

Solar park

18,000 panels at the Haarweg | **p.7** |

Marine snow

It sounds nicer than it is | **p.8** |

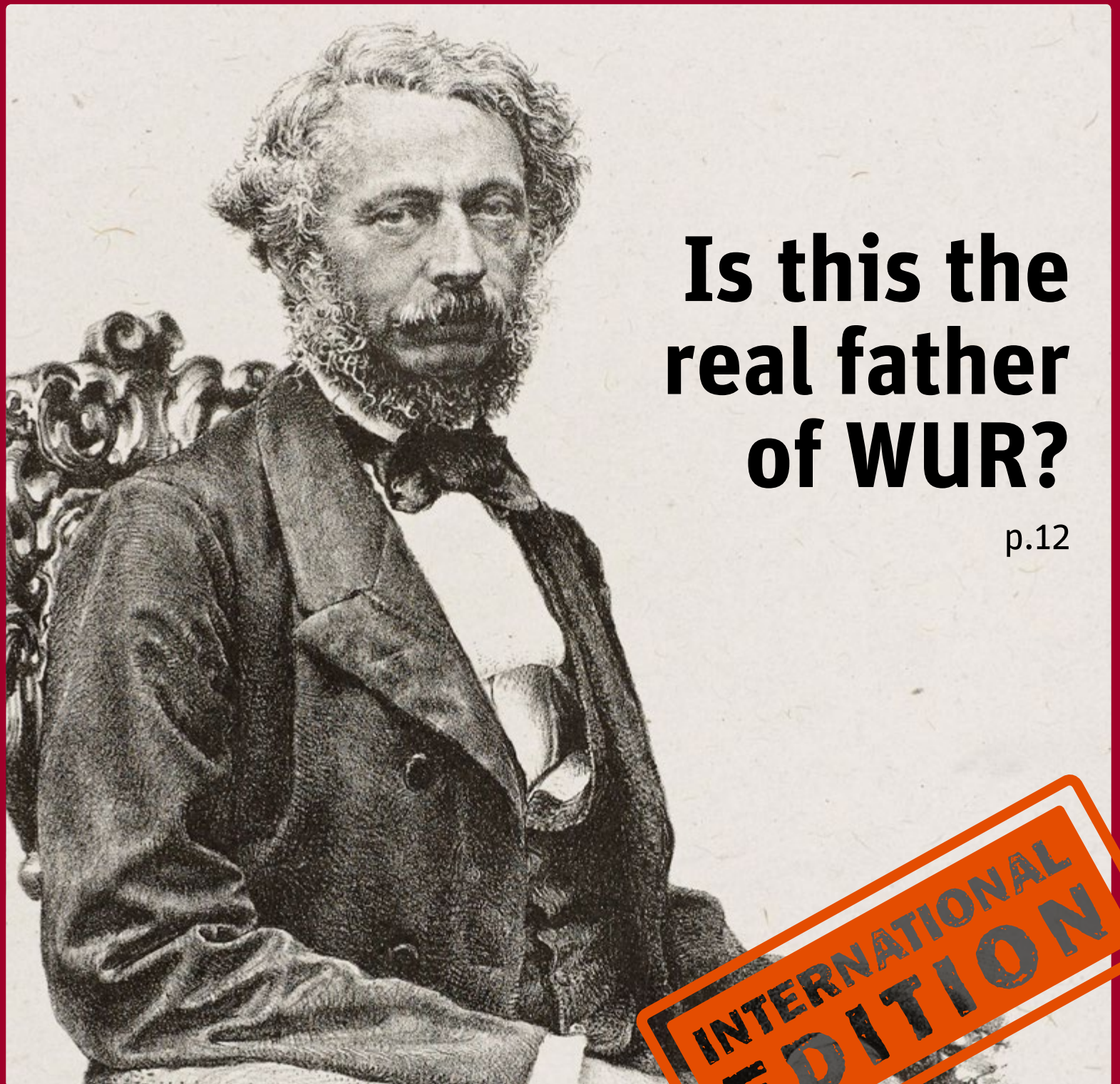
News quiz 2017

Test your knowledge of WUR affairs | **p.16** |

RESOURCE **[EN]**

For students and employees of Wageningen UR

no 9 – 14 December 2017 – 12th Volume



**Is this the
real father
of WUR?**

p.12

**INTERNATIONAL
EDITION**

FOR THE FOLKS BACK HOME

It's fun to send the folks back home a photo of yourself in the Dutch snow. And that's what a lot of international students have been doing on or near campus in the past few days: snapping each other as the snowflakes swirled around their heads. Or posing next to snow-laden trees and enormous snowmen.  photo: Sven Menschel



>> CONTENTS

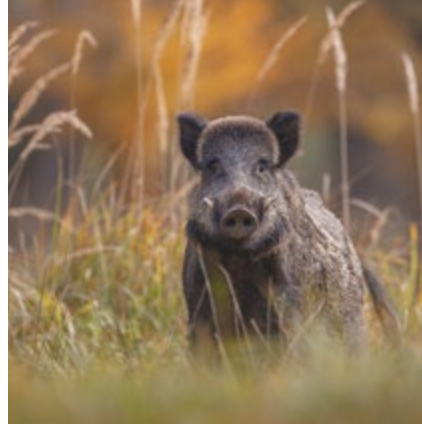
no. 9 – 12th volume



>> **8**

WELL-PACKAGED

Which thesis will win the 2017 Cover Prize?



>> **9**

GAME

Eating wild boar is good for the forest



>> **22**

FAR FROM HOME

Christmas away from your family

AND MORE

- 4 No extra funding in 2018**
- 5 Uni grows by 7 percent**
- 6 Five questions about tenure track 2.0**
- 9 Nile tilapia digest feather meal poorly**
- 10 Far more shellfish**
- 18 Creative with data**
- 26 Student Challenge in Bijlmer prison**
- 27 Meanwhile in Ireland**

DONATE A FILM

The approaching year's end always seems to prompt us to look back and reflect. These are the weeks of 'lists'. What was the most remarkable event of 2017? What is our story of the year? This time I want to look back a bit further, actually. With WUR gearing up for its 100th anniversary next year, we Resource editors have been working for weeks on interesting stories from the past century. My late grandfather often said you had to look back to see who you are now. History is important, and that goes for an institution like ours too. In our quest for history, I realize that quite a lot of material has been preserved, but that it is scattered all over the place. Our historical records depend on the personal commitment of colleagues who quietly conserve and watch over our heritage. I would like to contribute something to that and I'm looking for films about WUR that date back more than 10 years. Doesn't matter what it's about, as long as there is a link with WUR. Email, phone or just bring it along. In this magazine: the worthy story of Winand Staring, the man whose bust gazes on the Atlas in silent witness. The first of a series of interesting stories of times gone by.

Edwin van Laar (edwin.vanlaar@wur.nl)



>> [Student photographed animals in the Ecuador jungle | p.29](#)

SO WHO IS THE REAL FATHER OF WUR?

The name of the Salverdaplein in Wageningen wasn't chosen at random. It is Wageningen's tribute to the founder of agricultural education in Wageningen. But is that justified? Professor of Soil Chemistry Rob Comans doesn't think so.

On the eve of Wageningen University's centenary year, Comans sheds new light on the university's early history. According to him, it is not Inspector of Agricultural Education Matthijs Salverda who deserves the credit for establishing an agricultural education institution in Wageningen in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. It is his predecessor Winand Staring. Comans bases his view on a remarkable letter he managed to get hold of. Next year the Association for Agricultural History and the Gelre Association are organizing a symposium on '150 years of agricultural education and research in Gelderland', with Comans as one of the speakers.

The tale of Comans and Staring's letter launches a series of stories with which *Resource* will be marking the centenary. Eleven stories which between them illustrate a century of Wageningen teaching and research. **✉ RK**

Read the article 'The real father of WUR' on page 12.

CABINET NOT YET COMPENSATING FOR STUDENT GROWTH

Education minister Ingrid van Engelshoven does not have any money available next year to let government funding keep pace with the growth in student numbers at Wageningen University in 2018. The SGP party has tabled a motion requiring the cabinet to compensate financially for the growth after all.

In recent years, government funding for Wageningen has not increased in line with student numbers. WUR was financed by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and its rule was that funding could only increase or decrease by a maximum of 2 percent. The coalition agreement promises an end to this rule, but now it seems the government only intends implementing this as of 1 January 2019. It is too short notice to introduce the measure on 1 January 2018, Van Engelshoven told Parliament on 1 December.

In the education debate with the minister on 6 and 7 December, the SGP and CDA parties proposed a compromise. Could the minister calculate the financial compensation for WUR for the next few months and arrange the extra amount for 2018 in the Spring Budget Report? The minister told Parliament she was not prepared to do that. She has already allocated the available budget for 2018 to the universities

and she has nothing left for 'green' education.

SGP is unconvinced by this explanation. On 7 December, MP Roelof Bisschop tabled a motion asking for green education to receive compensation from 1 January 2018 and the financial impact to be covered retrospectively in the 2018 Spring Budget Report. The minister is advising against the motion. It is not clear when the SGP motion will be put to the vote.

WUR Student Council wrote to the coalition partners at the end of November about this issue. The council pointed out to the parties that the coalition agreement promises that green education will be treated the same as standard education institutions from now on, with funding per participant. Postponing implementation of this agreement is irresponsible, says chair Bregje de Regt. 'Wageningen University is at the limit in terms of flexibility, its facilities and workload. There is no more slack.' The Student Council thinks the government should keep to the coalition agreement. **✉ AS**

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at resource-online.nl



PHOTO: GUY ACKERMANS

MINISTER PAYS A CALL

Minister Sigrid Kaag of Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation visited WUR on 7 December. She was given a guided tour of the plant science research at Unifarm, and she talked to WUR president Louise Fresco. The D66 minister (in the middle of the photo) was keen to show her face in Wageningen, which has 'a great name in the world', she says. For the coming years she is targeting the UN's sustainable development goals. She and Fresco sought a 'shared vision on the world' with a view to achieving those goals and establishing a form of development cooperation in which government, research institutions and companies work together. **✉ AS**

UNI GROWS BY 7 PERCENT

The number of students at Wageningen University & Research has grown this academic year by 7 percent compared with the year 2016-2017. There are now a total of 11,480 students here, show figures from Education & Student Affairs (ESA).

Most of the growth in numbers of first-years has been in the Master's programmes. Thanks to an influx of students from other Dutch universities, on top of

those who stayed on after obtaining a Wageningen BSc, the total number of first-year Master's students has grown by 5 percent. The number of first-year Master's students from non-European countries went down by 3 percent from last year, but that is mainly because there was a considerable peak in the number of these students in 2016-2017, says Eric de Munck of ESA. 'If we look at the last six years, 2017 stays in second place for the number of new stu-

dents from non-European countries.'

There were 2 percent more Bachelor's students starting a degree in Wageningen this academic year than last year. A total of 1637 first-years registered at the university. This is in line with the university's projected growth figures since the spring. The most popular degree programmes are Business and Consumer Sciences (178), Food Technology (174) and Biology (157). **R LvdN**

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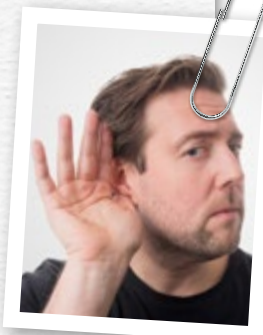
Wey-ghe-nin-gen

Just as you're about to give your presentation at a conference, you see the chairperson pondering his programme dubiously. 'Please welcome the next speaker, Guido Camps from... Wey-ghe-nin-gen, er... Wakh-uh-nine-gen..., Wage-nuh-gun University.' We work and study at a great university. A university that is extremely internationally oriented, where the whole class switches to English so that overseas students can come here to do a Bachelor's degree too. A university like that deserves an international name. Even in our own WURtube film *Get to know Wageningen University & Research*, you can hear the voiceover lady wondering how to pronounce 'Wageningen' in an English script. In the end she settles for a kind of Denglish hybrid.

Name changes are nothing new for us. The university started in 1918 as an Agricultural College, then it became Wageningen Agricultural University, later Wageningen University and Research centre, and in 2016, Wageningen University & Research. However attached we all are to the name and city of 'Wageningen', it will always be a very Dutch tongue twister for English speakers. During my thesis defence at the end of December I therefore used one of my propositions to suggest we change our name to Rhine Valley University: a name which reflects our location and our European and international orientation, and which trips off the tongue in English. For the sentimental among us, we can add something: Rhine Valley University: Wageningen Campus. **R**



Guido Camps (34) is a vet, and will soon graduate with a PhD for MRI research on stomach emptying in humans. His hobbies are baking, bee-keeping and unusual animals.



in brief

>> THE HAGUE

Economic Research to move

Wageningen Economic Research in The Hague will move to the World Trade Centre in the same city in the summer. The institute's current office on the Alexanderveld has become too big. The location, atmosphere and setup of new premises are ideally suited to WUR's objectives, says the management of the Social Sciences Group. The institute wants to adopt an 'open and transparent' working style, with different zones for focused work, silence and meetings. This is perfectly possible in the WTC building, to which the roughly 150-strong staff of the institute will move next summer. **R AS**

>> OPEN LETTER

'No food as fuel'

Europe must stop using food crops to produce biodiesel, a large group of scientists have demanded in an open letter to secretary of state for Infrastructure and Water Management Stientje Van Veldhoven, and minister of Economic Affairs and Climate Policy Eric Wiebes. The letter, published in *Trouw* newspaper on Saturday 2 December, was the initiative of Michiel Köhne, assistant professor in the Anthropology of Law and Development at the Sociology of Development and Change chair group. In no time he had collected 174 signatures, one quarter of them from Wageningen scientists. **R RK**

>> 4TU PROGRAMME

Sustainable technology

The 4TU.Federation (formed by Delft University of Technology, Eindhoven University of Technology, the University of Twente, and Wagenin-



gen University & Research) has pledged to spend 19 million euros on technological research for a sustainable society. The aim of this research programme is to add momentum to the Dutch National Science Agenda. The universities will focus on *High tech for a sustainable future*, and have identified seven research themes: high tech for a better food supply; robotics for health; safety, energy and environment; sensor technology; new measuring instruments for assessing individual health and wellbeing; resilience (robust energy and food chains); and new materials and smart forms of energy transition and energy storage. Wageningen University will contribute one and a half million euros to the programme. **R AS**

Read the full articles
on resource-online.nl

FIVE QUESTIONS ABOUT TENURE TRACK 2.0

The Executive Board wants to make the tenure track system more flexible so that not everyone has to become a professor holding a personal chair and career opportunities are also available for people who do a lot of teaching. That plan has now been sent to the WUR Council for its approval. If the plan gets the go-ahead, what does that mean in practice? Five questions about the new tenure track policy.

1. HOW MANY TENURE TRACK STAFF WILL BE AFFECTED BY THE NEW RULES?

The university currently has 230 staff on the tenure track. This career path policy started in 2009. Eight years later, 30 academics (20 men and 10 women) have reached the finishing line of a personal professorship. There are also over 110 assistant professors and almost 90 associate professors on the tenure track. More than 40 percent of them are women. In the past few years, the number of tenure track staff has increased by about 20 per year. Around 30 staff are taken on every year and about 10 employees leave the tenure track.

2. ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR WILL BECOME THE 'DEFAULT' FINAL STAGE. WHAT IF YOU WANT TO BECOME A PERSONAL PROFESSOR?

An associate professor who wants to become a personal professor will have to satisfy the same criteria as now but these criteria will be enforced more strictly. For example, in the new situation it will no longer be possible to compensate for criteria. In the past, if you didn't score that well in 'PhD supervision' you could compensate for that with a higher score in 'publications', for instance. Now associate professors will have to satisfy all the criteria in order to be promoted to personal professor. On the other hand, the personal professor 2.0 will earn more. Professors holding a personal chair will be on the same salary scale as other professors. That does not mean that they will have the same responsibilities. Professors with a chair group have more management tasks and therefore do not need to satisfy all the tenure track criteria. The Tenure Track 2.0 working group expects about 10 to 20 percent of the associate professors to progress to a personal professorship.

3. WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO THE PERSONAL PROFESSORS WHO DON'T SATISFY ALL THE TENURE TRACK CRITERIA?

A transitional period will apply for personal professors who used compensation to obtain their position. Under the current system, each



PHOTO: GUY ACKERMANS

Tenure track 2.0 will have more to offer academic staff who focus on teaching.

personal professor is reassessed after five years. If any of them fail to satisfy all the criteria, they will remain in their current job (as personal professor) but on the present salary scale. Personal professors who do satisfy all the criteria will be put on the higher salary scale. Researchers who secure prestigious funding such as a Vidi or Vici need special attention as they will temporarily be unable to fulfil all the teaching criteria. In that case, the appointment advisory committee can grant compensation or postpone the assessment. In this way, the new tenure track will offer greater flexibility for talented academics.

4. WHAT RESEARCH OBLIGATIONS WILL STAFF HAVE WHO CHOOSE THE TEACHING CAREER PATH?

It is as yet unclear how much research someone on the teaching career path will have to do. There are two options. The first is to maintain the close links between teaching and research. Rector magnificus Arthur Mol has hinted at this option: he does not want Wageningen to have professors who specialize in teaching. The second possibility is a specific teaching career path for a small group of employees who only have limited research obligations (10 to 20 percent

of their time). These teaching professionals will be expected to improve the quality of the teaching, in terms of both content and methods, and to deliver innovation in education. These teaching specialists can be promoted to 'lecturer 1', a job at associate professor level that already exists but is barely used.

5. WHAT WILL THE CHANGE IN POLICY MEAN FROM A FINANCIAL PERSPECTIVE?

The current tenure track policy is pushing up staff costs as staff get a salary increase with every new step in their career. The intention is that the changes will lead to smaller increases in staff costs in the coming years. The Executive Board predicts that if the policy were to remain the same, the tenure track costs would increase from 24.5 million euros in 2017 to 29.5 million in 2025, by which point 40 percent of staff would be personal professors. According to the board, the proposed new policy — in which fewer candidates progress to a personal professorship — would cause costs to increase by 4 million up to 2025, or one million euros less than under the current policy. **LvdN and AS**

Read too the feature Point of View on op p.20.

18,000 SOLAR PANELS ON HAARWEG

A solar park with 18,000 solar panels may be built next to the student accommodation on Haarweg, on the west side of Wageningen. The company LC Energy wants to set up the park on land belonging to Wageningen University & Research.

LC Energy, with offices in Plus Ultra on campus, is the company developing and investing in the park. WUR wants to let seven hectares of land for the solar park. LC Energy is a collaborative venture between the British investor Low Carbon and the consultancy and engineering firm Qing, established by Wageningen businessman Martin Ruiter.

It was WUR and Qing that came up with the idea for the solar park, says Ruiter. 'Wageningen municipality wants to be climate-neutral by 2030. One aspect of this is generating sustainable energy. When it turned out at the end of last year that wind turbines were not a feasible option for Wageningen, the municipality asked us to look at the options for the large-scale gen-

eration of solar energy.'

One option is WUR's former trial fields on Haarweg. Ruiter: 'The site is close to a point where we can feed the generated power into the grid. What is more, the park is large enough to make the development financially viable. The panels deliver five megawatts of electricity per annum, enough for roughly 5000 households. That's the lower limit for a solar park.'

Wageningen's municipal executive wants to facilitate the park. That will require a change to the zoning plan as the land is currently designated for R&D use. If the solar park plan goes ahead, the site will be filled with 18,000 solar panels, arranged in arrays two panels high. They will rise to a good two metres above ground level.

The plan has its critics. Landscape society Mooi Wageningen is 'not enthusiastic', according to spokesperson Patrick Jansen. 'A solar park like this detracts from the rural setting. You build a structure on a large area of open land. This plan is about going for the easiest solution; building in an



PHOTO: GUY ACKERMANS

The site on Haarweg where the solar park is planned.

outlying area at the expense of the open countryside.'

Ruiter says the solar park will be designed to fit in with the landscape as much as possible. 'It will be surrounded by a green hedge at any rate. We also want to use the land efficiently by combining multiple functions. An example would

be doing research on different combinations of grass seed.' Anyway, the use of the site is temporary, says Ruiter. The park will remain in operation for 20 to 25 years. **GRK**

THROUGH THE WINDOW

Can you see whether the little meter top right has already switched off? That could be a question the man the other side of the window is asking the person with the clipboard. It looks as though they are preparing for an experiment. Or is the research already in full swing? Do you know who they are and where this is, by any chance? Or can you tell us what these people are doing? Drop in on the editors in Atlas, or send an email to edwin.vanlaar@wur.nl. WUR is celebrating its 100th anniversary in 2018, and the *Resource* editors are investigating interesting photos in the archive.

See the photo series
'100 years... of collaboration'
on resource-online.nl



PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN



MARINE SNOW WORSENS IMPACT OF OIL SPILL

When the oil spilled during the disaster in the Gulf of Mexico was being cleaned up, vast amounts of marine snow were generated. Researcher Justine van Eenennaam discovered that this sediment exacerbates the negative impact of oil on seabed fauna, and hampers the breakdown of oil.

After the Deepwater Horizon oil disaster in the Gulf of Mexico in 2010, substances were added to the seawater to disperse the oil and help clean it up. These substances had an unforeseen side-effect: vast amounts of marine snow were generated. This is a kind of snot produced by bacteria and plankton, probably under stress. Many things stick to it, including organic matter and oil residues. This mixture then sinks to the seabed, forming a layer of sludge. 'When people think of an oil disaster they tend to picture pitiful seabirds with polluted wings, but seabed animals are extremely vulnerable too because they can't easily get away,' says Van Eenennaam, who recently graduated with a PhD on this topic in the Marine Animal Ecology chair group.

In the lab, Van Eenennaam studied the impact of oil and marine snow on four species of seabed creatures: mud shrimps, aquatic snails, saltwater clams and *Foraminifera*. She made artificial marine snow that was similar in composition to the snow that formed when the oil spill was cleaned up, and added it to the aquaria. She saw that the marine snow suffocated the seabed creatures. Van Eenennaam: 'How vulnerable they are to it depends partly on their mobility.' Snails, for example, can



The oil spilled during the Deepwater Horizon disaster approaches the coast of Alabama.

crawl away. 'In the aquarium they crawled up the glass, which of course they can't do in the sea, but they can let themselves float in the water to a cleaner place.' Unfortunately, though, the snails also ate the toxic marine snow.

Marine snow also hampers the breakdown of oil residues by bacteria. This is because they prefer to break down the marine snow first, as it contains more easily digestible sugars and proteins. Also, the bacteria need oxygen to break down the oil. Van Eenennaam: 'Creatures such as mud shrimps dig up the seabed,

which increased the amount of oxygen in it. If these seabed creatures are suffocated, that doesn't happen so much.'

Van Eenennaam cannot say for certain to what extent the same effects occur in the Gulf of Mexico. 'We studied Dutch species. Besides, the situation at a depth of 1500 metres is not the same as in an aquarium of 25 by 25 centimetres.' But it has been ascertained, she says, that marine snow has negative effects. 'This should be taken into account when selecting the best method of cleaning up oil.' **TL**

PHOTO: MICHAEL B. WATKINS, UNITED STATES NAVY

VOTING FOR THE BEST THESIS COVER OF 2017

The last thesis of this year still has to be defended, but the annual election of the most attractive cover is already under way. From today you can vote online for the Resource Cover Prize of 2017.

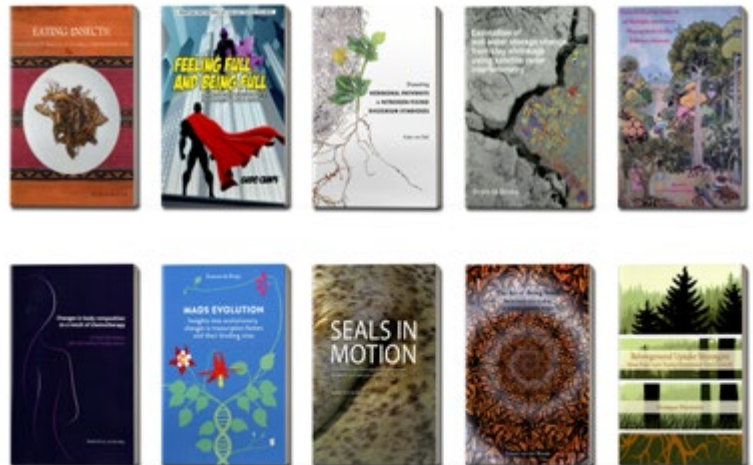
The last PhD ceremony is next Friday: Guido Camps will defend his thesis, bringing up the rear of the 295 PhD candidates who graduated this year. Exactly one less than in 2016.

From the mountain of theses, the editors have nominated 10 for the Cover Prize 2017 (see photos).

Eight of the 10 nominees are Dutch, seven are women. Last year the prize went to Audrie Jacky Siahainenia from Indonesia.

In the nomination, we paid attention as always to the attractiveness of the design and the creativity drawn on to present the content of the research visually. The use of colour and fonts plays a role too.

You can vote for the Cover Prize until the end of the first week of the new year on the *Resource* website. You'll find the covers there, with a brief explanation of their design and the research in question. **RK**



NILE TILAPIAS BAD AT DIGESTING FEATHER MEAL

Researcher Mahmoud Haidar developed a new way of determining the energy requirements of Nile tilapia. This lets fish feed be tailored to suit the needs of the fish. One of the lessons he learnt: Nile tilapias don't do well on feather meal.

Because fish meal and fish oil are becoming scarcer and are not very sustainable anyway, the fish feed industry is increasingly investigating alternative ingredients. That means manufacturers have to recalculate the composition of their feed. 'Protein is the most expensive component,' says Haidar. 'You want to give the fish enough to end up with a fish fillet but you don't want them using an excess of protein as an energy source. They should be getting that energy from cheaper nutrients such as carbohydrates.'

That is why feed producers now look at the ratio between the total amount of digestible protein and digestible energy (DP/DE) when mixing feed. But Haidar says this is not very exact. 'For example, we don't know what the optimum ratio is for some fish species. What is more, no allowance is made for the differences in the ingredients, which also contain other substances.'

Haidar tested the DP/DE model on *Oreochromis niloticus*, aka the Nile tilapia,

one of the most commonly cultivated fish species. It is also an omnivore, which means Haidar could play around with the composition of the feed. He discovered that young Nile tilapias don't have an optimum DP/DE. However much protein you give them, they convert it all into fillets. He also discovered that the fish grow better on starch than on other kinds of carbohydrates. He then investigated the effect of various ingredients that are often used in the fish feed industry, such as feather meal, soybeans and rapeseed. Not everything could be properly digested. 'The composition of feather meal, for example, doesn't resemble the food the fish eat in the wild in the slightest so it costs more energy to digest the nutrients.'

Haidar used these results to develop an alternative method to predict the energy requirements of the Nile tilapia. This 'net energy model', which is used for pigs as well, takes account not just of the amount of digestible energy in the feed but also its composition in terms of protein, fat and carbohydrates. By looking more precisely at the effects of the different ingredients, it is possible to design feed that the fish can use more efficiently.

Mahmoud Haidar of the Aquaculture and Fisheries group obtained his PhD on 17 November. **TL**



The Nile tilapia is one of the most commonly cultivated fish species.

VISION

'Eating game is good for the forests'



Christmas is the season for feasting on a haunch of venison, a saddle of hare, wild swan and pheasant. Game is seen as the ultimate 'free-range' meat, part of the trend for a healthy, sustainable diet. But most of the so-called 'game' in the supermarket is actually rather tame, says Frits Mohren, professor of Forest Ecology and Forest Management.

Doesn't that meat come from the wild?

'Hunted game is a niche market and usually comes in small batches. For the bigger customers this is not enough, and it's too expensive. They buy their meat from abroad – venison from New Zealand, for instance. Nothing wrong with that: those animals are out of doors and have better lives than animals in factory farming. Anyway, it is compulsory to label meat with its origin so you can always see where it comes from.'

What if you want to eat 'real' game?

'Then you have to go to a game butcher. At De Hoge Veluwe (a national park), they sell packages of game. Then there is also natural meat, which comes from semi-wild cattle and other large ruminants in the nature reserves. That is more expensive and you have to get in quick, but then you can be sure the animal lived in the wild. From the point of view of forest management, we should eat as much game as possible. The forests definitely benefit from that. Game populations are far too high in the Netherlands, and that hampers forest regeneration, especially on the Veluwe.'

Is meat from Dutch nature reserves safe?

'We shouldn't romanticize food from nature. Game is not automatically healthy and better. Wild animals don't get given antibiotics and they can carry diseases. Deer can be infected with Q fever, for example. There are procedures for maintaining food safety. A hunter must check the innards for anything abnormal. In practice this is sometimes only done superficially and the organs are left behind in the field, and then the butcher cannot inspect them. As far as I know, this hasn't caused any problems so far, but it does carry risks.' **TL**



PHOTO: SACHA DE BOER

PROFESSOR EXAMINES WAGENINGEN EDUCATION

The new professor of Education and Competency Studies, Perry den Brok, is going to take a good look at the education innovation going on at the university. 'I'm going to do research on the Wageningen educational ecosystem,' he says.

Den Brok started in Wageningen at the beginning of October. He came from Eindhoven University of Technology, where he led the Eindhoven section of the 4TU Center for Engineering Education. 'A setting in which the technical universities compare notes on their experience with educational innovation.' Den Brok was also a programme leader and director of teacher training at Eindhoven University, and he co-authored vision papers on education at the university. 'I want to do that in Wageningen too,' says the new professor. 'It would be a shame if the expertise in our chair group did not benefit the university.'

His chair group studies things like how people learn in businesses and organizations, and how learning environments contribute to the transfer and application of knowledge and competencies. The chair group will continue these lines of research, says Den Brok, but will now also study the Wageningen situation.

Wageningen University is growing and has a need for sound, proven educational innovations.



PHOTO: GUY ACKERMANS

The new professor of Education and Competency Studies, Perry den Brok: 'It would be a shame if the expertise in our chair group didn't benefit the university.'

Den Brok: 'If student numbers grow and you want to produce a more diverse group of graduates, you face choices in your approach to education. You can address these through innovations, but how do we know what works? If something has been tested at other universities, I might be able to bring in that knowledge.'

The professor also wants to collaborate closely with teaching staff in Wageningen. 'I want to

help develop, and later evaluate, educational innovations. Take the MOOCs. Do they contribute to students' knowledge and skills? My group can help find that out.' Another important topic is the effects of ICT on education, says Den Brok. 'What is more, we want to know how you keep the on-campus learning experience attractive to students when most of the knowledge is offered digitally.' **AS**

FAR MORE SHELLFISH IN THE NETHERLANDS

The number of shellfish in Dutch waters has shot up, according to the annual survey by Wageningen Marine Research.

The surf clam (*spisula*) in particular has made a comeback, according to the report on shellfish populations in Dutch coastal waters in 2017 that Marine Research produced at the behest of the Ministry of Economic Affairs. 'This spring we measured the largest numbers ever, since the start of the annual survey in 1995,' says project leader Karin Troost of Wageningen Marine Research. Razor clams (*Ensis directus*) are doing well too. Troost: 'Both species seem to have had very successful spat settlement last year.' Spat settlement is when the shellfish larvae transfer from the water to the ground.

Spisula used to be one of the commonest shellfish species in coastal waters but after the turn of the century the population fell in only 10 years from 692 million kilos to a mere 3 million. The population last year was estimated at 39 million kilos and this year at 1282 mil-

lion kilos. Troost: 'We saw *spisula* gradually starting to recover in 2015, which was exciting in itself, but we could never have imagined we'd find such large volumes in 2017. This is important for humans and nature because *spisula* is fished and it is also a key source of food for the common scoter.'

A lot of fishing for shellfish takes place in Dutch coastal waters. As input for the policy on this, a survey is carried out each year of the populations of razor clams, surf clams and other species that are important for fisheries. Those other shellfish species are thriving too. 'We have been seeing increases in otter shells, banded wedge shells and Venus clams for years,' says Troost.

Troost does not have an explanation yet as to why the number of shellfish has shot up so much. 'It's probably a combination of factors such as the availability of food, presence of predators and climate change. We would like to investigate whether we can identify the causes. We're trying to set up a project to do that next year.' **TL**



PHOTO: JACK PERDON

Jetze van Zwol at Wageningen Marine Research sorting shellfish that have been caught.

Not all the news reported by *Resource's* journalists makes the magazine. On this page you can find a selection of the news and views online.

CONFORMIST BEETLE



PHOTO: WANG IVERSEN

Sjaak Driessen, director of Wageningen public library, airs his views online about the new artwork to be erected on campus in honour of WUR's

100th anniversary. The five-metre-high water beetle, an initiative of Maarten Scheffer's, is a beautiful tribute to thinkers who migrate between countries, says Driessen. But he also thinks it's very concrete and conformist. That prevents it from being the kind of source of inspiration that shakes people up and spurs them on to 'unheard-of ideas'. You can read the whole of Sjaak Driessen's response online.

FINES



PHOTO: RESOURCE

There were loads of reactions to the news that the police had fined 11 students for ignoring red lights on the

crossroads between the Churchillweg and the Nijenoord Allee. The police say they will be patrolling more often in future. The fines angered students, some of whom feel that the lights do not stay green for long enough, in view of the large numbers of cyclists who have to cross the road. Such arguments were dismissed by others: 'Makes no difference... red is red!'

PIETER THE SPERM WHALE



PHOTO: RWIM VAN URK

There was no plastic in the stomach of the sperm whale that got beached near Domburg. The animal was probably suffering from an intestinal infection, conclude researchers from Utrecht University and WUR. Pieter the whale's stomach contained the remains of octopus, crabs and a half-digested cod. 'The latter was probably his last meal,' says WUR researcher Mardik Leopold.

There were loads of reactions to the news that the police had fined 11 students for ignoring red lights on the

MEANWHILE ONLINE

ARBOVIRUS



PHOTO: BIOVETERINARY RESEARCH

Jeroen Kortekaas, a researcher at Wageningen Veterinary Research, was appointed extraordinary professor of Veterinary Arbovirology from 1 November.

He will be studying how arboviruses are passed on from the mother to the foetus and how they infect the brain. Arboviruses are pathogens borne by insects or ticks, such as the Zika virus or bluetongue disease.

Watch and read it all on resource-online.nl

PROPOSITION

'I was the scientist but I could not help'

No, he did not do a farm internship himself. But he would have liked to have done so, says the German soil scientist Torsten Starkloff, who has come over from his current residence Ås, Norway, for a few days for his defence. During his research in Norway he discovered that many farmers, his father-in-law included, knew more about the soil than he does.

'How do I like the Dutch weather? It is cold! I know that sounds funny from someone who lives in Norway; the country is already covered in snow. But with all the dampness and fog here in the Netherlands, it feels much colder.

My research was on soil erosion problems in the Norwegian winter. During the fieldwork I talked to several farmers, including my father-in-law. They were all very interested and listened patiently at

first. But after a while they all became impatient and anxious to interrupt me. There is so much they know from experience.



Torsten Starkloff from Germany graduated with a PhD on 5 December for his study on winter hydrology and soil erosion in Norway.

They have been farming their land for years, experimenting with different practices and observing the results. It occurred to me that in a way I was badly equipped to talk to them.

One farmer asked me where he should leave or plant trees along the stream bank and where he should cut them down. I know the theory and physics behind the use of trees to prevent stream bank erosion but I could not answer this precise question. This put me in an uncomfortable position: I was the scientist but I could not help. What the farmers need is advice on what to do, not theoretical explanations of how things work.

A one-year internship is quite long, and students might not have the time or opportunity for that. But if I could do it all over again, I think I would at least use my summer holidays to gain some experience on a farm.' **LdK**

Of one-year internship at a farm should be a mandatory part of the education of soil scientists.

'Time to revise our view of Staring'

The true father of WUR



The big anniversary year starts in three months' time. Wageningen University will then be 100 years old. But agricultural education in Wageningen is much older than that. Professor Rob Comans made an interesting discovery about the first steps towards it. So interesting that he had 'adrenaline coming out of his ears'.

text Roelof Kleis *photos* WUR archives, Guy Ackermans

9 March 1918 was a day of celebration in Wageningen. It was the day that academic agricultural education took off in the Netherlands. Prince Hendrik was there to represent the royal family. Queen Wilhelmina was absent because of the First World War. Otherwise, everyone was present who you might expect at the opening of the new Agricultural College. Minister of Agriculture, Industry and Trade Folkert Posthuma presided over the official ceremony. In the evening the minister, who stayed at De Wereld hotel, was serenaded by the residents of Wageningen by torchlight. It was not the right time for big celebrations.

BIG FISH

Things had been different 30 years earlier, though. The official opening of the National Agriculture School on 11 September 1877 was celebrated in style. For two days there were 'matinees and soirees musicales, an agricultural exhibition, a procession and a big firework display laid on by the municipality,' writes J. van der Haar in part one of his History of Wageningen Agricultural University. In acquiring the National Agricultural School, the highest level of agricultural education available at the time,

Wageningen had caught a big fish. The school built on the start made by the provincial agricultural school launched four years previously. Inspector of Agricultural Education Matthijs Salverda was closely involved in the setting up of both schools. As a result, a square in the town centre is named after him, a gesture of Wageningen's respect for the man who has gone down in history as the founder of agricultural education in Wageningen. But is he really?

THE FIRST GEOLOGICAL MAP

As professor of Soil Chemistry and Chemical Soil Quality, Rob Comans has a busy job. But most evenings he reserves 10 minutes for a scan of secondhand bookshops and secondhand trading website Marktplaats. Looking for Staring. A book, a notebook, an article, anything at all... He is fascinated by Staring. Not the nineteenth century poet Anthoni Staring, but his son Winand, the geologist, who was Inspector of Agricultural Education before Salverda. This fascination arose when Comans came across the first geological map of the Netherlands while studying for his Earth Sciences degree in Utrecht, and found out that it had been made by Staring. 'A beautiful work which

took him years. Very detailed,' says Comans, sitting at his desk in Atlas. 'Then I found out more about him and was very impressed by the tremendous progress he made in the nineteenth century in the geological and agricultural sciences. For Staring, those two fields were very closely interlinked.'

A COLLECTOR'S PASSION

Comans' interest in Staring developed into a passion, with a collector's passion to go with it. Staring wrote a lot, on the most diverse subjects. 'I've got an entire library of Staring. I think my collection can compete with that of the Royal Library or the Special Collections in the Forum Library.' One of his most prized treasures is Staring's original thesis from 1833, written in Latin. Then there was the evening, a few years ago, when on his daily trawl Comans stumbled upon a collection of papers on agricultural education. Including, according to the description, 'an original letter from WCH Staring about the National Agriculture School'. 'Well, then the adrenaline starts coming out of your ears,' says Comans, remembering his initial excitement. 'I can still remember when I found the first publications in which there were a few annotations in

9
March
1918

Opening of the
Agricultural College
in Wageningen

Staring's hand. Then you get very close. And now suddenly I could get hold of an original letter. That makes your heart beat faster. Well, it does mine at least. Maybe there aren't too many idiots like me.'

LOBBYIST

A few days later, the set of letters fell through his letterbox. His excitement grew even greater, if that was possible, when it became clear what the letter was about: the establishment of the National Agricultural School. In the letter, addressed to an MP, Staring lobbies for funding in the 1872 budget for the establishment of a National Agricultural School. He says he 'happens to know' that 'people' have plans for such a school. The letter is dated 2 October 1871, just before the debate on the budget for the following year. 'And please note,' says Comans, 'that is therefore just three months before Staring wrote his famous letter to the mayor and aldermen of Wageningen about the establishment of a provincial agricultural school in the town' (see inset).

It takes a little historical background to understand Comans' excitement about this, and the significance of his find. Staring was a key lobbyist for agricultural education, which he saw as the only way to raise farming to a higher level. According to Staring, Dutch agriculture was the laughing stock of Europe. Thorbecke's Educa-



▲ Prince Hendrik (in long military greatcoat) is welcomed in Wageningen on 9 March 1918, to open the Agricultural College.

Winand Staring was the real founding father of agricultural education in Wageningen, according to Professor Rob Comans. ▶



▲ Professor Rob Comans with the bust of Staring in the Atlas building on campus.





◀ Prince Hendrik (middle of lower row) poses before the opening with the ministers and professors present, on the steps of the City Hall.

tion Act of 1863 provided for lower, secondary and higher agricultural education at municipal, provincial and national levels. And there would only be one National Agricultural School.

FOUNDING FATHER

But how did that one agricultural school end up in Wageningen? As mentioned, historians have credited this to Salverda, under whose jurisdiction as Inspector of Agricultural Education the immediate forerunner of Wageningen University was established.

Staring was dead by then. But, according to Comans, Staring had played an important role in the establishment of both the provincial and the national agricultural schools in Wageningen. Comans: 'The prevailing view is that if it had been up to Staring, the National Agricultural School wouldn't have ended up here, but in Utrecht with the veterinary college.' That idea about Staring must now be revised, believes Comans. In fact, Staring may well be the only true founding father of Wageningen University.

The letter Comans got hold of is key to this hypothesis. The letter is addressed to MP Willem Jonckbloet, later professor of literature in Leiden. Like Staring, Jonckbloet was a liberal and probably a personal friend of the Staring family. Staring addresses him as 'Honourable friend' and asks him a favour. Comans: 'Staring has seen the budget for 1872 and has noticed that, yet again, no funding has been allocated to a National Agricultural School. Thorbecke's Education Act was passed eight years ago and nothing has happened yet.' Then he gets to the point. 'People' are working, without consulting Staring, on a plan for such an agricultural school 'entirely in my spirit'. And would Jonckbloet, an education specialist, please propose an amendment to ensure that funding is included in the budget?'

BEYOND HIS REMIT

By lobbying actively like this, Staring goes



The National Agricultural School on the Heerenstraat in Wageningen (1877-1918). The school was the forerunner of the Agricultural College. ▶

9
March
1918

Opening of the
Agricultural College
in Wageningen

beyond his remit as an inspector and thus a civil servant. He therefore impresses on Jonckbloet that 'my name should not be mentioned in connection with this business, so that no one notices I have got involved'. Three months later, on 20 January 1872, Staring writes the oft-cited letter to the mayor and council members of Wageningen, revealing what a provincial agricultural school should look like as part of an existing secondary school (see inset). For Comans, this all looks a bit too coincidental. He suspects a preconceived plan to establish the National Agricultural School in Wageningen, with the provincial school as an interim phase. Historian Van der Haar already suspected a preconceived plan, but had not found any incontrovertible evidence. Comans thinks that the letter does constitute significant evidence, but he stresses that this is still only a hypothesis. There is no incontrovertible evidence at this point. 'I interpret this letter and the timing of it, namely the moment when he was in consultation with Wageningen about establishing a provincial agricultural school here, as a strong indication that it was a joint strategy to establish the National Agricultural School in Wageningen.' Comans does not rule out the possibility that Staring passed on that strategy to his successor Salverda. 'Salverda took very much the same line as Staring as far as agricultural education was concerned.'

FAMILY ARCHIVE

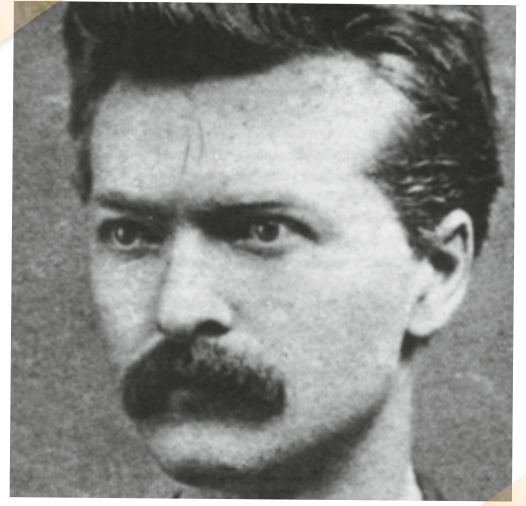
There is still no smoking gun, though. No document or letter that sets out the strategy in black and white. A month ago, his search brought Comans to De Wildenborch estate near Vorden, where Staring was born. The estate is once again in the hands of the Staring family, and houses the family archive. Comans: 'I approached them with this letter, my hypothesis, and the request to be allowed to search the archive. With the WUR centenary in mind, it would be wonderful to be able to reveal that Staring's role in the establishment of the National Agricultural School was much greater than has always been assumed. They liked that idea very much.' Comans was cordially welcomed by Jennine Staring, a distant descendant of Winand's, spent a day going through a fat pile of incoming correspondence from 1870 to 1871, but didn't find what he was looking for. 'Actually I found nothing

at all about agricultural education, and yet Staring was inspector at the time. So I think that part of the work archive must be somewhere else.'

The establishment of agricultural education in the Netherlands was pretty much Staring's life's work. A work with which, all things considered, he did not get anywhere, in terms of the Wageningen plans. The only provincial agricultural school to get off the ground during his time as inspector was the one in Warffum, in Groningen. But that school, started in 1870, did not take off. It seems likely that Staring, enthused by the better prospects in Wageningen, put all his eggs in this basket. He personally saw to it, for instance, that the German Otto Pitsch, the only qualified teacher of agriculture at the time, was transferred from Warffum to Wageningen. That transfer was a deathblow for the school in Warffum.

STARINGPLEIN

If Comans is right, the history books can be rewritten. 'Next year we are celebrating 100 years of higher agricultural education in Wageningen. But that Agricultural College of 1918 would never have come here, of course, if the National Agricultural School wasn't already here. In that sense, I see Staring as the founding father of higher agricultural education.' And yes, Comans confirms that in that case the Salverdaplein (Salverda Square) is wrongly named. In any case, there is very little commemoration of Staring in Wageningen – only the Staringlaan in the Sahara neighbourhood. 'But that is considerably less prominent than the Salverdaplein,' thinks Comans. The Staring Centre (later Alterra) building on the Haarweg made way a few years ago for insurance company Menzis's new building. There is a bust of Staring in



▲ Matthijs Salverda is widely considered the founder of agricultural education in Wageningen.

Atlas, on campus. But you have to know who it is, because his name is barely legible. If it is up to Comans, his hero will finally get the recognition he deserves in Wageningen's centenary year. He is working on a publication about the letter and its significance.

Staring himself did not live to witness the official opening of 'his' National Agricultural School. He died at the age of 68 on 4 June 1877, just three months before the opening. ❷

NO 'CITY APPETITES' IN WAGENINGEN

In a famous letter of 20 January 1872, Inspector of Agricultural Education Winand Staring sets out exactly why Wageningen is the best place for a (provincial) agricultural school. Farmers could send their sons there with no worries, because Wageningen is not such a big city that they would develop 'city appetites and urban inclinations'. And they could go home every Sunday, possibly by train. The National Agricultural School that was established later attracted a completely different clientele: the sons of landowners and prosperous citizens.

News Quiz



START

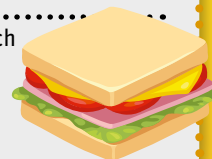
In this last *Resource* of 2017 we look back on the WUR news of the past year. Were you paying attention, and do you know the answers to these questions about events great and small? Why *did* Manon Römken spy on bonobos for two years?

1. THE FORMER STAFF ASSOCIATION O&O DONATED 100,000 EUROS TO WAGENINGEN'S TWO ARBORETA. WHAT DO THE LETTERS O&O STAND FOR (IN DUTCH)?

- a. Development and recreation
- b. Education and research
- c. Dismay and disenchantment
- d. Nurture and recreation

2. THE PLANNED DIALOGUE CENTRE ON CAMPUS IS ALREADY MAKING TONGUES WAG, AND THE FOUNDATION STONE HAS NOT EVEN BEEN LAID YET. WHAT DOESN'T THE DESIGN LOOK LIKE, ACCORDING TO ITS CRITICS?

- a. A concrete sandwich
- b. A bunker
- c. A crematorium
- d. A Dialogue Centre



3. FORMER TEACHER OF THE YEAR GERT PEEK IS STEPPING DOWN AS CHIEF REFEREE AT THE SOIL-DRILLING CHAMPIONSHIPS. WHY?

- a. He is getting too old
- b. He is going to be chief referee for the open Wageningen Worm-catching Championships
- c. He is retiring
- d. He wants to take part himself next year



4. HONOURS STUDENTS ARE GOING TO MARK THE UNIVERSITY'S CENTENARY WITH A MOOC ABOUT:

- a. beer
- b. milk
- c. algae
- d. bread



5. BACHELOR'S STUDENT MANON RÖMKENS STUDIED BONOBOS IN APENHEUL PRIMATE PARK. WHAT DOES SHE LIKE BEST ABOUT THESE ANIMALS?

- a. The way they laugh
- b. The way they have unbridled sex
- c. Their eyes
- d. Their laughing eyes while they're having unbridled sex

6. VESTE CANDIDATE GIULIA HOMMS GOT THE MOST VOTES IN THE STUDENT COUNCIL ELECTIONS. WHY DID SHE STILL NOT GET ONTO THE STUDENT COUNCIL?

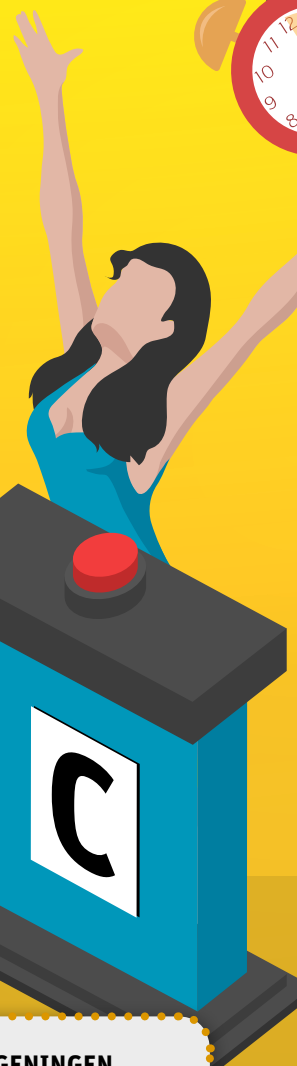
- a. She had fiddled the result
- b. She opted for the chair of the Student Alliance instead
- c. She was too far down the list of candidates
- d. She was too busy attending evening lectures

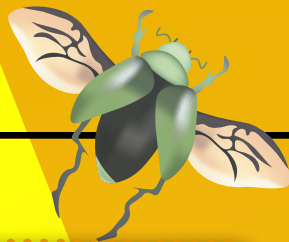
7. TENURE-TRACKERS NO LONGER HAVE TO END UP AS PERSONAL PROFESSORS. WHY NOT?

- a. There are going to be far too many professors
- b. Not all associate professors want to be full professors
- c. Associate professors can supervise PhD candidates too from now on
- d. Not many associate professors have the capacity for further promotion

8. WAGENINGEN SCIENTISTS DEVELOPED SOME WEIRD EQUIPMENT AGAIN THIS YEAR. WHICH ONE WASN'T THEIR BRAINCHILD?

- a. Garbage detector
- b. Chewing sensor
- c. Mite counter
- d. Green monitor





12. IN THE POND NEAR THE FORUM THERE IS A LARGE WATER BEETLE POISED TO FLY AWAY. WHAT IS THE NAME OF THIS ART WORK?

- a. Must leave
- b. Go ahead
- c. Fly away
- d. So long

13. 'IN MY DAY YOU WENT TO A PRACTICAL AND READ THE INSTRUCTIONS ON THE SPOT.' WHO SAID THIS?

- a. Tijs Breukink at his farewell as member of the Executive Board
- b. Tiny van Boekel when he said goodbye as director of education
- c. Rens Buchwaldt when he took up his appointment to the executive board
- d. Arnold Bregt when he started as the new director of education

14. STUDENTS FROM THE ORTHODOX PROTESTANT SOCIETY CSFR WERE ARRESTED IN BENNEKOM FOR:

- a. disturbing the peace on a Sunday
- b. kidnapping
- c. drunkenness in public
- d. blasphemy



11. MORNING LECTURES WILL START 10 MINUTES EARLIER NEXT YEAR. WHY?

- a. To separate the schoolchildren from the students in the bicycle traffic through the Tarthorst
- b. To tie in better with the bus service on campus
- c. To give students the chance to get home before dark
- d. To make better use of the available teaching space



15. THERE WAS A LOT OF OPPOSITION TO THE PRESENCE OF BRITISH AUTHOR MATT RIDLEY AS GUEST SPEAKER AT THE OPENING OF THE ACADEMIC YEAR IN SEPTEMBER. WHY?

- a. A group of professors wanted a real scientist
- b. A group of students thought he was too optimistic about climate change
- c. A group of professors wanted the chance to answer his claims
- d. Many students hadn't read Ridley's book



10. THE DASSENBOSJE (A SMALL WOOD) IS CENTRAL TO THE DEBATE ABOUT A RING ROAD AROUND THE CAMPUS? WHY, ACTUALLY?

- a. It is home to a colony of badgers (*dassen* in Dutch)
- b. Local residents don't want a ring road through the Dassenbosje, but around the entire neighbourhood
- c. Wageningen municipal council wants to save the wood
- d. The director of Rikilt doesn't want a ring road on his doorstep



16. DEAN RIUR BOERSMA SET UP SELF-HELP GROUPS FOR HIGHLY GIFTED STUDENTS. THESE STUDENTS HAVE PROBLEMS BECAUSE:

- a. they lack study skills
- b. they lack love
- c. they lack self-knowledge
- d. they lack funding for their studies

17. A PIONEERING CHANGE WAS MADE TO THE COURSE TRENDING TOPICS IN BIOLOGY OF SOIL AND WATER. STUDENTS COULD NOW:

- a. grade their exams themselves
- b. only take the course online, in response to the shortage of classroom space
- c. award their own ECTS points afterwards
- d. decide on the content of the course themselves

19. THE EXECUTIVE BOARD SEEKS TO LOOK AFTER EMPLOYEES' HEALTH. SO EVERYONE GETS:

- a. a 10 percent discount on the sports pass
- b. less work pressure
- c. personalized advice on health
- d. a free apple or banana every week

18. THE POPLAR OUTSIDE ORION IS ON TWITTER. WHAT DOES THE TREE TWEET ABOUT?

- a. The conversations it overhears
- b. The weather
- c. Its sap flow
- d. The latest gossip at the Forest and Nature Management chair group



9. PHD CANDIDATES NOW HAVE TO SIGN A DECLARATION OF AUTHORSHIP. WHAT DOES IT SAY?

- a. Which part of the thesis is their own work
- b. Which part of the thesis they copied
- c. Which part of the thesis has not already been published elsewhere
- d. Which part of the thesis they wrote and which part their supervisor wrote

20. THE THEME OF THE CENTENARY CELEBRATION NEXT YEAR IS:

- a. Wisdom and Wonder
- b. Look back in wonder
- c. Wuthering Heights
- d. Wonders of Life

The answers are on page 31.



What do you do if other people distort your results?

Creative with data

Lobbying organizations, institutes, government bodies and companies have all been known to hijack Wageningen research results. And that can lead to such oversimplified stories doing the rounds that researchers have to call a halt. 'Of course you know that NGOs cherry-pick, but when does it become a travesty of the truth?'

text Rik Nijland illustration Pascal Tieman

It takes guts to accuse the national statisticians at Statistics Netherlands (CBS) of manipulating data. But Ingrid Tulp, a researcher at Wageningen Marine Research, took her courage in both hands at the beginning of November and did just that.

Statistics Netherlands used research data produced by Tulp and her colleagues for the *Living Planet* Report that focuses on saltwater and brackish nature in the Netherlands, published by the Worldwide Fund for Nature WWF. It was the Statistics Netherlands press release in particular that went down badly with Tulp. The headline '30 percent less wildlife in the North Sea' was a real case of jumping to conclusions, she said in *Resource*. 'If numbers of one species have gone up by 20 percent and numbers of another have gone down by 60 percent, you can't take an overall average from that. The total animal population is nothing to do with these figures.'

The press release also laid the blame disproportionately on bottom trawling, says the researcher. Wageningen has not done any research at all on the cause of the decline in fauna populations. Bottom trawling certainly has played a role, says Tulp, but the accusation that was made is 'arbitrary'.

DISCREET

Statistics Netherlands withdrew its statement after the criticism. The press release now bears the headline: 'Biodiversity of North Sea in decline'. And bottom trawling is named as 'one of the main causes of the decline in seabed fauna in the North Sea'. This seems to have cleared the air, even though nothing has been changed in the WWF's *Living Planet* report.

This is not the first time WUR has been in the firing line over the way its research is inter-

preted. But how common is it, actually, for NGOs, institutes, government bodies or companies to distort research results to suit their own purposes, or to massage or misinterpret them? No one is very keen to answer this question.

Preferably, you settle such matters discreetly, emails Erik Toussant, communication advisor at the Plant Sciences Group. 'Nobody wants to get in the papers with this sort of thing, even if

'An NGO makes a claim, and journalists often just write it down unquestioningly'

they were very offended at the time. Sometimes there has already been a furore about it, whether it got in the press or not. And even if not, it can still damage relations. So it's not very sensible to give it publicity.'

MEGA BARNS

But sometimes the researcher just gets drawn in. Edo Gies of Wageningen Environmental Research found himself at the centre of a comparable affair, characterized by the agricultural press as: '*Milieudéfensie* (an environmental lobbying organization) distorts figures on mega barns'. In the spring of 2015, *Trouw* newspaper stated on the front page that the number of so-called 'mega barns' had tripled in the last eight years. Press agencies ANP and FD also used *Milieudéfensie*'s press release, based on research Gies did for the organization. The interpretation was shaky, though, as the researcher confirmed when *Resource* sounded the alarm. *Milieudéfensie* had confused large farms with large barns. The number of the latter had doubled, not tripled.

'In *Resource* I could bring in the nuances,'

reflects Gies. 'That had a negative impact for *Milieudéfensie*: after that attention was focused on the idea that the organization was unreliable, rather than on upscaling in livestock farming. Since then, though, I've talked it all through with *Milieudéfensie*. How can you prevent such things from happening? Above all, by making agreements about how you publicize results. Actually it goes well nearly all the time.'

'OVERSTATED CASE'

The bottom trawling issue will also lead to consultations between Statistics Netherlands and Wageningen Marine Research, says Statistics Netherlands spokesperson Cor Pierik. 'We need to know more about what the other party measures and how they work. There was obviously not enough exchange on those points at the workshop that was held beforehand.' But Pierik denies that Statistics Netherlands was influenced by the client. 'We write those press releases ourselves. WWF was not involved at any point. We adjusted it later because we had overstated the case somewhat, and had claimed a causal relationship for which we had no evidence. Normally we are very precise about that, but it seems that not enough people took a look at this.'

However those consultations go, the publicity horse has already bolted. The fisheries industry is surrounded by political polarization, so the article in *Resource* prompted questions in parliament. Bureaucrats at the ministries of Agriculture and Economic Affairs now have to respond to the shared concerns of the fisheries spokespersons from the CDA, Christian Union and SGP parties. They asked questions about the integrity of Statistics Netherlands and the bad press given to bottom trawling. The animal rights party also asked questions about the phasing out of bottom trawling.

TENURE TRACK

Is more flexibility a good idea?

The Executive Board wants to relax the tenure track system a bit and create a career path for teachers. This will improve the prospects for staff who want to focus on teaching, while lightening heavy teaching loads. The close link between research and education for which Wageningen is renowned will be somewhat loosened. Is that a good idea?

text Linda van der Nat and Albert Sikkema photo Guy Ackermans

Perry den Brok



Professor of Education and Competency Studies

‘The interaction between education and research at the university is very important, because they reinforce each other. So I am not in favour of a career path with only teaching or only

research. **But it is good to give staff the option of specializing in teaching, so that you can even become a teaching professor.** There is already a basic teaching qualification (BKO) for lecturers, but there is nothing after that. Some universities have already created a senior teaching qualification (SKO). You get that if you are an exceptionally good teacher, if you stand out for curriculum development, or if you are innovative in the area of testing, practicals or ICT. I think you need these kinds of criteria for testing teaching quality in your HR policy. I see this kind of career path as a way of rewarding different kinds of talent in your organization.’

Carlijn Wentink



Lecturer and education coordinator in Health and Society

‘**The career path for teachers is a nice first step by the university to show that they think good teaching is important.** But there has to be a cultural

change as well. We could do with a bit more appreciation of education and a career path won’t change that by itself. The way it’s seen at the moment is that if you are a good researcher, you just do some

teaching on the side. But teaching really is a profession that you can be good at or bad at. If the university wants to show that it sets store by good teaching, there will need to be more scope for professionalization as a teacher, going beyond the basic qualification (BKO). I am in favour of maintaining the link between teaching and research. We are training young researchers, so as a teacher you need to have your feet on the ground too. But we don’t all have to be outstanding researchers.’

Tjitske Geertsema



PhD candidate in Hydrology and Quantitative Water Management, and member of the WUR Council

‘I see it as a positive development that more career possibilities are created for teachers. The most important competency for this group, in my view, is not educational innovation but didactic quality. Teachers who know how to motivate and inspire their students. **In our sciences group it is the people with light research loads who turn up every year in the Teacher of the Year long list.** People like Roel Dijkema, Gert Peek and Paul Torfs. Teachers to the bone. Some of them will be retiring soon and will be replaced by tenure-trackers with a lighter teaching load. I expect that to lead to a fall in the quality of teaching. The most important question for the WUR Council is: what exactly will the research load be in the teaching career path? Personally I think there should still be a strong link with research, because that is Wageningen’s strong point. The discussion hasn’t got going yet in the WUR Council, but I don’t sense any strong opposition.’



Ivonne Rietjens



Professor of Toxicology

'I think it's a very good thing that they re-evaluate the tenure track. I've already lost two members of staff who found it too onerous and opted for a job elsewhere.'

I would have liked to appoint them as assistant or associate professors, but that wasn't possible in recent years. I now have new tenure-trackers, but with the current criteria I can't make them do all the additional teaching that is a consequence of rising student numbers. As a result I am teaching a lot myself now. So I would very much like to be able to appoint a new associate professor. I wouldn't want the emphasis in tenure track to lie on teaching. That would be going too far. People teaching on the Master's, especially, must stay in touch with research. I am in favour of the possibility of appointing assistant or associate professors with an old-fashioned ratio of 40 percent teaching, 40 percent research and 20 percent social responsibilities.'

Erwin Bulte



Professor of Development Economics

'I'm in favour of more flexibility, especially in the initial phase of tenure track. I see around me that the acquisition demands create a lot of stress. People sometimes take on research that is far from their own research field, just to have projects. More scope for shifting between education, research and acquisition is something I applaud. I've got four tenure-trackers in my group. We don't have too

much teaching available, in fact we need courses, but I recognize the problem of rising student numbers in other groups. I think we should always have a combination of teaching and research in tenure track, otherwise you run the risk of turning into an applied sciences university. I also think we should assess tenure-trackers less on the spreadsheet with the grades that were achieved, and more on the content of their research. Then you need more external expertise to be able to assess them properly.'

Frits Claassen



Associate Professor of Operational Research and Logistics, and Teacher of the Year 2012

'In itself I think it's a good thing the university is starting to appreciate the importance of education more precisely. Adding a teaching career path offers staff a wider range of possibilities, a prospect they didn't have before. At the same time I wonder whether any young members of staff will opt for a teaching career. Surely every staff member wants to do research, especially ambitious young scientists. A minority will block the possibility to go on to a personal chair early on. That is logical, that is why they are working at a university. So tenure-trackers will want to invest a lot of time and effort in looking for funding and writing project proposals. The competition for grants and research funding is enormous, however. If you ask me, the problem with tenure track is not the teaching load but the financial feasibility and the pressure of acquisition. Even without rising student numbers, the current system is not tenable in the long run.'

away from home for Christmas

Christmas is almost here, the time that most people will celebrate with their families. However, it is not possible for everyone to be home for Christmas. Some people are abroad due to their studies and cannot make it back home to celebrate the holidays. What are their plans, instead, for their Christmas away from home?

text Evelien Castrop, Lotje Hogerzeil, Liza van Kapel and Madhura Rao illustrations Henk van Ruitenbeek



'I'll miss meeting up with my extended family'

CYZA ALLI, MSC STUDENT OF FOOD SAFETY FROM RWANDA

'I plan on visiting some Rwandan friends during the holidays. A friend of mine lives in Rotterdam with her family so I might visit them. Or perhaps another friend who lives in Belgium! On Christmas Eve I will go to church, as is the tradition back at home. I will miss meeting up with my extended family and having a good time over food and drinks.

I am already in the festive mood because all my Dutch friends were celebrating Sinterklaas. I was even invited to dinner by a couple of them to enjoy the celebration in the true Dutch way! However, I feel like the celebrations here aren't as big as they are back at home in Rwanda. Here people seem to be quite busy with their private lives and nuclear families. In Rwanda, it is customary for several families to come together and celebrate in large groups.

I am hopeful that visiting my friends and their families will make me miss the celebrations back home a little less. Celebrating Christmas this year is going to be a guilty pleasure because the completion of my thesis is going to be at the back of my mind.'



'Our dinner will be a fusion of cuisines'

FATIMA DOMINGUEZ GIGANTE, MSC STUDENT OF FOREST & NATURE CONSERVATION FROM SPAIN

'Already in September I was looking for flights. I have my last exam on the 22nd and I wanted to go home to Madrid on the 23rd. But ticket prices turned out to be sky high already. I told my best friend about it, and she wouldn't even let me finish my sentence: 'COME HERE FOR CHRISTMAS!' she answered. She will celebrate Christmas with her sister in Gothenburg, Sweden, and this was my chance. My friend's sister, whom we are staying with, has a house right on the edge of the city. So I will spend my winter break in a magical Swedish forest, playing in the snow. My friend is half Swedish, half Iranian, so our Christmas dinner will be a fusion of these cuisines. Yum!

Of course my family was a little sad to hear I will not be there. Christmas is always a big thing for us, and I have never been away from home for this long, so it's a double disappointment. Luckily, my mum sent me a lot of treats from home to survive without the Spanish Christmas. Those will most likely be finished before I go to Sweden. But I'll bring *stroopwafels* instead.'

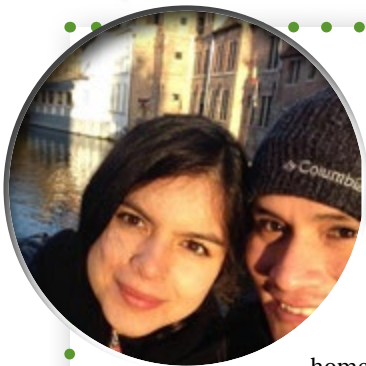


‘I’ll be binge watching Star Wars’

TOSHIHIRO TAKADA, MSC STUDENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES FROM JAPAN

‘During the holidays I’m looking forward to binge watching Star Wars because I’m a big fan! I plan on visiting some European countries. In particular, I’m keen on visiting Düsseldorf in Germany to see the Japanese garden. I am quite curious about how the Dutch celebrate Christmas but I realized that all the Dutch students are going to go home for the holidays. Since all my Dutch friends will be away, I will probably celebrate with other international students who decide to stay here. I also intend to study about water management and learn the Dutch language. I’m even keen on learning some Spanish if I find the time.

In Japan, many people visit shrines on New Year’s Day. I will definitely miss this tradition. In fact I’m even hoping to find one around here so I can meditate by myself. Besides the traditions, I obviously miss the festive food eaten around this time. During the winter holidays, we eat Japanese thick noodles called *udon* and rice cakes called *mochi*. It’s a pity that I won’t be able to enjoy them this time. Oh, and I will also miss *onsen* – the Japanese hot springs!’



‘We will do some shopping in Amsterdam’

STEPHANIE BARBACHAN, MSC STUDENT OF FOOD QUALITY MANAGEMENT FROM PERU

‘This isn’t my first Christmas away from home since I have studied abroad before. This time around, I am very happy because my boyfriend is coming to Wageningen for the holidays and I will see him again after four long months! On Christmas Eve, we plan on staying here and having fun preparing a nice Christmas dinner the way it is done in our country. We will also visit the Christmas markets in Amsterdam and do some shopping.

In Peru, families usually gather on Christmas Eve to start the elaborate food preparation. There’s roast turkey and pork, accompanied by other delicious dishes. Also, there are several desserts like the traditional *mazamorra morada* made from peaches, strawberries, grapes and purple corn. I will definitely miss this amazing Christmas food.

Back at home on Christmas Eve, my whole family meets up at my grandparents’ home. It is nice because I do not see most of them often and we have so much to talk about! So during the holidays we spend time chatting, cooking, enjoying delicious food, decorating the house and watching Christmas movies together. Of course the house gets very noisy and crowded, but it is a lot of fun. That is what I will miss most.’





'We might skate on the fjord'

TIMO KELDER, MSC STUDENT OF EARTH & ENVIRONMENT, FROM THE NETHERLANDS (ORIGINALLY FROM CURACAO)

'I'll be in Oslo for Christmas this year, and we've already had the first snow! I even stood on my snowboard for the first time yesterday. It is quite funny just to be able to go down a ski slope after work, because in the Netherlands you are used to having to drive a long way to do that.'

In the Christmas holidays my mother, brother and girlfriend are coming to see me and we've rented a house through Airbnb, south of Oslo with a view over the fjord. I think we'll go for nice walks, do some snowboarding, and visit the Christmas market in Oslo. And maybe we can skate on the fjord.

There was no snow at Christmas last year so my colleagues have already told me I'm lucky this year. There will be a Christmas dinner at the organization where I'm doing my internship, too. Normally everybody here dresses very casually but I get the impression the Norwegians really go to town on dressing up at Christmas. Beyond that, I have no idea what they eat at a Norwegian Christmas dinner. Perhaps that typical Norwegian brown cheese which, to everyone's amazement, I actually like.'



'I might also visit Auschwitz'

AXEL EMDI, MSC STUDENT OF PLANT BIOTECHNOLOGY FROM INDONESIA

'I plan on going to Switzerland and some of the eastern European countries during the holidays with my friends. I haven't been to Switzerland before but I've heard that the country has some very beautiful scenery. I've been to Budapest and Prague before but the fact that travelling there is so affordable made me want to visit that region once again. I'm looking forward to enjoying some tasty and, most importantly, cheap local foods there. I would also like to visit Hallstatt and Salzburg for Christmas because I have seen lots of Instagram posts that make those places look very cool. I might visit Auschwitz as well for my New Year holiday. I hope all my travelling is going to be really fun and exciting.'

I'm quite envious of all those who will get to spend Christmas with their loved ones. I will miss the delicious dinner and doing nothing on Christmas Eve except playing some online games back at home. That said, I prefer to celebrate Christmas here rather than in Indonesia. Here I can feel the festive vibe with all the beautifully decorated streets, sparkling lights and amazing Christmas markets. In Indonesia, this is not the case because the celebrations are not as big as they are over here. So, I think I'm really going to enjoy this holiday season!'





'It is over 25 degrees here on Bonaire'

MAARTEN VAN PELT, MSC STUDENT OF EARTH AND ENVIRONMENT, FROM THE NETHERLANDS

'Bonaire is a totally different environment to Wageningen. It's nice and hot here, of course, over 25 degrees. So that in itself will make my first Christmas here different to what I'm used to in the Netherlands. I'm living in a little hut in the middle of nowhere, at a parrot sanctuary. I am studying how we can optimize the growth of threatened tree species. I've been seeing Christmas decorations in the village for two weeks, and there is even a Christmas tree in the KFC.

A lot of volunteers will be away at Christmas; there will only be three here. I'm not sure yet whether I'll be on Bonaire for Christmas or only for New Year. I have a friend on Curacao and I might visit him in the holidays. If I am here for Christmas I think I'll make a jolly time of it with my colleagues. People here live from day to day so most of them haven't planned much. And people are so hospitable that it wouldn't surprise me if my boss invites us to his home. Normally I spend Christmas with my family and it mainly revolves around a lot of good food. But everything is different this year, with the sun and the beach.'



'I can't wait to visit my French host family'

JUAN IGNACIO ARTAVIA, MSC STUDENT OF SUSTAINABLE ANIMAL NUTRITION AND FEEDING FROM COSTA RICA

'I knew all along that I would not be celebrating Christmas in Costa Rica this year. Too much effort and money to go back for only two weeks. But I am not sad about it – quite the opposite. Instead I will be spending my holidays around Europe: from Toulouse to Barcelona, from Switzerland to Budapest.

Christmas I will spend with some very special people and there is quite a cool story behind it. Right before I left Costa Rica for my Master's programme, which is taught partly in Toulouse and partly in Wageningen, my dad booked a family whale tour for Mother's Day. On that boat, we met a very nice couple who turned out to be French and – guess what – from Toulouse! We had a lot of fun together that day, and then they invited me to visit them when I came to Toulouse. When I arrived, they were the first people I visited, and many amazing dinners and lunches followed.

This French family became like a second home to me. The mother was determined to let me try all the dishes of the Southern French cuisine – and I loved them. She is an amazing cook, and I am a great appreciator of food, so it was a match made in heaven. They invited me for Christmas to join them for yet another feast. I cannot wait to be there again.'



CLOSED

A group of Wageningen retailers will be closing their doors this winter. Not that they are closing down; they'll just be keeping the door shut to save energy. The shopkeepers want to end the wasteful habit of heating the street. Participating shops will display a board saying: 'Of course we are OPEN'. Unless they are closed, of course.

RIGHT-EARED

If spoken information is difficult to process or inaudible, our brains concentrate on the right ear. This was revealed by a study by Auburn University in Alabama. The researchers say this is because the right ear has strong links with the left side of the brain, which controls speech. Case of short lines, then.

NOD

If you nod your head now and then, people will think you are a lot nicer and more approachable. To be precise: 30 percent nicer and 40 percent more approachable, according to a Japanese study at Hokkaido University. Men and women respond to that nodding the same way. The researchers believe their results will be of interest to robot designers.

FUEL

Chemists at the University of Bristol have found a way to make fuel out of beer. A joke, but perhaps one with a future. The process converts ethanol into butanol, the fuel with more of a future than ethanol as an alternative to petrol. Beer turns out to be a perfect model liquid for the study.



RESOURCE

Student Challenge in Bijlmer prison

Students participating in the WUR Green Student Challenge get to develop the greenhouse of the future in the former Bijlmer prison in Amsterdam. One of the prison's towers has been allocated to 'green' projects.

The Green Challenge is Wageningen's answer to student competitions such as the World Solar Challenges, iGem or Field Robot. The task is clear: in multidisciplinary teams, design an optimally sustainable urban greenhouse with which to involve local residents in the sustainable production of healthy foods.

The location for the sustainable urban greenhouse has now been announced: the Bajes Quarter, in the grounds of the former Bijlmer prison. The prison closed its doors in June last year. There are plans for an environmentally friendly neighbourhood on the site, with many green and energy-neutral buildings. Of the six towers, five are to be demolished while the sixth is designated 'green', with scope for

a vertical park and urban farming.

There was tremendous interest in the Student Challenge, says coordinator Rio Pals. 'Initially, 33 teams from nine different countries registered, and 23 of them were admitted to the competition. They include six WUR teams.' The teams can obtain support from the university in the form of workshops, coaching and workspace in Atlas. To get that

support they have to pitch their project plans to a special committee on 14 December.

The official kick-off will be in January, and will include talks by property developer AM Real Estate and experts from the relevant disciplines. As to whether the winning team's plans will really be implemented – nobody knows.

📍 LvdN

Watch the video
on resource-online.nl



An impression of the Bajes Quarter in Amsterdam. One of the towers of the former prison has been allocated to 'green' project such as a vertical park and urban farming.

ILLUSTRATION: ROBOTA, OMA

Students win prize with chemical invention

Three Wageningen students have won the student competition run by the Chemistry top sector. They developed a cheap device that can detect biological weapons.

Martijn van Galen and *Resource* blogger Carina Nieuwenweg designed a cheap, portable gadget that can detect potential biological weapons within an hour. It can also be used to track down a number of diseases outside the laboratory.

The jury was impressed by the gadget's wide range of applications and thought the design by the three Wageningen students of Molecular Life Sciences was 'creative' and 'socially relevant'. The team, CRISPR Clear, beat three other teams. The team members were awarded 1000 euros each at the national chemistry conference, Chains 2017 on 6 December.

The sensor the team developed can detect whether an organism has been modified with a Crispr-Cas9 gene drive. This is a technique with which you can



The CRISPR Clear team receives cheques from Marcus Remmers of DSM.

PHOTO: CARINA NIEUWENWEG

cause a precisely targeted mutation to the DNA. The three students presented their gadget to people from the ministry of Defence, says Carina Nieuwenweg. 'They want further discussions on the possibilities.'

📍 LvdN

Fast bicycle route to campus

The fast new bicycle route from Ede to Wageningen will have a turning to the campus on the Grintweg. The narrow path running past Droevendaal will be upgraded.

This unlit path is already used by many cyclists going to and from the campus. In the new plans, it will be widened to form a 'cycle highway' leading to the Grintweg at its eastern end. The last few hundred metres of that path do not exist yet and will have to run through a field.

All this can be read in the plan for a fast bicycle route between Ede and Wageningen which was presented to local residents and interested parties in the evening of Monday 11 December in Orion. The route will form the main bicycle connection between the centres of Ede and Wageningen. The route goes down the Edeseweg from Ede-Wageningen station, the Dorpsstraat through Bennekom and then the Bovenweg and the Grintweg to Wageningen.

The cycle path crosses the Mansholtlaan in

front of 't Gesprek restaurant and reaches the town centre via Hoevestein and the Churchillweg. The route runs along wide, dedicated cycle paths or streets on which bicycles have priority. In Wageningen this means that the Grintweg and the Churchillweg will become 'bicycle streets', where cars are allowed but the speed limit is 30 km per hour. This means the Grintweg will no longer function as a through road for cars.

This is the preferred route chosen in consultation between Wageningen and Ede municipal councils, the provincial council, the cyclists union and WUR. Alternative routes were considered but were rejected. WUR was not willing to collaborate on routes running straight through the trial fields in the Binnenveld and near Bennekom.

Even the preferred route poses some problems, though. One is the crossing at the Mansholtlaan by 't Gesprek restaurant. A bicycle tunnel may be required here. The same goes for the turning to the campus, another place



PHOTO: ROELOF KLEIS

The narrow cycle path past Droevendaal student complex is to become a metres-wide cycle highway.

where the Mansholtlaan has to be crossed.

The creation of both these crossing places is linked with the creation of the new ring road around the campus, intended to reduce the traffic on the Mansholtlaan. **📍 RK**

MEANWHILE IN... IRELAND

'Closing the border would provoke violence'

The negotiations between the EU and the UK about Brexit reached a 'phase 1 agreement' this week. One of the crucial points was the border between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. Even after the agreement, the issue continues to be debated British politics. Master's student Jeremy Sterling explains why this question is so crucial for the inhabitants of the Irish island.

"The huge importance of a soft border can be traced back to the 1998 Good Friday Agreement. This document marks the end of The Troubles, a period with a lot of violence in Northern Ireland. My family have terrible memories from that time. I even had relatives on both sides of the conflict. Out of respect to those who passed away, we rarely talk about it.

As an open border is affirmed in the Good Friday document, the agreement would be violated if the open border were not maintained.



Jeremy Sterling is a Master's student of Climate Studies from the Republic of Ireland.

Some people will likely see that as a justification for violence. Agreement on this issue between the EU and the UK therefore benefits many people, especially Northern Irish



PHOTO: REMIZOV / SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

civilians, whose living conditions are at stake. For this reason, I think an "exemption status" for the Northern Irish is better defensible than for the Scottish, Welsh or Londoners. For the Northern Irish, it is for the sake of preventing casualties more than any other interest. As I have barely any memories from the time before 1998, it seems natural for me to cross the Northern Irish border without giving it a second thought. However, in recent years I experienced some bus controls with passport checks, focussed on illegal migrants who want to enter the UK. Of course, this is related to a completely different problem, but it gave me this remarkable experience of the border. Also, I was told there was a lot of smuggling in the 1980s and 90s. But as the EU and the UK now seem to agree, those will likely remain stories from the past.' **📍 TF**

YOU ON CAMPUS

You might have been approached in the Forum by Master's student of Landscape Architecture Coos van Ginkel (23). He goes there every other week, together with another member of his student association Navigators Wageningen (NSW), to talk to anyone who is interested about the meaning of life and religious beliefs.

'I have been pleasantly surprised by how open and honest people are. They often have very different ideas on important themes than me, but that means you can have an interesting discussion.' It is not Coos's aim to convert people. 'I couldn't even do that if I wanted to,' he laughs. 'I just want to show people that there is more than one way of looking at things.'

Coos's student life largely revolves around NSW, and it has been an important factor in coming to enjoy life in Wageningen. 'You make friends and then you start to feel at home, and get to like it more.' Which was just as well, because Coos's first impression of

Wageningen was not very positive. 'I thought it was horribly provincial. I still do, but now I don't think it's so terrible to be provincial.' In fact, Coos will even

'I'm getting married in August in Potsdam'

be sorry to leave Wageningen soon. 'I've lost my heart to this town.' But he will be leaving in the summer. 'I'm getting married in August in Potsdam, one of the most romantic places in Europe.' Potsdam is in Germany, which is where Coos's fiancée Elisabeth comes from. 'I travel to Berlin to see her about once every six weeks. Sometimes I hitch, sometimes I take the train and sometimes I carpool.' Some people are surprised to hear about his marriage plans. 'A lot of Christians don't see anything wrong with our getting married at 23, but non-Christians are

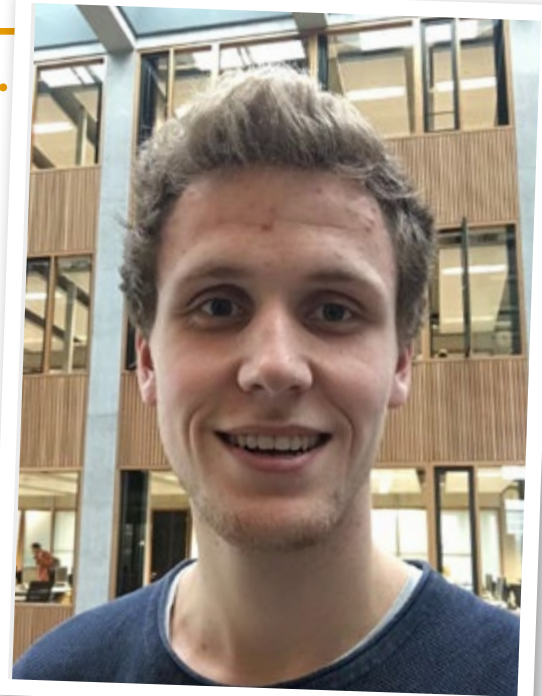


PHOTO: ANNE VAN DER HEIJDEN

more likely to be surprised. For us, marriage belongs at the start. You say yes and then you build your relationship on that basis. I'm happy that Elisabeth and I will have that firm foundation.' **AvdH**

Read all the interviews on resource-online.nl

PARTIES

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

LUCA - XMAS REUNION

Tuesday 26 December from 23:00 to 04:00

Of course, Christmas is a holiday with an emphasis on feasting and family. But after two days at the table with your family, you could do with a bit of distraction. What could be better than letting your hair down to Christmas music with your friends? Entrance is free.

JUNUSHOFF – UNITAS: NYE STARLIGHT

Monday 1 January from 00:30 to 05:45

Staying in Wageningen this year? Then you won't want to miss this New Year party. Buy your tickets now to be sure to get in. 15 euro is quite pricey, so let's hope they've got a good line-up.

KSV- TRINITY PARTIES

Wednesday 10 to Friday 12 January from 23:00 to 04:00

Three days of partying at KSV are a good way to start the new year. These annual parties are always a great success. Throw all your resolutions to the winds and party on down! **AvdH**

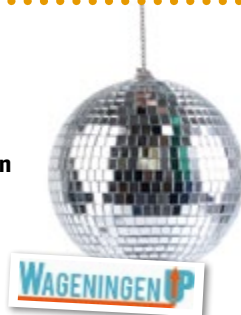


PHOTO: SVEN MENSCHL

The Wageningen Comedy Club entertained their audience in café Loburg on Monday with improvised sketches.

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.

Every animal in the same position

THE WORKS

Who? Matthijs Hollanders, Master's student of Biology
What? Internship at Tropical Herping
Where? Quito, Ecuador

'During my internship I went on a lot of expeditions into the rainforest, looking for reptiles and amphibians. We went out at night, for instance, and took the animals we found back to our temporary lodgings. We came across all sorts: frogs, snakes, lizards, crocodiles, tortoises.

Back at the field stations where we were staying we took photos of the animals, all in the same position and against a white background. With frogs, for instance, you needed to be able to count the toes. The next day, when we were done with taking photos, we put the animals back where we had found them.

TREE-FELLING

I did my internship at Tropical Herping: an organization that does research on reptiles and amphibians. Herping is looking for these animals. The verb is derived from herpetology: the study of reptiles and amphibians. Photography has always played an important role in this organization. At the moment they are working on a book called *Reptiles of Ecuador*, which includes about 450 species.

The way the rainforest is disappearing in Ecuador is a dramatic sight. In some places a truck loaded with timber goes past every quarter of an hour. So some of Tropical Herping's profits are going to an initiative that buys up land to prevent felling.

FROGS' FINGERS

When I wasn't on an expedition, I worked at the laboratory at the Universidad San Francisco in Quito, where I helped put together the description of a new species of frog. This entailed taking DNA samples from the specimens we had collected. We also took all sorts of measurements for the morphological description – measuring the length of the fingers and the distance between the eyes, for instance.

I've been doing photography for years. I got in touch with Tropical Herping because they take the best photos of reptiles and amphibians in the world. When I heard that I could do my internship here, I booked my flight straightaway.

One day after arrival I got the unexpected chance to go on a 10-day expedition. I really lived my dream for over five months during my internship. I'm always looking for and photographing reptiles and amphibians as a hobby, and all of a sudden in Ecuador it was my work.'

EvK

You can see more of Matthijs Hollanders' animal photos on his Instagram account.



Matthijs Hollanders with a *Corallus blombergi*.



The *Oophaga sylvatica*.



The *Chironius monticola*.

Read all interviews on resource-online.nl.

Orion Irregular Opening Hours Christmas 2017

	Friday 22 December	Saturday 23 December to Sunday 7 January
The Building	8 am - 6 pm	Closed
Bike basement	8 am - 6 pm	Closed
Restaurant	11.30 am - 1.30 pm	Closed
The Spot	8 am - 6 pm	Closed



Leeuwenborch Irregular Opening Hours Christmas 2017

	2017	The Building	Coffee Bar/ Restaurant	The Library
Saturday	23 December	8 am - 5.30 pm	Closed	Closed
Sunday	24 December	Closed	Closed	Closed
Monday Christmas	25 December	Closed	Closed	Closed
Tuesday Christmas	26 December	Closed	Closed	Closed
Wednesday	27 December	7 am - 6 pm	Closed	Closed
Thursday	28 December	7 am - 6 pm	Closed	Closed
Friday	29 December	7 am - 6 pm	Closed	Closed
Saturday	30 December	8 am - 5.30 pm	Closed	Closed
Sunday	31 December	Closed	Closed	Closed
Monday New Years Day	1 January	Closed	Closed	Closed
Tuesday	2 January	7 am - 10.30 pm	10 am - 2 pm	Closed
Wednesday	3 January	7 am - 10.30 pm	10 am - 2 pm	Closed
Thursday	4 January	7 am - 10.30 pm	10 am - 2 pm	Closed
Friday	5 January	7 am - 10.30 pm	10 am - 2 pm	Closed
Saturday	6 January	8 am - 5.30 pm	Closed	Closed
Sunday	7 January	Closed	Closed	Closed



Forum Irregular Opening Hours Christmas 2017

	2017	The Building	The Library	Student Desk IT Service Point	WURshop	Restaurant	Grand Café	Wageningen in'to Languages
Saturday	23 December	10 am - 6 pm	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed
Sunday	24 December	10 am - 6 pm	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed
Monday Christmas	25 December	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed
Tuesday Christmas	26 December	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed
Wednesday	27 December	8 am - 8 pm	8.30 am - 5.30 pm	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed
Thursday	28 December	8 am - 8 pm	8.30 am - 5.30 pm	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed
Friday	29 December	8 am - 8 pm	8.30 am - 5.30 pm	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed
Saturday	30 December	10 am - 6 pm	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed
Sunday	31 December	10 am - 6 pm	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed
Monday New Years Day	1 January	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed
Tuesday	2 January	8 am - 8 pm	8.30 am - 5.30 pm	Closed	10 am - 2 pm	11.30 am - 1.30 pm	Closed	Closed
Wednesday	3 January	8 am - 8 pm	8.30 am - 5.30 pm	12 pm - 2 pm	10 am - 2 pm	11.30 am - 1.30 pm	Closed	Closed
Thursday	4 January	8 am - 8 pm	8.30 am - 5.30 pm	12 pm - 2 pm	10 am - 2 pm	11.30 am - 1.30 pm	Closed	Closed
Friday	5 January	8 am - 8 pm	8.30 am - 5.30 pm	12 pm - 2 pm	10 am - 2 pm	11.30 am - 1.30 pm	Closed	Closed
Saturday	6 January	10 am - 6 pm	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed
Sunday	7 January	10 am - 6 pm	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed



>>TYPICAL DUTCH




ILLUSTRATION: HENK VAN RUITENBEEK

Pet rodents and reptiles

It's over a year since I moved to Wageningen but still I cannot get used to the fact that people have rodents, reptiles and insects for pets. I constantly see notes from people looking for someone to look after their rats, snakes, geckos, spiders or hamsters while they travel out of town for holiday.

The idea that people keep rodents instead of setting traps to kill them perplexed me. They are fed and live in the same room as the owners. Where I come from, rats and hamsters are killed. Here, the pets have names and sometimes even birthday parties, they have friends and play dates so that they are not lonely. I also find it strange that people keep chickens and rabbits for pets. In my country that is playing around with the potential for a delicious stew (no offence). I once saw an advert seeking a home for a rooster. The owner advertised the weight and age of the rooster and the ideal situation and home for it. Don't get me wrong: I understand there are vegetarians and animal lovers who cannot fathom the idea of eating meat. But in my head, I already had the recipe for a delicious meal.

One day one of my Dutch corridor mates found a rabbit outside the building, and she brought it to our kitchen. I walked in and found our furry friend surrounded by all the Dutch people from my corridor. I was excited and thought: we have free meat today! But my excitement was short-lived once people in green uniforms arrived to rescue the poor rabbit. I later learnt that they were animal protection police.  **Monica Mbutia, Master's student of Development and Rural innovation, from Kenya**

Where I come from, rats and hamsters are killed. Here they have names, birthdays and play dates

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