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RESOURCE ^[EN]

For everyone at Wageningen University & Research

no 13 – 23 February 2017 – 11th Volume

Wageningen voting guide

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**INTERNATIONAL
EDITION**

MEASURING GAS EXCHANGE

The Human Nutrition Unit in Helix opens its doors to guests from the business world on Thursday 23 February, to show off the many possibilities in this spanking new research facility. One of the many pieces of measuring equipment here is this basal metabolic rate monitor. This apparatus measures the gas exchange: the amounts of carbon dioxide and oxygen inhaled and exhaled. This is an indicator of the amount of energy someone burns up.

TL, photo Guy Ackermans



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ACADEMIC FREEDOM

Academic freedom is under fire all around the world. And not just in Turkey or Iran; we need to be alert in the west as well. Politicians and companies are bring science into disrepute everywhere. This is affecting science in the Netherlands, says the Dutch universities' rectors' conference in an open letter to the newspaper *NRC Handelsblad*. Stating the obvious, one might think. But there is more to this letter than that. This public warning can make us more aware of how we deal with undesirable messages on social media. We attack the messenger. We tar and feather him and hurl him into a pit, egged on by virtual cheers of applause. And it's not just the man on the street that does this, it's no holds barred for the American president too. Type in a hashtag about 'fake research' and you'll sure of a rich harvest. In their open letter the rectors called on the leaders of countries and continents to stand up against the attacks on academic freedom. But how? Ban Twitter? Establish codes of conduct? That is impossible and restricts another kind of freedom. Can't freely operating academics come up with a solution to this?

Edwin van Laar

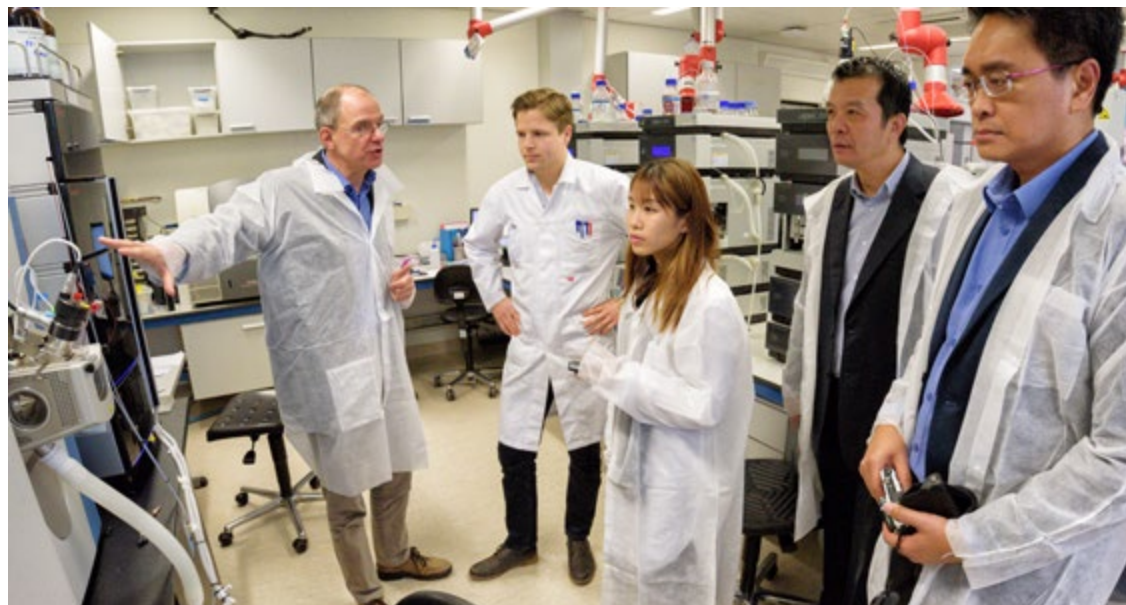
>> [Prins Vleermuis crèche comes to campus | p.7](#)

TIES WITH SINGAPORE STRENGTHENED

A delegation from Nanyang Technological University (NTU) in Singapore is visiting Wageningen University & Research this week to discuss collaboration on the education front. The universities already have a joint Bachelor's programme and are now working on a Master's.

NTU is a young and highly regarded university in Singapore. It has 25,00 students and is in 54th place in the Times World Education Ranking, 11 places higher than Wageningen. Since 2014, NTU and WUR have run a joint major in NTU Bachelor's programme Food Science and Technology. NTU selects about 30 students a year from four technical degree programmes for this major.

Over two years, the students from Singapore take five Wageningen courses. These are taught online but for the practicals Wageningen lecturers go to Singapore or the students come to Wageningen. In the second year the students from Singapore combine one of these practicals with an excursion week in the Netherlands, visiting food companies such as Mars and KraftHeinz. Exchange of knowledge with companies is im-



Staff and students from Singapore had a look round some WUR labs on Wednesday.

PHOTO: GUY ACKERMANS

portant because for NTU the arrival of international food companies in Singapore is a major reason for starting this major.

At the end of last year WUR and NTU decided to extend the collaboration on the Bachelor's programme until 2022. They are also now preparing a two-year Master's programme in Food Studies that follows on from the Bachelor's. In this Master's programme, the students spend the first six months in Singapore and then take courses

in Wageningen for six months. The second year consists of a thesis and an internship, says Anja Kleijn, coordinator of the collaboration with NTU in Wageningen.

The Master's students in Singapore could of course just come to Wageningen for a Master's degree programme, says Kleijn. But so far not many do so. That is because these students' first degrees often don't provide a good foundation for these programmes. In order to stimulate more student exchange-

es, NTU and WUR signed an exchange agreement in December. The first student from Singapore will arrive in Wageningen this spring for a period of six months.

The delegation from Singapore is paying visits on campus this week, and going to food companies and institutes in the Netherlands. With the delegation is a journalist from *The Straits Times* in Singapore, who will be writing a report on a small country with a strong food sector. **AS**

DBA ACT CAUSES CONFUSION AND EXTRA WORK

Staff at Wageningen University & Research who regularly hire freelance professionals have lots of questions about the Assessment of Employment Relationships (Deregulation) Act (DBA Act). The act is also increasing the amount of paperwork.

This is what Marleen de Vries and Johan Kanis at Corporate HR say. The DBA Act, which came into effect in May 2016, was intended to put an end to bogus self-employment. It replaces the Declaration of Independent Contractor Status (the VAR) that freelancers used to be able to use to show they really were self-employed. The DBA Act enables stricter checks. It also makes the organization hiring the freelancer

liable in the event of an infringement rather than the freelancer, as was the case for the VAR.

De Vries and Kanis have had dozens of requests for assistance since May 2016 from WUR staff who want to hire a freelancer. They have also had complaints about the extra paperwork due to the DBA Act.

De Vries says that departments who want to engage freelancers, such as lecturers, editors or translators, should ask themselves three questions. Is the freelancer in a subordinate position with respect to the client? Is personal work being delivered (in other words, can only the freelancer do the work)? Is money being paid for it? If the answer to all three questions

is yes, this is really an employer-employee relationship and hiring a freelancer is therefore not permitted. The department should then look for an alternative solution such as a payroll setup. The freelancer and client can also sign a model contract that clearly states the assignment, stipulates the mutual responsibilities and contains a declaration by both parties that this is not an employer-employee relationship. 'If freelancers are not prepared to sign the model contract or to go for a payroll solution, they won't be hired. The risk of fines by the tax authority is just too great,' says Kanis.

It should be noted that the tax authority will not be enforcing the DBA Act until January 2018. **VK**

'ACADEMIC FREEDOM UNDER THREAT'

The turmoil in the world is threatening academic freedom, wrote the rectors of the Dutch universities last week in *NRC Handelsblad*. 'Let us turn the tide while we still can.'

According to the rectors, among them Arthur Mol of Wageningen University & Research, things have been moving in the wrong direction since the economic crisis and the Arab Spring. 'Europe's incapacity to respond quickly and adequately to the influx of refugees, along with rising east-west tensions, have led to serious fears among segments of the population, the increasing strength of populist parties, and an ever stronger orientation to

'our own country'.

And this poses a threat to academic freedom, say the rectors, pointing to the example of Iran – and those of Russia and the United States. People whose opinions are not welcome are feeling the pinch and it has become harder for academics and students to travel. Also, science is being discredited increasingly often.

The rectors call on the Dutch government, the EU and governments around the world to take a strong stand against restrictions on academic freedom. 'History teaches us that we too often looked the other way when unacceptable things went on, or let ourselves be lulled into complacency for too long.' **AS**

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No reply

M is only in the Netherlands for a few days. She is spending some of her precious time with me, over a bowl of soup in Orion. I tell her about my end-of-PhD stress but emphasize that things are going great apart from that. She says the postdoc job in London has taken some getting used to. Way too busy. But after some ups and downs it's OK now. 'Only...' A silence falls. 'It's so difficult working with A.' I stare at her in amazement. 'Really, with A?' 'Yes,' she replies adamantly, 'A is doing nothing towards the paper we're supposed to be working on together. I've emailed and phoned her but I never get a reply. Nothing. And it's so important for my future to get this research published quickly.' 'How annoying,' I say sympathetically. I start to feel a little bit angry at A. 'M,' I say firmly, 'you did set limits, didn't you? If you can't get A to work with you, just strike her off the list of authors.' M nods, but her body language is saying something else. A silence falls.

I suddenly recall something. 'M,' I say with a grin. 'Do you remember that experiment we worked on? Where you're a co-author? I texted you, emailed you, phoned you. No reply. It took months. I actually considered scrapping you from the co-authors.' M stares guiltily at her empty soup bowl. A silence falls. My phone rings. An email: 'Dear Stijn, Hope you are doing fine. I know you are busy, but I emailed you several times about attached paper. Could you please respond...' I feel my grin evaporating and my face slowly reddening. 'M,' I stutter, 'I'm sorry but I've really got to get back to work.' **R**

in brief

>> VICI GRANTS

Wageningen passed over

This week the Dutch science funding body NWO allocated 1.5 million euros to Dutch scientists. Just like last year, there were no Wageningen researchers among them. In 2015, three Wageningen scientists were among the lucky ones. Henrieke de Ruiter, the WUR policy advisor who helps researchers with their Vici applications, cannot explain the downturn and talks of 'very bad luck'. Both this year and last, three Wageningen scientists submitted applications for Vici grants. **AS**

>> MAPPING PARTY

Maps for Kenya

Wageningen researchers held a Mapping Party in Lumen last week. To help aid organizations, they created maps of a region of Kenya which is suffering from serious drought. The Mapping Party was an initiative by Saskia Werners of WUR and someone from Unesco-IHE. About

200 researchers got together at four locations in the Netherlands and Kenya to make maps of the River Mara watershed. Werners: 'I heard about the drought and the Red Cross's need for good maps. I've got a project in that area and I thought: there is more to being a university than education and research. We have a social role to play too.' **AS**

>> BIRD BOOKS

Exhibition in Forum library

The Special Collections department of the library in the Forum has built up a sizable collection of bird books over the years. At the request of the Wageningen bird work group, these books are currently on display. The exhibition's tour de force is the original of *De Nederlandsche Vogelen*, a famous five-part series of books from the 18th century, by *Nozeman* and *Sepp*. The exhibition provides an overview of ornithology through the ages, and the way it is reflected in books. The exhibition runs until 20 March. **RK**

Read the whole story
on resource-online.nl.



FOTO: SASKIA WERNERS

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



ARTISTS GOING TO WORK ON CAMPUS

In the runup to the eleventh open-air exhibition *Beelden op de Berg* in summer 2018, three artists will be setting to work on Wageningen campus. This is clear from the prospectus which the foundation organizing the exhibition presented to executive board chair Louise Fresco this week, describing an extensive art and education programme on campus prior to the exhibition.

The collaboration between Beelden op de Berg and Wageningen University & Research is in honour of the 100th anniversary of higher education in Wageningen. The theme of the exhibition in Belmonte Arboretum – ‘for ever young’ – fits the bill precisely.

Of the 11 artists who will be exhibiting in the arboretum, three will be making their works on campus. Over a period of two months they will be linking their artistic research with scientific research. The results will be exhibited as they go along.

Studium General will be devoting five sessions to Beelden op de Berg, with lectures, scientific or otherwise, performances, music and film.

The on-campus activities will include an educational programme for children from primary and secondary schools. **✎ RK**

HARD-UP INSTITUTES LOBBY FOR MORE CASH

Dutch applied research institutes, including Wageningen Research, are struggling due to the cuts in government spending. On Monday 20 February they organized a debate with politicians in The Hague. The message: we need more money to be able to go on doing relevant and innovative research.

The ‘TO2’ institutes – TNO, Deltares, Marin, ECN, NLR and Wageningen Research – all do applied research and they therefore see themselves as serving a key function in the Netherlands’ innovation policy. But the ministry of Economic Affairs has made severe cuts in the funding for these institutes in recent years. They therefore argued on 20 February that the next cabinet needs to invest more in applied research.

Politicians from various political parties covering the spectrum from left to right (SP, GroenLinks, PvdA, D66, ChristenUnie and VVD) were on stage at café Dudok to explain how their party intended investing in research. There were policy makers and company R&D executives in the room as well as the research managers from the TO2 institutes. Those TO2 managers had all seen the evaluation report on the TO2 institutes that the minister will be sending to the Dutch parliament on Thursday. It concludes that the research institutes do high-quality work and

have a big impact on society with their research on topics such as water, food, energy, environment and shipping. But the authors of the report say the cutbacks mean that they now often lack the basic knowledge and infrastructure to carry on developing innovative products and systems. WUR had already drawn this conclusion in its ‘Thin Ice’ analysis.

The politicians had not yet read the report and were therefore unable to comment on it, but they did quote from their parties’ manifestos. The SP (Socialist Party) wants more focus on fundamental research, but no sums of money were mentioned. ChristenUnie (a Christian party) wants 300 million euros more for applied research, D66 (a centrist liberal party) wants to invest one billion more in research, PvdA (Labour Party) thinks 200 million extra is enough and GroenLinks (Green Left) would spend 400 million more. They all said these sums were subject to conditions and caveats. For example, many parties feel multinationals currently benefit too much from the top sector policy. Consequently many parties would like to reform that policy to enable more research on social issues such as climate change. Only the right-wing VVD thinks things are fine as they are. The CDA (Christian democrat party) and the far-right PVV did not take part in the debate. **✎ AS**



PHOTO: SVEN MENSCHER

START-UP WEEK

During Start-up Week, from 5 to 10 February, nine groups of students came up with products that they thought were potential world-beaters. The winning idea – a muesli bar rich in iron for women, called Fema Iron – came from Rita Razooki, Soumia Majait, Jacqueline Halbrendt and Xuejuan Zhang. Ideas from other groups included a bacterium that eats plastic and ‘leather’ made from fungi. Start-up Week is an initiative of Starthub, a centre that helps students and recent graduates to set up businesses. **✎ VK**

Have a look at the photo series on resource-online.nl.

ESPRESSO BAR AND CRÈCHE IN CAMPUS PLAZA

The empty locations on the ground floor of Campus Plaza are gradually filling up. The newest arrivals are a Doppio espresso bar, a Prins Vleermuis crèche and Eastern Express Chinese takeaway.

Doppio is a franchise chain with branches in 31 Dutch towns. The one on campus opens on 1 March. Next-door to Doppio will be Eastern Express, which has another branch on the Churchillweg in Wageningen. It is not yet known when the Chinese takeaway will open.

The Wageningen branch of Prins Vleermuis opens in the Plaza on Monday 3 April. This crèche chain owned by Soraja Prins has had a branch in the Maurits barracks on the eastern side of Ede since 2011, and will soon be opening a branch in the Kernhem neighbourhood on the northern side of Ede. Prins Vleermuis will occupy about half of



A Doppio branch in Spijkenisse.

the large space on the south-facing side of the building. There will be two after-school groups (4-plus and 7-plus, 40 children in total), two baby groups (2-4 years, 24 children) and two toddler groups (2-4 years, 32 children). Prins Vleermuis is primar-

ily for WUR staff but everyone is welcome.

The shopping and residential centre Campus Plaza opened at the end of September. The 440 DUWO student rooms on the top floor were all occupied in no time, but about

half of the shop premises are still empty five months later. But Jos van Schriek at property developer Ten Brinke is not worried. 'If you keep track of the market at all, you know that's not bad. As long as there's a steady trickle, we are satisfied.' **RK**



IN THE NEWS

Who? Political philosopher Eva Groen-Reijman of the Philosophy chair group
What? Got in the press with her idea for a new holiday: National Discussion Day
Where? *De Volkskrant*

'Democracy deserves a national holiday'

What was your idea?
'De Volkskrant and Tertium bureau asked academics to come up with ideas for improving democracy in the Netherlands. There is a lot of criticism of our democracy at the moment, and of the quality of public debate. My proposal is to organize a national discussion day before the elections: a day off when people can get together to discuss political topics. Citizens would get to set the agen-

da themselves and have an opportunity to put their questions to representatives of political parties. It's not a new idea, incidentally; it comes from the American political scientists James Fishkin and Bruce Ackerman.'

How would such a day contribute to democracy?

'During campaigns there is a lot of emphasis on the parties' strategic goals. On a discussion day

like this it would be the content that is addressed. That forces politicians and journalists to focus more on this too. Currently much of the discussion takes place through the media and online, but it is precisely through meeting each other face to face that you see what politics means to different people and you create a support base. You don't have to agree, but you do gain more under-



standing of each other's perspectives.'

Is this doable?

'It is of course quite a radical proposal to introduce a new public holiday. And yet we shouldn't underestimate the symbolic value of doing so. Democracy is for everyone and we ought to be able to devote one day a year to it.' **TL**

VAN HUIS FIGURES OUT CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE OF TERMITES

Miners in Africa use termite mounds to determine whether valuable metals are hidden underground. That saves on drilling because the termites have already done that; they burrow up to tens of metres under the ground to obtain building materials for their mounds.

Just one piece of trivia from a fascinating article by the emeritus professor of Entomology Arnold van Huis in the *Journal of Ethnobiology and Ethnomedicine*. The paper is full of such facts. Van Huis acquired this knowledge during two sabbaticals in 1995 and 2000. He visited 27 countries and talked to more than 300 local entomologists about the cultural significance of insects and their consumption. He stored all that knowledge in a database and now that he is retired, he finally has the time to process it. Starting with the termites, but he promises us that there is more to come. 'It will be a series. I've got much more information, on grasshoppers, beetles, flies, butterflies and caterpillars.'

It is difficult to draw conclusions from the mass of facts on termites. Van Huis: 'But it is striking that all these peoples and cultures have roughly the same ideas and the same stories. It's also remarkable how much respect people have for termite mounds. I hadn't expected the supernatural and religious connotations that are ascribed to them. Termite mounds are associated with their forefathers, spirits and devils. Children greet their forefa-



PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK

A termite mound in the Okavango Delta, Botswana.

thers when they pass a termite mound and offerings are left there.'

Van Huis mainly aims to record and document the information. 'I'm not really interested in whether the stories are true or not. I just wrote up what people told me.' He adds that you have to be very careful about drawing conclusions. 'There is a water beetle in East Africa

that looks like a breast. Young women let the beetle bite their breasts in the hope that this will make them more attractive. I often thought this must just be a superstition. Until I came across an article that showed these creatures are full of hormones. So you have to be careful about calling something a superstition.' **✎ RK**

SELENIUM CAN HALT SPREAD OF PROSTATE CANCER

Selenium, a trace element found in Brazil nuts, shellfish and fish, may help prevent metastasis of prostate cancer. This finding comes out of research by the Human Nutrition department and Radboud University medical centre.

'It was already clear from earlier studies that a selenium deficiency may increase the risk of prostate cancer,' says Dieuwertje Kok of Human Nutrition. 'Now we looked at exactly what selenium does in the prostate, in order to find out how it could provide protection.' The results were published in *Oncotarget*.

For the study, 23 men with (suspected) prostate cancer were randomly divided into

two groups. One half were given 300 micrograms of selenium per day for five weeks, and the other half got a placebo. Then the researchers took samples of healthy prostate tissue from the participants. Kok: 'Because we wanted to study the effect of selenium in relation to prevention of prostate cancer, we specifically looked at healthy tissue.'

In the group which was given selenium, the researchers saw a change in the activity of certain genes. These were mainly the genes which have an influence on the transformation of epithelial cells into mesenchymal cells. Kok: 'Epithelial cells in the prostate are normally found all together in a row. Once they change into mesenchymal cells,

they become 'loose cannons'. They can start wandering and reach the circulatory system. This is a normal process which takes place, for instance, in embryonic development and in the healing of wounds. But in the case of prostate cancer, this transition to mesenchymal cells can lead to secondary tumours.'

According to Kok, selenium does not so much prevent prostate cancer from establishing itself as possibly curb its progress at a later stage. 'Especially in aggressive forms of prostate cancer, selenium may prevent the cancer spreading. That is also what recent studies in the literature show, and we have revealed how this might work.' **✎ TL**

CARP MANIPULATED BY HERPES VIRUS

Carp infected with the koi herpes virus (KHV) tend to treat themselves by swimming to warm water. But the virus has a trick to hold the carp back, discovered researchers from Liège and Wageningen.

If a diseased carp swims into warm water, the proliferation of the koi herpes virus slows down and the animal can survive it. The rise in temperature is comparable with the fever which warm-blooded animals run when they have an infection. Together with veterinary researchers from Liège, Maria Forlenza and Geert Wiegertjes of the Cell Biology and Immunology chair group have now found the mechanism behind this 'behavioural fever' in carp.

The fish's immune system manufactures a signal substance, the cytokine TNF, which prompts the carp to swim towards warmer water. The same cytokine induces a fever in humans with a viral infection. The koi herpes virus does not give up easily, however, as the researchers discovered. This virus has a gene that codes for a receptor which captures the cytokine. In so doing, this TNF receptor suppresses the behavioural fever, thus preventing the fish from swimming towards restored health.

The researchers, who published their results in *Cell Host & Microbe*, could clearly demonstrate the effect of the cytokine in the carp and the TNF receptor in the virus, in an aquarium with three different temperatures. Once they had injected the carp with the cytokine TNF, they swam towards a warm spot. If they infected the carp with the herpes virus, they did not do so, or only later. But if the researchers deactivated the TNF receptor in the virus, the infected carp did swim towards warm water immediately.

It may be possible to use a herpes virus without a TNF receptor as a vaccine in fish farming, says Forlenza. This weakened virus could activate the carp's immune systems without killing them. But the researcher is cautious. 'The koi herpes virus is a very complex virus with an extensive arsenal of weapons.' Forlenza found earlier that the virus also has a gene which codes for the molecule IL-10. This is another cytokine which has 'hijacked' the virus from the carp and uses it to suppress the fish's immune system. It is possible that a herpes virus which lacks both the TNF receptor and IL-10 would be suitable as a vaccine. **AS**



PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK

VISION <<

'Public trust in science is going up and down'

Public trust in science is dwindling, we read with increasing frequency. But in fact, it is increasing, research shows. So what is going on? Both claims are true, concludes professor of Strategic Communication Noelle Aarts.

Public trust in science is being eroded, say opinion leaders such as Gabriel van den Brink and Louise Fresco. Interest groups shop around in research data and if the conclusions do not suit them, they accuse researchers of partiality. But this impression does not reflect the reality, two Tilburg professors claimed in the Dutch newspaper *NRC Handelsblad* last week. Television science programmes are hugely popular and research among 2000 Dutch people actually shows that trust in science is as strong as it ever was.

What is the situation now?

'I think public trust in science is still tremendously strong. In fact: more and more often, so-called leaks make use of scientific facts to make their point. Science really is more popular than ever!'

So why all that criticism of science?

'People increasingly often make use of science in an opportunistic way. And that is easy to do, because you can do a lot of shopping around in the vast supermarket called the internet – a quote from Louise Fresco – where we can find scientific evidence being put forward both for and against many arguments. Often, science is not clear-cut. And sometimes the position of science in society is an issue. When scientists are invited to take part in public discussions, they are often the ones who end the discussion because they feel they have presented facts which the rest of the participants should just accept. Research by my colleague Hedwig te Molder shows that there are often norms hidden in those facts which say how people should live their lives. Those people feel that their identity is being undermined, and that generates opposition. So both claims are true.' **AS**



PHOTO: NIELS VAN MOSSEVELDE

'WE NEED A FOURTH TECHNOLOGICAL REVOLUTION'

We need a fourth technological revolution if we are to continue to be able to feed the growing world population. This is the view of professor of Information Technology Bedir Tekinerdogan, who gave his inaugural lecture this month.

Tekinerdogan came to the Netherlands with his Turkish parents at the age of four, and grew up in the village of Ulft, south of Doetinchem. He studied Informatics at the University of Twente, where he got his PhD in 2000. After working for some time at Bilkent University in Ankara, he was appointed to the chair in Information Technology in Wageningen in 2015.

Humanity has made three major technological leaps, says Tekinerdogan: the harnessing of steam and water power, the discovery of electricity, and the digital revolution. We now find ourselves in the midst of the fourth industrial revolution, he says, with several major innovations such as artificial intelligence, robotics, cloud computing and big data. 'In industry 4.0, the distinction between systems and factories becomes fuzzy. Instead we shall see smart systems, in which machines communicate directly with other machines. This leads to an autonomic system which optimizes itself.' One example of this is smart farming: precision agriculture which makes use of IT to optimize crop production.

You need three things to construct a smart system, explains Tekinerdogan. First of all you need to collect large amounts of data. Then you need smart applications, or software, which can analyse these data properly and ensure



PHOTO: GUY ACKERMANS

that machines can communicate with each other. But as well as all this, Tekinerdogan says we mustn't forget the human dimension. 'People are not just users of these systems; they design, develop, test and maintain them too. We need to pay attention to the impact of IT on people and vice versa. There is a lot of fear around too: what if the machines take over?

Tekinerdogan understands the fear but is convinced that we cannot progress further without

this technology. 'It is important that we see the potential of IT and use it in the right ways. The population is growing exponentially and if we don't do anything there will be shortages of food and resources in 2050. **TL**

See the New professors dossier on resource-online.nl.

MAKING CANDLES FROM PLANTS

Cosy, candles around the house. But the paraffin is produced from scarce mineral oil and is going up in price. Wageningen Food & Biobased Research is working with Cargill Global Edible Oil solutions on a sustainable and affordable alternative from vegetable oils.

The researchers have treated liquid vegetable oils such as

palm and rape seed oil with hydrogen, which produced saturated fats with a higher melting point. This material is already usable for encased candles such as tea lights.

Before they can also make freestanding candles from it, there are a few hurdles to be jumped, says project leader Rolf Blauw. One problem is that the hardened oil can solidify in various different crystal shapes,

making for an ugly candle. Blauw: 'It is similar to what happens if you melt chocolate and then put it back in the fridge.' Moreover, the current production process was developed for paraffin. The hardened oil is more brittle and cannot therefore be processed the same way.

By finding smarter ways to combine the hardened oil with softer fats, the researchers have now developed a vegetable wax

which does solidify normally. So they have cleared the first hurdle. The preliminary results are promising. Blauw: 'Now we shall mainly be looking into how we can make the material less brittle.'

Blaauw sees potential for applications in the food packaging industry as well. 'Our vegetable wax is harmless so it is safe to use it as a water-resistant coating for food products.' **TL**

The editors of *Resource* produce a lot more stories, not to mention videos and photo series, than the ones that make it into this magazine. You can browse through a selection of what is on offer below. On resource-online.nl you can see it all.

MEANWHILE ON...



RESOURCE-ONLINE.NL

VLOGGING FROM JORDAN

WUR student Hedzer Roodenburg Vermaat is doing an internship in Jordan, where he is studying the way refugee camps grow into cities. He is focusing on Baqa'a, a large Palestinian camp that goes back to 1968. Hedzer is vlogging about his experience for *Resource*.



Watch Hedzer's vlog
on resource-online.nl.



GREEN UMBRELLA

The Green Active Network (GAN), a kind of umbrella organization for the numerous green associations in Wageningen, wants to catch more of the limelight this year. There is a new coordinator and events are planned which aim at making the campus more sustainable. The GAN was set up in 2016 by 15 associations which all have their sights set on the same green targets. The members include student organizations and various platforms and foundations. After a relatively quiet year, the network now aims to make its presence felt on campus.

'AGRICULTURE MINISTRY BACK'

Blogger Jan-Willem thinks the ministry of Agriculture should be brought back. He has had enough of half-hearted policy and thinks the farmers deserve more support from The Hague. 'Now you get money if you fold up your farm. A plain slap in the face for many dairy farmers. A government that stimulates businesses to pack it in is ridiculous.' Reader Monique disagrees. She writes: 'It's time farmers moved with the times. Stand out for something other than price. And perhaps there simply is overproduction. Is it then really so bad that some farmers have to stop? The world is changing and sooner or later the generally arch-conservative farmers will have to change too.'

ALUMNUS SEEKS WIFE

At the start of a new season of the popular Dutch TV series *Boer zoekt vrouw* (Farmer seeks wife), Marc Verkuyt, a fish farmer and a Wageningen graduate, received more than 800 letters from interested women. The four other participants did not come near that number. But going through all 829 letters proved quite a task because Marc is afraid of making wrong deci-

sions. The alumnus also got embroiled in controversy because he is stationed on a Zambian fish farm through an employment agency. Then you are not a real farmer, according to some people.

POPULAR ANTS

Ants are interesting. At least, that is the impression you get from the number of people who attended Tim Möhlmann and Jitte Groothuis's WURtalk on 8 February. The talk was all about ants and all 200 seats in the big lecture theatre in the Forum were taken. According to Tim Möhlmann, a passionate ant-keeper and junior researcher at Wageningen Plant Research, ant life is similar to ours in many ways. Ants build extensive (underground) cities, for instance. These can reach impressive proportions, as can be seen in a video of a nest of leafcutter ants.

Watch the video
on resource-online.nl.



STELLING

Scientific conferences should offer a reduced fee option for attending coffee breaks only.

Proposition in the thesis defended by Amélie Vallée-Dassonneville at her PhD graduation on 13 February.

Wageningen voting guide

The Netherlands will elect a new parliament on 15 March. Resource read the party manifestos and analysed their positions on key 'Wageningen' topics such as food production and research funding.

text Albert Sikkema *photos* Shutterstock














EDUCATION

BASIC GRANT OR LOAN SYSTEM?

At the beginning of 2015 the basic grant for Dutch students was replaced by a social loan system. This was the second Rutte cabinet's main educational reform. For students it meant an annual bill of about 5000 euros. The coalition of D66, PvdA, VVD and GroenLinks (see the key to political parties on page 14) who introduced the loan system want to keep it – of course. They point out how much money it has freed up – between 700 million and one billion a year – for investments in educational quality. But not one of the other parties is keen on the loan system. The CDA, SP, PvdD, 50Plus and ChristenUnie all want to bring back the basic grant. The other parties do not refer specifically to the loan system in their manifestos, but did not support the proposal in 2015. And even the PvdA, D66 and GroenLinks are worried about the impact of 'their' loan system on the accessibility of higher education for children from families with low incomes, first generation students and secondary school students from immigrant backgrounds. So they want to make adjustments to prevent the system having a negative impact.

OTHER POSITIONS ON EDUCATION

- ☒ The VVD, D66, ChristenUnie, GroenLinks, SP and PvdD want to transfer responsibility for Wageningen University from the ministry of Economic Affairs to the ministry of Education. A motion on this has already been passed, which the new cabinet has to act on.
- ☒ The ChristenUnie, GroenLinks and D66 want to maximize tuition fees for a second Bachelor's or Master's.
- ☒ The PvdD wants to lower tuition fees.
- ☒ GroenLinks wants to scrap the binding recommendation for students.
- ☒ The SP wants to abolish selection, while D66 and GroenLinks want to use it conservatively. The VVD and VNL are big fans of selection.
- ☒ The medium of instruction in higher education should be Dutch, says 50Plus. D66 wants more English used in education.
- ☒ The SP, D66, PvdD and GroenLinks want more power for student-staff councils.

										
Proposition 1 Bring back the basic grant.										
no	no	-	yes	yes	no	yes	no	yes	yes	yes
Proposition 2 There should be more funding for science.										
no, it is fine as it is	no, it is fine as it is	no, less	-	yes, with companies paying more	yes, one billion more government funding	yes, with companies paying more	-	-	-	-
Proposition 3 The top sectors should stay.										
yes	yes, but adjusted	-	nee	yes	nee	yes, but adjusted	yes, but adjusted	-	-	-
Proposition 4 The WUR should move to the ministry of Education.										
yes	no	-	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	
Proposition 5 The upscaling of agriculture should stop.										
no	yes	no	yes	no	no	no	yes	no	yes	yes
Proposition 6 There should be a tax on sugar and fat.										
no	yes	-	yes	yes	-	no	yes	-	-	-
Proposition 7 The development aid budget should be cut.										
yes	no	yes, to zero	no, up instead	no, up instead	no	no, up instead	no, up instead	no	-	no

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

UPSCALE EVEN FURTHER
OR JUST THE OPPOSITE?

Food and agriculture divide the Lower House of Parliament. Parties on the left often wholeheartedly adopt the argumentation and framing of activist groups such as Greenpeace and Wakker Dier, while right-wing parties support the farmers and the agro-industry.

The VVD in particular has turned into the defender of the agro-industry. The demand for food is growing due to the growing world population, so agriculture, a major pillar of the Dutch economy, should become even more intensive. After all, our farmers have to compete on the world market. The CDA opts for a strongly export-oriented agriculture, but has less confidence in the global market. The party thinks Europe should aim at self-sufficiency in food, and wants to see a 'food referee' who blows the whistle on unfair power relations in the food chains, and ensures farmers get higher prices. Just like the VVD, the CDA is proud of 'our' farmers and agriculture sector. CDA MP Jaco Geurts' main concern: 'The persistently negative campaigning of nature and environmental organizations will ensure that soon there won't be a single farmer's daughter or son who wants to take over the farm.'

The ideas of the environmental organizations are mainly voiced by parties such as GroenLinks, PvdA, PvdD and SP. GroenLinks goes for an ambitious climate policy and for nature and landscape. To get rid of fossil fuels will require a CO₂ tax on food. GroenLinks also wants to see the back of factory farming-style 'mega barns', upscaling and the pesticides glyphosate and neonicotinoids. This programme overlaps considerably with those of the PvdD, PvdA and SP. They too want to legislate for getting cows into the meadows and giving pigs and chickens access to the outdoors, and they want to ban pesticides and mega barns. The want to transform the 'bio-industry' into an animal-friendly, sustainable livestock sector. The SP also wants to tighten the rules on fine particles and nitrogen in livestock farming and quadruple the turnover of organic food in ten years. The PvdA wants to stop imports of soya for animal feeds, set limits to livestock numbers in the Netherlands, and stop the use of antibiotics in agriculture. The party for seniors, 50Plus, strongly backs such ideas too.

Two parties take up an in-between position: D66 and ChristenUnie. They would like to see sustainable agriculture with lower greenhouse gas emissions, and a food industry which produces more healthy food. D66 wants to stimulate circular farming systems through taxation: 'fiscal greening'. This party is critical of the 'food market' in which the lowest possible cost price is the main priority, but wants to transform that market through entrepreneurial channels. ChristenUnie thinks food prices are currently too low. The party wants to calculate the pros and cons for the environment, animal welfare and health into the price of food, but in a way that gives the farmer a better income and gets the consumer to pay for added value.

The PVV has nothing to say about food, agriculture or the environment in its one-page election manifesto. Its position



on food is represented by MP Dion Graus. When it comes to animal suffering and rights, the party is in line with the PvdD. When it comes to bureaucracy in agriculture, the PVV follows the VVD.

OTHER POSITIONS ON FOOD AND AGRICULTURE


- ✗ Almost all the parties want more attention to dietary education in schools.
- ✗ The VVD is against sugar and fat taxes, GroenLinks and the SP do want this kind of taxation of unhealthy food.
- ✗ GroenLinks wants meat taxed at the higher VAT rate of 21 percent instead of the current rate of 6 percent.
- ✗ The SP wants additional money for the Dutch Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority, so that tariffs for these services for farmers can go down.
- ✗ The PvdA wants a compulsory monitoring system for farmers to oversee and improve animal welfare.
- ✗ The CDA, ChristenUnie, PvdA, SGP, SP and PvdD have all expressed their support for the establishment of a ministry of Food. The VVD is against it.

KEY TO POLITICAL PARTIES

50Plus	Pensioners' interests party
CDA	Centrist Christian democrat party
ChristenUnie	Christian party
D66	Centrist liberal party
GroenLinks	Green Left
PvdA	Labour party
PvdD	Animal Rights party
PVV	Far-right Freedom Party
SGP	Orthodox reformed church party
SP	Socialist party
VNL	'For the Netherlands' right-wing party
VVD	Conservative party

RESEARCH

INVEST A BILLION EXTRA?



During the cabinet period which just ended, government spending on research increased slightly. Nevertheless, universities and research institutes complained that they didn't get enough money. There were two reasons for this. At the universities, student numbers were growing faster than the government's contribution, making it less per student. And the research institutes – not just Wageningen Research but also TNO and ECN – faced dwindling government research assignments, forcing them to make cuts. So universities, institutes and the employees' organization VNO-NCW are calling for an extra one billion for research. Two parties have a crystal clear take on this point. D66 wants to put one billion extra into research; PVV wants to stop all investment in knowledge and innovation. The CDA, ChristenUnie and GroenLinks say they would invest more in knowledge but do not name figures. The VVD and PvdA are satisfied with the current situation.

ARE THE TOP SECTORS ANY GOOD?

The parties have divergent views on the cabinet's top sector policy, linking research funding from the government with funding from participating businesses. We must carry on with this, say VVD and CDA, because this policy increases companies' commitment to research and to the position of the Netherlands as a knowledge economy. D66 and SP, on the other hand, want to scrap the top sec-

tors and stimulate research and innovation by other means. The PvdA, GroenLinks and ChristenUnie position themselves somewhere in between. They would want to keep the structure of the top sectors but stimulate research around broad societal themes such as climate change and sustainable development.

OTHER POSITIONS ON RESEARCH:

- ✗ Almost all the parties think the municipal bank BNG, the water board bank NWB and the development bank FMO should merge to form a single national investment bank. The left-wing parties want that bank to invest mainly in sustainable development; the right-wing parties talk of knowledge and innovation.
- ✗ The SP wants to install an independent research fund between companies and universities to counteract direct influencing of researchers.
- ✗ The VVD wants to link a bigger proportion of the research budget to research funding by businesses, to attract more private investment in research.

DEVELOPMENT AID

END IT OR GO BACK TO OLD LEVELS?

The Dutch budget for development aid in 2015 was 3.7 billion euros. This money was spent on emergency aid and poverty alleviation, on development projects and on support to knowledge institutions and industry in developing countries. Politicians' opinions on whether that money is well spent vary widely. The PVV wants to stop all development aid. The VVD wants to cut it back drastically, and only give emergency aid. The PvdA wants to stick to the current budget, while the SP and GroenLinks want to increase development aid. They would like to go back to the earlier norm that the Netherlands spent 0.7 percent of the gross national product (GNP) on development aid. The current budget is officially 0.7 percent of the GNP too, but because provision for refugees comes out of the same budget, the real budget for development aid has shrunk in recent years to just over 0.5 percent of the GNP.

NATURE

BRIEF STATEMENTS

Nature hardly gets a look-in in the election campaigns. This is because under secretary of state Henk Bleker (CDA), nature policy was decentralized to provincial governments, so it is no longer 'The Hague's' business. Nevertheless, quite a few political parties have included statements – albeit brief – on nature management in their programmes. The CDA is against the acquisition of farmland for nature development. The PvdA wants to convert income support in the European agricultural policy into targeted grants for nature conservation, health and animal welfare. D66 wants to finish off the nature network Natural 2000. The VVD is in favour of incentives for private nature management. GroenLinks and the PvdD, on the other hand, want more funding for government nature management. The SP wants to invest in the ecological main structure. And finally, 50Plus wants to develop new nature areas and open up existing ones to the public more.



JACK-OF-ALL-TRADES IN THE LAB

Lab assistant Adrie Groeneveld's 'workplace' is not so easy to pin down. All the labs on the eighth floor (and part of the seventh) in the Forum are candidates. He lugs his trolley full of goods to and fro for a pastime. The photo shows a storage

space. Rows of pots containing plant and animal material preserved in alcohol fill the shelves. The atmosphere is that of an old lab. Groeneveld is one of the five people in the Forum – 'a lovely building to work in' – who run the practi-

cals. 'We make sure all the material that's needed is present, fill the test tubes with chemicals and get the apparatus ready. And afterwards we tidy it all up again.' He's been doing this for eight years now. Before that he spent 38 years as an analyst



with the chair group which is now Cell Biology. He'll be retiring at the end of May after 'working for the Queen' for 47 years. Then he's planning to garden and play billiards and bowls. In his own office – 'I'm hardly ever there' – there's

a seed tray of vanilla seedlings on a table. And a couple of broken pipetting syringes lie on his desk. 'Do you know those things cost 200 euros? I'm going to take out the reusable parts.' There's an orange wuppie on his screen and the schedule of

'his club', Feyenoord, on the wall. The room looks out over the Forum courtyard. 'I would have preferred an outside window.' Then again, he's not here much anyway.

© RK, photo Margriet van Vianen

The street of the future

The year 2022 still seems far off. And yet Wageningen researchers are already working on the Floriade which will open its doors in Almere that year. They will be creating the Street of the Future, completely geared to recycling.

text Roelof Kleis *Illustration* Architects' firm MVRDV



The design for the Floriade grounds in Almere.

At the last World Horticulture Exhibition five years ago in Venlo, Wageningen University & Research was conspicuous for its absence. That is not going to be the case at the next Floriade in Almere. Set to steal the show at this edition is the Street of the Future, a real street with 20 to 30 houses, linked to a nearby greenhouse complex where food is produced. The whole thing will be equipped with the latest technology related to sustainable water and energy use.

This idea was the brainchild of Jan Vreeburg, of the Wageningen Environmental technology chair group. He also dubs the project Green Street or – even more poetically – his Boulevard of Accomplished Dreams. ‘It’s all about having an umbrella under which you can give shape to a systems approach,’ he explains, immediately making it sound a lot more businesslike. By ‘system’ Vreeburg means the way we treat our drinking and waste water. Our approach needs a radical overhaul, is his firm

‘This is just a start. Researchers, bring on your ideas’

conviction. ‘What we do at present comes down to sourcing, purifying and using water, and then getting rid of it as quickly as possible. It’s all geared to throwing it away.’

But the Street of the Future is geared, not to throwing away water but to reusing it. What nutrients can I extract from my waste water? The emphasis lies on phosphate. Vreeburg: ‘Phosphate is a finite resource and there is no known substitute for it. Resources of which there is still a supply now will be finished in 50 years’ time. So by then, you should have a system based on reclamation. And you have to start now, otherwise it will be too late.’

FEEDING THE CITY

Vreeburg’s future street is one of the projects currently being set up by the Amsterdam Institute for Advanced Metropolitan Solutions (AMS), a collaboration between parties including TU Delft and WUR. Not, officially, for the Floriade, but for the Flevo Campus, explains Henk Wolfert of AMS. ‘The idea is that the grounds of the Floriade will afterwards become the Flevo Campus. This plan is being worked out by Almere, the province of Flevoland, Aeres Applied Science University, and AMS.’

Almere recently welcomes its 200,000th resident. ‘And there are many more to come. The city has a big house-building allocation,’ says

Wolfert. The idea behind the Flevo Campus is to provide a boost for the knowledge economy in that future city. Wolfert and Jan-Eelco Jansma, a researcher of urban-rural relations at Wageningen Plant Research, are responsible for the science programme for Flevo Campus. The theme of that programme – feeding the city – is exactly the same as the theme of the Floriade. The Floriade site is to be a testing ground for urban innovations in the field of sustainable food supply, water purification and waste flow processing.

STREET LEVEL

Water purification now still takes place in large centralized purification plants. Environmental technologist Vreeburg focuses, by contrast, on the street level. ‘If you want to extract nutrients from waste flows, they have to be as small and as concentrated as possible,’ he explains. ‘A concentrated waste flow is easier to use. What is more, the smaller the flow, the smaller the installation you need for it. The street scale is suitable for that. But that is only a hypothesis. It doesn’t mean this is the perfect scale for urban services such as the water supply. That is for the project to reveal. You can’t do it at the house level, that’s for sure, because you need too much technology. The street is the smallest building block in a city.’

Exactly what this smallest, innovative building block is going to look like is not clear right now. Vreeburg: ‘At the moment we are making a “virtual design”. In the next few years there will be pilots in existing neighbourhoods. I have had discussions with several municipalities about that, including Wageningen. We are also going to develop new toilets and showers which use little water without complicated plumbing systems. In 2020 we are going to draw up building plans and we’ll start really building the year after that.’

Vreeburg can’t wait. ‘The Floriade is a huge opportunity. In a Street of the Future like that you can try out so many ideas. It is a powerful

way of presenting innovation, to show what a decentralized system looks like.’

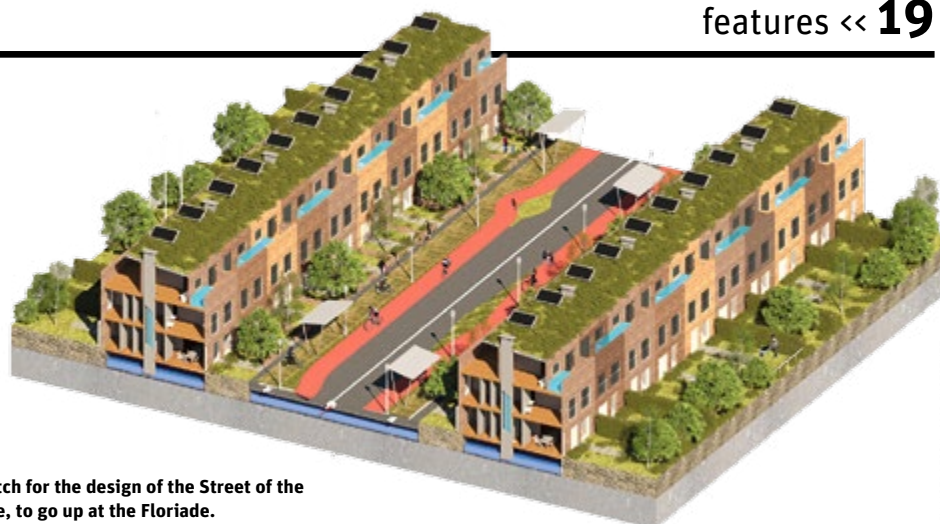
OTHER PROJECTS

There are other Wageningen researchers who are already working towards the Floriade too. A start has been made, for example on the Healing Gardens project (see text box). Other projects will follow. The central concept here is the living lab: testing in the real world whether things thought up in the lab really work.

‘The programme still has to grow,’ says Wolfert. ‘For instance we are studying the scope for using organic waste and sewer sludge from the cities to improve the fertility of the soil in Flevoland. Another project is urban development in the Almere neighbourhood of Oosterwold, where residents take care of the design themselves. This raises supervision issues which WUR is going to tackle. But this is just a start. I would say: researchers, bring on your ideas.’

HEALING GARDEN

American research has shown that cancer patients benefit from gardening. This healing effect is the basis for a pilot which Esther Veen of the Rural Sociology chair group and colleagues at the Human Nutrition chair group want to start in the coming months in Almere. Veen will get a group of 10 to 15 cancer patients to garden at the Parkhuys, a day centre for patients and their families, for one growing season. She expects to see positive effects on their physical health (more exercise), mental health (less stress) and social health (more contacts). The pilot is the first step towards a larger study to be set up in collaboration with the Flevo hospital and other parties on the Floriade site.



A sketch for the design of the Street of the Future, to go up at the Floriade.

ILLUSTRATION: AMS INSTITUTE

ACT REMAINS A CHALLENGE

Any discussion of Academic Consultancy Training (ACT) among international students in Wageningen produces a lot of grim looks. Many experience the compulsory group project as frustrating and challenging. The main stumbling blocks are cultural differences and an inadequate command of English.

text Jessica Bernard *illustration* Eva van Schijndel

Academic Consultancy Training (ACT) is the 9 ECTS project which resembles an industrial simulation and is compulsory on most Master's programmes at WUR. The training entails five to seven students working together to solve problems posed by academia, industry or policy makers.

For example, a project during the sixth period in 2015-16 was developing a model involving Taxol for pharmaceutical use. This assignment came from Rudi Ariaans from Hudson River Biotechnology firm. Another project, provided by Arnold van Vliet from the University in period 1 of 2016-17, was to develop a business case for the use of citizen science data.

Each ACT team is supervised by a coach, an academic expert and the project commissioner. Apart from working on the project report and analyses, the ACT programme also has a Communication and Personality Development (CPD) component which requires reflection reports at intervals throughout the ACT process. This reflection is supported with interactive sessions aimed at improving the students' conflict management and communication skills.

MISCOMMUNICATION

Many second-year Master's students who were contacted by Resource for their views on ACT shared both challenging and rewarding experiences. Their overall take on the programme was not always positive. According to Made-

Some international students complain that ACT aims to 'Dutchify' them

line Susanto, a second-year MSc student of Food Technology, the issues mainly arise from a lack of cross-cultural understanding. Students may not know how different cultures perceive the same thing differently and this can lead to miscommunication and frustrations in the team. She also pointed out problems that arose from cultural differences in approaches to discussion.

A second-year student on the MSc in Animal Sciences, who did not wish to be named, highlighted the role of limited academic speaking and writing skills in English, and the way many Dutch group members speak their own language among themselves.



Jenifer Sundar, a second-year MSc student of Plant Biotechnology, mentioned the problem of free-riding and recommended that the coaches find a way of assessing the contribution of team members. As things stand, members of a group do not contribute equally to the project yet the lazy ones get the same grades as the hard workers. Given the emphasis on the process in ACT, many students felt coaches should pay more attention to who contributed what to the product.

A few Dutch nationals voiced concerns about ACT too. Max Koster (second-year MSc Environmental Sciences) stressed the need for a knowledge of the methodology and good English language skills so as to avoid communication issues. He shared his experience of a group in which one member's work had to be edited for many errors, which was very time-consuming.

DUTCHIFY


Though five years have passed since the publication of *An Explorative Case Study of ACT* in the *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* (by Popov and colleagues in 2012), respondents in

our interviews highlighted the same issues as that article. The major challenges identified in the article – namely free-riding, insufficient English language skills and poor communication by students – were highlighted by the students too. The paper recommended making use of the diverse cultural experiences, but the international interviewees questioned whether this has been achieved yet. As WUR has about 30 percent international Master's students, and has plans to launch several Bachelor's programmes for international students, it seems particularly relevant to develop a system in which different cultural perspectives are respected and heard.

Valentina Tassone, an Academic Coordinator of ACT: 'In my view a first general challenge in a multicultural ACT context, is to allow for cultural differences to emerge within a team and to be open to the fact that people can hold different perspectives, can have different ways of doing things and can value things differently.' She says groups are formed with the biggest possible mix of international and Dutch students so as to facilitate effective learning and functioning.

On the question of whether ACT was trying to 'Dutchify' students, Tassone said this is not a goal of ACT and her team was trying its best by creating teams with a mix of nationalities and allowing only English during ACT meetings and discussions. Tassone recognized that some students on ACT are hampered by their limited fluency in the English language. She also expressed concern about the lowered credit requirements for ACT, and their implications for the English proficiency and subject knowledge of participants.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Despite these issues, ACT is viewed by many students as a good learning experience. At the same time, students see plenty of room for improvement to the system. A few students suggested that the Communication and Personality Development (CPD) component should include intercultural communication, as well as sessions on working in interdisciplinary groups. Meanwhile, the coaches could be trained in spotting free-riders and pre-empting cross-cultural conflicts in the groups they support. 

AUTHOR'S STATEMENT DOES NOT SOLVE FREE-RIDING

A typical piece of corporate distrust, was how Professor Bas Zwaan described the compulsory author's statement in which PhD candidates now have to indicate which parts of their thesis they wrote themselves. PhD students themselves are milder about it, although they do feel free-riding co-authors should be dealt with.

text Linda van der Nat *illustration* Henk van Ruitenbeek



Lisa Ploum



PhD student of Sustainable Entrepreneurship

'Actually it is strange that only the candidate has to declare what his or her contribution was. **The burden of proof should lie with the co-author. There are nice guidelines for co-authorship but it doesn't always work well in practice.** In some cases it is more of a political game and the co-author actually contributed little. It is a good idea for PhD students to discuss who does what with their supervisors, but that should happen at the start and throughout the process, and not after it's over. If the statement is intended to help the examiners, I think the university should give clearer instructions so the examiners know that the PhD is the product of collaboration. In principle you should be able to assume that the thesis is entirely the work of the PhD students, but we are still students so it is logical that we don't do it all on our own.'

Kevin Raaphorst



PhD student of Landscape Architecture

'I can imagine that an author's statement can provide clarity for the examining board in certain cases. There are several disciplines in which you can get someone else to do parts of your research, such as statistical calculations. With an author's statement, examiners can ask the candidate appropriate questions, avoiding an embarrassing situation during the defence. **The discussion about the author's statement also raises the sensitive issue of free-riding co-authors.** The author's statement shouldn't be aimed at protecting the candidate against this. If that's at stake, then there is a bigger problem and a statement of this sort is not the solution. Something like that should be monitored throughout the whole process and not set right at the end with a statement.'

Alexandra Rijke



PhD student of Cultural Geography

'I understand that within some departments the author guidelines are not sufficiently adhered to, and that this indicates a possible need for other regulations. Only I don't think an author's

statement is the solution. The research process is a joint effort in which PhD students deliver their theses in collaboration with their supervisors. This is a process in which the PhD candidate has the biggest say, or should do, but is also in constant consultation with supervisors. **An author's statement suggests that you can reduce this relationship to a division of tasks, whereas carrying out research is a constant interaction between the PhD candidate and the supervisor.** Often it is not possible to establish who did what. That is why I would argue that the proposed author's statement papers over the problem rather than solving it.'

Nico Claassens



PhD student of Microbiology

'I think it's a good development that the PhD candidate shows what his own contribution has been. The ability to collaborate is an important competence for a scientist, so it's good that chapters in a thesis are the product of collaboration. An author's statement makes it clear to the examiners exactly what the PhD candidate contributed, and what he or she did together with someone else. Transparency is important in science. **Sadly, I know of examples of unclear co-authorship, and you can use an author's statement to clarify the extent of your share in the work.** I don't see it as a sign of distrust. I handed in my own thesis before 1 January, but I would have considered it worthwhile to write an author's statement.'

Jochem Jonkman



PhD student of Operations Research and Logistics

'I don't have a strong opinion on this at this point. My first impression is that the measure is a bit similar to time-tracking. I can imagine there being a demand for this from outside, and also that it could really make a difference in some cases. But I think that, just like time-tracking for PhD students, it will be a fake transparency in many cases. You will duly fill in all the boxes as requested, but whether it really reflects how things actually happened, is anyone's guess. **Maybe the responsibility to prove what you contributed should lie with the other authors rather than with the main author; they should have to justify being mentioned as co-authors.'** ®

Student researches vegetarian options in canteens

For her thesis for her BSc in Environmental Sciences, Emi van der Horst studied the supply and consumption of vegetarian food in the WUR canteens. Eating less meat is good for the environment. 'This enabled me to link diet with environmental sciences.'

Emi is a vegetarian herself and tries to encourage the people around her to eat less meat. 'It's not easy because people are creatures of habit.' So she wanted to know how you can break these habits, and she arrived at the hypothesis that a wider variety of vegetarian products stimulates people to pick vegetarian options. For her study Emi first described how much vegetarian food is on offer and is bought. To do this she talked to the catering managers of Cormet in the Forum, GoodFoodCatering in the Leeuwenborch, and OSP in Orion. In the Forum about one third of the food is vegetarian, in Orion half and in the Leeuwenborch three quarters, she discovered. This supply is reasonably in line with the amount of vegetarian food in the turnover, except at the Leeuwenborch, where roughly half of the food sold is meatless.

Emi sat with canteen users and interviewed 29 of them, most of them students. It struck her that the groups are fairly mixed. 'The vegetarians happily share a table with avid carnivores. And actually the latter said they more often go vegetarian if they eat with vegetarians.'

MEATLESS MONDAY

In all the canteens, the interviewees were generally satisfied with the vegetarian options available, although vegetarians did say they would like more diversity. Emi: 'If a roll with brie is your only option, for instance, and you can't eat that or don't want to, that's it then.' Many people also indicated that they would be more likely to buy vegetarian products if they were a bit cheaper than the meat products.



PHOTO: GUY ACKERMANS

The meat-eaters have a grouse too. Since October 2015, all the WUR canteens observe 'Meatless Monday' and serve very few meat products. The caterers get frequent comments about this, says Emi. 'In Orion they even think fewer people come on Mondays, and I have indeed spoken to students who say they'd rather go to the Subway on a Monday.'

STRIKING

Emi says her research is too limited in scope to draw any firm conclusions. 'For that I would have liked to interview more people. And I didn't look at variety. Given that a lot of people said there was too little variety on offer, that is something that deserves some attention.' The main thing that struck Emi was that more vegetarian food is eaten in the canteens which

offer a bigger range. Which confirms her hypothesis. 'But what I noticed was that at the Leeuwenborch about 70 percent of the products served are vegetarian, but people still says the vegetarian options are too limited. So it seems as though they don't realize how much there actually is already.'

According to Emi, the catering managers acknowledge the impact of meat consumption on the environment, and yet they say they won't make changes to what they offer so quickly. They will only do that if demand increases. **TL**

Chef Hans Budding responds.
Watch the video
on resource-online.nl.



‘This town has a lovely mix of people’

Master’s and exchange students who embark on their Wageningen degree programmes in February are being welcomed and shown around this week during the Winter AID. *Resource* talked to three participants.

text Madhura Rao photos Sven Menschel



JONNAS SOMMER

Master’s student of Forest and Nature Conservation from Germany

‘I’ve been around a week now and I really love the campus because it is so green and well maintained. I brought my bike along from Germany and I’ve been around most of the town already. It’s small but quite beautiful.

I am extremely impressed with how well organised the Winter AID is. Back at the university where I did my Bachelor’s, the introduction programme usually lasted only for a day or at the most two. This university’s introduction programme is at a different level all together! All the activities are so inclusive and so much fun. I have the best group and mentor. Quite literally, because we won Winter AID 2017! Oh, and have you met our mascot yet?

About my expectations, I am hoping for a comprehensive and well-structured study programme. I’m really looking forward to meeting people from different parts of the world.’



MARIE TINE ASOH

Exchange student of Landscape Architecture from Canada

‘When I arrived a month ago I did not know what to expect. I happened to meet so many like-minded people! I hadn’t expected so many international students but this town has a lovely mix of people from diverse backgrounds. I was also really surprised to meet so many other Canadians. I have a great bunch of friends now in Wageningen.

The university seems to have a unique environment and infrastructure. I’m very impressed by the great use of different buildings and materials. Now I’m looking forward to finding out what the courses here are like.

Wageningen is a lot like my home town Guelph and I already feel quite at home. From whatever I’ve gathered in my time here, I can say that it is a great place for international students. Wageningen University has lived up to its reputation so far and I’m hoping for the most amazing few months to come.’



SU SARKAR

Exchange student of Plant Sciences from Turkey

‘Before arriving here, I hadn’t set my expectations too high. I was pleasantly surprised to see how amazing the university actually is. I thought it would be smaller but I’ve come to realise that it has several complexes all around the town. I’m glad Wageningen University turned out to be so much more than I had hoped.

I have studied away from my home university before but this is my first time in the Netherlands so I intend to travel as much as I can during my stay here. I want to make the most of my time and hopefully pick up a little bit of Dutch.

I’ve been here only for a couple of days and the first thing I did was to try to ride a bike. The last time I rode one was when I was around five years old so it’s quite a challenge, but I’m sure I’ll be back on track real soon.’

SUGAR WATER (1)

Rinsing the mouth with sugar water improves running performance. This remarkable conclusion was drawn by researchers at the university of Georgia. Trained runners finished a course of 13 kilometres five percent faster – about three minutes on average. All they had to do was to rinse their mouths eight time during the race. No need to swallow.

SUGAR WATER (2)

This wonder cure does not work if there are artificial sweeteners in the water instead of sugars. A sweet taste alone is not sufficient. Scientists think rinsing with sugar water – which always leads to some of the sugar being absorbed by the body – stimulates reward centres in the brain which are also involved in muscle control.

RED

Forty percent of the French will walk through a red light, as opposed to two percent of the Japanese. This finding comes from a study by the University of Strasbourg on pedestrian behaviour in Strasbourg and Nagoya. So are more of the French colour blind? No, say the researchers. The Japanese are conformist and the French are not. So the question is: are you a Frenchie or more Japanese?

BALD

Bald men mainly have their mothers to thank for it, says a genetic study of male baldness by the University of Edinburgh. The researchers found 287 genetic regions which play a role in baldness. Most of them are found on the X chromosome, which men get from their mothers.

More than 400 extra rooms

Student accommodation provider Idealis will be building 300 temporary student units on the corner of Nieuwe Kanaal and Kortenoord Allee in Wageningen. Another 120 permanent rooms will be built on the site of the former Kirpestein garage.

Idealis already announced in September last year that it was looking for sites for temporary student accommodation. Far more students had enrolled with the university than predicted. According to the director Sylvie Deenen, this did not lead to any urgent problems but there could be shortages if student numbers

continue to grow like this.

The temporary units due to be built on the vacant plot next to the new residential district of Kortenoord will take the form of container housing, which is allowed to stand there for 10 years. Students will probably be able to start moving in from October 2017.

Earlier this month, Idealis was also given permission to build 120 permanent units for students on the vacant Kirpestein site, on the corner of Ritzema Bosweg and Churchillweg. After lengthy consultations, the province of Gelderland and the owner of the nearby windmill De Vliet have agreed to the plans. Having the windmill in

the vicinity made it difficult to build on the site because of fears that a tall building would obstruct the flow of wind, making it impossible for the windmill to operate properly. According to Han ter Maat, the alderman responsible for spatial planning, the building will now be designed so as not to affect wind flows. Construction cannot start until the second half of 2018 at the earliest. The first students would then be able to move in from 2019.

In addition to these sites, there are plans for 178 new permanent rooms on Churchillweg and around 200 rooms on Costerweg.

Ⓡ LvdN and RK



Pole jumpers in action using the jump in Wageningen in 2004.

PHOTO: GUY ACKERMANS

Wageningen pole jump to go

Wageningen fans of pole jumping across canals, better known in Dutch by the Frisian name *ferljeppen*, will soon have to look elsewhere as the pole jumping facility in Noordwest district is due to go.

It was an initiative of the Wageningen student society for Frisian studies (WSSFS) and was built in 1999 adjoining the Van Ketwich Verschuur sports complex. Competitions were held in the early years but the pole

jumping facility has been used less and less in recent years. The structure is in a poor state of repair so Wageningen municipality has decided to demolish it, according to De Gelderlander newspaper.

WSSFS did investigate whether the jump could be saved, says chair Jorn Dijkstra. 'Unfortunately we don't have the resources for that. We are growing, but we are still a small society. We can't cough up the money for restoring and maintaining the jump. We think it's a real pity, but it's just not possible.' Ⓡ LvdN

Sterrin takes part in TV programme

What effect does poison have on the human body? This will be the key question on Monday evening, 27 February, in the BNN TV programme *Proefkonijnen* ('Guinea pigs'). The Wageningen Master's student and snake expert Sterrin Smalbrugge (23) will be providing part of the answer.

The programme looks for answers to extreme questions by doing experiments and talking to experts. In mid-January, they came to Wageningen University & Research to ask Sterrin and her partner Romilly van den Bergh questions about snake poison. 'When people think of poison, they immediately think

of snakes,' says Sterrin. 'That's why the presenters Geraldine and Jan wanted to work with snake experts to introduce the subject.'

Romilly milked an inland taipan – the most poisonous snake in the world — and a spectacled cobra in front of the cameras. Meanwhile, Sterrin explained how snake poison affects the body. 'At first, the presenters were terrified,' says Sterrin, 'because they were standing only one metre away from the most poisonous snake on earth. But we talked a lot during and after the recording, and their fear turned into admiration. It was nice to see that change in Geraldine and Jan; those are the moments I live



PHOTO: PETER SCHILPERD

Sterrin Smalbrugge (in pink) and her boyfriend Romilly van den Bergh show the presenters of the TV programme *Proefkonijnen* how to milk a snake.

for. Snakes are amazing creatures and there's nothing to be afraid of as long as you leave them in peace.'

Sterrin had to do a lot of preparation for the recordings. 'It was certainly a challenge. I'm an ecologist, but poison works at the molecular level. So I had to study a lot

for the recordings. Fortunately I have good contacts with snake scientists who could help me.' The student enjoyed the experience. 'The programme's objective fits perfectly with my passion: like the programme makers, I want to bring science to the general public.' **JS**

MEANWHILE IN... ROMANIA

'I am sad that I could not join the protests'

Romania saw a series of protests in the first two weeks of February, owing to the proposition of a new ordinance by the recently elected government. Master's student Andreea Spinu feels strongly against the bill that intends to pardon prisoners, but could be used to protect corrupt politicians.

'I am joining the Romanian youth in voicing our dissent against the new ordinance to pardon prisoners in the name of easing the overcrowding in prisons. The move by the newly elected populist Social Democrat-led government was an attempt to pass a bill which could exonerate their associates convicted of corruption. This includes the majority party's leader who already received a two-year suspended jail sentence in a vote-rigging case and other corruption allegations.

Romania saw a massive political awakening among its youth, who took to the streets protesting against the move. I am proud of my fellow Romanian citizens and my friends who joined the protests, fighting for a stronger democracy and better state. I am a bit sad that I could not join the protests this time. Though I

was away from my country during the protests, I was constantly updated by my friends and family about the events. An informed youth fighting for



PHOTO: CĂTĂLIN MĂRGESCU

effective democracy and rule of law is something Romania has been witnessing in recent years. I was active in protesting against the Canadian gold mining in the Rosia Montana in 2013 and 2015. After that event, this protest of 2017 brought people from many walks of life to Bucharest to stand up for good governance.

I wish Romania to have clean politicians who sincerely work for the betterment of the country and its people. Though the current government came to power on a wave of populism, I am confident that the youth of the country are getting stronger to question unethical practices and corruption.' **JB**



Andreea Spinu, an MSc student of Forest and Nature Conservation from Romania, comments on recent events in her home country.

YOU ON CAMPUS

On the first floor of the Forum are the 'dens' of many Wageningen study associations. Tycho Jongenelen can often be found in the office of Aktief Slip, the Environmental Sciences Study Association. 'This is a second home to me.'

Tycho Jongenelen (21) is a second-year student of Environmental Sciences. Before he came to Wageningen, he was at Erasmus University College, but he realized that was not what he wanted. He found the range of courses too broad and 'the people too enthusiastic'. So he looked for something else and ended up in Wageningen.

At the start of his first year, Tycho was still very actively involved in his theatre society in Rotterdam. He was director for a group of young children and he acted himself as well. This meant spending hours in the train every week. 'I had to go up and

down every Monday and Wednesday, and often at the weekend too.' And that was also why he stopped with his theatrical activities and was open to new challenges. At that point he came across Aktief Slip, and was asked to serve on the board. A surprise in some ways, but not in others. 'Things always come my way in strange ways.'

'Aktief Slip's den is a second home to me'

Tycho felt honours. First he became secretary and later even chair of the study association.

His time as chair is nearly over now. A pity in some ways, but not in others. 'Now I can do other useful things like watching Netflix. Oh, and studying!'



Tycho has got a lot out of these six months. 'I feel very comfortable and at home at the university.' And although he looks forward to having space for other activities, he has already let himself in for a new committee... **AB**

PARTIES

In the party mood? Wageningen Party Promotion (WUP) tells you where to find one. See too www.wageningenup.nl.

VILLA BLOEM - MINICULTURE: HOUSECULTURE

Friday 24 February from 21:00 to 01:00

MiniCulture has been livening up Wageningen's nightlife for a few years now with its exceptional performances. This time they will be putting on a proper house party. Don't miss this (free) party – come to Villa Bloem on Friday 24 February.

CAFÉ LOBURG - KABAAL REGIONAAL 2017

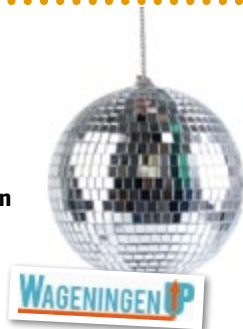
Tuesday 28 February from 19:00 to 23:00

On Tuesday 28 February, eight bands will be competing for a place on the Kabaal am Gemaal stage in Wageningen on 5 May. So not to be missed, unless of course you have to celebrate carnival somewhere in the south.

KSV - OH OH WAJO!

Thursday 9 March from 23:30 to 06:00

This public party is all about the young people of Wageningen (Wajo's). While most students were not born and brought up in Wageningen, many still see it as their home town. If you do too, celebrate this on 9 March at KSV! **B**



The British comedian and singer-songwriter Ria Lina performed in Loburg on 13 February.

PHOTO: SVEN MENSCHER

Wageningen Master's students do internships and thesis research all around the world, getting to know their field and other cultures. Here they talk about their adventures.

'On the island everything seemed so surreal'

'Barro Colorado Island is a complete scientific reserve in the middle of the Panama Canal. The island is part of the famous Smithsonian Environmental Research Center and is nearly untouched by humans. I was there during the low season when only fifteen people lived on the island and hardly anybody came to visit. I really enjoyed this situation as I could make deep relationships with the few people who were there.

I did my thesis on the population development of ocelots during the last 20 years. I spent a lot of time at the office processing photos from camera traps which are positioned all around the island. During my time on Barro Colorado Island I went through 140,000 pictures and made notes on the species, age and activities of the animals on them. I was lucky that my work was supervised by highly experienced and well-known scientists.

SWEAT AND DIRT

I also did a lot of hard fieldwork. We went out five days a week to replace the camera traps and to look for dead animals on the trails. During the five-hour walks we had to cross streams, find our way through dense lianas and climb up crazy slopes. The two girls I worked with and I always made a competition out of it to motivate each other. We fell over a lot on the slippery trails and returned covered in sweat, dirt, spines and bugs. The shower was always the best part of these days.

During the trail walks we encountered the fascinating wildlife of the island. Once, we walked into a howler monkey totally by chance. It was sitting on a branch right next to the trail and stayed there to look at us. It was great to see the animal up close whose call woke us up every morning. We also saw many coaties, which look like a cross between a cat and a

monkey. When you approach coaties you should always sing or scream to give them a warning. Otherwise, they might panic and hurt themselves while fleeing.

REAL WORLD

I went back home with mixed feelings. I had a great time so I was sad to leave, but I was really looking forward to getting back to the real world. On the island everything seemed so surreal.' **RJS**

THE WORKS

Who? Maddie van der Poel (23), Master's student of Forest and Nature Conservation
What? Master's thesis on ocelots
Where? Barro Colorado Island, Panama

Read all interviews on resource-online.nl.



Announcements

STUDENT COUNCIL ELECTION

The Student Council 2017/2018 election will be held from Monday 29 May 2017, 00:00 hrs to Thursday 01 June 2017, 23:59 hrs inclusive. The complete time schedule for the Student Council election can be consulted via the intranet page of the Student Council elections, SSC online and Studentnet WU. A copy of the decision of the Student Council will be available for inspection at the office of the Secretary of the Student Council. Any person concerned may lodge a notice of objection to this decision up to and including 23 March 2017, with the Secretary of the Student Council, Hermijn Speelman, Droevendaalsesteeg 4 (Room B.103), P.O. Box 9101, 6700 HB Wageningen.

COURSE ON 'WRITING LANDSCAPE POEMS' BY TOWN POET MARTIJN ALDELMUND

There are places in the Netherlands which appeal to our imagi-

nations and seem to inspire a stream of words. A story about an old shed or the poetry of crocuses in the spring. Every place evokes its own language and it is up to us to discover it. Like to join the exploration? The course takes place over two evenings and a morning. Dates: 23 February, 19.00-21.00 (start); 25 February, 9.00-12.00 (walk); 1 March, 19.00-21.00 (writing). Sign up or inquire at www.tvenster.nl

WEEKLY SILENT MINDFULNESS CLASSES

I teach weekly meditation classes at a beautiful location on the Wageningse berg. A powerful place to find peace. Everyone needs 'empty' time in which there are no obligations, to avoid ending up overstretched and stressed. To pay attention to what is present here and now. My approach is straightforward, focused and finely tuned. Three trial lessons for €25. Class times: Monday 20.30-21.30, Fri-

day 9.00-10.00 and from 1 April also Wednesday 20.30-21.30. See www.zijnvolzin.nl or call Laura Jonker, 06-4522 9355.

FABLAB OPEN AFTERNOONS, SATURDAYS 14.00-18.00

Students and staff are welcome every Saturday afternoon to get inspiration and some experience of 3D technology. Print or lasercut your idea in 3D at the Fablab in Wageningen, in WUR's Starthub. We also organize courses and workshops on request, such as an introduction course or a thematic evening exploring a specific topic. Location: Starthub, Triton (building 119), De Vijfde Polder 1, Wageningen.

SHEET MUSIC AND MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS ON LOAN

The music library of the Van Uven Foundation provides sheet music, choral music scores and classical musical literature. The very special items can be studied by stu-

dents, photocopied and borrowed (sometimes online). The foundation also lends out musical instruments. The library's opening times are: every third Thursday of the month from 20.00 to 22.00. Location: Generaal Foulkesweg 1A, Wageningen.

www.vanuv.nl

NETWORKING FOR JOBBEEKERS AND FREELANCERS

NetWerkwiel in Wageningen organizes activities and network meetings for jobseekers and freelancers. The meetings offer a relaxed environment for self-development, inspiration and finding new strength. We meet every Tuesday from 9.30 to 11.30 in the canteen of De Vlinder sports hall, Hollandseweg 7 Wageningen. Interested? Send an email to werk-wiel@gmail.com or just drop in.

www.werkwiel.wordpress.com

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RESOURCE
For everyone at Wageningen University & Research

Agenda

Thursday 23 February to Wednesday 8 March

5 FILMS FOR STUDENTS

Walking distance: Mexican tragicomedy about a fat man confined to his house, who wants to make a new start as a photographer. *Ultimo Tango*: gripping portrait of famous Argentinian tango partners, showing their turbulent life in dance and heartwarming interviews. *The General*: fantastic stunts and jokes in the classic from 1926 about a memorable train chase, with a special soundtrack. *Neruda*: unconventional drama about the Chilean poet and communist politician Pablo Neruda. *Stranger than Paradise*: drily comical portrait of a couple of aimless post-punk twenty-somethings. Venue: Wilhelmaweg 3A, Wageningen.

WWW.MOVIE-W.NL

Friday 24 February, 20.15

CONCERT BY THE DUTCH STUDENTS' CHAMBER CHOIR (NSK): 'EMOTIONAL ABSTRACT'

The NSK is a student choir which performs contemporary music to a high standard. The choir is formed anew every year, with students from the whole of the Netherlands. The concert tour will come to nine university towns. The programme includes two world premieres: a work for cello by René Samson, performed by cellist Emma Kroon, and a commissioned piece by Joost Kleppe. 'Emotional Abstract' seeks to unite abstraction with emotion. The music is linked with other art forms: poems, images and painters inspired the composers. Location: Arboretum church on the corner of the August Faliseweg and the Arboretumlaan in Wageningen.

NSKK.NL

Monday, 27 February, 12.30-13.30 LUNCH LECTURE: INTERNET OF (AGRICULTURAL) THINGS

WUR has an exceptional area of expertise in a wide range of applied disciplines and from the scale of genes and molecules to that of global ecosystems. The knowledge and data generated in our work add up to a vast and interesting pool of data which, through smart and strategic linkages, can be more valuable than the sum of its parts. To valorise this

potential requires an openness to internal and external collaboration. This lecture is one of the lunch lectures on 'The world of Big Data'. Venue: Impulse.

Tuesday 28 February, 19.15-22.15

SWU THYMOS: MARTIAL ARTS EVENING

Always fancied boxing or wanted to know what it's like to do jiu-jitsu? At the annual Martial Arts Evening, you can choose from a range of workshops such as judo, capoeira, MMA, jiu-jitsu and kickboxing. Admission free and no need to sign up in advance! Location: Sports Centre De Bongerd, Bornsesteeg 2, Wageningen.

WWW.SWTHYMOS.NL

Thursday 2 March, 12.30-13.20

LUNCH WORKSHOP 'SEARCH EFFICIENTLY IN THE RIGHT DATABASE' (WAGENINGEN WRITING LAB / WAGENINGEN UR LIBRARY)

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 (ask at reception). Info: info.wageningenwritinglab@wur.nl.

Friday 3 March, 15.00-17.00

MINISYMPOSIUM ON 'VEGETATION AND WATER IN THE (CLIMATE-FRIENDLY) CITY'

What are the main scientific insights for using vegetation and water to create a climate-friendly city? Jan Eelco Jansma will talk about city farming, Jan Willem van de Schans about the appeal of living and working in green cities, Tia Hermans about the effects on physical and psychological health, and Maria Koelen on interventions in the context of local nature and environmental education and healthcare. Also participating in the discussions chaired by Han Swinkels are: PvdA MPs Henk Leender and Lutz Jacobi (who wrote the PvdA paper on 'Vegetation and water in

the city'), Hans Oosters, chair of the Union of Waterboards, and Brenda Horstra (Tuinbranche Nederland). Organized by PvdA Netwerk Ruimte. Location: Forum, room C222. Sign up through: symposiumgroenindestad@gmail.com.

Saturday 4 March, 13.00

NSK KNOTSBALL WAGENINGEN

Knotsball is a hugely popular sport in Wageningen where two teams compete against each other by trying to hit a rubber ball against the opponent's mat with a club (knots). The team consist of at least one woman and four members. Team up with your friends and join the competition. Costs: € 7 including dinner. Venue: Sports Centre De Bongerd. Subscribe with a team of five or six people via:

SWU.THYMOS@WUR.NL.

Friday 17 March, 21.00 – 03.00

WAGENINGEN STUDENT GALA

On Friday 17 March, the annual Wageningen Student Association Gala will be held. The participating Student Associations are: Aktief Slip, Alchimica, Biologica, Codon, Ipso Facto, Nitocra, Sylvatica and Licere. This year the Gala will be hosted at a unique location: Ouwehands Dierenpark Rhenen! There will be a dance workshop, live band and DJ. You can buy your tickets at:

WWW.WAGENINGENSTUDENTGALA.NL/TICKETS.

colophon

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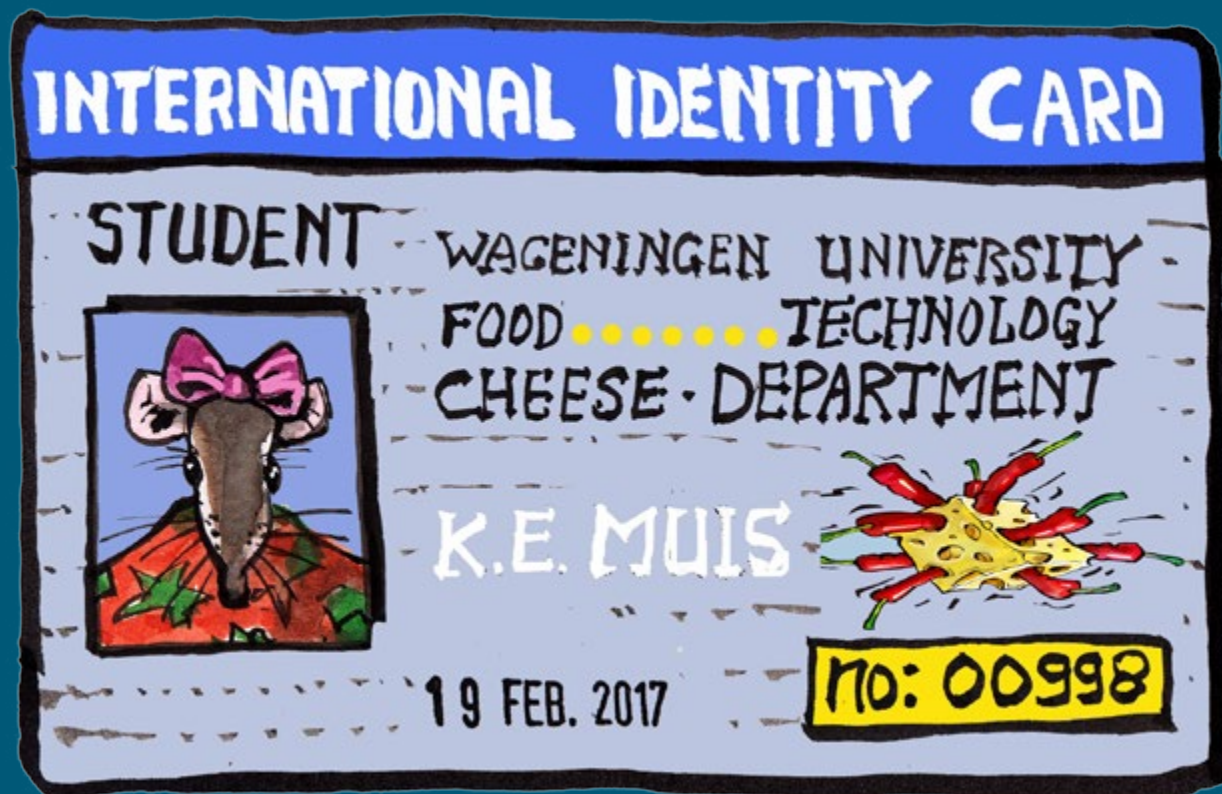
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Email: resource@wur.nl

>>TYPICAL DUTCH



Ms. Mouse

Asian students who visit the Netherlands always have to get used to the Dutch thinking their last name is their family name. And the problem increases when their last name actually means something in Dutch.

It's always confusing for students from Asia to register their names in the Dutch registration system. Dutch officials always ask for your first name and your last name or family name. In Indonesia, however, our last name is usually not our family name but an additional personal name which is less important than our first name. So it's very weird for us when we are called Meneer (Mr.) *Last name* or Mevrouw (Ms.) *Last name*. Well, it's not a big problem since we quickly get used to it, but the situation becomes really strange when your last name is Muis.

I was studying when my phone rang. 'Hello?' I answered. Then I heard someone speaking in Dutch. I frowned, then interrupted him: 'Sorry?' 'Ah, sorry, you don't speak Dutch? I thought you were Dutch because your name is Dutch,' said the caller. At first I didn't get what the problem was with my name, until I asked my Dutch friend and heard that my last name means 'mouse' in Dutch.

This also made me realize why I often notice people smiling in an unusual way when I show my resident permit or student card. The name stated there is in initials except for the last name. From now on, I will not respond awkwardly to those smiling people who are reading my last name. I will simply smile back and say: 'Yes, you can call me Ms. Mouse.'

📍 Karinska Eunike Muis, Master's student of Food Technology, from Indonesia

I didn't get what it was with my last name, until I heard that it means 'mouse' in Dutch

Have you had an interesting encounter with Dutch culture? Send your anecdote (in 250 to 350 words) to resource@wur.nl and earn 25 euros and a jar of Dutch sweets. The editors reserve the right to shorten and edit the contributions before publication.