Virology are in the PERC Graduate school too.

NEW SCORING SYSTEM

The Peer Review committees used a different scoring system this time to the one they used six years ago. Then, a 5 was excellent, a 4 was very good, a 3 was good, a 2 was satisfactory and a 1 was unsatisfactory. In the new system, a 1 is excellent, 2 very good, 3 good and 4 unsatisfactory. The category of satisfactory has been scrapped. And two criteria, research quality and research productivity, have been merged into one.

WIMEK GRADUATE SCHOOL

chair group	professor	quality	relevance	viability
Aquatic Ecology	Scheffer	5	5	5
Environm. Policy	Mol	5	5	4,5
Environm. System Analysis	Leemans	5	5	4
Environm. Microbiology	Stams	5	4,5	5
Meteorology	Holtslag	5	4	4,5
Environm. Technology	Rijnaarts	4,5	4,5	5
Earth System Science	Leemans	4,5	4	4,5
Soil Physics	Ritsema	4	4,5	4,5
Environm. Economics	Van Ierland	4	4	4
Hydrology	Uijlenhoet	4	4	4
Soil Chemistry	Comans	4	4	3,5
Landscape Architecture	Van den Brink	3,5	4	4

WIMEK was evaluated last year according to the old system (see text box on new points system). The score for academic productivity is missing from this table.





SLOWCOACH

When the first one stands up, no problem. There are always a few show-offs around. But when the sound of scraping chairs builds up, those still working away can get a bit anxious. Has everyone else finished already? The first exam week of the academic year is over. Students bent over their questions in various lecture rooms, like this one in Orion. And in the Vlinder sports hall at the Pantarijn secondary school, where exams were sat this time. It was too noisy at the university's own sports centre, De Bongerd, because of the building work going on.  LdK/ photo Sven Menschel



Detecting the Long-h

Long-horned beetles leave a trail behind them after hatching out. PhD candidate Paul Copini studies the traces of their presence left in tree rings and can say when a beetle was born. Crucial information.

text: Roelof Kleis / **photo:** Paul Copini and Peter Groenendijk

‘Copini, nature archivist’ is how the name plate on his door should read. Paul Copini studies tree rings, interpreting history from the information locked into the form and structure of those rings. Its rings are a tree’s memory, a kind of archive to the initiated. Their numbers include Paul Copini, who currently works for Alterra and the Centre for Genetic Resources. He received his PhD this week from Professor Frits Mohren (Forest Ecology and Forest Management) for his thesis *Markers inside Wood*.

The markers that most interest forester and geneticist Copini are those left behind by long-horned beetles. This came about by chance. ‘Originally my study was going to be about the traces left behind in trees by floods and drift sand (see text box). What exactly goes on in a tree when such things happen? What are the consequences? And can you use tree rings to get an idea of the geomorphological history of an area? But just as we were getting going the Netherlands Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority (NVWA) came knocking at the door. “We have a maple with holes in it which might be infested with long-horned beetles,” they said. “Can you tell where the insect crawled out of the tree? Was it here or in the country of origin?”

ALARM BELLS

Plant breeders, nature managers and governments get nervous at the thought of long-horned beetles. The Asian long-horned beetle and the citrus long-horned beetle are among the most destructive invasive insects in the world. They literally devour trees from the inside out. Both species originate from south-east Asia but occasionally turn up in the US, Canada or Europe. The citrus long-horned beetle usually arrives in imported ornamental



PHOTO: YAO LISHEN

The citrus long-horned beetle comes to Europe in imported ornamental trees.

trees. The most common source in this country is the Japanese maple, of which the Netherlands is the world’s biggest importer. The Asian long-horned beetle is more likely to travel in wood used for packaging.

Once signs of long-horned beetles are detected the alarm bells go off. ‘If it turns out that the beetles have hatched out here, all trees within a radius of 100 metres of the infested tree are destroyed preventively,’ explains Copini. And a wider area around the spot is closely monitored by the inspectorate for years. But how do you know whether an exit hole in the tree was used recently? This is where the tree rings come in. Copini: ‘Long-horned beetles leave behind an exit hole of about one centimetre in size which is visible for years before it gets overgrown. You can date that exit hole using tree rings. The key issue for the research question is: how precise is that dating? Can you determine it down to the day or hour? The timing is important because it can have major consequences.’

HOLEY CHEESE

Long-horned beetles lay their eggs in the bark of a tree, says Copini. ‘The larvae that come out

of the eggs crawl deeper into the tree to feed. After two or three years the larvae hatch out, create a hole and fly away. Meanwhile the insect has eaten its way through the whole tree, leaving it looking like holey cheese. Long-horned beetles often stay in the same tree, feeding off it and laying their eggs in it in turn. Eventually the infested tree gives up the ghost.’

Copini organized his own long-horned beetle-infested forest – without the aid of a single beetle, however. He simulated the exit holes by drilling holes in the tree at various different times during the growing season. He closely monitored the tree’s response to these wounds and compared them in Wageningen UR’s Dendrolab. The location of the wound in the tree ring is particularly important in this.

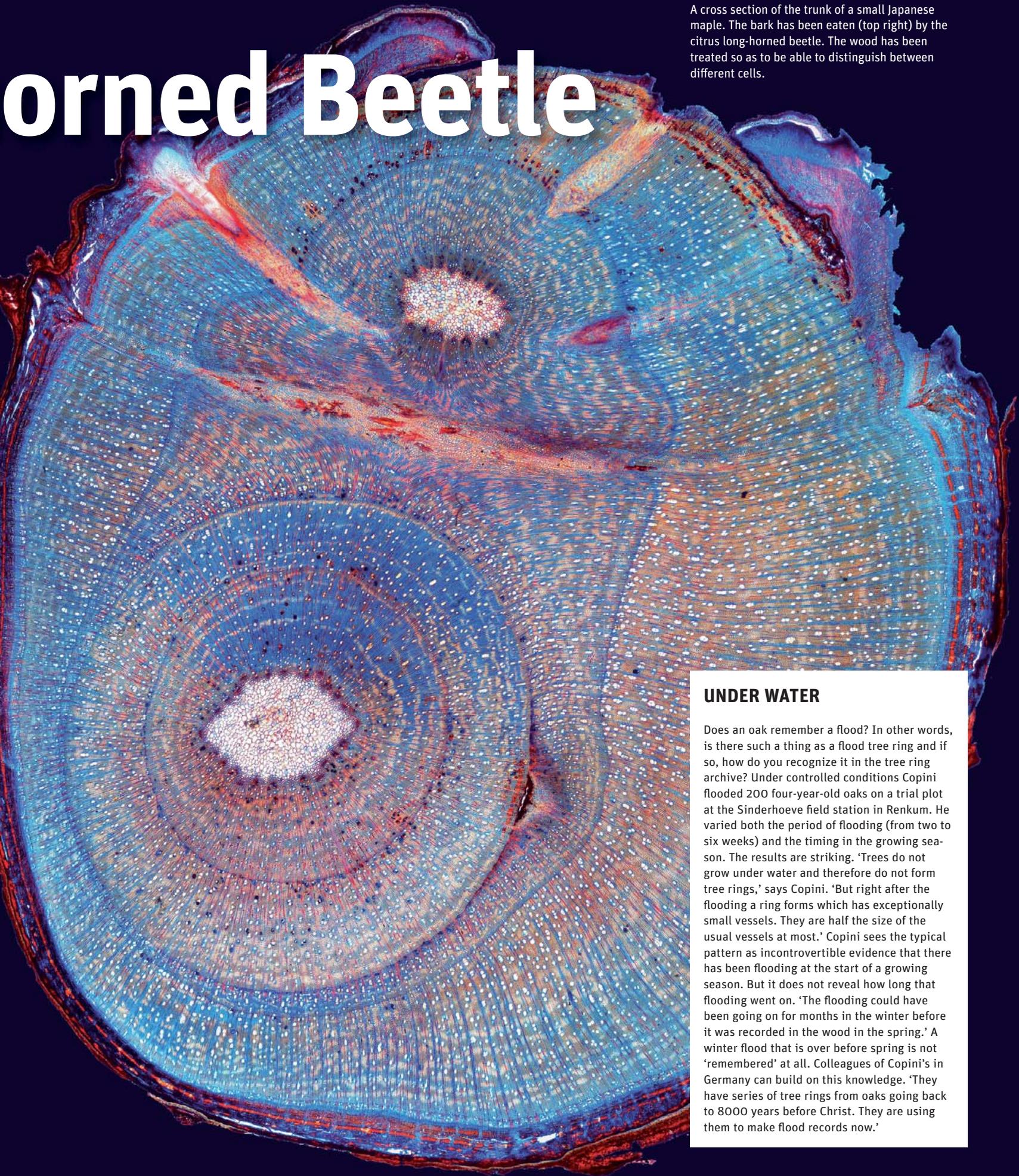
DIFFICULT CASES

The results show that the dating is less precise than expected. ‘There are three times of year when we can date the formation of an exit hole: before, straight after and during the growing season,’ explains Copini. ‘Precision to the month is not possible because of the wide variation in tree ring growth between different trees. That means you cannot identify exactly which growth phase a part of a tree ring is in. For that you would have to have a separate growth curve for every tree.’

But the dating is still perfectly usable, according to Copini. Over the past few years the NVWA has regularly asked him for his verdict on wood afflicted by long-horned beetles. ‘But it has gone quiet recently, which shows that the measures which have been taken are working. The government’s plant protect service can do this test itself now. We only get the difficult cases. In this country the situation is under control but in Italy and the US long-horned beetles are damaging forests on a large scale.’

horned Beetle

A cross section of the trunk of a small Japanese maple. The bark has been eaten (top right) by the citrus long-horned beetle. The wood has been treated so as to be able to distinguish between different cells.



UNDER WATER

Does an oak remember a flood? In other words, is there such a thing as a flood tree ring and if so, how do you recognize it in the tree ring archive? Under controlled conditions Copini flooded 200 four-year-old oaks on a trial plot at the Sinderhoeve field station in Renkum. He varied both the period of flooding (from two to six weeks) and the timing in the growing season. The results are striking. 'Trees do not grow under water and therefore do not form tree rings,' says Copini. 'But right after the flooding a ring forms which has exceptionally small vessels. They are half the size of the usual vessels at most.' Copini sees the typical pattern as incontrovertible evidence that there has been flooding at the start of a growing season. But it does not reveal how long that flooding went on. 'The flooding could have been going on for months in the winter before it was recorded in the wood in the spring.' A winter flood that is over before spring is not 'remembered' at all. Colleagues of Copini's in Germany can build on this knowledge. 'They have series of tree rings from oaks going back to 8000 years before Christ. They are using them to make flood records now.'

Listening to LGBT refugees

Marloes Hofstede and Niko Holstege are regular visitors at the Leemkuil asylum seekers' centre where they talk with people who have fled their countries because of their sexual orientation.

Coming out about your sexual orientation is not very problematic in the Netherlands nowadays. Elsewhere in the world you can get the death penalty for being gay. The volunteers of Shout Wageningen, many of whom are students, offer a listening ear to people who have fled because of their sexual orientation.

text: Linda van der Nat / **photo:** Guy Ackermans

After her first conversation with refugees at the Leemkuil asylum-seekers' centre in Wageningen, Marlies Hofstede stood outside trembling. 'Two lesbian sisters from Georgia described a demonstration they were involved in,' says the Wageningen alumna. They showed footage on YouTube of a square full of people, and a bus in the middle. At first I thought, what a good turnout, but then they told me the demonstrators had been chased into the bus by the people on the square. In the bus people were beaten to death; you could see the blood splashing against the windows. Their story gave me a sleepless night. I thought: how am I going to cope if I have to listen to this kind of story every week?

Marloes Hofstede, who graduated from Wageningen University three years ago, and biology student Niko Holstege are volunteers with Shout, the Wageningen lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender association. In the spring of 2013, refugee organization Vluchtelingenwerk came knocking at the association's door because they needed help with talking to people who were refugees because of their orientation.

'No one at Vluchtelingenwerk could really help them,' says Marloes. 'At that time we were organizing information events at schools and parties and running talk groups for young people who had just come out. We had no experience of counselling refugees. But we thought it was so important that we expanded our activities.'

SCARS

Shout formed a support committee which responds to requests from Vluchtelingenwerk by going to the asylum-seekers' centre on the Keijenbergseweg to talk with homosexual refugees. They usually go in pairs, with one of the two being of the same orientation as the refugee. Marloes: 'It is good for the asylum-seeker to talk to someone of the same sex, and it is good for you to have someone to talk about it with afterwards.'

The volunteers in the support committee hear some terrible stories. Niko: 'These people have been rejected, mistreated, raped, or their partner has been murdered in front of them.

One man pulled up his shirt as we were talking, to show us the scars of the cruel torture he had been submitted to.'

The association has already held nearly 100 such interviews, mainly with people from Uganda, Iran, Russia and Nigeria, where homosexuality is not accepted or is even a criminal offense. Niko: 'We usually start our discussion by explaining what the situation is like in the Netherlands. We tell them that gays here have rights and do not have to be afraid of the police. That is a real revelation to many refugees.'

'It is a revelation to them that homosexuals have rights here'

Marloes adds: 'Some of them they are so scared that they still do not dare tell their story. But usually they talk non-stop for one and a half hours. They pour it all out and you can't get a word in edgeways. It is their coming out, as it were, and that is nice to see. For a lot of refugees their discussion with us is the first time they have been able to talk freely about their orientation. Some of them are very grateful and give you a big bear hug after the session, while for others it is still very difficult to accept.'

After each meeting the pair feel happy to live in the Netherlands. 'I have known I was gay since I was 12 and I came out during my student days,' says Niko. 'Everyone responded very positively to it. In the 12 years I have lived in Wageningen the worst experience I have had was to be shouted at by a few kids when I walked down the road hand-in-hand with my boyfriend.'

Marloes has had one negative experience since she came out. 'For five years I kept my horse with a strictly religious farmer here in Wageningen. Never had any problems until one day he came to tell me that my girlfriend and I were not welcome there together. He didn't want any 'abnormal behaviour' in front of his grandchildren. He meant the fact that my girlfriend and I would walk around arm in arm. In the end we moved to a friendly stables

where my girlfriend is welcome too.' However upsetting this may be, it cannot be compared to the experience of people in Africa who can be lynched if people find out they are gay, say Marloes and Niko.

SENT BACK

The most difficult conversations for them are those with people from countries with a homophobic climate, says Marloes. 'People who have fled countries like Uganda or Nigeria, where homosexuality is a criminal offence, stand a good chance of being allowed to stay here. Their stories are horrific but they do get to make a fresh start here. People who have fled Russia or Morocco are often sent back. Homosexuality is not a crime in those countries but it is still very difficult for a homosexual to live there. When you hear what they've been through it is terrible to know that they will have to go back to that life. Their stories always hit us harder.'

Niko talked, for example, to a 19-year-old gay man from Morocco. 'He had fallen into the hands of human traffickers and got involved in prostitution. After being arrested by the police he ended up at the asylum-seekers' centre in Wageningen. We talked to him a couple of times. At some point he had to go back to Morocco after all. He hadn't had any education, he came from a devoutly religious family, he had no money and no prospects. That boy had come too far out of the closet to go back now. How is someone like that supposed to manage? That made me feel so terribly powerless that I questioned what I was doing it all for.'

Marloes: 'Everyone finds themselves in the position at some point that you have been deeply touched by someone's story. It is very hard but the next time you are more distant. I find it worrying how immune I have got to their stories. Sometimes a few words are enough for me to know: you have had this or that experience. Unfortunately you need that emotional distance to be able to keep it up.' ®

In January Shout Wageningen will be starting a new Out Now group, a discussion group for students and young people who think or know that they are not heterosexual. More information at www.shoutwageningen.nl

TIME TO THROW OPEN THE HONOURS PROGRAMME?

Early this month three students argued for an open Honours Programme (HP) in an open letter to the Executive Board. They want ‘everyone who wants to and has the ability’ to have the opportunity to work towards excellence. Education Director Tiny van Boekel defends the current selection process but does not evade the discussion. Is it time to open the door more fully?

text: Milou van der Horst / **illustration:** Henk van Ruitenbeek

Robin van der Bles



Initiator of the open Honours Programme

‘We think that the current HP is fixated on having an arbitrarily narrow selection, the aim of which is to safeguard a certain level of quality in the programme. We believe that as a result talent is being passed over unnecessarily. We advocate investigating the possibility of a single integrated and flexible ‘open HP’, whereby everyone who wants to and has the ability is given the chance to demonstrate their best scientific performance. For students, it also needs to be easier to see how they can get more out of their programme. Many existing initiatives may well be getting too little exposure. **The university cannot justify spending Wageningen’s share of the ‘loan system millions’ on only a select group of 30 students,** while other talented people are left on the sidelines without their basic grant and an added academic challenge.’

Liede Lambriex



Student who left the HP after the introduction

‘I thought that my strengths were not being developed to the full by the activities we were doing. I saw too little sign of the enterprising, problem-solving element and interdisciplinary cooperation. And I found out that the possibilities offered

by the HP that I personally found appealing could also be created outside the HP. When I said that I was looking for depth, for example, I was able to do an extra research study for one of my courses. In addition, I was not in favour of the selection procedure. After the introductory course a selection was made based mainly on a single presentation that was supposed to reflect the group process. That meant group members fell by the wayside who had been really keen to do the HP and who would have been perfectly capable of doing it. The introductory course consisted largely of reading a single book, while I had expected much more variety from an introductory course. **I think an Open HP is a very good idea. If you offer different projects to everyone who wants to participate, selection will occur naturally.**’

Joris de Kok



Rejected HP student

‘After I was rejected for the HP I continued to hanker after extra challenge and development alongside my programme. Unfortunately, I soon realized that besides the HP the university offers little that arouses my interest.

Instead of giving up, I set to work doing Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs). So nevertheless I was able to continue my self-development and I have discovered new interests and ambitions. **The university is creating a huge hole by making the HP so select and offering few alternatives for self-development.** An open HP would largely solve this problem.’



Pieter Zuidema



HP lecturer and coach

'Unbelievably enjoyable activities are organized for HP students and it would be nice if these were also made available to others. The value of the HP lies in its being a broad two-year project much of whose content is not prescribed. The student learns a lot from dealing with this freedom and from forming a group. I would love to see many more students have this opportunity alongside their programme. **I am in favour of selection, even though it causes heartache for the suitable candidates who are not selected. Resources are limited and that is a fact we have to face.** The money that is supposed to come from abolishing student financing is not yet available. Quality agreements are now being made between universities. Until that time, the university must release its own funds and so it is understandable that we have selection.'

Erik-Jan Bijleveld



Master's student Biology & Forest and Nature Conservation

'I think there are also opportunities for self-development outside the HP and for getting more out of your programme, like a course to improve your writing skills. **But the HP itself**

must be something special that you cannot easily do. It needs to genuinely add something and in that case I understand that you have to meet quality criteria. Only it would be a bit harsh if the HP were very popular and a lot of people failed to get a place under a lottery system. It should not be like that.'

Caspar Swinkels



Master's student International Development

'During my Bachelor's degree in Utrecht I also followed an HP and there anyone with a 7.5 grade average could participate. I became very demotivated by the people there who were only taking the programme to get an extra annotation on their diploma. That is why I dropped out. **I believe that this kind of HP can be something cool if it is implemented well and quality is safeguarded, which also means selecting on the basis of motivation.** It is my belief, you see, that an inspiring environment must be created around the HP. And if then you still drop out, I think other options should also be available alongside your programme, such as taking more courses.' ③

Programme director Ingrid Hijman and academic director Ellis Hoffland of the Honours Programme were not available for comment.

There is life after grants

They were both worried about the effects of the abolition of Dutch government student funding and decided to join forces. Relations manager Hermien Miltenburg and student Carina Nieuwenweg will be hosting an evening on the theme of student funding on 9 November. 'Objective information is important because there are a lot of scary ideas doing the rounds.'

Hermien Miltenburg, relations manager for Wageningen University, has been travelling around the country for years providing information about higher education choices. Since the scrapping of the

basic grant hitherto provided for students by the Dutch government, she notices a big change among parents. 'Now they question whether their child ought to go to university, or they mainly look at profes-

sions in which a job is guaranteed. But financial reasons are not the right motivation for the choice of degree subject.'

Students themselves have been very preoccupied with money matters recently, too, says Hermien. 'Health care insurer Achmea recently conducted a survey to find out what the Dutch worried most about. Students turned out to worry most about money, even more than, say, mothers on benefit. Isn't that awful?'

Education should be about the subject matter, not about money worries, in Hermien's opinion. And she found an ally in student of Molecular Life Sciences Carina Nieuwenweg, who she meets regularly through various Wageningen activities. Carina: 'We talked about how important it is for students, parents and high school students to get objective information about the new loan system and money, because there are scares going around and people are unnecessarily anxious. After all, you are not the only one or the first person to have to manage on a tight budget, nor are you the only one who has to consider whether a course of studies is worth taking out a loan for, and whether you should be worried about a student debt. I thought it would be nice to join forces with a university staff member and tackle this, so I asked Hermien if we could organize something together.'

PASSION

Hermien took the first step towards organizing the evening at ex-rector magnificus Martin Kropff's farewell party. 'I

saw Job Cohen there and I thought: I need to talk to him. I followed him around all evening until he sat down in a quiet corner. After a glass of wine I had the courage to approach him.' Cohen, who chairs Wageningen UR's supervisory board, was willing to speak at the information evening. Hermien: 'He will emphasize that it always pays off to study, because it is an investment in yourself, which cannot be compared with something like taking out a mortgage. You should do a degree in a subject you are passionate about because that is the best guarantee of a job. You don't take long to get good at it either. The expectation is that people who are young now will work until they are 72. You cannot keep that up if you are not passionate about your work. And although a lot of people may be needed in ICT at the moment, that won't necessarily still be the case in ten years' time.'

Carina and Hermien managed to get funding from Nibud, the institute for budgeting education. They are making a film in which students talk about the money issues they face and Nibud comments on them. Carina also came up with the idea of sharing the tips for economizing which she drew up together with a student panel. One of these tips is to eat together, which leads to savings of 40 percent, as well as being sociable and giving you a chance to exchange recipes. The tips are being collected in a digital flyer so everyone can benefit from them.  MvdH

The information evening *Wijzer met Geld (Wiser with money)* will be held on 9 November from 19.30 to 21.30 in Orion.

You can register at www.wageningenur.nl/wijzermetgeld.



PHOTO: GUY ACKERMANS

Student Carina Nieuwenweg and relations manager Hermien Miltenburg are running an evening on the theme of students and money.

Argo rower 'sour' about good race

Last weekend student Marten Breeuwer finished in fifteenth place at the Head of the Charles Regatta, a prestigious rowing event in Boston Massachusetts. An impressive performance but not one he is satisfied with. 'Everything went wrong.'

Jetlag is not the only factor fuelling his bad mood. Agrotechnology student Marten Breeuwer has not yet overcome his disappointment at losing the race on Sunday. 'I have mixed feelings. Coming 15 out of 41 participants is not bad at all. But the training sessions went so well that it should have been possible to finish among the top three. Not managing to achieve that - that is what we are all feeling really sour about.'

Put together specially for international races like this one, the eight-strong team from Minerva Rowing Club had just completed a perfect week of preparations, says Marten. 'The weather was good and we had a good boat. We were going so fast that our times were ap-



Marten Breeuwer (fourth from left) during one of the promising training sessions in Boston.

proaching the course records. We knew that if everything went well we would win.'

But everything went wrong, says Marten. 'Race day was a fair bit colder than the preceding days. When we had to start I had no control over the blade, my wrists were that cold. A biting wind was blowing that almost overturned the boat. Of course everyone finds the

weather conditions difficult, but it meant we couldn't get the stroke length we'd achieved in training. Our strokes simply weren't good enough.'

This was why Minerva was unable to overtake its competitors' boat in time, which meant they were forced to take the outside of every bend. 'We were giving it all we had, yet that cost us a huge amount of

time.' To cap it all, the gentlemen received a five-second penalty, 'no idea what for'. Ultimately, they completed the course 17 seconds slower than the winners.

He knows that he should be really proud of his achievement, but 'it is still a bit too early for that'. 'Losing is part of the game, but if you didn't row a good race either, then it simply leaves a sour taste.' **LvdN**

Teacher of the Year jury wants new names

The Teacher of the Year election is under way again. Students who have been studying in Wageningen for at least one year can vote for their favourite teacher until 6 November. Jaco Slingerland, chair of the six-person student jury for the annual prize would like to see some new faces on the list.

The long list of the most popular teachers tends to feature the same names every year. Understandable, says Jaco. 'I myself was taught by Teachers of the Year such as André van Lammeren, Arie Terlouw and Dolf Weijers and those are the lectures I can remember most clearly.' Nevertheless, he thinks the Teacher of the Year Award is a nice

opportunity to pay attention to teachers who always just miss the mark. Teachers who go on developing continuously and deserve appreciation and encouragement for that. 'Perhaps there is too much focus now on the crème de la crème.'

The jury will hold discussions with the 15 teachers who get the most votes and put together a shortlist of five. The six students are interested in the question of what teachers do to ensure progress for themselves and for students. They want to know, for instance, whether the teachers keep up with recent developments in their field, whether they use social media, stimulate students to look



beyond the boundaries of their own field and take an interest in the students' personal development. **LvdN**

Chairperson Jaco Slingerland (second from right) and the other members of the student jury for the annual Teacher of the Year election.

DUPED

We are not the only creatures who enjoy coffee. Bees like a double espresso too, suggests research by the University of Sussex. And flowers make good use of the fact by mixing a pinch of caffeine into poorer quality pollen. Bees fall for it. Nature goes ersatz.

SWEETENERS

Rewards and sleep help us learn better, say Viennese scientists in the journal *eLife*. Test subjects had to remember pairs of pictures and were given a dollar for some of the pairs. They recalled these pairs significantly better, especially if the learning phase was concluded with a power nap. Potential there for a new teaching method. A jar of sweets on teacher's desk and a compulsory nap at the end of every lesson.

HOMO TEST

Are homosexuals genetically different? Yes, say researchers at UCLA. In a twin study they succeeded in selected nine fragments of DNA which are clearly different in gays. The difference lies in the methylation pattern of the DNA. The test is not watertight yet, though. In three out of ten cases the difference doesn't tell you anything about the person's orientation. Or have they just not come out yet?

MONGOLIAN

The dog is descended from the wolf. But where and when did that happen? Geneticists from Cornell University think they have the answer to this burning question. They analysed DNA from 549 stray dogs from 38 countries around the world. Conclusion: dogs evolved from wolves between five and ten thousand years ago on and around the Mongolian plateau.



Student duo chair programme committee

It is a first in the history of Wageningen university: two students chairing a programme committee. On 12 October, Master's students Wim Bosschaart and Bart Steman were unanimously elected as co-chairpersons of the programme committee for Landscape Architecture and Planning.

Admittedly, they were a little surprised back in February when Jan Philipsen, the programme director and then chairperson of the programme committee, sounded them out about the position. By then, Bart and Wim had been members of the programme committee for some time and had voiced their opinions strongly in the discussions about educational changes to the Bachelor's and Master's of Landscape Architecture and Planning.

ture and Planning.

Wim: 'It felt like a reward for our involvement, but it was quite something to give a student so much responsibility.' Bart: 'I was taken a bit by surprise but at the same time I thought this was an opportunity we must grasp. When do you ever get the chance to influence your own education so directly?'

The guys wanted per se to do this jointly. 'On your own, the responsibility is simply too great,' says Wim. Moreover the students know each other well. They were board members of student association Genius Loci at the same time, have regularly worked together on assignments and they cycle together. 'We know each other's strengths and weaknesses,' says Bart. That trust, they believe, is essential to taking this step together. 'The learning effect is



Bart Steman (left) and Wim Bosschaart are the first Wageningen students to chair a programme committee.

greatest when you can rely on each other and can reflect together.'

Wim and Bart see their chairpersonship as a chance to increase student involvement in the programme. Wim: 'Previously we could raise topics in the meetings, now we can set the parameters of what will be discussed. Students with a complaint or suggestion can collar us in the lunch break and the next day, so to speak, it will be on the agenda of the programme committee.' **LvdN**



PHOTO: GUY ACKERMANS

Kick-off for new sports hall

With the help of strong cables, Thymos board members Romy Willemsen and Martijn van der Vis installed a staircase in the new sports hall at Sports Centre De Bongerd on Monday 19 October. This marked the offi-

cial kick-off of the construction work.

The expansion of De Bongerd is expected to be completed by February. Completion was actually planned for the end of this year but the construction work has

suffered several delays. First, the noise permit was incorrect, later the re-routing of the gas pipeline caused delay. A further minor delay ensued when the new gas pipe was accidentally hit during excavation work. **LvdN**

EPISODE 59 - MORTIERSTRAAT 14B <<

Text
Liza
van Kapel

Derk

Filippo

Bianca

Vera

Willem-Jan

Vecino

The story so far: Willem-Jan is keeping up his reputation as the eternal student. Besides this, after having a long-term crush on Bianca, he met a nice girl at the sports night event.

Motivation

‘You are going to do what?’ chuckled Derk, as they sat having breakfast. ‘Going to uni to study,’ said Willem-Jan. Exam week was coming around again, and he was hoping to finally knock a number of retakes on the head. He knew perfectly well that he wasn’t known for having his head in the books, but being laughed at like this by Derk and Filippo irritated him. ‘If I really set my mind to it, I can pass an exam, you know!’

‘Okay, you know what?’ said Derk, ‘If you pass your retake first time round, then erm...’ he glanced round the kitchen, ‘Filippo and I will do your washing-up for a month. And if you don’t, you do ours. A little extra motivation.’ ‘Deal!’ said Willem-Jan.

A few hours later, however, he was not feeling quite so upbeat. He was sitting in the beeb where he had been staring at the same assignment for eons and as the minutes ticked by he understood less and less of it. After he had arrived at the wrong answer for the hundredth time, he threw his pen away in frustration.

‘Ouch!’ Willem-Jan looked up and recognized those freckles all too well. It was the girl whom he had got to know at the sports night. The idea of studying flew right out his head. ‘You okay?’ he asked feeling startled. She looked at him and said with a smile, ‘Yeah, sure, I’m not made of glass. But you don’t seem to be doing so well.’



ILLUSTRATIONS: KIM PETERSE

Willem-Jan felt his nervousness ebbing away and even felt the urge to laugh. ‘Yes, I’ve got to pass a retake at the end of this week, and it is totally not going to happen.’ He hesitated. ‘And as well as credits, I’m afraid there is also a month’s washing-up at stake.’ She walked over to his table. ‘A bet? Then I’d like to help you.’ She sat down beside him and Willem-Jan felt himself blushing. ‘Oh, I had this only last period,’ she said, reaching for his books. He stared at her in amazement. The girl noticed his gaze. ‘I’m Michelle. Shall I help you? I got an eight for it.’ She blushed, and that made him like her even more. Two weeks later he came waltzing into the lounge, a washing-up brush and pair of rubber gloves in hand. ‘Here you go!’ he said, pressing them triumphantly into Derk and Filippo’s hands. ‘You passed?’ asked Derk astounded. ‘Yes, got an eight! You were right, it was simply a question of a little extra motivation.’

Resource follows events at Mortierstraat 14B

Students with disabilities satisfied

Wageningen University meets the needs of students with a disability better than other Dutch universities, suggests a study by the Centre for Higher Education Information (CHOI) commissioned by the *Handicap + Studie* foundation.

Wageningen University scored higher than other universities on all points, reveals the report *Stu-*

deren met een handicap, published on 15 October. That is nothing new, actually. Old news bulletins on the Wageningen UR intranet mention that the university has topped the list every year since 2008.

The CHOI reports that the number of students with a handicap has gone up in five years from 6.5 to 9.4 percent. No reason is given for this increase. As a matter of

fact, Wageningen University has been saying for years that just under 10 percent of the students has a disability. The commonest disabilities are dyslexia, concentration problems and ADHD.

The report *Studeren met een handicap* also says that, in contrast to previous years, the provision at applied science universities is almost as good as at academic ones.

KG



>> PARTIES

The best parties according to Wageningen Uitgaans Promotie. Check www.wageningenup.nl for all parties.

WAGENINGEN UP

CAFÉ DANIELS - NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD HALLOWEEN PARTY

Saturday 31 October from 22:00 to 04:00

Following the success of previous years, Café Daniels is throwing another all-American Halloween party. Around ten o'clock the café will change into a dark, bloody cave full of vampires, sexy dead brides and other horrors. Get out your scariest gear out and groove to numbers by dead artists.

WAGENINGEN - PALM PROCESSION

Wednesday 4 November from 17:00 to 04:00

The annual Doppelpalm procession is a fixture in Wageningen. If you have never been, now is your chance. For only 10euros you get a palm beer in the participating cafés, as well as a fancy

hat. The afterparty is in Café Het Gat, so the partying will go on deep into the night.

WAGENINGEN - ROOMSERVICE

Thursday 5 November from 20:00 to 01:00

Not to be missed! For the ninth time Wageningen student rooms (plus the public library) will turn into little theatres and music clubs where artists will pour their comic, dramatic, musical or poetic talents into a half-hour show. Guests cycle or walk from room to room to enjoy the shows in a cosy atmosphere from sagging sofas. Put your own programme together by choosing three shows at 20.00, 21.00 and 22.00 and order tickets (with student discount, from the Forum, Leeuwenborch or info.sg@wur.nl). The afterparty starts at 23.00 in Café Loburg. **Ⓜ**

>> THE WORKS

'TEA AND CAKE ON THE VERANDA EVERY DAY'

Who? Sean Sauren, Bachelor's student Biology (Health & Disease)

What? Research on malaria medicine Coarten

Where? Kenya, Mbita, Nyanza Province

'For my thesis I researched the influence of the malaria medicine Coarten on a person's odour profile, and thus on how appealing mosquitoes find people. Together with someone who was familiar with the local area, I distributed nylon socks to the residents. They had to wear the socks for 20 hours, after which I collected them and put them in the freezer, ready for later research. The idea is that mosquitoes find a particular scent attractive and I was studying the effect of age in this respect.

Between the studies, I also travelled widely in Kenya. For example, I visited the Rondo Retreat, a resort designed in a style that takes you right back to 1920. That was really cool. Every day at 4 o'clock we were served tea and cake on the veranda and there were apes in the nearby trees who would be sociable and come and take a look. So you really felt like you were back in the colonial era. Luckily, we did have modern conveniences, such as a fridge.

As well as the bungalow we had our own guide. On one occasion we got up at 5 a.m. to go into the Kakamega Rainforest. That is the most beautiful place I have ever seen. It is bursting with greenery and wild animals. We walked a little way into the rainforest and stood on a large vol-

canic hill. Standing there, I saw the most beautiful sunrise of my life. Travelling itself was difficult because the traffic is truly chaotic. It is very frightening. You see buses with tree trunks ten metres long strapped to the roof. People overtake by accelerating rapidly and there is no trace of any traffic regulations. Once, we wanted to turn the car around on the street because we had missed a turning. Suddenly a pikipiki, a sort of motorbike, appeared from behind a truck. The drive scraped along the side of our car, fell heavily and rolled a fair way across the road. We quickly stopped and I gave the man first aid and took him to a clinic. He was lucky not to be badly injured.' **Ⓜ** **AJ**

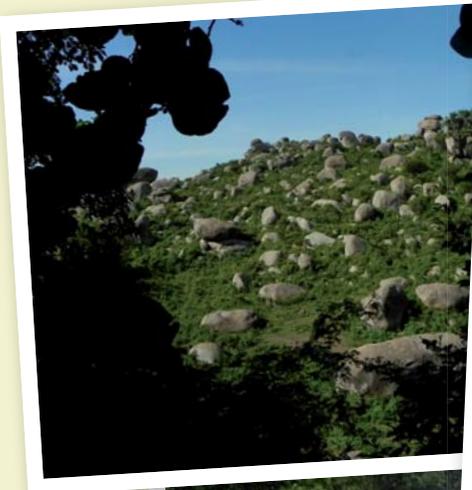




PHOTO: THOMAS KOCH/SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

MEANWHILE IN... <<

Meanwhile in... Turkey

In the news: Turkey is going to the polls again on 1 November. President Erdogan's AK party was unable to form a coalition and now hopes to regain the absolute majority it had before the elections in June. Tension is mounting.

Commentary by Eyup Oztutuncu, Master's student of Plant Biotechnology

'In the last elections the AK party lost some of its power to the pro-Kurdish party HDP, to Erdogan's great annoyance. That led to provocations by Erdogan and to bomb attacks by the terrorist Kurdish party PKK.

The refugee crisis is influencing the coming election. The majority of the Turks see the Syrian refugees as people we should help. They are fleeing war and beheadings. Sending them back is not an option. At the moment there are two million refugees in our country. We share the same religion but we have a different language and culture. That causes problems. Look at Europe – there the reception of 40,000 people divided over 28 member states was enough to cause chaos.

Some of the refugees are travelling on to the EU. Turkey is not doing anything to prevent that; it's not our business. And yet our country is now taking a lot of refugees from the EU. We are getting money for that, which we can invest in education and accommodation for refugees. We don't have much choice either, because negotiations for admission to the EU are under way. Add to that the economic stagnation of recent years and the tensions in neighbouring countries and you have tense elections.

There was a lot of fuss in the Netherlands because Turks living here got a letter from the AK party urging them to vote for the party. I don't see the problem there. Surely every party has the right to canvass? An absolute majority for Erdogan would be disastrous. It reeks of autocracy and that is never a good thing. I don't think it will happen. Erdogan will probably have to share power and things will calm down after the elections. **R LdP**

More news every day at resource-online.nl



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in memoriam**Hans Verver**

Hans Verver passed away on 11 October at the age of 69. He occupied key posts at our university for more

than 25 years.

Hans Verver came in as a business law expert in the early nineteen seventies and worked in the administration of the then agricultural college of higher education. For true and creative business lawyers there was enough to do in that period of transition from higher education college to university. In the exciting times of the 'Wageningen Spring' Hans kept his cool and provided the executive board with solid, well-considered advice. He later became clerk to the faculty, in which capacity he was a pillar of strength to the faculty management and council. Throughout

those years, too, the government bombarded universities with one educational reform after another. It was vital to have a competent jurist such as Hans Verver in a key position, like a beacon in a stormy sea. He then became head of the department of Education and Research Policy and Student Affairs. These were the years in which agricultural Wageningen came under a lot of pressure. A complex concentration of agricultural institutions was in the offing and constructive, creative approaches were needed. Hans did not cling doggedly to the existing order but was able once again to display flexibility exactly when it was needed.

Hans Verver made an important contribution to the long run-up to the splendid WUR of today. As his erstwhile colleagues we treasure fine memories of years of friendship and constructive collaboration on Wageningen's flourishing business.

Piet Aben, Paul den Besten, Hans van Kamp, Henk van den Hoofdakker, John Schuilenburg, Theo Theijse

Hugo van der Meer

Much to our distress, Hugo van der Meer is no longer with us. Hugo died at home with his

wife and daughters in the morning of Saturday 3 October after a short period in which he realized he was terminally ill. He declined all treatment of uncertain effectiveness.

Although he had been retired for eight years and said his goodbyes officially with a symposium five years ago, Hugo continued to cycle in to Radix almost every day until a few months ago. Why stop doing what he liked doing best in the whole world? Hugo always found questions he wanted to answer together with his colleagues. And that has been denied him now, doubtless to his own regret. Hugo was capable of going straight to the heart of complicated matters, and of expressing them very concisely. People came to rely on him for his extensive experience in the field, both at home and abroad, and his steady, analytical way of looking at things. He was not a man for 'trending topics' but he did like to grapple with the big issues of the day, such as the role of livestock in climate change, and to do so on the basis of sound systematic knowledge. In Hugo we have lost an ever-enquiring, critical, expert and committed colleague who never settled for less than his best. His scientific quest was empirical and kept him busy day and night. Calm, honest, reliable and sincere, to-the-point but never offensive: that was Hugo through and through. This was experienced by a great many people in Wageningen, up to the highest echelons. In the latter stages of his career particularly, he had regular and mutually appreciated contact with young researchers and PhD candidates in Wageningen UR. We wish Riet, their daughters and the whole family strength to bear their loss.

*Raymond Jongschaap, Business Unit Manager Agrosystems Science
Ernst van den Ende, PSG director*

classifieds**PrintMyDoc', new for WUR students: printing from your own device**

Just register once and you can easily send print jobs to a WUR printer from your smartphone, laptop or tablet. Mail your document to WageningenUR@PrintMyDoc.nl and get it from any WUR printer using your WUR card. If you want more control over what the print looks like, use the upload function. Register at <https://wageningenur.printmydoc.nl/login.aspx>

Wanted: female participants for an eating study (the Breaknunch study)

We are looking for Dutch-speaking women students to participate in a study between 9 and 17 November at the Restaurant of the Future on the campus. All in one day you will get a free breakfast, lunch and a surprise gift. Info and registration: aikaterini.palascha@wur.nl

Borrowing sheet music and instruments

One of the aims of the Van Uven foundation is to promote musical activities among Wageningen students. If you would like to play more classical music and are you looking for sheet music for yourself or your ensemble, come to the foundation's music library. We also lend out music instruments. The VUS library has a lot of sheet music, singing scores and music literature collected by Professor Van Uven. The very special originals can be studied in the library and we will lend you a photocopy if you wish. You can also borrow things on the internet. Library opening times: third Thursday of the month from 20.00 to 22.00. Location: General Foulkesweg 1A, Wageningen.

Hibhoppers Wageningen

Exercise is good for you, and that goes for people with heart problems too. The sports and games group of the Hibhoppers foundation runs a special programme for them in Wageningen. The programme offers a sensible and varied programme. On Monday mornings and Wednesday people exercise

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and work on their fitness in the gym in the Nude with great enthusiasm. Those from other neighbourhoods are most welcome.

WWW.HIBOPPERS.NL

Participants wanted for smell panel

Do you have a good nose and a lot of spare time? Would you like to earn some easy money? Buro Blauw in Wageningen is looking for people for a smell panel. Info & signing up: geurlab@buroblauw.nl or call 0317 466699. Ask for Jacco, Marianne or Nienke.

WWW.BUROBLAUW.EU

agenda

Thursday 29 October to
Wednesday 11 November

FILMS FOR STUDENTS

At filmhouse Movie W: *While We're Young*, a hilarious tragicomedy about differences between generations; *Theeb*, an adventure movie about a Bedouin boy in the desert during World War I; *Citizenfour*, a blood-curdling account of Edward Snowden and governments' phone-tapping practices; *The Wolfpack*, a bizarre tale of six brothers who grow up cut off from the outside world, only watching movies; *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*, a razor-sharp SF classic that goes beyond its genre and raises current social issues.

WWW.MOVIE-W.NL

Tuesday 3 November, 18.45 –
21.30

SYMPOSIUM IN HONOUR OF SEMPER FLORENS' THIRD JUBILEE: 'THE FUTURE OF AGRICULTURE'

Biotechnological and organic approaches tend to be seen as two different things in contemporary agriculture. But how different are these approaches in reality? The symposium aims to provide an overview of knowledge from different fields to provide the basis for creating visions of sustainable agriculture in the future. Speakers: Ernst van den Ende, director of PSG; Wim Grunewald of the Flemish Institute for Biotechnology; Edith Lammerts van Bueren of the Louis Bolk Institute & WUR; Ruud

Huirne, director of Food & Agri Nederland at the Rabobank; Martin van Ittursum, professor in the Plant Production Systems chair group. Costs €5. Location: Forum room C222 (reception in Grand Café).

WWW.SEMPER-FLORENS.NL

Thursday 5 November from 22.00 FLORA & SAUNA: FULL SPEED IN YOUR BATHROBE

Semper Florens is celebrating its 15th anniversary with an open party. And no ordinary open party but a foam party! Entrance: €3. Location: Café Het Gat, Herenstraat 31 Wageningen.

WWW.SEMPER-FLORENS.NL

Friday 6 November, 8.30 – 18.00 IFSA WORKSHOP AND SYMPOSIUM ABOUT WATER STORAGE BEHIND DYKES.

In an intensive workshop on a farm in the Wieringermeer students develop a plan and give their own views on cooperation. During the afternoon symposium ideas are exchanged and there is networking between academics and professionals, and a Chinese Mitten Crab buffet.

FIND OUT MORE AND SIGN UP AT
WWW.I-FSA.ORG/WIERINGERMEER

Thursday 6 and 20 November
9.15 – 17.00

YOUNG KLV – TWO-DAY WORKSHOP ON PERSONAL LEADERSHIP – FLOW! (IN DUTCH)

Are you in the final stages of your studies or have you graduated? Then it is important to know what inspires you and what your talents are so you can steer your own course and take firm steps towards getting into a good flow. Using the 'appreciative enquiry' method you will work with a number of creative and analytical techniques in groups of six to eight participants. Costs KLV members €95; non-members €120. Location: Impulse, Wageningen.

WWW.KLV.NL

Sunday 8 November 16.30 – 19.00 JAZZ JAM SESSION IN CAFÉ DE ZAAIER

We play jazz standards as well as

funk and bossa and free improvisations. Keyboards, base guitar and drums are provided and there is a small sound system for voice and other instruments that need amplification. Everyone is very welcome, both experienced and starting musicians. Of course you are also welcome to just come and listen and enjoy the nice music.

WWW.JAZZINWAGENINGEN.NL

Wednesday 25 November
12.30 – 17.30

VHL: AFTERNOON SYMPOSIUM 'RESILIENT FOOD LANDSCAPES'

With speakers Paul Opdam, Willem Ferwerda and Wouter van Eck, workshops and poster presentations.

Location: Van Hall Larenstein University of Applied Sciences, Larensteinselaan 26a, Velp. For information and to sign up:

www.hogeschoolvhl.nl/Agenda

Deadline for submissions: one week before publication date (max. 75 words)
Email: resource@wur.nl

Nu in de boekhandel en webshops:
(ook als eBook)

De sociale dimensie van de opwarming

Nijssen & Walter

We dreigen te stranden op klimaat. Maar zijn verdeeld. Welke aanpak brengt ons op één lijn en mobiliseert alle krachten?

colophon

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Address

Akkermaalsbos 14, 6708 WB Wageningen (Nexus, Building 117, bode 31).
POBox 409 6700 AK Wageningen.
Secretariat: Thea Kuijpers,
resource@wur.nl, 0317 484020
Website: www.resource-online.nl
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Editorial staff

- Edwin van Laar (editor-in-chief)
edwin.vanlaar@wur.nl, 0317 482997
- Lieke de Kwant (editor)
lieke.dekwant@wur.nl, 0317 485320
- Roelof Kleis (ecology, social sciences, economy),
roelof.kleis@wur.nl, 0317 481721
- Koen Guiking (web editor)
koen.guiking@wur.nl, 0317 488190
- Linda van der Nat (students, education)
linda.vandernat@wur.nl, 0317 481725
- Rob Ramaker (nutrition, fisheries),
rob.ramaker@wur.nl, 0317 481709
- Albert Sikkema (plant sciences, animal sciences, organization)
albert.sikkema@wur.nl, 0317 481724

Aan Resource werken mee

Guy Ackermans, Jeroen Bok, Ton van den Born, Alexandra Branderhorst, Stijn van Gils, Aart-Jan van de Glind, Yvonne de Hilster, Hoger Onderwijs Persbureau, Milou van der Horst, Amy Jansen, Nicole Janssen, Iris Keizer, Jan-Willem Kortlever, Sander de Kraker, Kito, Hilde de Laat, Sven Menschel, Carina Nieuwenweg, Rik Nijland, Derek Pan, Kim Peterse, Camilla Ponte, Lucas du Pré, Simone Rijlaarsdam, Henk van Ruitenbeek, Eva van Schijndel, Kristina Simonaityte, Twan van der Slikke, Joris Tielens, Pascal Tieman, Kees van Veluw, Veronika Wehner, Daniël Dreadson, Rob de Winter, Remo Wormmeester

Design

Geert-Jan Bruins

Translators

Clare McGregor, Susie Day, Clare Wilkinson

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Advertising

External: Bureau van Vliet, T 023-5714745
m.dewit@bureauvanvliet.com
Internal (reduced rate): Thea Kuijpers,
resource@wur.nl. T 0317 484020

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>>TYPICAL DUTCH



Cold climate, warm welcome

I hate the Dutch weather and I don't like Dutch food. Those are the two things that I complain the most about here in Holland. But ironically, despite the bad weather and the tasteless food, I always feel at home and accepted here.

I am non-white, non-European, I wear a headscarf and I don't speak the mother tongue of this country. When I was living in the United States, those unique qualities of mine were not widely accepted, and I still face prejudice when I travel around the globe. People stare at me because of the piece of cloth on my head, I get judged because of my skin colour, accent and even origin. However, that is not the case here.

I'm surprised to see a quiet room in Radix where I can say my prayers. I'm impressed when my Dutch acquaintances know about the festivals that I celebrate. I'm delighted when strangers greet me in Dutch. I feel relieved when the locals do not mind that I can't speak the language and most importantly I'm happy when my Dutch friends and I laugh and joke about the stereotypes that we have about each other. And that is what I find unique about this country: how neutral and accepting the Dutch are towards people from different backgrounds.

It is true that the Dutch are cold, like to complain, are straightforward and have stereotypes about you, but once you talk to them and get to know each other better, they will welcome you with open arms. Over here, I'm not judged on my appearance or my beliefs. Rather people see me as an individual and treat me respectfully. Never mind the bad weather and tasteless food.

📍 Mas Muniroh binti Mohd Nadzir, PhD candidate in Plant Breeding, from Malaysia

I'm happy when my Dutch friends and I laugh about our stereotypes about each other

Do you have a nice anecdote about your experience of going Dutch? Send it in! Describe an encounter with Dutch culture in detail and comment on it briefly. 300 words max. Send it to resource@wur.nl and earn 25 euros and Dutch candy.