

## Goodbye UR

From now on University & Research in full | **p.6 and 16** |

## Smart farmers

'Farmers around 1800 were more advanced than us' | **p.20** |

## Soil monsters

Would English-taught BSc affect quality? | **p.22** |

# RESOURCE <sup>[EN]</sup>

For everyone at Wageningen University & Research

no 3 – 8 September 2016 – 11th Volume



When is an  
internship  
too risky? p.12

**INTERNATIONAL  
EDITION**



# >> JANDIRK + VILLA ARION

Jandirk Bulens, Geo-information researcher at Alterra

## 'I love old houses'

Are there any (older) Wageningen alumni for whom it doesn't bring back memories? The Accommodation Office, student union WSO, the Reduktioburo, the stencil machine in the office, the CAID... Villa Arion is part of Wageningen student DNA. Jandirk Bulens bought the listed building from the university four years ago and set about a long renovation process. A labour of love and skill. The late 19th century doctor's house is almost restored to all its former glory. Want to see it? Parts of the building are rented out for meetings, cookery workshops and B&B. See [www.villa-arion.nl](http://www.villa-arion.nl).

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This ornamental flower started life as a Japanese treat



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## WUR AWAY

I met the man with the flag at one of the flagpoles in front of the Forum building. He was trying to untangle a rope. Because the flag had to come down. A colleague came over, a new flag draped over his tattooed arm. As white as snow. 'Is this the new flag in the new house style?' I asked. He had no idea and said he always hoists a new flag at the start of an academic year. A bit later I saw the old logo flapping in the breeze. Now I know a lot of people don't see the point of it. A waste of money, they say. And yet your brand name is your identity. The choice of that identity is always debatable, as is the way it is expressed. In the end it's a question of getting used to it. I admit that 'Jan Jansen of Alterra' trips off the tongue a bit more easily than 'Jan Jansen of Wageningen Environmental Research'. Personally what pleases me most is that I'm allowed to say WUR again. The penalty for using this abbreviation in the past few years fell just short of corporal punishment. The new name has been in force since yesterday. Let me just take a look on [www.wur.nl](http://www.wur.nl) and then I'll check the flag.

*Edwin van Laar*



>> Students in China get water-saving 'pee pass' | p.26

# ‘WE NEED TO UNDERSTAND THE SOCIAL SIDE OF INNOVATIONS’

- Louise Fresco stands in for keynote speaker Juma
- ‘Charismatic scientists, use your talent’

Wageningen University & Research launched the new academic year on Monday with a quest for ways of reducing resistance to innovation. ‘In some ways the world has turned upside down,’ said Louise Fresco, president of Wageningen University & Research, on Monday in Orion. In countries once considered backward by their colonial rulers, new technology is being eagerly embraced. Memories of poverty are only one generation away, and technology seems the best solution. Meanwhile among middle-class westerners there is growing distrust and a yearning for everything that is ‘natural’, ‘GMO-free’ and ‘artisanal’.

This resistance is a recurring theme in Fresco’s lectures. On Monday she mixed her ideas with those of Harvard professor Calestous Juma. The invited keynote speaker, author of *Innovation and its enemies*, had to cancel at the last minute for personal reasons.

If you want to make innovations acceptable, you need to be aware of their social aspects, says Fresco. For example, people will never accept something which positions them outside



PHOTO: JONNE SEIJDEL

their group. They may also have been raised with belief systems which stand in the way of acceptance. ‘People don’t believe facts, they believe other people.’

Yet Fresco notes that there is still a widely shared realization that science can provide answers. This means scientists can do a lot to increase acceptance of their work. They should

not ‘oversell’ their work but should talk in terms of ‘plausible benefits’. Fresco also thinks there is a lot to be said for a new kind of incubator: a safe (possibly online) space where people can think about new technologies. But her main appeal was to all charismatic scientists with the ability to tell a story with passion. They should use that talent, she said. **RR**

## BETTER HEALTH INSURANCE FOR PHD CANDIDATES

- New deal with insurance company Aon
- No longer necessary to pay deposit in hospital

Wageningen PhD candidates on a grant can once again visit the Gelderse Vallei hospital in Ede without first having to pay a deposit of 300 euros. The Expat Centre Food Valley has arranged a new policy with the insurance company Aon, which offers more comprehensive cover for healthcare costs at a slightly higher price.

PhD candidates on grants and non-European Master’s students

are not able to get standard health insurance in the Netherlands because they don’t have an employment contract. However they still need health insurance in order to qualify for a residence permit. That is why Wageningen University & Research had arranged a kind of extensive travel insurance policy with Aon. It covered the costs of GP and dentist visits and a range of hospital treatments, but treatments for pre-existing condition were excluded.

The latter aspect led to discussions between the insurance company and the Gelderse Vallei hospital, which deals with a relatively large number of international stu-

dents and PhD candidates from Wageningen. At the start of the year, the hospital decided it had had enough and started charging the international students and PhD candidates. They often had to pay a 300 euro deposit before they could get a treatment or blood test.

The new group insurance policy that the Expat Center has arranged with Aon should put an end to that problem for PhD candidates on grants. The new policy is similar to the basic health insurance for Dutch people. PhD candidates with this policy are given a Dutch Health Card with a ‘VECOZO’ code. This code means hospitals can be certain that the health

insurer will cover the costs of basic care. The hospital invoices the insurance company directly and PhD candidates do not have to pay the hospital any deposits or invoices, says Petra Krop at the Expat Center. It took her six months to negotiate this deal with Aon.

Krop stresses that the new insurance policy is not available for Wageningen Bachelor’s and Master’s students. ‘Aon was not prepared to discuss that yet.’

About 500 Wageningen PhD candidates and their families are eligible for the new insurance every year. The new policy came into effect on 1 September. **AS**



## BOARD WANTS SIX ENGLISH-TAUGHT BACHELOR'S PROGRAMMES

### • Plan is in line with further internationalization.

The executive board wants to make six of Wageningen's 19 Bachelor's degree programmes English-language. This is a resolution pending approval by the WUR council. If the plan gets the go-ahead, the programmes will be taught in English from 1 September 2018.

The six Bachelor's programmes concerned are Biology; Forest & Nature Management; Soil, Water, Atmosphere; International Land and

Water Management; Environmental Sciences and Food Technology.

The discussion about English-language Bachelor's programmes has been going on for some time. It is thought that it would enable Wageningen University to attract more foreign students, Arthur Mol previously told *Resource*. The resulting international classroom would be a good thing for Dutch students too, thinks the rector. At the same time, Mol does understand the concern that the use of English might put off some Dutch secondary school students.

All Master's programmes offered by Wageningen University & Research are taught entirely in English. In the Bachelor's programmes Dutch is still the official language of communication for the first two years, but the third year is taught in English.

A survey conducted by *Resource* during the AID revealed that 90 percent of first-year Bachelor's students do not see the English language as an obstacle. **RR**

*In the Opinion feature on p. 22, teachers air their views on the English-language Bachelor's.*

## © COLUMN | STIJN

### Skiving

I never skived as a student. Not once. I do now, regularly. I am ashamed of it so to compensate, I am fairly open about it. If someone asks what I'm going to do on a skive-day, I just say, 'Oh, skive off.' Strikes me as a smart strategy because the other person thinks I'm joking, leaving me free to confess my academic misconduct. The reason I skive is as painful as it is funny: I skive so I can teach. It works like this: I am not working for the university but for a non-WUR research institute. As its name suggests, our main work at this institute is research. But I enjoy teaching too. Skiving off to teach is therapeutic for me. After teaching ecology to first-year students all morning, I feel useful again and I can work on longer with renewed self-confidence. Sadly, skiving is not a good business model. With annual student growth at 10 percent and budget growth at 2 percent, Wageningen education is less and less profitable. Education is already a loss-making activity for the chair group where I skive. For a while I hoped that would change. The four technical universities (Wageningen is a bit technical too) threatened to cap admissions if their budget didn't grow. Secretly I was already dreaming of being hired legally on the strength of that extra budget, and showing my students around without any guilt feelings. Those hopes were soon dashed. Minister Jet Bussemaker announced straightaway that an admissions cap is fine by her. So for now I'll go on skiving. Hopefully after my PhD I'll find another employer who is willing to tolerate my skiving. **R**

**Stijn van Gils** (29) is doing doctoral research on ecosystem services in agriculture. Every month he describes his struggles with the scientific system.



### in brief

#### >> MEXICAN PHD CANDIDATE 'Inspiring example'

PhD candidate Tania Martinez received Mexico's National Youth Prize personally from President Enrique Peña Nieto. She won the prize for her services to science and her inspiring example. In her acceptance speech she stressed the need to invest in education for 15 million indigenous Mexicans, the poorest sector of the country's population. Martinez is one of the

few who have managed to escape that predicament. She has been working on her PhD with the Knowledge, Technology and Innovation chair group in Wageningen since 2013. Martinez is thinking of

spending some of her prize money on a documentary about social injustice in Mexico. **RR**



and 29 September in Orion. The setup is similar to that of the well-known TED talks. WUR has taken the idea on board and will continue the series, starting with previous Teachers of the Year but welcoming other storytellers too, says Susanne Laven of Publicity and Recruitment. **RR**

#### >> MANSHOLT LECTURE Third attempt

Executive board chair Louise Fresco is due to give the first Mansholt lecture, entitled From agricultural to food policy and beyond, in Brussels on Friday afternoon, 9 September. That is the plan at least. The lecture was originally scheduled for 30 November 2015 but was postponed due to a terrorist threat. On 22 March 2016 it had to be cancelled again due to the terrorist attacks on Zaventem airport and the Brussels metro. If all goes to plan this time, Fresco and Krijn Poppe of Wageningen Economic Research (formerly the LEI) will set out what they think the European agricultural policy of the future should look like. **LdK**

#### Krijn Poppe ponders the Mansholt lecture.

Watch the video on Friday  
on [resource-online.nl](http://resource-online.nl)

#### >> WUR TALK

##### Talks for a wider audience

This month sees the start of a series of monthly WUR talks: short talks for a broad audience, held on the Wageningen campus. The event came out of an idea of Teacher of the Year Roel Dijksema's. The hydrogeology teacher is using his prize money for two evening lectures on 28

# ALL UNDER ONE BRAND

- From now on we're Wageningen University & Research
- Institute names such as Alterra and LEI are scrapped

From this week on we are all working for Wageningen University & Research. All other brands, such as LEI and Alterra, have been scrapped. The aim of this new branding policy is to emphasise internal collaboration. One Wageningen means one name: that is the idea.

Little changes for the staff of the university. Until today they came under the brand Wageningen University, now they are under Wageningen University & Research. They can continue to indicate which chair group they work in.

The change is bigger for DLO employees. Their employer, DLO foundation, is changing its name to Wageningen Research foundation. The labour conditions remain the

same but the institutes have new names. Alterra is now Wageningen Environmental Research, LEI is called Wageningen Economic Research, Imares has become Wageningen Marine Research and CVI is Wageningen Bioveterinary Research.

The separate DLO brand names are going, explains Kristel Klein of Communication Services. Instead there will be 'domain names', all beginning with 'Wageningen' and

ending with 'Research'. So not much changes for staff at Food & Biobased Research and Livestock Research – they only have to stick 'Wageningen' in front of the name. And there is one exception that proves the rule: Rikilt, the food safety institute, remains Rikilt, in anticipation of a merger with the food and consumer safety organization NVWA.

Wageningen UR, till now the core brand, will no longer be used –

or only in full. The hitherto frowned-on abbreviation WUR, on the other hand, is now permitted.

The new brand names should not be confused with names within the organization. The science groups stay the same, for instance: people still work for the Animal Sciences or the Environmental Sciences group. These are not – and never were – brand names. **AS**

*See also page 16: Goodbye UR*



## FIRST EVENING LECTURES

The day finally came last Monday: evening classes in Wageningen. At 18.15, courses on Accounting & Health, Welfare & Management started in the Leeuwenborch and the course Advanced Statistics in the Forum. There were hardly any grumbles from the students present. One student said he had just had a snack and would only have dinner after 8 o'clock, but that was no problem for him. Three others agreed they had no objection to evening classes. One student was annoyed, though. She would have preferred to go out for dinner with her year group. The pilot with evening classes runs until January and will involve about 2000 students. A bureau commissioned by the executive board will conduct a survey of their experiences. The Student Alliance Wageningen has opened a 'reporting point' for collecting student experiences and views. **AS**



PHOTO: BART DE GOUW



# 'MORE FUNDING BUT NO ADMISSIONS CAP'

- Financial straits due to turbulent growth
- Delft, Eindhoven and Twente all in the same boat

Wageningen University & Research and the three other technical universities in the Netherlands want more funding from The Hague. They predict that the quality of their education will be put under pressure if the funding does not keep up with student numbers.

The technical universities – united in 4TU – are attracting more and more students. In 2006, 32,000 students embarked on a technical degree; last year 50,000 did so. And there is no sign to an end to the growth. But government funding is not keeping pace, says 4TU.

'We may have to put a cap on admissions,' says 4TU chair Victor

van der Chijs in Dutch newspaper *Algemeen Dagblad*. 'That means we'll have to select more strictly, taking only the best foreign students, for instance. Unless we get more money.'

The ultimate consequence would be for the universities to introduce admissions caps. Not an option that appeals to rector Arthur Mol: 'We don't want an admissions cap but better funding.' At the moment only Nutrition and Health has a limit to admissions. Next year two more degree programmes will follow suit: Biotechnology and Molecular Life Sciences.

The issue of government funding has already been a headache for WUR for some time. In the past, universities agreed with the ministry of Economic Affairs that funding should go up and down by a maximum of 2 percent. Now that student numbers are rising at a



PHOTO: GUY ACKERMANS

A big crowd at registration for Wageningen Master's students last month.

much faster rate, universities are losing out because of this agreement.

In a response in the *AD*, minister Bussemaker says she does not intend to give the technical univer-

sities more money. She repeats that educational quality is paramount. 'If degree programmes really cannot cope with the number of applicants, an admissions cap is in everyone's interests.' **HOP en AS**

## LONGER CONTRACTS THANKS TO FLEXIBILITY ACT

- Advice: offer a seven-year contract instead of six

The university is considering offering new academic staff a one-off temporary contract of seven years instead of six. This is related to the new Flexibility and Security Act.

This only applies to contracts for new staff who have done their PhD at another university and are embarking on Wageningen's tenure track. Until last year these talented young researchers would first get a contract for three years, which could be renewed for another three years. But since the new act came into effect in July last year, the university can no longer offer this group a second three-year temporary contract. To do so would be in contravention of the law.

So last year the university

changed the temporary contracts from three years to a one-off temporary contract for six years. If on assessment after three and six years, these staff fulfil the criteria for tenure track, they can be offered a permanent appointment.

A working group at the university has now advised extending the one-off temporary contract to seven years. Doing so would create some space so that staff who fall ill, get pregnant or become fathers, can be assessed at a later date. It is thought that around ten new staff members would benefit from this arrangement every year. The extension would not apply to staff who are already under contract at this university as doctoral or postdoc researchers and go straight on to tenure track. That group will be offered a temporary contract of maximum four years, including the previous period of service. **AS**



## Discover your campus



See for more information the Campus Calendar or visit

[www.wageningencampus.nl](http://www.wageningencampus.nl)

# PARTICIPATION KEY TO SUCCESS OF MALARIA PROJECT

- Solar power also important for success of Solarmal
- Immediate benefit outweighs long-term benefit

If the Solarmal project on the Kenyan island of Rusinga had consisted solely of installing mosquito traps containing bait, it probably would not have been a success. The participation of the local population and the provision of solar energy were crucial factors in the project's success, claims PhD researcher Prisca Oria, who received her PhD on 31 August from professor of Communication Cees Leeuwis and professor of entomology Willem Takken.

The Wageningen Solarmal researchers reported last month in *The Lancet* that they had succeeded in beating back malaria on Rusinga using odour-baited traps. One of the secrets of their success was that the researchers discussed their plans with the local people and asked them for feedback. That feedback led, for example, to the researchers changing the order in which they installed the traps on the island. And this created support for the project.

Another crucial factor was that the researchers acknowledged the lack of electricity on the island as a problem. They combined the installation of the odour-baited traps, which require electricity, with that of solar panels and the distribution of mobile phone chargers. The solar energy brought the islanders immediate bene-



Residents of Rusinga are informed about the mosquito trap. Photo Alexandra Hiscox

fits. They no longer needed to buy paraffin and the children could do their homework after dark. These immediate benefits weighed more heavily for the population that the expected later benefit that they would get malaria less often, claims Oria.

This raises the question of whether the population will carry on maintaining the traps proper-

ly now the project has ended. It is crucial, thinks Oria, that maintenance becomes a routine task. This calls for extension, consultation and capacity building, both at household and at village level, in women's groups for instance. Only when continuity is assured can the Solarmal project successfully be duplicated in other parts of the world, says the PhD holder. **AS**

## VIRUSES PLAY A ROLE IN GUT HEALTH TOO

- Core group of gut viruses found
- In colorectal patients this community is disturbed

Our intestinal flora consist not just of bacteria, but of viruses as well. In colorectal patients the virus community proves to be disturbed. This suggests that viruses too are crucial to intestinal health, suggest microbiologists from Wageningen and the United States in *PNAS*.

It has become increasingly clear over recent years that bacte-

rial communities influence the health of our intestines. The presence of 'good' microbes is important for a normal metabolism as well as for resistance to disease and mental health. In patients with chronic inflammation of the gut, obesity and diabetes, these gut flora are often disturbed. They often improve after faecal transplants, which provide them with a healthy set of bacteria.

As well as bacteria, our intestines also house large numbers of viruses. These are smaller and inhabit a gray area between living and non-living. In earlier studies

scientists found few similarities in virus communities from one person to the next. But the work of professor of Microbiology Willem de Vis and his colleagues changes this picture.

They discovered that there is in fact a core group of viruses that can be found in many people's systems. The team found 23 viruses which half of their 64 test subjects had in common. And a further group of viruses was common to a substantial minority. What is more, it was precisely in people with Crohn's disease and ulcerous colitis that this community was disturbed. And that sug-

gests that the viruses, in combination with the bacteria present in our bodies, contribute to intestinal health.

The microbiologists were able to find these similarities now because of their approach. Instead of studying the entire contents of the gut, they fished out as many virus particles as possible from two test subjects. Then all the DNA of these viruses was analysed and compared with that found in other test subjects.

This result does not translate directly into 'virus treatments', warns De Vos, although research on that is already going on. **RR**



# VEGGIE BURGER FROM BEET LEAVES IS POSSIBLE

- PhD candidate extracts protein from beet tops
- Green colour is hard to get rid of

Beet leaves contain proteins that are valuable for humans and that would work perfectly well as an alternative to animal protein, for example in veggie burgers. Techniques have already been developed for the extraction of soluble proteins – such as RuBisCO – but the insoluble membrane proteins are so varied that they cannot all be extracted by any single method. The green colour is also rather hard to get rid of. These findings come from research published in *Food Chemistry* by food process engineering PhD candidate Angelica Tamayo Tenorio.

Tamayo says there are two options for extracting protein from the foliage. 'Either you make a concentrate containing all the protein, both the soluble RuBisCO and the insoluble membrane proteins, but in that case you have to put up with the green colour, which comes from the chlorophyll. Or you go for the pure, colourless RuBisCO, but then you have low yields.' In the latter case, the membrane proteins have to be used for a different purpose — for example as an emulsifier or gelling agent — to make the process economically viable.

At the start of the research, the membrane protein in beet leaves was still thought to consist of a single type of protein, but Tamayo discovered that there are actually hundreds of different proteins. 'They are also very diverse in terms of size, behaviour and charge. That means that every process step for extracting these proteins is selective for one particular protein. So if you design a series of processes, you lose some of the membrane proteins with each step.'

Tamayo therefore argues that it is better when processing the green leaves to split them into a fibre-rich pulp and concentrated protein-rich juice instead of just extracting the protein. This 'total leaf fractionation' using a screw press and a centrifuge produces a concentrate with 50 percent protein (by dry weight). 'This is about 25 percent of all the protein in beet leaves. So you still have losses,' admits Tamayo.

She still thinks there is a lot of potential in processing beet leaves, which are currently not used at all. The protein-rich concentrate could then easily be used in a green beet-leaf burger. Tamayo: 'But because beetroots are seasonal, I have wondered what this hypothetical factory would be processing the rest of the year. I see options for other plant components that are not being used at present, such as broccoli leaves and carrot tops.' **RAJ**



## VISION <<

### Reef discovery is 'question of getting a better look'

**A new reef covering 6000 square kilometres has been discovered off the coast of Australia. How can scientists have failed to see such a huge reef all that time? According to marine biologist Ronald Osinga, the answer is simple: this is the first time they have used improved techniques to look.**



#### What kind of a reef is this?

'It's not a coral reef; it's a halimeda reef, one based on the halimeda plant. It creates calcareous structures. When the plant dies, the calcium carbonate remains behind and sticks together to create the structures that have now been discovered. Scientists call them *bioherms*, stone mounds of organic origin.'

#### Are these structures completely new?

'No, we've known about them since the 1980s. They are found between the coral reefs that make up the Great Barrier Reef, which stretches to a couple of hundred kilometres from the coast. These structures appear in the somewhat deeper sections in between. The stone mounds are about 200 metres wide and 20 metres thick.'

#### So what is new about this discovery?

'The new aspect is that this is the first time they have been mapped in such detail. LiDAR was used for this. Like radar, only with light. Before, people were mainly using sonar to map the seabed. LiDAR gives a better picture and more detail. They thought there were about 2000 square kilometres of bioherms but that estimate has now been increased to 6000 square kilometres. A question of getting a better look.'

#### So there is still a lot to be discovered at the bottom of the ocean?

'Yes. There is increasing interest in these kinds of mesophotic ecosystems: life in the twilight zones of the oceans. At depths between about 50 and 250 metres, life is not driven by light and completely different types of organisms dominate as a result. There is still loads to discover at lower depths too. Along with the Microbiology and Bioprocess Engineering groups, we are involved in a major European project on sponges in the North Atlantic Ocean.' **RRK**





# SATELLITE SHOWS WHERE FOREST IS VULNERABLE

- New method for measuring stress
- Slow changes in greenness sign of diminishing resilience

Wageningen scientists have found a way of determining the vulnerability of tropical forests using satellite images. Subtle variations in the greenness of the forest function as a signal. It turns out that these fluctuations are an indicator for resilience. A breakthrough, says the study's lead author, Jan Verbesselt of Geo-information Science and Remote Sensing.

Stress, for example due to drought or extreme heat, can push a forest to a point where plants die in large numbers. This is known as a tipping point and it marks the boundary between two alternative conditions: forest or savannah. Co-author Marten Scheffer, professor of Aquatic Ecology, does research on such tipping points in complex systems. But how do you know how close a forest is to its tipping point?

Resilience is the key concept here. The closer to the tipping point, the less resilience there is and the longer it takes for the system to recover from disturbances. The Wageningen researchers have now found a quantifiable indicator for a tropical forest's resilience. Satellite



te data that have been used for decades to measure how green vegetation is, the so-called NVDI, produced the gauge they were looking for.

Calculations show that changes in greenness are much more gradual once annual rainfall drops below 1500 mm. This slowness points to reduced resilience and proximity to the tipping point. Some team members have

already shown that 1500 mm is indeed a critical threshold for a forest in a paper in *Science*. According to Scheffer, this means the pieces of the puzzle are now starting to fall into place. The new indicator makes it possible to work out how vulnerable forests are based on satellite images. Scheffer: 'So based on measurements — that's the breakthrough.' The results can be found in *Nature Climate Change*. **© RK**

# LILIES AND RADISHES COME FROM JAPAN

- Student studies old botanical catalogue
- Lilies were grown for edible bulbs

The lilies we now put in vases as decoration come from Japan, only the Japanese used to cultivate them for their edible bulbs. Master's student Shantonu Abe discovered this when examining an unusual old botanical catalogue from Japan.

Abe investigated Japanese agriculture in around 1800 by studying an exceptional book, a Japanese work on rice paper that the doctor and botanist Philipp von Siebold received as a gift in the nineteenth century and brought back to Leid-

en. Abe, a Japanese student in Organic Agriculture, was the perfect person to assess that booklet, says his supervisor Tinde van Andel, professor in Ethnobotany.

Abe looked at the 191 drawings of Japanese crops in around 1800, read the Japanese names and information in the booklet and came to some surprising conclusions. Von Siebold introduced Japanese lilies to the Netherlands as a decorative plant but in Japan they were grown for their bitter but tasty bulbs. The botanist also introduced the greater burdock to the Netherlands, known for the burrs that stick to your clothes. The Japanese eat the roots of this plant but it is seen as a weed in the Netherlands. Radishes too come from Japan, as demonstrated by the ten

different varieties in the booklet. They don't look much like modern radishes.

There was surprising diversity in cereals in Japan around 1800, says Abe. In addition to rice, the botanical booklet mentions millet, barley and buckwheat. That shows that Japan did not live in splendid isolation before Von Siebold arrived in 1823, as is often thought, but already had trading relations with the Portuguese and Chinese. The booklet has drawings of peppers, for example, that must have been introduced by the Portuguese.

The forgotten crops from Japan could be useful for plant breeding companies that want to develop traditional crops with favourable properties. The

catalogue contains a lot of cereals, for instance, that tolerate dry conditions. **© AS**





There are daily news updates about Wageningen University & Research on Resource-online.nl. Here is a sample of news from the past fortnight. The full reports are online and you are welcome to respond to them.

MEANWHILE ON...



# RESOURCE-ONLINE.NL

## HI SJAAR

Blogger Jan-Willem Kortlever welcomes new students with an open letter addressed to 'Sjaar'. He predicts what will happen to new students and what will amaze them. 'Don't be surprised to see people walking around barefoot or in clogs or hippie outfits. That is quite normal here.' He adds: 'There are an awful lot of you and that is sure to cause some problems. (...) Don't worry about it, after all it's not your fault.'

## SYMBIOSUM

The first SymbioSUM attracted about 70 students. The idea was to get students thinking about the biobased economy through lectures, workshops, and a thinktank. The event was organized by student organization Ibbess, which aims to link up students and professionals around the theme of biobased. **R AB**

## GREENHOUSE GAS

It is increasingly difficult to assess the overall impact of all the plans to reduce human greenhouse gas emissions. This was the subject of Niklas Höhne's inaugural lecture on 1 september. Höhne is the new special professor of Mitigation of Greenhouse Gases. More and more organizations are presenting plans for reducing emissions but it is not clear to what extent these plans overlap. **R RR**

## WAGENINGEN HANGOUT

'Thuis Wageningen' on Stationsstraat is no longer just a place to stop by for a cup of coffee and a chat. The common room has been transformed into a workplace for students and townspeople. This way Thuis hopes to achieve its original

objectives: sharing knowledge, bringing people together and stimulating enterprising initiatives. **R RvD**



## FALSE ALARM

The Forum was evacuated briefly on Monday 5 September. It turned out to be a false alarm: a trolley had accidentally set off a smoke alarm. If it had been an exercise, though, it would have been a success: 2500 people managed to leave the building in 14 minutes without mishap. Watch the video online. **R RR**

## WOMEN'S SWEATER

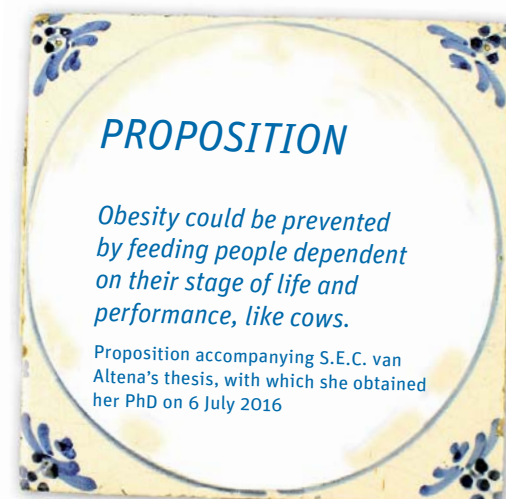
Last week KLV Alumni Network was advertising a sweater for the women bearing the text: 'Never underestimate a woman who graduated from Wageningen University.' Blogger Carina is not impressed: 'Just like running around bra-less or with plaited armpits, I wonder whether wearing such a sweater is the way to go.'

## DESERT TOMATO

Growing tomatoes in the desert has been made possible thanks to the greenhouses developed by Jouke Campen and his colleagues at Wageningen Greenhouse Horticulture. They designed two greenhouses with air-conditioning and water recycling, which they are now trialling in the Middle East. The incentive for designing the greenhouses was the food crisis of 2008, when national borders of food exporting countries were closed. **R DdV**

## SENIOR SCIENCE

More and more Dutch seniors are going to university. Interest in studying has increased by 40 percent among this group in the past two years. In 2015 almost 25,000 people in this age group registered at universities: about 7000 more than two years earlier. **R HOP**



# Dodgy internship locations

Who would want to do an internship in Iraq or Nigeria? Students on the Disaster Studies Master's track. They feel they should do research in high-risk areas as part of a degree focussing on life in such places. The university understands their wish but sets limits. Which can cause frustration.

text Milou van der Horst, Linda van der Nat and Rob Ramaker photo Hollandse Hoogte

**I**t is not that we send our students off to high-risk areas; they are keen to go there themselves,' says assistant professor Gemma van der Haar, until recently internship coordinator for the Disaster Studies Master's track, which is part of the Master's in International Development Studies. 'Many of the students who choose this Master's track – 20 to 25 last year – have been actively involved in a particular issue and know what they are doing when they specialize in this field.' One such student is Pier Hiemstra. 'I wanted to go to a conflict zone to test myself.' At first he had Somalia and South Sudan in mind, but these countries are coloured red on the world map at the ministry of Foreign Affairs: no go. In such cases, Wageningen University will not approve an internship or field research trip (see box). 'So in the end I went to Nigeria,' says Pier.

The Master's student spent seven weeks in Jos and Mangu in central Nigeria, doing

his thesis research with support from a local researcher. Tens of thousands of people were murdered in this region between 1999 and 2004, and even today tensions between Muslims and Christians regularly lead to violence. Pier studied the way various institutions collaborate on peacekeeping efforts. 'I interviewed mayors, village chiefs and local people. Some of them were very friendly and grateful that I wanted to interview them; others were very suspicious. A lot of people are wary, afraid of getting into trouble.'

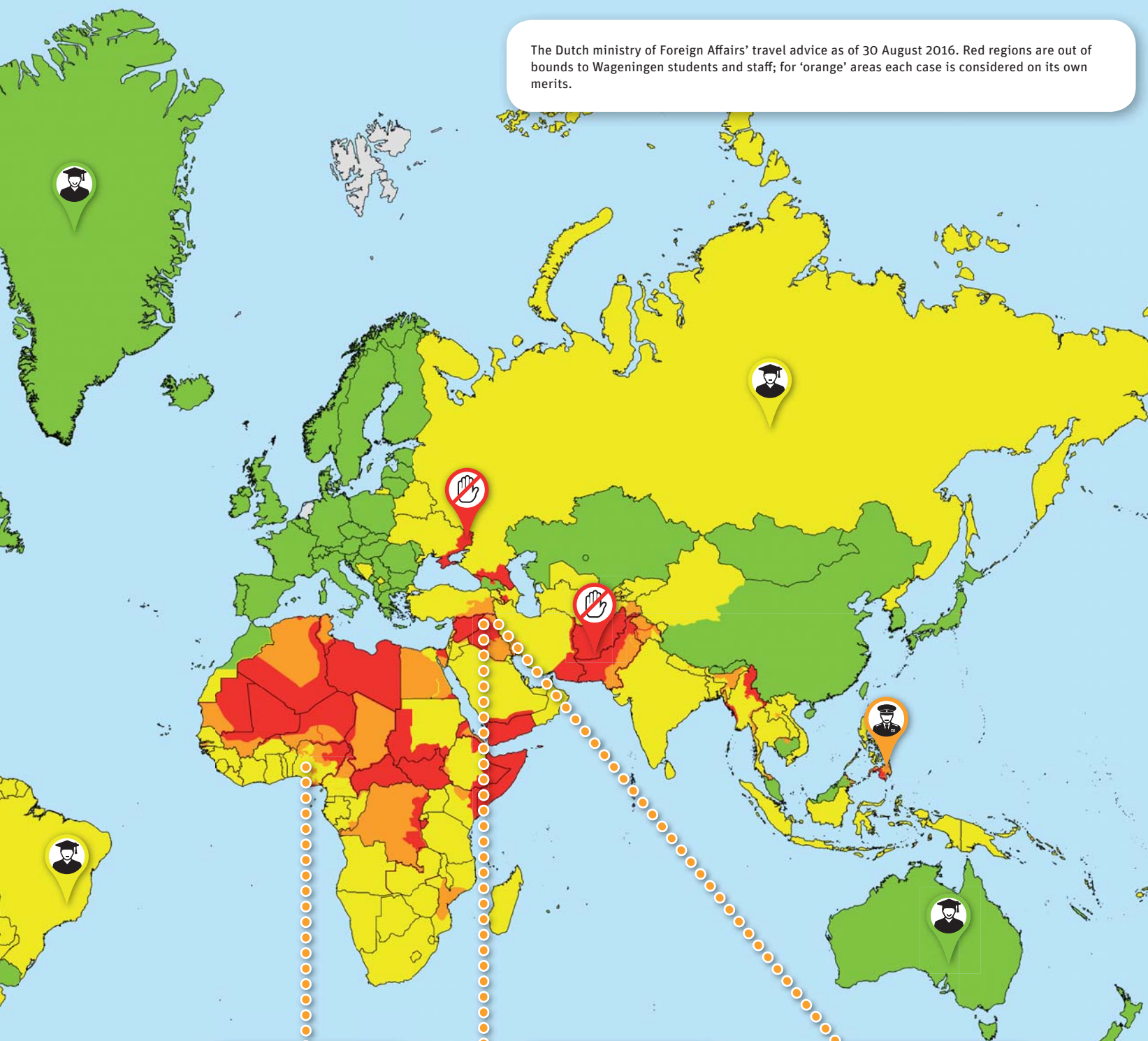
## SCARED

Actually I was scared all the time in Nigeria,' says Pier. 'It bothered me that I couldn't rely on my own instincts. In the Netherlands I think I can tell who is well-intentioned and who isn't. In Nigeria I couldn't judge that, so I tended to see everyone as a potential threat. And it is more dangerous there because there are weapons everywhere and people are trigger-happy.'





The Dutch ministry of Foreign Affairs' travel advice as of 30 August 2016. Red regions are out of bounds to Wageningen students and staff; for 'orange' areas each case is considered on its own merits.



### JOS AND MANGU, NIGERIA

Pier Hiemstra spent seven weeks – with the blessing of the university – doing his thesis research in Jos and Mangu, in central Nigeria.



### DUHOK, IRAK

Peter Goedbloed worked for seven months for an aid organization in Duhok, northern Iraq. He did not get formal permission for this.



### ERBIL, IRAK

Jan van 't Land spent two weeks doing thesis research with a local NGO in Erbil, northern Iraq. He got permission from the university.





Northern Iraqi refugees on their way to the city of Duhok.



The secret service once paid Pier a visit in his hotel. ‘They had already been following me around for half a day. I then phoned a friend in the Netherlands and said, if I don’t call you again at such and such a time, things might have gone wrong. In your mind you are ready for the worst case scenario. The consequences of a false move are bigger than in the Netherlands.’

In the end Pier came home early. ‘I did the work in seven weeks that was planned for two and a half months. At first it felt like a failure but later I realized that I couldn’t help the way I experienced it.’

#### NORTHERN IRAQ

Piers’ fellow student Peter Goedbloed did not experience this level of anxiety during his stay in Duhok, a city in northern Iraq. He worked there for seven months for the aid organization Dorcas. ‘Duhok is relatively rich: there is a shopping centre with a Carrefour and shops selling western clothes. Everyone drives expensive Land Cruisers. The atmosphere during the period I was there was relaxed. Expats drive their cars themselves, walk around the bazaar alone and hold pub quizzes in the hotel. There are checkpoints but the atmosphere was never menacing.’

And yet Peter’s stay there was certainly not

without risks. Terrorist attacks take place all over Iraq. There is heavy fighting between extremist groups (including IS) and the Iraqi armed forces. ‘I was close to the frontline: Mosul is less than 75 kilometres away. In the far north Kurdish rebels are under fire from the Turkish army. Once when I was on a trip to distribute fertilizer I saw pillars of smoke going up from a village ahead of me. Probably an air raid on IS.’

#### NO APPROVAL

Peter’s original plan was to do research in northern Iraq on the refugee situation. ‘There are very many refugees in and around Duhok.



Pier Hiemstra in Nigeria.



Peter Goedbloed in northern Iraq.



They live in refugee camps, in abandoned or unfinished buildings, or with friends or family. I wanted to know why these people didn't move on from here.' But the university turned down his research proposal because the situation was considered too dangerous. 'Whereas I experienced Duhok as an oasis of calm in an otherwise chaotic region.'

The rejection was extra-frustrating for Peter because the plan was to accompany his wife. 'She was going to do a traineeship with Dorcas. In the run-up to our departure I didn't get any hints that I wouldn't get approval, so we had already sold our car and given notice on our rented accommodation. I heard that I couldn't go to Iraq for my research just a few days before my departure. Not going was just not an option at that point. I dropped out of my degree programme and got a job with Dorcas.' Not for a moment did he feel in danger. 'What is more, I think it was safer in Duhok than in many other places that students are allowed to go to.'

#### CAR BOMB

Whereas Peter did not get formal approval for his research in northern Iraq, fellow student Jan van 't Land did get the go-ahead for research in the same region, in the city of Erbil. He spent two weeks there doing research for his thesis with a local NGO, which he does not want to name for security reasons. 'The IS frontline was 40 kilometres away. So I was close to the war but I didn't feel in danger. The border with the war zone is clearly demarcated. I saw no sign of the war and hardly saw any military on the streets. Only there were refugees in a camp just a stone's throw from my hotel and I did see a lot of military planes and helicopters. But the city itself was relatively safe. I could just do my own thing, even walking on the streets at night and eating out in restaurants.'

Jan was vigilant though. 'The NGO gave me a security briefing, because something could happen at any time. There are IS cells in that city and one and a half years ago a car bomb went off in front of the American consulate. The NGO put me up in a smaller hotel, which is safer than a large hotel full of internationals. And whenever I ate out I made sure I kept an eye of the door of the restaurant, and I always read the NGO's security updates.'

#### SECURITY ANALYSIS

Before leaving for Iraq Jan had to write a 'security analysis' saying how he would make sure he worked safely and sensibly. 'I don't think

the average African capital is any safer than Erbil, but the fact is the Dutch government's travel advice codes most of Iraq orange.' Jan understands the university's wish to assess whether the risks are acceptable. Only that turned out to be quite difficult. 'With hindsight my security analysis was too strict. I had said I would hold all the interviews at the NGO's office but that wasn't necessary. I went to other neighbourhoods with my interpreter, including the city centre and some Muslim neighbourhoods. My interpreter was an Iraqi woman who knew the city very well.'

Jan did have to be careful what he said, and couldn't take photographs. 'I wasn't allowed to have my photo taken with other people either,

### 'I like working in tense situations'

and now I've got to remove any references in my thesis with which people could be identified. I talked to several people who didn't let me record anything because they fear reprisals. I am glad that I learned how you should deal with these kinds of situations in Wageningen on the course on Fieldwork in conflict and post-conflict settings. As a researcher you are constantly faced with ethical dilemmas and you must never put your respondents in any danger.'

#### TIME-CONSUMING

Jan learned a lot from his stay in northern Iraq, including that working in conflict zones suits him. 'I enjoy working in this kind of environment. I like working in tense situations. That's why these weeks were an important test case for me.'

So he is glad the university gave him this opportunity. 'I see it as positive that the university takes the time to assess each student's case individually. I hope it will stay that way in the future, because for me and many other students Disaster Studies is a conscious choice. A thesis and an internship in disaster and conflict zones are a good preparation for our careers after the Master's.'

However, Jan did find the procedure for the security analysis unclear and time-consuming. 'You hand in an analysis, and it gets discussed with your supervisor in the department. Then it disappears to the executive board. At that point it's just a case of 'wait and see' and you don't get a chance to explain your analysis.'

## DECIDING WHETHER TO GO TO A CONFLICT ZONE

Students and staff at Wageningen University & Research who want to go to a region with a negative travel advice from the ministry of Foreign Affairs must, according to rules brought in last year, get permission from their science group and the executive board. They fill in a security analysis explaining how they will make sure they can work safely and sensibly. This plans goes to the science group management and the board. Wageningen tends to be less cautious than other academic institutions, but 'red' areas such as Somalia and Syria are out of bounds. For 'orange' zones each case is considered on its own merits.

In the past the decision was made by the chair group in question. 'We would consult experts about the security situation and study the local situation,' says assistant professor of the Sociology of Development and Change Gemma van der Haar, until recently internship coordinator for the Disaster Studies Master's track. 'We also considered the student's character.'

#### TOP-DOWN

Van der Haar thinks it is a pity the chair group is not involved in the new procedure. 'I really appreciate it that the university takes its security policy seriously – that is part of our obligation to look after our students. It is also positive that the management and the board are prepared to weigh up each case separately for orange regions, because a categorical 'no' would be a lot less acceptable. But I don't like the top-down way the security policy was brought in without involving us as teachers. And it is problematic that the final decision is made by people who might not know anything about this subject.'


#### CONSISTENT

Rector Arthur Mol does not deny the expertise of the chair group involved. According to him, the specific knowledge of chair groups is still used to draw up a good plan. But he believes the final decision has to be made centrally for the sake of consistency across the institution. 'We can't have it happening that one chair group gets to go to northern Ethiopia and another one is told 'no'. It's got to be consistent.' The process was still in the startup phase last year, admits Mol. This might explain why students have complained about how long it takes. But as experience is gained, it will go faster, Mol expects. 'Nobody wants delays in graduating.'





## GOODBYE UR

Wageningen UR is no more. From this week the organization will go by its full name, Wageningen University & Research, which may be abbreviated to WUR. To mark the change the old name was removed from the back wall of Lumen on Monday. A contractor took the giant letters down with a crane. For the time being they will not be replaced. If a new 'signboard' is put up, it may be on Atlas. See also page 6.  LdK, photo Sven Menschel

Watch the film  
on [resource-online.nl](http://resource-online.nl).









# Storm in a packet of sprinkles

Ink residues can get into our food from packaging made of recycled paper. How harmful that is, we don't know. 'In decades toxicologists have not managed to assess the risks.' Meanwhile sector watchdog Foodwatch is stirring up public opinion.

text Rob Ramaker illustration Geert-Jan Bruins

**W**hat could be more Dutch than a slice of bread with *hagelslag* (chocolate sprinkles)? Packets of this favourite sweet treat grace thousands of breakfast tables every morning. And some of these packets, just like packets of rice and milk, are made of recycled cardboard and paper. This means they can contain unwelcome ink residues. A discussion about the possible health risks of this pollution blew up last year and still continues.

The concern is focused on two categories of substance, known as MOSH and MOAH (see box). Both get into food packaging after the recycling of magazines and newspapers printed with ink. The substances can 'migrate' from the packaging into the food it contains. There are also ways such substances can end up in our food during production processes (through lubricants on machines) and transportation (through bulk packaging).

## AROMATIC COMPOUNDS

It is a fact that MOSH and MOAH compounds are present in packaging and in our food. Food watchdog Foodwatch drew attention to this in October 2015 after studying the packaging and contents of 120 food products in the Netherlands, France and Germany. Foodwatch explicitly targeted products in which contamination was expected. MOAH were found in 43 percent of the food products, and traces of MOSH in 83 percent.

The big question is where there are health risks attached to this. 'The tricky thing is that

this is not just about one substance, but a combination,' says Ron Hoogenboom, toxicologist at Rikilt. The name MOAH covers not just one but a vast number of compounds, all of which have a chemical ring structure. This means they are aromatic. 'And with aromatic compounds the suspicion that they are carcinogenic soon arises,' says Hoogenboom, 'whereas there are plenty of aromatic substances that are not at all carcinogenic.'

## 'CAUSE FOR CONCERN'

It is not easy to make a risk assessment for these substances, confirms Ulphard Thoden van Velzen, a researcher at Wageningen Food & Biobased Research. He did a literature study for the Dutch institute for sustainable packaging KIDV. 'In decades toxicologists have not managed to establish the risks.' The reason for this, as Thoden van Velzen agrees, is that these compounds contain 'tens of thousands of substances, and we don't know what the structure of most of them looks like'. Nor did tests carried out on mixtures of substances lead to reproducible results. This is unlikely to change in the short term, thinks Thoden van Velzen.

So for the time being, the assessment of the European Food Safety Authority EFSA stays the same: 'cause for concern but no stricter norms'. Until new insights emerge.

But Foodwatch is not content to wait until new research clarifies which kinds of MOAH and MOSH are unsafe. 'We turn it around,' says spokesperson Sjoerd van der Wouw: the safety of substances should first be proven before they are permitted in packaging. According to Van der Wouw, this means that strict limits should be set on the permitted level of MOSH. MOAH, considered riskier, should not be allowed to end up in foodstuffs at all. In practical terms, Foodwatch would like to see food products wrapped in a functional barrier such as a bag inside the box.

There are various options for preventing MOAH and MOSH from getting into our food, says Thoden van Velzen. Besides a protective inner lining, paper could be de-inked – a process which removes 20 to 50 percent of the ink – before recycling. Another process adds an absorbent substance which traps the pollutant and make it possible to remove it during the next round of recycling. An advantage of this

## WHAT ARE MOAH AND MOSH?

MOAH (mineral oil aromatic hydrocarbons) and MOSH (mineral oil saturated hydrocarbons) are two groups of substances with long hydrocarbon chains. They are found in mineral oils and printing ink. When newspapers are recycled into food packaging they show up here as well. MOSH and MOAH are umbrella terms covering a large number of compounds. The structure of MOAH always contains a chemical ring. Scientists have identified the precise structure of only a few of these substances.



procedure is that the unwanted substance goes out of circulation. A further possibility is for printers to use more plant-based solvents, as they do in Japan. There, says Thoden van Velzen, there are much smaller quantities of MOSH and MOAH in recycled paper.

#### LIP SALVE

Thoden van Velzen notes that the discussion about MOAH and MOSH tends to focus on the role of packaging and food products. But these may not be the main source of the traces of MOAH and MOSH that are found in our bodies. 'You come in contact with them via lubricants, petrol stations and cosmetics and lip salve as well. We don't know what the relative contribution is of each source.' The choice of MOAH and MOSH as 'molecule of the month' seems to him rather arbitrary.

Van de Wouw at Foodwatch is not impressed by this kind of counterargument. 'Those are the arguments the industry like to use in order not to have to take steps.' He sees sufficient grounds and options for action in the existing knowledge. In his view, Minister Schippers of Public Health is not tackling the issue firmly enough. In her answer to questions in parliament from the Christian Union – asked in response to the Foodwatch study – she said she had raised the issue in Brussels and that public health research institute RIVM was investigating the risks. She also commented that there are no institutions in the Netherlands yet which measure the actual levels of these substances. Without that sort of information it is difficult to establish norms, said Schippers. At Rikilt, says Hoozeboom, thought is now being given to possible measurement methods.

#### LIDL AND JUMBO

In reality Foodwatch does not need new rules to get its way. The threat of negative publicity seems to be enough to goad at least some companies into action. On 17 August Foodwatch triumphantly announced that supermarket chains Lidl and Jumbo will no longer accept any traces of MOAH in milk packaging, for

example. The retailers are going to change their suppliers' regulations in line with this. As for MOSH, a strict limit will be set. Foodwatch spokesman Van der Wouw: 'Companies can choose whether to be frontrunners or stragglers. We shall "fame" the frontrunners and shame the stragglers.' 





# ‘Farmers around 1800 were ahead of us now’



Plant researcher Frans Aarts worked for many years on the question of how dairy farmers could make optimal use of their land, crops and fertilizer. To his surprise he discovered that his impoverished ancestors in De Peel and Kempen around 1800 knew exactly how to do this. He wrote a book about it.

The spot in Deurne where researcher Frans Aart's parents' farm once stood (see black & white photo).

*text* Albert Sikkema *photo* Guy Ackermans

About 30 years ago Dutch livestock farmers were throwing much too much manure onto their land, polluting the environment. Reason enough for Frans Aarts, a researcher at Plant Research International (now Wageningen Plant Research) to develop a plan for an environmentally-friendly experimental dairy farm. The farm – De Marke – opened in 1992 in Hengelo in the province of Gelderland, with Aarts as project coordinator.

Before starting up, Aarts worked out the nutrient cycle on the farm. He calculated the nutrient content of the feed, and how much of this ended up in the cow, how much nitrogen and phosphate the cow excreted in

the manure, how much of this ended up on the land, and how much of this was absorbed by the grass and maize, which then served as feed. ‘We thought about how to close that cycle. Then we started taking measurements on the experimental farm, to see whether our model worked.’

De Marke became famous in the sector. ‘We produced just as much milk as an average farm, but bought less feed and hardly any artificial fertilizer, and that on the poorest soil in the Achterhoek.’ The practical knowledge gained has become compulsory fare for dairy farmers, who must use the Wageningen Annual Nutrient Cycling Assessment (ANCA) to be allowed to supply milk.



## BACKWARD

Aarts has been using all his knowledge of cycles in recent years in a historical study of farming methods in De Peel and Kempen around 1800. He wrote up his findings in a book. 'I come from Deurne, and so did my ancestors. Life was hard there. My forefather Mathijs Aarts was born there in 1781. His wife died at the age of 37 a few months after delivering their fifth child. He remarried and three more children were born. When Mathijs died at the age of 61, seven of these eight children had died already. Only my great grandfather survived. He was ten when his father died.'

At that time Brabant was a colony of the Republic of the Seven United Netherlands, which imposed heavy taxes on the population. And an army would frequently pass by, confiscating food as it went. Aarts read a lot about this period but missed an agronomist's perspective. 'The historians reported that Brabant agriculture was backward, but I didn't come across many backward farmers. A farmer has reasons for what he does; there are always underlying motives. I wanted to find them.'

## OUT OF NOTHING

Aarts's ancestors on the poor sandy soils around Deurne could not buy feed or fertilizer and yet they got surprisingly high yields, the researcher discovered while working on his book. 'They developed farming methods using turf. Grasslands were hayed and turf was cut, and this was mixed with heather cuttings for bedding in the barn. The manure was spread on the fields, concentrating nutrients here to the detriment of the surrounding countryside.'

This was not sustainable agriculture, warns Aarts. 'That impoverishment of the soil year after year goes wrong on the end. At some point the heath turns into a sandy desert.' But it was smart too. 'The Kempen farmer

## SURPLUS MANURE


So when did it all go wrong, and did De Peel become a byword for manure surplus, acidification and stinking farms? 'After 1950,' says Aarts. 'I saw it for myself: there was an exodus from farming, farmers' sons became builders and came back to a small piece of land on their parents' land, where they built a pig shed. Brabant was full of large families who worked hard and did everything themselves. Livestock feed was cheap, manure was no problem, so the number of pigs shot up.'

The ministry of Agriculture should have intervened immediately, says Aarts, but it didn't. Only much later did the ministry of VROM (environment) take over the reigns, and Aarts then got the go-ahead for the experimental farm. This brings us back to 1992.

The environment has improved a lot since then, Aarts notes. 'In the 1980s dairy farmers still applied 400 kilos of nitrogen per hectare; now they use 100 kilos, as well as less animal manure. And the yields are still good. I think it could still be 20 percent more efficient without any drop in yield. Farmers currently make silage of the grass, for instance, but perhaps you could process it differently so that more nutrients become available. In 1800 the farmers' wives cooked the feed. Is that a good idea?'

## Q FEVER

Something has to change in terms of environmental pollution, pathogens and landscape, says Aarts, because farmers are not going to survive without a good relationship with the rest of society. In De Peel and Kampen, as elsewhere, relations have soured, he warns. 'I come from a farming background. That is your home so for a long time you accept the way it goes. But at some point you notice: this doesn't feel like home anymore, this stinks. I think the Q fever outbreak was a turning point. It was already known that Q fever was dangerous, but the local people were not informed. People died and were left disabled. Then the feeling was: this isn't my agriculture anymore.'

The agronomist sees one thing as missing from today's agriculture: knowledge. 'It might sound strange but the Brabant farmer around 1800 was ahead of us now. There used to be mixed farms, where the farmers could keep livestock and grow crops. Knowledge about that has declined fast in the past 40 years. The livestock farmer knows all about livestock but often knows less about crops than the average allotment gardener. He could get a lot more out of his land. We need to get the relationship back between the farmer and his soil. Only then do you get farmers with an efficient nutrient cycle.' 



Boeren in Peel en Kempen omstreeks 1800, Frans Aarts, ISBN 978-94-632-3022-3. See [www.peelenkempen.nl](http://www.peelenkempen.nl)



## 'A livestock farmer often knows less about crops than the average allotment gardener'

made something out of nothing. He kept the cows in the barn to make better use of their manure. When the feed became harder to digest, the farmer's wife started cooking it so that the cows would eat it. The farmers turned over the soil to bring deeper-lying soil up to the surface and boost soil fertility. And they started growing corn spurrey in the autumn as an extra source of feed. They made up for the increasing exhaustion of the soils by working harder and harder.'

The French occupation in the early 19th century finally put paid to the over-exploitation. Brabant changed from a colony to a province and taxes were no longer brought to Holland, but were invested. Moreover, the farmers stopped selling rye and started feeding it to their cows, leading to an increase in cattle numbers and an adequate supply of manure. Around 1900 fertilizer was being used in De Peel and Kampen in a balanced manner.

# ENGLISH-LANGUAGE BACHELOR'S: A GOOD IDEA?

The executive board will decide soon whether Wageningen BSc programmes should be English-taught, as MSc programmes already are. *Resource* asked several teachers and education directors what they think. Do the teachers and first-year students have a good enough command of English? Would using English harm the quality of the programmes?

text Roelof Kleis and Albert Sikkema illustration Henk van Ruitenbeek

## Jan Philipsen



### Programme director for Tourism and other programmes

'Personally I am very much in favour of English-language Bachelor's programmes. I am director of the BSc in Tourism, the first fully English-language Bachelor's programme in Wageningen. It is going very well, with a very internationally oriented group of students. But I am also director of the Landscape architecture and spatial planning programme, and that's a more complicated case. On this programme we work with planning and design studios on location in the Netherlands, discussing local design and planning problems with other stakeholders and often using Dutch-language documentation. In an entirely English-language programme you would shut the students off from this Dutch-language information and context. So we need time to solve these kinds of practical problems. **I don't see quality problems in our English-language programme. On the BSc in Tourism we have international staff who are very capable of discussing things in English.** There are a few exceptions, but you can replace or train those teachers. English gives added value. You broaden the scope of discussions when you have students from other countries.'

## Harm Biemans



### Associate professor of Education and Competency Studies

'I have no evidence that the introduction of English-language education negatively affects the quality. Most teachers have already been teaching on English-language MSc

programmes for years, and the language of communication with PhD students and other researchers is often English too. You go into more depth in those research consultations than you do in a lecture at Bachelor's level, so on the whole their language skills are fine. Students don't seem to see the introduction of English-language education as disadvantageous, either. In fact it's more of an advantage to them. They are English-oriented in primary and secondary school, and they will probably work in an international context later. In which case you might as well start communicating in English as soon as you can. **Of course not all students are equally good at English but they are going to have to make that switch anyway. Better sooner than later.**'

## Thom Kuijper



### Professor of Soil Quality

**'I am afraid English-language education would affect quality in the first year. Surveys show that some students find even an English-language text book difficult in the first year.'** It is possible that the quality stays the same but the pass rate in exams goes down. There is a lot of variation among our Dutch students when it comes to English. I notice that on courses in the second and third year too. My students take the Soil Quality course in the second year and they have to write a report on it in English. Every year you get students writing that they have taken "soil monsters". Foreign students have to demonstrate an adequate command of English. If we require our Dutch students to do the same, I predict a drop in student numbers. Not that such a drop is necessarily a problem, mind you.'





## Meghann Ormond



### Native speaking teacher bachelor Tourism

'I've taught on Wageningen's fully English-language bachelor programme since it began six years ago.

**I find the level of English among my BSc Tourism students very high, even among the first-year students who have come straight from secondary school.**

Their spoken and written English gets even better over the course of the degree programme. This is possibly due (in part) to the range of nationalities in the classroom: our Dutch students have a real incentive to use English. While I don't think we need to raise the starting qualifications for students, I do think we need to give Dutch students more opportunities to strengthen their active English skills. This diversity clearly serves to enrich students' formal educational experience and opens students up to other ways of thinking and being in the world. Expanding one's horizons and making new connections should be, in my view, a key objective in one's Bachelor's-level studies.'

## Ralf Hartemink



### Programme director Food technology

'We at Food Technology would like an English-language Bachelor's programme. Part of the first year and the whole of the second and third year of this programme is already taught in English.

**It's a small step and it has advantages. You can get international teachers and PhD students to teach on Bachelor's courses and you can attract better staff from other European countries.**

There is a lot of in-

terest because our programmes are top quality. I don't see many language problems. Most of the teachers have already been teaching in English for over ten years and they can express themselves fine in the language. The biggest problem is that a few teachers have a strong Dutch accent or translate Dutch idioms literally. Students are getting more critical and they complain about that. Those teachers get lower scores in course evaluations. But the students have no problems with classes and exams in English. For the first-year course Organic Chemistry 2, which is already in English, the students got a choice last year of an English or a Dutch exam. All 107 students chose the English exam. Students want to prepare for the labour market. And that is international and English-speaking.'

## Sylvia van der Weerden



### Head of Wageningen in'to Languages

**'Not much research has been done on the relation between use of English and the quality of university education.**

It has been studied at bilingual secondary schools though. What came out was that not only was the

standard of English higher, which is logical, but the students also scored at least as highly in the other subjects. So the quality did not suffer. I would guess that the same would apply at university level. The standard of English among Wageningen students varies widely. Our impression is that the standard among Asian and African students is usually a bit lower. Dutch students are either very good or they just reach the threshold level, B2. I am in favour of gradually raising the minimum level to C1, the second highest level. The better your language skills, the better you can function together in the academic arena.'



# Field of green

Plenty of thinking and talking about nature goes on among Wageningen students and researchers. But until recently they didn't get much chance to dig around in the soil with their own hands. The Field is changing this. The new campus garden is there for anyone who fancies experimenting with nature.

text Ronald van Drie photos Sven Menschel

**F**rom the bus lane, the field next to research institute Rikilt on the Wageningen campus looks like an overgrown jungle. Weeds stand shoulder-high and not much system is detectable. Last January this patch of ground was designated The Field: a place where all staff and students can experiment to their hearts' content. The idea is to create a research garden where everyone is welcome with green plans that don't fit in at a chair group or research group. And that makes The Field unique in Wageningen.

## EXPERIMENTAL

When you actually walk into the field you can see some structure and order. To the right lies a vegetable garden, to the left a flower garden. Paths cut through the tall weeds and there are banks separating the Field into sections. Each section will house several projects. The

organizers only accept a new plan if it won't interfere with other projects, and preferably actually supports them. The proposed project also has to be informative and experimental.

The Field started last January. Landscape gardeners created the banks using bulldozers, and dug channels and a pond for drainage. Shortly afterwards trees and shrubs were planted and flower meadows were sown. The organizers also bought tools for maintaining the gardens. These initial activities – costing about 30,000 euros – transformed this lifeless patch of ground into a green, if still rather messy, oasis of life.

## BEANS

Arthur Nooren stands bare-chested, watering his broad beans. The student of Plant Sciences is growing the beans for a soil improvement project. He and other students will be studying how you can get more nutrients

Check out the  
photo series  
on [resource-online.nl](http://resource-online.nl).



into the soil by growing beans and composting vegetable waste in an eco-friendly manner. Because, having been a building site, the plot has a top layer of infertile soil which could use some attention. Nooren has planted several different species of bean to see which one works best. He explains that bean plants manufacture a lot of nitrogen compounds in the soil, rendering making them perfect for fertilizing poor soils.

Nooren feels the lack of practical application on his degree course. There is no real scope for putting his green fingers to work. He therefore joined the Wageningen Student Farm society, which started an experimental garden at The Field this spring. So while most students were on holiday in the summer, Nooren could be found watering his beans. 'It is a lot of work. If you want to do a project here, you really have to put a lot of time into it.'

### PLANTING SEEDS

One of the managers of The Field, Elike Wijnheijmer, comes into the garden, sweat drops forming on her forehead. She stands in her summer dress and sandals looking at Nooren's handiwork. 'This is great, isn't it?' she says. 'These students don't normally get the chance to implement these kinds of ideas during their studies. We are now the only place on the campus where they can do so. Here they can experience for themselves what it's like to plant seeds in the ground.'

Wijnheijmer turns around and walks over to the flower garden. 'This garden belongs to me and two of my colleagues. It is divided into sections and I try out different combinations of flowers in each section to see which ones can live side by side and which ones overshadow each other.'


Wijnheijmer stands still in the middle of the garden. She points to a plant. 'The summer snow is doing well! I hadn't seen it in flower yet.' A bit further along she kneels by a small plant that looks a bit like mint. 'I transplanted this plant from my garden at home. It is lemon verbena. The leaves smell very lemony. You can make tea with them.'

### APPLE ORCHARD

The organizers of The Field want to run the place in the most sustainable and environmentally friendly way possible. So there is no electricity – all the work is done by hand - and artificial fertilizer is absolutely forbidden. Instead, there is a small compost heap next to Nooren's vegetable garden. Nor is there a water connection on the plot. Nooren gets water from a tap in the Rikilt building through a 100-metre-long hosepipe. 'We didn't really want to do that either,' says Wijnheijmer. She would have preferred a water pump but that wasn't feasible yet. More projects will be starting in The Field in the autumn. One of these will be an apple orchard with some rare and local species, to be planted by the Centre for Genetic Resources Netherlands (CGN). A group of students intend to try to grow mushrooms on blocks of wood. Another student is working on growing pumpkins. And right at the far end of The Field, in the last section, is plant ecologist Wieger Wamelink's project location. A mix of wild flowers was sown in the spring and he and his

students are going to see how these flowers fare at this location.

### NO JUNGLE

By the end of the afternoon the temperature drops and Nooren has harvested the first beans. Wijnheijmer closes the gate and surveys the garden. 'Hopefully we'll survive the starting period with this poor soil. We are looking for an ecological balance and need to build up a stable community. We need continuity because it will take three to five years to develop the garden. Only then will you see even from a distance that The Field is no jungle.' 



Arthur Nooren (right) of Wageningen Student Farm harvests his first beans.



### PEE PASS

Students at Kunming Health Vocational College are to be issued with a pass for toilet use on campus.

The idea is to reduce water wasting in a region suffering from drought. Each student is allowed to use 3000 litres of water per month. That represents 15 flushes per working day. Surely the Chinese can do better than that? Wouldn't 1000 litres each be enough?

### FOREIGN

The more foreign languages you learn the more easily your brain absorbs and processes new information, shows research at the university of Helsinki. The researchers deduce this from EEGs of test subjects who are learning a foreign language. All the more reason to switch to teaching in other languages. Not just English but French and German too.

### SKINNY

Were you on the skinny side when you were born? Then you are probably not destined to win an Olympic medal. British research on more than 2700 babies born with low birth weights (<2.5 kg) in March 1946 shows that light-weight babies underachieve in sport and exercise all their lives. And that is not only bad for their health but also for the medal score.

### JOINT

A joint makes you less motivated to earn your living, shows research at University College London. The real news, however, is that the effect is small. Under normal conditions half the test subjects opted to take a tougher test that would earn them more money. Under the influence of a joint, 8 percent fewer did so. Only just significant, but enough reason to give it up?



## Discover your campus

The Discover your campus campaign to draw attention to activities on campus was launched on Monday with a selfie campaign. A group of students drove around the campus in a yellow 'instagram van', inviting fellow students to take selfies and share them on Instagram with #CampusWUR.

The selfies will be used for the Discover campaign on the website of Wageningen University & Research, and on Facebook. They will also feature in the new activities calendar for the campus. The idea behind this 'campus calendar' is to help keep students and staff better informed about all that there is to do. From now on the print version will be available free from boxes all around the

campus. The calendar can also be found on [wageningencampus.nl](http://wageningencampus.nl). It is the first complete calendar

for everything that goes on around the campus. **RvD**



A yellow 'instagram van' was driving around the campus on Monday. All part of the Discover your campus campaign.



## Camping at Droef

Cycle past the student housing on the Droevendaalste steeg these days and you'll see tents dotted about the gardens. Temporary shelter for students who haven't found a room yet. Michael Cor-

mann, a Master's student of Environmental Studies from Germany, is one of them. He came to Wageningen just before the AID. He has already been allocated a room at Droef but since it will only be va-

cated in October, he is camping out for now. That's no punishment for him: he likes camping and the late summer weather helps. What's more, he's got nice neighbours. **RvD**



## Fewer lecturers have teaching qualification

**Few lecturers at Wageningen have a basic teaching qualification compared with other universities, says the Dutch National Students' Association (ISO). Wageningen University & Research says that it is currently working on catching up with the rest.**

Figures from ISO show that on average 70 percent of teaching staff at Dutch universities have the BKO basic teaching qualification. Only 48 percent of staff at WUR had this qualification on 31 December 2015. That means we are bringing up the rear nationally.

The university has been making efforts to close that gap for some years, says Emiel van Puffelen, head of department at Corporate Education, Research & Innovation. Qualified lecturers only made up 24 percent of the total in 2011 but that proportion has now increased to over 50 percent, although there are no precise figures for the current status. Van Puffelen does know that 250 lecturers are scheduled to get their BKO within the next three years.

ISO wants an end to the use of unqualified lecturers and is therefore advocating making a BKO qualification compulsory. To a certain extent that is already the case in Wageningen, says Van Puffelen, as it is a mandatory element in the tenure track career programme. But there is no obligation for existing staff. Tailored solutions apply for younger researchers — PhD candidates and postdocs — according to Van Puffelen.

In 2008 the universities agreed that as many lecturers as possible would receive training in teaching skills. That became the BKO. Each university has its own programme, which is recognized by all the others. There are big differences between the programmes. Van Puffelen considers Wageningen's BKO programme to be one of the most extensive.

According to a previous study, PhD candidates feel they are not well prepared for their teaching responsibilities. The survey six months ago by ISO and other organizations showed that half are dissatisfied with the supervision they get in teaching and only 11 percent complete all or part of the BKO training programme. **RR**



ILLUSTRATIONS: KIM PETERSE

## EPISODE 76 MORTIERSTRAAT 14B <<

*The story so far: The house on the Mortierstraat is emptying out fast. Derk is the only resident with no plans to move. Willem-Jan and Vera are the first to pack their bags.*

### Archeologist

**O**f all the furniture in Willem-Jan's room, the bed — surprisingly — proved the hardest to dismantle. It took them at least half an hour of tugging and wrenching to loosen the last plank without damaging the wood.

'What a useless thing,' said Derk, wiping the sweat from his forehead. A thick layer of dust had become visible on the floor, with a few objects dotted about in it — beer bottle tops, crisp packets and a pair of boxer shorts. 'Maybe we should get an archaeologist in to analyse this,' says Derk. 'Then we'll know at last how long you've been a student.' Willem-Jan didn't take the bait. He had to get on with packing up and cleaning: the landlord was coming to inspect the place soon. Derk found even more mess in the living room. Removal boxes everywhere, cleaning materials and furniture. Somewhere in the midst of it all, Filippo and Bianca were smooching on the sofa. They had hardly taken their hands off each other since Bianca got back from Africa. They would be leaving too in a few weeks, thought Derk wistfully. The only plus side was that his friend Jelle would now be coming to live here. He was just pouring himself a glass of coke in the kitchen when Vera came in.

'I am totally ready,' she said conspiratorially, showing him her single-lens reflex camera. He grinned back. 'The big moment has come.' Together they crept into Willem-Jan's room to see whether their housemate really had laid hands on the vacuum cleaner.

'Come and see this, guys!' yelled

Derk. 'The eighth wonder of the world. Willem-Jan is using a vacuum cleaner.' Grinning, the housemates watched Willem-Jan sweat.

'We are going to record this for posterity,' said Vera, her camera poised. 'Otherwise nobody will believe it.' Willem-Jan theatrically swung the vacuum cleaner tube around his head like a lasso. Soon everyone else lost interest and he collapsed onto the sofa.

'Mission accomplished.' He made a high five with Vera, who had finished long ago. It turned out he was ready just in time because the doorbell went almost immediately. The landlord — as usual in jeans and jacket — started rolling a cigarette straight away.

'Let's have a look, then' he growled. The other housemates stood aside but watched the show from a distance. The landlord cast a quick glance around Willem-Jan's room, licked his cigarette paper and stuck his hag in his mouth. 'Not bad, lad, but are you going to clean it too?'



Resource follows events at Mortierstraat 14B

## &gt;&gt; PARTIES

The best parties according to Wageningen Uitgaans Promotie. Check [www.wageningenup.nl](http://www.wageningenup.nl) for all parties.

**WAGENINGENUP**

**LUCA - IXESN: WELCOME TO HOLLAND PARTY**

**Friday 9 September from 23.00 to 04.00**

Café Het Gat became Luca this summer. Some parties were already held there during AID week but this is the first student party of the new academic year. IXESN is putting on this 'Holland Party' (dress code: orange) to welcome all international students to the Netherlands. Free admission for members, 2.50 euros for non-members. The first 100 guests get a free drink – orange, of course.

**CERES - OPEN PARTY**

**Thursday 15 September from 23.00 to 05.00**

Ceres' first open party of the new academic year. The theme has yet to be announced, but

based on our years of experience with Ceres parties we are willing to bet this will be an event you won't want to miss.

**ARGO - SIMPLY TECHNO OUTDOOR AND SIMPLY TECHNO AFTERPARTY**

**Saturday 24 September from 12.00 to 23.00 and from 23.45 to 06.00**

Student rowing club Argo will be going crazy on Saturday 24 September. The techno party will start outdoors, where you can join in free of charge. From midnight it will continue indoors at Argo (tickets on sale in advance from Argo). So true techno fans will be able to party non-stop for 18 whole hours. Luckily the next day is Sunday so you'll be able to lie in bed all day. ③

## &gt;&gt; THE WORKS

## 'THE WORKING HOURS ARE BIZARRE: FROM 9.30 TO 22.00'

**Who?** Raoul Frijns, Master's student of Molecular Life Sciences

**What?** Six months' internship at the Korean Advanced Institute of Science and Technology (KAIST)

**Where?** Daejeon, South Korea

'The lab where I do research specializes in making microcapsules for various purposes such as dosing medicines. My thesis supervisor mentioned this lab as one of the places where I might be able to do an internship. I found the research they do here very interesting and it also appealed to me because South Korea is an unusual place to go. I am doing research here on photonic crystals: periodic nanostructures which give rise to colours. Unlike colour from pigments, colour from photonic crystals never fades. Butterfly wings and peacock feathers are made of these kinds of structures.

I had some doubts initially because I was thinking in terms of Anglophone countries. In the end I just took the plunge and ventured into the unknown. The Koreans don't speak English terribly well. Everyone at the lab speaks quite broken English, which can make it difficult to communicate. Off the campus I manage using gestures or a translation app. I eat in restaurants a lot because eating out is much cheaper and more normal in Korea. They have a cooked meal at lunchtime here. I haven't cooked once since I've been here.

What is really bizarre is the working hours. Officially they are 09.30 to

22.00 but the professor emphasized that I didn't have to stick to that. I think such working hours are counterproductive and only make people less productive. I don't see many signs of the tensions with North Korea. The people here are pretty calm about it and they don't think about it much. In fact, when Pokémon GO first came out loads of people set off towards the North-Korean border: in South Korea itself the government has blocked some features of Google Maps so the game doesn't work as well.' ③ CN







## MEANWHILE IN... <<

### Meanwhile in... Italy


**In the news:** On Wednesday 24 August the mountainous area of central Italy was struck by an earthquake with a magnitude of 6.2 on the Richter scale, killing almost 300 people and leaving 2000 people homeless.

*Comment by Marco Dompé, Ph.D student at Physical chemistry and soft matter*

'The earthquake is a real disaster. People could feel the earth trembling in the middle of the night: one big quake followed by more, smaller tremors. In the morning news it turned out that a lot of people were dead or missing and that they were trying to rescue people. But hour after hour the number of dead increased. The mayor of the town which was affected the most, Amatrice, stated at a certain point that half of the town just does not exist anymore.

Soon after that, people started to question if the buildings were earthquake-proof enough. After the disastrous earthquake of L'Aquila in 2009 a lot of money was allocated to improving buildings. But people are annoyed to learn that some buildings were not made earthquake-safe. For example, an old church which should have been improved but which was not: it collapsed and the house below it was destroyed, killing a family with little children. The news is filled with scandals like this.

I can imagine that it is difficult to improve historic buildings. Reconstructing normal houses is one thing but reinforcing old buildings is another. If you want to make them safe you should reshape and sometimes rebuild them since some of them were built centuries ago. But then they lose some of their cultural value. It is a tradeoff but in my opinion the safety of people should always come first.

What is even worse is that extreme right political parties in Italy are using this for their campaign: they are stating that the victims of the earthquake who have lost their homes have to stay in tents whereas immigrants stay in hotels or houses at this moment. I think this is ridiculous but, strangely, people are impressed by such quotes. Probably because they are angry and looking for a scapegoat.'  CN

### in memoriam

#### Pim Kooij, professor of Rural History 1999-2010



Pim Kooij passed away on 9 August 2016 at the age of 71. When Pim Kooij came to Wageningen as professor of Rural History in 1999, he was already a big name in the field of urban and regional history. He would soon make his presence felt in the field of rural history too. His inaugural lecture at Wageningen outlined his programme and spelled innovation for the work of the chair group. Pim was the right man in the right place. With his appealing personality he was soon a well-known figure in Wageningen circles, even though he still also held the chair at the university of Groningen, and did some substantial odd jobs besides. In 2007 Pim was appointed officer of the Order of Oranje Nassau on

the basis of his extraordinary academic achievements. He drew the greatest satisfaction, though, from the fact that successors were appointed to take over from him both in Groningen and in Wageningen. Pim was a person people liked to consult because you could always trust that he would have your interests at heart, and because he could always get straight to the heart of the matter. Pim worked hard and enjoyed life to the full.

He was a doer and had no time for grumbling. He was honest, confidence-inspiring, energetic, focused, optimistic and above all, energizing. He pulled the chair group through a difficult period, apparently effortlessly. And that was partly because of what he called his secret weapon: his wife Anje and his children Mathijs and Xandra. Our thoughts are with them at this sad time.

*On behalf of the Rural and Environmental History group,  
Anton Schuurman*

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## Announcements

### How should it be done?! Innovative alternatives wanted for the NWO-MVI Young Responsible Design Award

The NWO programme for socially responsible innovation challenges students, young researchers, designers and entrepreneurs to produce a socially responsible design for a technology, product or service. The objective is to solve an urgent social problem. All your team has to do is to present your idea in a short video and submit it by 1 November. More information at [www.nwo.nl/mvi-award](http://www.nwo.nl/mvi-award).

### Free open surgery for students with questions about RSI

There is a free open surgery every Thursday from 17.00 to 18.00 for students with questions about RSI or arm, neck and shoulder problems. The surgery is for answering minor questions about symptoms, exercises, posture at work etc. We also give advice on what to do about these symptoms (for example rest, sport/movement, software that enforces breaks, etc.) and whether there is a need for therapy. Location:

Mensendieck exercise therapy practice run by Karin Vaessen, Kolkakkerweg 2 in Wageningen. The entrance is on the left side of the building.

[WWW.BETERBEWEGEN.NL](http://WWW.BETERBEWEGEN.NL)

### Big band needs musicians

This is your chance to play jazz, blues, funk or Latin in a big band. Our own WUR big band, the Sound of Science, is looking for a drummer, a pianist and trumpeters. We have a professional conductor and we rehearse every Tuesday from 17.30 to 19.30 in the Gaia meeting room at Alterra. You are welcome to come along and find out what our rehearsals are like. [www.soundofscience.nl](http://www.soundofscience.nl), [www.facebook.com/BigBandSoundOfScience](http://www.facebook.com/BigBandSoundOfScience) or [leen.moraal@wur.nl](mailto:leen.moraal@wur.nl).

### Annie's Kroeg needs board members

Annie's Kroeg is a lively traditional pub especially for students. We are open every Thursday evening. We also organize exciting and unusual activities. We have specialty beers, delicious liqueurs and non-alcoholic drinks on offer, all for a student-friendly price. Are you interested in organizing activities or would you like a seat on our board? For we are

looking for new board members. Email [annieskroeg@hotmail.com](mailto:annieskroeg@hotmail.com).

## agenda

### Thursday 8 to Wednesday 21 September

#### FIVE FILMS FOR STUDENTS

*Liza, the Fox-Fairy*: dry humour in a dark fairy tale about a dreamy girl looking for Mr Right; *The Idol*: a feel-good drama about a boy in Gaza who wants to take part in an Egyptian talent show; *Maggie's Plan*: a refreshing rom-com in which Maggie finds a sperm donor but falls in love with a married professor; *The Neon Demon*: a horror film that mixes beauty and obsession in a treacherous cocktail; *Compostella*: about pilgrims on their way to Santiago de Compostella in northern Spain, an undogmatic, spiritual film with spectacular panoramas. Venue: Wilhelminaweg 3A, Wageningen.

[WWW.MOVIE-W.NL](http://WWW.MOVIE-W.NL)

### Thursday 8 September from 19.45 to 20.00

#### OPEN EVENING MAKING THEATRE AT STICHTING LENS

Lens gives you the chance to contrib-

ute to all aspects of the theatrical process (decor, costumes, lighting and script) and you get plenty of opportunity to develop your acting talents. You do more than just act at Lens! From September to January we will be working on a production aimed at beginners, and from January to June on a production for more experienced actors. Come to the open evening to savour the atmosphere and find out whether making theatre is for you. Venue: the Wilde Wereld theatre, Burgtstraat 1, Wageningen. Register via [stichtinglens@hotmail.com](mailto:stichtinglens@hotmail.com).

[WWW.STICHTINGLENS.NL](http://WWW.STICHTINGLENS.NL)

### Sunday 11 September, 16.00

#### JAZZ JAM SESSION

Laurens Ganzeveld organizes a jazz jam session every second Sunday of the month in Café de Zaaier. The stage will be set up from 16.00 and musicians can play between 16.30 and 19.00. If the weather's nice, we will be open up onto the Zaaier's pavement cafe. Anyone can join in the jam session, both experienced musicians and beginners. Keyboards, guitar, bass guitar and drums are provided and there is a modest sound system for the singer and instruments that require an amplifier. Register via [jamsessie@jazzinwageningen.nl](mailto:jamsessie@jazzinwageningen.nl). Venue: Café De Zaaier, Heerstraat 33 Wageningen.

[WWW.JAZZINWAGENINGEN.NL](http://WWW.JAZZINWAGENINGEN.NL)

### Thursday September 15, 12.30-13.20 LUNCH WORKSHOP WAGENINGEN WRITING LAB 'PLAN FOR SUCCESS'

How to start on your writing assignment in an effective way? That is the question we aim to address during the workshop 'Plan for Success!' We'll provide you with the theory behind the writing process and guide you to apply this theory to your own assignment. Don't forget to bring your assignment! Free access. Be on time, as participant numbers are limited to 20.

Venue: C0408 Forum. [info.wageningenwritinglab@wur.nl](mailto:info.wageningenwritinglab@wur.nl)

### Saturday 17 September, 13.00-16.00 INTERNATIONAL MUSIC AT THE EMMAUS-REGENBOOG ANNUAL FAIR

At the annual fair, extra activities are



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being organized by IWW (the Wageningen intercultural working group) and THUIS, with support from Wij Wageningen (for neighbourhood initiatives). Various international organizations will be showcasing Wageningen's cultural diversity. There will be a variety of performances, such as traditional dance by the Indo-Surinamese society Shaanti Dal and a percussion workshop by Samporna Soekhrum. The Chinese Society and the Somali society Tusmo will also be there with music and a fashion show. Finally, Minor Barantes will be singing in Spanish with his distinctive voice and the student band Floram Metric will be playing protest songs from around the world. The programme can be found on Facebook. Let's celebrate diversity together! Info: 06-54 250 350. Venue: square on the corner of Bowlespark and Herenstraat, Wageningen.

**Wednesday 21 September, 19.30-22.00**

#### CRASH COURSE ON WU EDUCATION: GOVERNANCE, POLICY AND ORGANIZATION

The course (one evening) addresses four issues. The first one is on governance and organization of WU, the second one on funding of courses and other financial issues, the third

one on main agenda items of Programme Committees (the annual Education Modification Cycle, the Education and Examination Regulations and the accreditation of study programmes, including the internal quality assurance system), the fourth one on tasks, responsibilities and authorities of a Programme Committee and its members. Lecturer: Prof. Tiny van Boekel, Director of the Education Institute (OWI) and Dean of Education. Venue: Forum Building, VIP rooms 031-034. Free drinks afterwards. Subscribe by sending an email to Marita.Kleffen@wur.nl. Next courses are on: November 23, 2016, January 25, 2017 and April 19, 2017.

**Thursday, September 22, 12.30-13.20**

#### LUNCH WORKSHOP WAGENINGEN WRITING LAB / WAGENINGEN UNIVERSITY 'SEARCH EFFICIENTLY IN THE RIGHT DATABASE'

There are many places and ways to look up information. Knowledge of databases and search strategies will help you to find scientific publications on your topic in an efficient and systematic way. Learn about tips and tricks in this workshop. You can bring your own research question to get advice. Free access. Be on time, as participant numbers are limited

to 20.

Venue: Forum Library, room 460. Registration: [info.wageningenwritinglab@wur.nl](mailto:info.wageningenwritinglab@wur.nl).

**Friday 30 September, 15.00**

#### WAGENINGEN YOUNG ACADEMY PRESENTS: LECTURES 'REWRITING OUR GENES?'

Jennifer Doudna, professor of Biomedical Sciences at UC Berkeley, and Edze Westra, researcher at the University of Exeter have respectively been awarded the prestigious Heineken Prize for and the Heineken Young Scientist Award, both for Biochemistry and Biophysics. They are both known for their work on CRISPR-Cas, a defence system present in many bacterial species. The potential applications of these systems may have a tremendous impact on medicine and biotechnology. The lectures are followed by a debate and drinks in The Spot. Venue: Orion, C1040. Registration: [www.wur.nl/en/activity/Lecture-Rewriting-our-genes.htm](http://www.wur.nl/en/activity/Lecture-Rewriting-our-genes.htm)

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

## colophon

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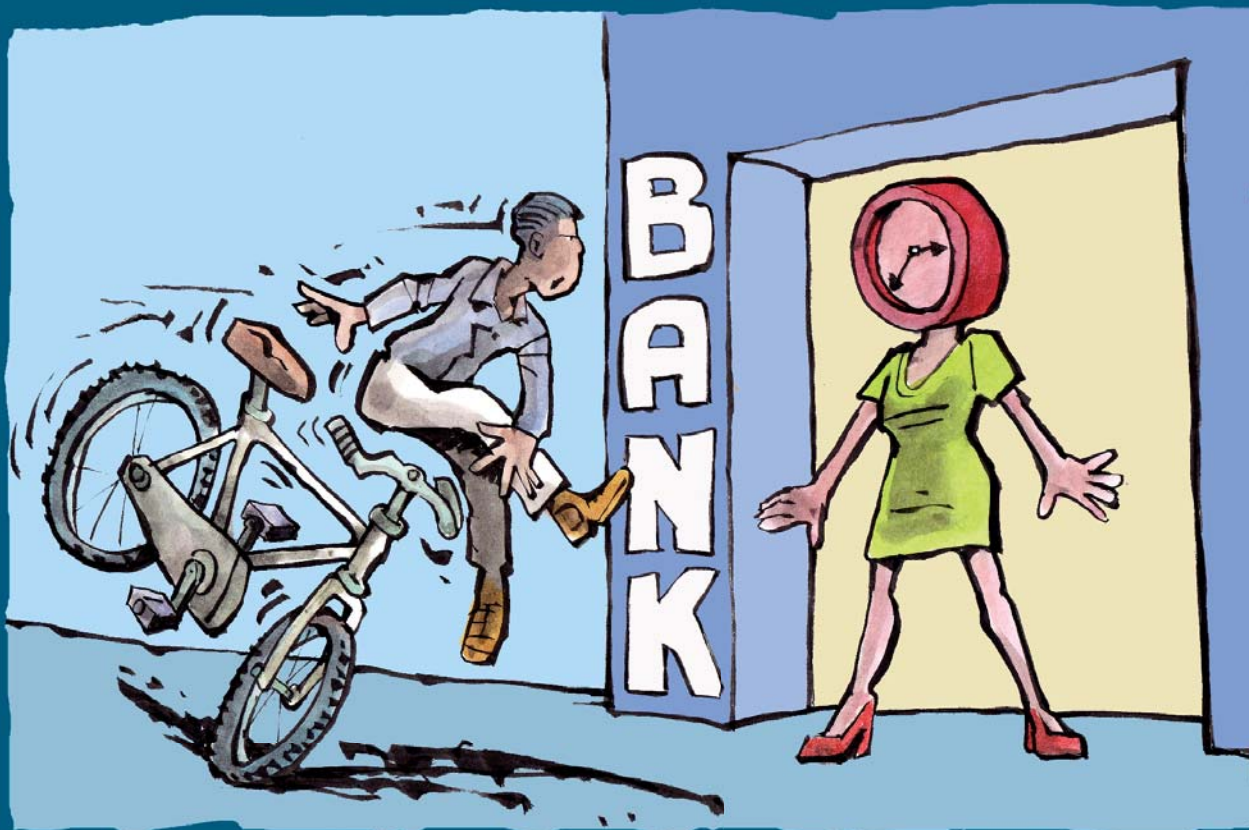


ILLUSTRATION: HENK VAN RUITENBEEK

## Late? Make a new appointment!

I rushed to the parking lot to get my old bicycle. A busy day with coursework made me forget an appointment with a local bank at 3:30 pm. No time for thinking, I cycled quickly to the Dutch bank located in the city centre to meet the bank employee on time. Unfortunately, when I entered the bank, the clock showed 3:40 pm.

I looked around and saw that there were just two people waiting. So I thought everything would be fine to open a bank account. Only slightly worried, I went up to the bank employee, gave her the appointment note and said: 'Sorry, I am a little bit late, these are my documents required for bank account opening.' 'You are late, please come back another time. I will make a new appointment for you', said the employee. I tried to persuade her. 'Please help me, I had a class and could not get here earlier'. She smiled. 'This is a rule for everybody and we make no exceptions. See you next time and have a nice day.'

I came home and told myself: 'I must manage time better from now on. This is a valuable experience when studying in the Netherlands.' In Vietnam, there are more employees in the bank and you rarely make an appointment with them. You just go and wait your turn and then open a bank account easily. Even if you have an appointment and unfortunately you come late, you just wait until a bank clerk is free, as long as it is within working hours.

Sometimes, strict regulations are inconvenient for me. But I am now familiar with the Dutch customs and have found it interesting to make use of them to improve my capacity for adaptation.

® Dung Duc Tran, PhD candidate in the Water Management Group, from Vietnam

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See you next time...'  
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time better from now on**

*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](mailto:resource@wur.nl) and earn twenty-five euro and Dutch candy.*