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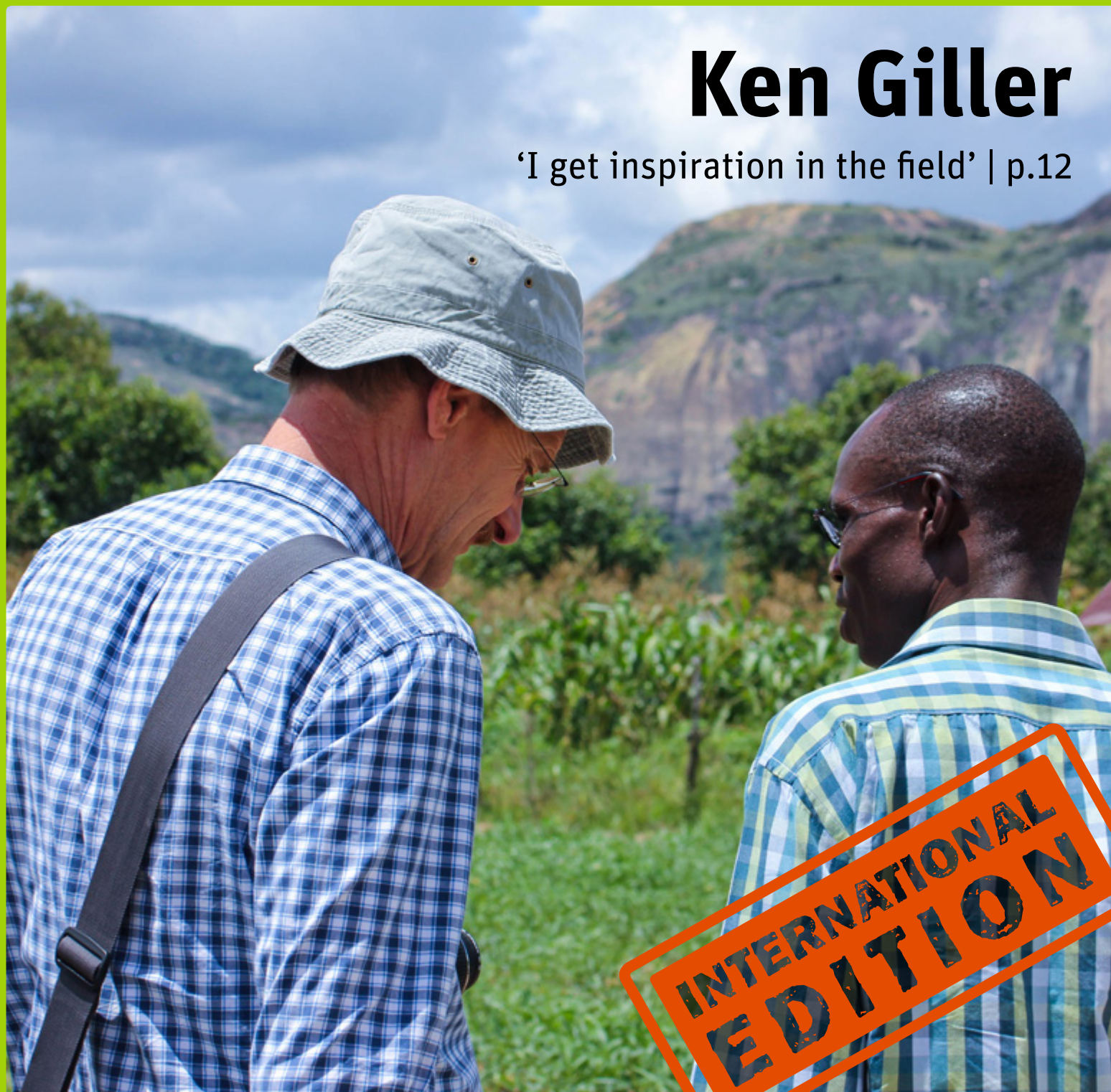
RESOURCE [EN]

For everyone at Wageningen University & Research

no 10 – 11 January 2016 – 12th Volume


Ken Giller

'I get inspiration in the field' | p.12



**INTERNATIONAL
EDITION**

NEW YEAR'S DAY DIVE

True to tradition, 10 students dived into the Rhine from the beach at Wolfswaard in Wageningen on New Year's Day. The group was considerably smaller than it has been in the last few years. The organizers had deliberately opted for a more small-scale approach. They had not given the dive much publicity because they thought it had become too crowded.  TL, photo Guy Ackermans



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BREXIT HIGH FLYERS

Will the impending Brexit have any consequences for Dutch universities? Definitely, argued the British author Simon Kuper recently in Dutch newspaper *Financieele Dagblad*. Brexit may lead to an exodus of international academics and students from the UK. Kuper sees the Netherlands as the prime candidate for attracting the academic top flight currently based in London, Oxford and Cambridge.

We already have one British knowledge refugee in Wageningen: Ken Giller. He wouldn't be here if the British government had decided to invest in agricultural research 20 years ago and if Mugabe hadn't expelled all foreign scientists from Zimbabwe, as he explains in this *Resource* (see page 12). Eric Smaling was chatting to him in a cafe in Benin and gave him the idea of applying to Wageningen.

All the talk at the moment at WUR is about numbers and quantity because of how fast the university is growing. But international competition for talent and knowledge will probably only become fiercer and we do want to remain the best agricultural university in the world. Brexit offers opportunities for recruiting the *crème de la crème*. WUR is already working on a list of potential new knowledge refugees from the UK.

Albert Sikkema



>> Do you deserve a star in Wageningen's Walk of Fame? | p.22

DE VOS MOST CITED WUR RESEARCHER

Willem de Vos is the most cited Wageningen researcher of recent years, followed by Pedro Crous and Lourens Poorter, according to an analysis by WUR Library.

The library counted the number of publications between 2006 and 2016 by WUR researchers that are among the 1 percent most cited papers in their field. Willem de Vos, professor of Microbiology, wrote 49 frequently cited articles during those ten years. Pedro Crous, professor holding an endowed chair in Phytopathology and director of the KNAW institute for fungal cultures, had 38 frequently cited papers. He was followed by forest ecologist Lourens Poorter, who just beat aquatic ecologist Marten Scheffer with 25 top publications.

This ranking is a follow-up to the citation list produced by Clarivate Analytics at the end of last year. That list, with the most cited researchers per discipline, selected nine Wageningen scientists, including Marcel Dicke, Ken Giller and Bart Thomma. Information specialist Ellen Fest was surprised not to see certain Wageningen researchers in the list, including De Vos, so she drew up her own list on the basis of the WUR research database. Rather than compare the citation scores of Wageningen researchers with colleagues in the same field at other universities, this new list gives an overview of WUR researchers.

De Vos produced the most frequently cited papers but apparently he is not among the global leaders in terms of top publications in the

TOP 16	Researcher	Chair group	No. of highly cited papers 2006-2016
1	Willem de Vos	Microbiology	49
2	Pedro Crous	Laboratory of Phytopathology	38
3	Lourens Poorter	Forest Ecology and Forest Management	25
4	Marten Scheffer	Aquatic Ecology and Water Quality Management	24
5	Marianne Geleijnse	Human Nutrition	21
6	Erwin Zoetendal	Microbiology	19
7	Bart Thomma	Laboratory of Phytopathology	16
8-9	Harro Bouwmeester	Laboratory of Plant Physiology*	15
8-9	Daan Kromhout	Human Nutrition**	15
10-12	Bart Koelmans	Aquatic Ecology and Water Quality Management	14
10-12	Egbert van Nes	Aquatic Ecology and Water Quality Management	14
10-12	Wim van der Putten	Laboratory of Nematology	14
13-16	Ken Giller	Plant Production Systems	13
13-16	David Kleijn	Plant Ecology and Nature Conservation	13
13-16	Frans Bongers	Forest Ecology and Forest Management	13
13-16	John Van Der Oost	Microbiology	13

* Was professor at the Laboratory of Plant Physiology until 2016

** Was professor at Human Nutrition until 2015

See the Top 100
on resource-online.nl

highly competitive medical domain. Dicke and Giller, on the other hand, produce fewer top publications in the field of agriculture, but they score well compared with their international colleagues.

Lourens Poorter and Marianne Geleijnse, both recently appointed professors holding a personal chair, are among the rising stars where publications are concerned. Both had a lot of frequently cited papers in the past three years.

This list also has its limitations, acknowledges its compiler Ellen Fest. For example,

the list does not include recently appointed researchers who had a lot of top publications at their previous university, such as Vincenzo Fogliano. Retired researchers such as the nutrition scientist Peter Hollman may also be excluded while professors who have recently left such as Harro Bouwmeester and Daan Kromhout do appear in the list. The numbers in this list may differ from the number of highly cited papers in the Web of Science, says Fest, due to minor differences in the methodology. **AS**



PHOTO: SVEN MENSCHER

HAGUE DIALOGUE

'Wageningen should also be there'. That was EU Agriculture commissioner Phil Hogan's wish a few days before Christmas. On Tuesday, he opened the new Dutch Federation of Agriculture and Horticulture building in The Hague. So the Animal Sciences Group managing director Martin Scholten and four students went to The Hague for a 'citizens' dialogue' with Hogan, the minister of Agriculture Ms Schouten, farmers and policy-makers. They were able to ask questions about the new common agricultural policy agreed jointly by the EU countries. At the same time, six other students were on campus in Wageningen following the dialogue via a live stream. They could use WhatsApp to ask the European commissioner and minister questions. **R**

MORE MONEY FOR TEACHING IN 2018

The Student Staff Council has agreed to the university's budget for 2018. The Executive Board is reserving an additional two million euros to tackle teaching issues.

The Executive Board had already increased expenditure for the chair groups in 2018 by two percent in order to pass on the increase in direct government funding from the ministry of Education to the teaching side. But the univer-

sity's representative body felt that was not enough. The Student Staff Council, which has the right of consent for the budget, asked and got an additional 25,000 euros per chair group for the coming year. That comes to about two million euros extra.

The Council also wants to know how the chair groups plan to spend the extra money. The Student Staff Council asked the same question last year. The chair groups were giv-

en more money but barely took on any more staff. A committee headed by former Educational Institute director Tiny van Boekel investigated this. It concluded in November that there are big differences between chair groups in how staff are dealing with the growth and that work pressure has increased. The Student Staff Council wants a follow-up survey in October 2018 on how the teaching money is being spent, this time with figures. **AS**

COLUMN|VINCENT

Showpiece

'The *Fries-Hollands* cattle breed!' We all had something to say about the preselection for the voting for the 'Showpiece of the Netherlands', run by national television. But my friends at home could not understand why I wanted to add a breed of cattle.

I tried to explain. How Dutch agriculture deserves some recognition for its expertise, including in the sometimes criticized field of dairy farming. How the now rare *Fries-Hollands* breed played an important role in the professionalization of dairy farming, and how its highly productive descendant, the Holstein-Frisian, now dominates the world. And how the Netherlands certainly didn't always take the lead in these developments, but was always on the scene as an innovative little dairy farming country. And how precisely for that reason the *Fries-Hollands* cow would be a much more meaningful showpiece than the twice-nominated Delft pottery. But it was all dismissed as Wageningen babble.

So there is obviously such a thing as 'Wageningen-tinted spectacles'. In that case, a Wageningen selection could be drawn up, it occurred to me. Showpieces of WUR. With the WUR centenary coming up, these kinds of lists will be on the cards anyway. So here are a few suggestions for a start: The Common European Agricultural Policy by honorary doctorate holder Sicco Mansholt, the CELOS forestry system from the 1970s, and CRISPR-Cas9 for its microbiology contribution to technology. Because a showpiece is allowed to be controversial, lost in the mists of time, or a joint achievement. After all, that can make all the difference. Between an iconic cattle breed and cheap 17th century imitation porcelain, for example. **B**

Vincent Oostvogels (22) is exploring the delicate interface between nature management and food production through his two Master's programmes, Forest and Nature Conservation and Animal Sciences



in brief

>> BRITISH ACCOLADE Louise Vet

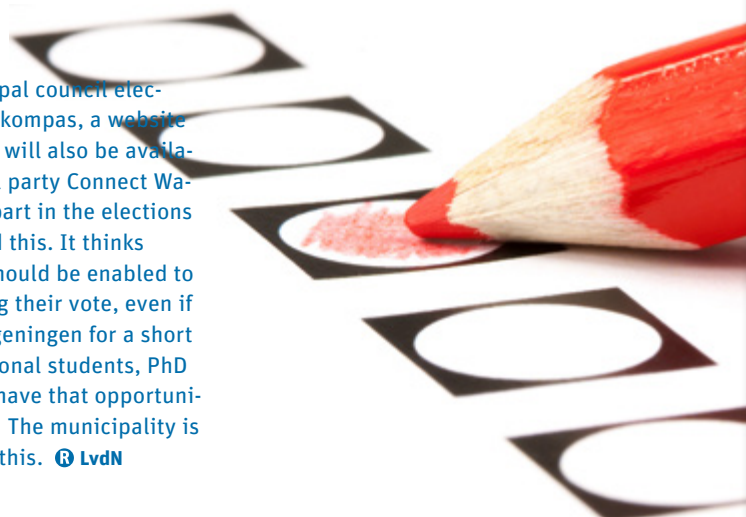
The British Ecological Society has given Louise Vet, professor by special appointment of Evolutionary Ecology at WUR, its highest accolade. The Society says Vet has delivered exceptional achievements in developing and communicating ecological knowledge and solutions at the international level. She has made major contributions not just to science but also to society. Vet, who is also director of the Netherlands Institute of Ecology (NIOO-KNAW), received her prize in mid-December during the 'Ecology Across Borders' meeting in Ghent, where 1500 ecologists were gathered from 60 different countries. She is the second Dutch person to be made an honorary member of the Society. The Leiden animal ecologist Kees Bakker was the first. **AS**

>> ELECTIONS Electoral advice

In the run-up to the municipal council elections, the Wageningen Kieskompas, a website that gives electoral advice, will also be available in English. The political party Connect Wageningen, which is taking part in the elections for the first time, requested this. It thinks everyone eligible to vote should be enabled to prepare properly for casting their vote, even if they have only been in Wageningen for a short while. Expats and international students, PhD candidates and staff don't have that opportunity as they can't read Dutch. The municipality is now offering a solution for this. **LvdN**

>> TENURE TRACK 2.0 More career flexibility

The central representative body has agreed to the university's plans to make the tenure track more flexible. The Executive Board wants to make the career path policy less rigid: not everyone will have to become a professor holding a personal chair and people doing a lot of teaching can still have a career. A career path will be created for them in which they can spend probably around 20 percent of their time on research and 80 percent on education. In December, the WUR Council wrote that it would be approving the plan for Tenure Track 2.0. The Council does have two demands that the Executive Board will have to meet, including the requirement for clear, unambiguous communication on what will change for the tenure track staff. That will prevent any confusion or misconceptions about the changes. **LvdN**



VOTING STARTS AGAIN FOR BEST TEACHER

The annual vote for Wageningen University's best teacher is starting again. Jury chair Cornelien Smit will be looking for teachers who are always capable of getting each and every student interested in their subject.

From 10 to 19 January, students who have studied in Wageningen for more than a year will be able to vote for their favourite teacher. The jury, consisting of five students from different degree programmes, will then hold extensive interviews with the 15 teachers who get the most votes. Based on those interviews, the jury will draw up a shortlist with the five best teachers. One of them will win the Teacher of the Year Award, to be handed out at the end of April.

International Development Bachelor's student Cornelien Smit is chairing the jury. The jury has not yet decided what it will be focussing on this year, says Smit.

'Personally, I find it important that a teacher should get each and every student interested in their subject. Two of my housemates are studying Food Technology and recently took a course given by Jessica Duncan, who won the Teacher of the Year Award last year. They weren't expecting much as they were used to the abstract aspects of their own degree, but they came back incredibly enthusiastic. I find that impressive.'

The jury won't be working with a standardized questionnaire this year; instead, they will have five or six topics that the lecturers will be able to discuss freely. 'We hope this will result in a casual chat in which we can really get to know the teacher.' Smit does not know yet what topics they will be focussing on but 'you could think of themes such as digitization in education and how to link the course material to everyday practice.'



PHOTO: GUY ACKERMANS

This year, the Teacher of the Year Award jury consists of Athul Sundaresan, Lisanne Kruijswijk, Lara van Veen, Cornelien Smit and Tom Ogweno (from left to right).

The Teacher of the Year Award is handed out every year by University Fund Wageningen. It is intended as a source of inspiration and a sign of recogni-

tion for teachers. Students can have their say by selecting three lecturers from a list of 250. They will receive an email about this.

R LvdN

'INCLUSIVE TRADE WILL BE THE NORM'

World trade is slowly but surely becoming more sustainable and more inclusive. This means that Dutch companies have to keep ahead of the pack by cooperating with NGOs and researchers. Gonne Beekman will be making this case at the Agro Debate that is being held today in Rotterdam.

The Agro Debate, organized by Wageningen Economic Research, is about the developments in international trade and how the Dutch agricultural sector can respond to them. Beekman is a development economist who has in recent years investigated the effects of development projects and trade agreements on tropical crops.

Multinationals are increasingly investing in farming communities in developing countries in order to improve food production, protect nature or increase farmers' incomes. This inclusive trade is often an interplay between campaign groups, who have sustainability objectives, and companies aiming to secure their supplies of raw materials. The

agreements result in quality labels such as Fair Trade. The Netherlands is in the vanguard of this business model, says Beekman. She anticipates more companies investing in this inclusive trade so that they can supply local products for niche markets.

She gives the example of cooperation between the Sustainable Trade Initiative and a large oil palm company in Liberia so that palm oil production can be combined with nature conservation. 'They are looking for options for achieving both objectives as well as involving the local community. We have to study this type of cooperative venture and find out which approaches work.'

She also sees more cooperation between international companies and local communities in the production of beer and spirits, for which the local farmers supply the necessary grain or sugar. 'It's a trend that's going to grow. There's also criticism. Such agreements between the company and the local community are often limited in scope, as is the extra income for the farmers. At WUR, we understand tropical crops and food chains,



Gonne Beekman, development economist

so we're a logical partner to help NGOs and companies move this inclusive trade to the next level.'

Beekman is one of the young researchers at Wageningen Economic Research who will be giving a presentation during the Agro Debate. **R AS**

NEW REQUIREMENTS FOR PIG BARN

From now on, the Netherlands Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority (NVWA) will check specific items when inspecting pig barns. Together with Wageningen researchers, it has drawn up a list of five aspects of a healthy living environment for pigs.

Dutch law on animal welfare states that the barn environment should not be harmful to the animals. This abstract 'open norm' creates ambiguity, says Herman Vermeer, researcher in Animal Welfare at Wageningen Livestock Research. 'Pig farmers can decide for themselves how they achieve this norm but they don't know exactly what criteria they need to satisfy. The regulatory authorities don't know what they should be checking either.'

Vermeer and his colleagues have identified five aspects that help determine whether the barn environment is damaging to the pigs. For instance, the concentrations of carbon dioxide and ammonia in the air are measured;

they can cause lung problems. Checks are also made to see how red the pigs' eyes are and how often they bite each other's ears and tails. Finally, the inspection includes an assessment of how soiled the animals and their stalls are. 'If it is too warm for the pigs, they try to cool down. If there is no mud available, they lie down in their own manure and urine.'

These aspects are just a selection from a long list of animal welfare indicators. Vermeer: 'This lets us offer the NVWA a guide for flagging up problem farms. Further investigations will then show whether the statutory norm has been violated. Because that is still the same.' Vermeer also thinks it will help livestock farmers. 'Sometimes the pig farmer doesn't realize that the barn environment isn't healthy. These aspects are easy to measure and then you can compare them to data on other farms. That will encourage pig farmers to make changes.' What is more, a good barn environment is not just important for the health and welfare of the animals



PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK

but also for the health of everyone working in the barn.

One limitation of the research, says Vermeer, is that the farm inspections for the study mainly took place at low temperatures. 'There is less ventilation on colder days, which means the air quality in the barn is worse on average in the winter. Different problems, such as heat stress, play more of a role in the summer. It would be good to

test whether the indicators we found are season-dependent.'

The NVWA started using these aspects to inspect farms this month. 'I'm curious to see how it works out. The inspectors are new to it too. It will be a while before they can see whether it's working. Perhaps similar aspects could be compiled for other farm animals, which are still subject to an open norm at the moment.' **TL**

ON THE GRASS

It must have been nice and hot in August 1982. The photographer of the *Wageningen Hogeschoolblad*, one of *Resource's* forerunners, came across these people in the Belmonte arboretum. According to his caption on the back of the photo, they were there to study. Do you know one of them, or are you in fact one of them? We'd love to hear the story behind this snap! Drop in on the *Resource* editors in Atlas, or send an email to edwin.vanlaar@wur.nl. WUR will be celebrating its centenary this year. *Resource* is anticipating the festivities by digging intriguing photos out of the archives.

**Look up the 100 years of...
collaboration photo series
on resource-online.nl**



PHOTO: WILLEM JAN DE ZWART



TESTERINK WANTS TO GRASP SALT TOLERANCE

The new professor of Plant Physiology, Christa Testerink, traded places with her predecessor Harro Bouwmeester at the end of 2017. She has brought three PhD candidates and an ERC grant for two million euros with her from Amsterdam. She hopes this will let her reveal the secret of salt tolerance.

Christa Testerink knows her predecessor in Wageningen well as Harro Bouwmeester left for the University of Amsterdam, where Testerink was professor of Plant Cell Biology, in February 2017. Now, after Bouwmeester's move to Amsterdam, she is travelling in the opposite direction. 'Amsterdam was a wonderful place too, but I've got far more opportunities in Wageningen,' she says in her new office in Radix.

She is looking forward to working with the existing staff at Plant Physiology. In addition to the three PhD candidates coming with her from Amsterdam, she can also take on two postdocs and three PhD candidates next year. She has the money for that because one year ago Testerink secured a prestigious Consolidator Grant from the European Research Council (ERC). But she finds the embedding in Wageningen just as important. 'I was already collaborating a lot with people like Ben Scheres and Eric Schranz and I knew a lot of Wageningen plant scientists from the Learning from Nature research programme. I see plenty of new options for collaboration. I feel very welcome here.'

Testerink is specialized in salt tolerance in plants. 'When soils become saline, plants have



PHOTO: RONALD PIERIK

Christa Testerink is pleased to be working in Wageningen. 'I see plenty of new options for collaboration.'

problems taking up water, and the sodium in the salt is toxic for plants,' she explains. 'Plant roots are able to adapt to the salination. For example, they grow away from the areas with loads of salt in the soil and the root architecture is modified. The plant roots also have mechanisms for getting the sodium out of the plant cell. Some plants are better at that than others. I want to understand the mechanism, how plants control this.' The EU gave her two million euros to answer that question.

Nearly all her research uses the thale cress, the model plant *Arabidopsis thaliana*,

for which a lot of the genetic processes are known. In Wageningen, Testerink will extend her physiological research with plants that like saline conditions, but she is also looking forward to studying the roots of tomatoes and potatoes. 'The big question is: how do plants detect salt in the soil? That question has been around for 50 years but it still hasn't been answered.' Testerink is not afraid to ask the big questions and has the ambition to find the answers with her new group in Wageningen. **AS**

RESEARCH FUNDS FOR NEW ANTIBIOTICS

Dutch research funding organization NWO is making seven million euros available for the development of new affordable antibiotics and alternatives to antibiotics. Eight research projects have received funding, including Marnix Medema's project. He will look for new antibiotics in soil.

A total of almost 50 scientists and 20 companies will be working on the development of new antibiotics. There is a big demand for new drugs because resistance to antibiotics is increasing around the world. That is why NWO is start-

ing a collaborative programme to make better use of research on antibiotics in the Dutch healthcare system.

Marnix Medema, a Bioinformatics researcher at Wageningen, will be looking for lipopeptides that are produced by soil bacteria as these molecules have a strong antibacterial effect. Two examples are the drugs daptomycin and polymyxin. Medema will be using metabolic analysis, genome analysis and bioinformatics to look for related molecules that could serve as antibiotics.

Medema is collaborating with the Leiden microbiologist Gilles

van Wezel and the Utrecht chemist Nathaniel Martin. NWO has given them 750,000 euros and the participating companies are contributing a further quarter of a million. 'We will screen thousands of bacterial strains to get as full a picture as possible of the natural diversity in lipopeptides,' says Medema. 'We will then expand on that diversity using synthetic biology and chemical synthesis.'

In another project, researchers will investigate how you can 'reset' human immune cells that have been affected by resistant bacteria. Another group of scien-

tists want to find proteins that can make resistant bacteria susceptible to antibiotics that have so far only worked on different bacterial groups. In other approved projects, researchers and companies will develop promising substances further that seem to be effective in tackling resistant microorganisms.

NWO is investing two million euros in the programme and the ministry of Health almost five million. Industrial partners are contributing over one million euros to the projects, either in funding or in the form of knowledge or equipment. **AS**

FISH FEED FROM WASTE STREAMS IN NEW REACTOR

At Wetsus, Bob Laarhoven has designed a reactor for breeding freshwater worms using waste streams from the food industry. The worms can be used as fish feed. More time and research is needed to scale up the process and apply for authorization.

Laarhoven investigated the blackworm (*Lumbriculus variegatus*). This freshwater worm is found in streams and wastewater treatment plants. The worm eats and digests silt, which significantly reduces the amount of waste so that the water treatment companies have less waste material to dispose of. The disadvantage is that while the worms reproduce fast in the summer, the population collapses in the autumn.

That was why Tim Hendrickx, Laarhoven's predecessor at water technology institute Wetsus, was looking for a reactor in which the worms could function well all year round. He developed a reactor with a kind of tea strainer in which the worms could settle. That turned out to be a stable system: the worms digested the silt all year round, substantially reducing waste streams. But the focus in that project was on waste water treatment rather than the value of the worms.

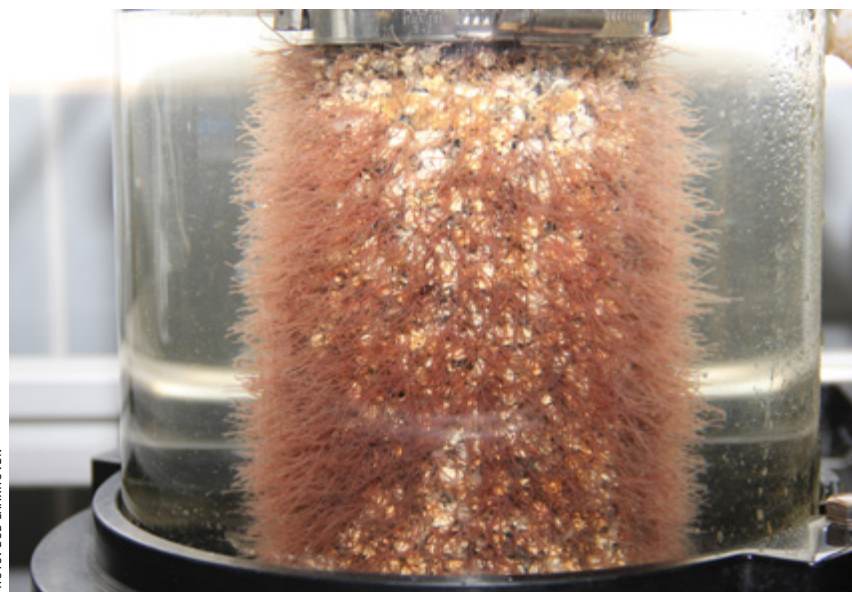
In his PhD research, Laarhoven studied the worms' growth and reproduction in waste streams with the aim of cultivating as many worms as possible.

Blackworms are very suitable as fish feed. He modified the reactor's design by replacing the tea strainer with a vertical gravel column. The worms felt more at home there and the growing conditions were better. The reactor consisted of a 30-centimetre tube with a diameter of seven centimetres. He filled it with 100 grams of worms, which ate and digested the silt in the tube within one or two days. This reactor design was patented several years ago by Wetsus.

The plan was to scale up this prototype and use it for the mass production of fish feed. However companies are hesitant, in part because of the tricky legislative situation. The worms have not yet been officially recognized as production animals or as fish feed for fish farming.

Laarhoven cultivated the worms using a clean waste stream from the food industry as a way of adding value to the food supply chain. He used waste streams from a potato processing factory. 'The aquaculture sector wants alternatives for the use of fishmeal but they are mainly betting on vegetable protein.' As in the cultivation of insects for animal feed, companies have cold feet when it comes to using worms for feed in fish farming, notes the PhD candidate.

He sees more potential in worms as feed for ornamental fish in aquariums. Laarhoven has started up a company, Dutch Blackworms, to serve this market. **AS**



Blackworms like to settle in this reactor.

VISION

'Brave of Albert Heijn to reward sustainability'

The Albert Heijn supermarket chain intends to sell its own 'plus' milk. This milk will come from dairy farmers who protect field birds, increase biodiversity, store CO₂ and put their cows out to graze. The supermarket will buy the milk directly from the farmers and pay them an extra 3 cents per kilo. Good idea, says Hans van Trijp, professor of Marketing and Consumer Behaviour at WUR.

'I'm all in favour of market differentiation,' says Van Trijp. 'I think it's bold of Albert Heijn to start rewarding sustainability in the form of a higher price for farmers.'

Is 3 cents enough?

'I don't know about that. This new kind of dairy chain will have to prove its worth in the next few years. It remains to be seen whether it will be a success in the AH supermarkets. I think AH will carry on selling a lot of cheap mainstream milk alongside this plus milk. And it has to be economically sustainable for the dairy farmers involved; they need to recoup their additional costs. If this chain crashes after three years, it will be very damaging for the farmers who joined it.'

What are the advantages of an AH chain of this sort?

'The nice thing is that AH pays the farmers a bonus for sustainable production. That is better than a lot of environmental legislation that generates additional costs without the farmers being paid more. Another strong point, I think, is that AH is aiming at integral sustainability. Sustainability is very complex, with environmental and welfare aspects that can be conflicting. Combining aspects such as outdoor grazing and CO₂ in an integral concept is a smart move, I think, in both marketing and environmental terms.'

Does this mean a revolution in the world of dairy cooperatives?

'I don't think so. It's part of a trend. Milk was always a bulk product and farmers were interchangeable. The added value and differentiation were created in the dairy factory. We've already got organic milk and three-star meat, where added value is created at source. The AH-plus milk is an extension of that. How successful it will be remains to be seen but I do think that is where the strength of Dutch agriculture lies: on the farm.' **AS**



TWO COVER PRIZE WINNERS

This time, the *Resource* Cover Prize has not one but two winners. The editors have awarded the prize to both Marlene Soriano Candia and Maaike van den Berg. After a tough duel, the result turned out to be too close to call.

The battle had narrowed down to the Bolivian and Dutch researchers' covers even before Christmas. The neck-and-neck race continued until literally the last second of the competition. The online voting site closed officially midnight last Sunday. At that point Van den Berg was just in the lead. But it was not yet midnight in Bolivia. In the early hours in Holland, Soriano Candia caught her up and overtook her.

The editors hadn't allowed for that time difference and the fierce final sprint. That is why we have decided to say that both covers are winners. Maaike van den Berg is 'incredibly surprised and pleased' with the win. 'I think it's really something that so many people have voted for me.' Victory tastes 'bittersweet' for Soriano Candia. She is pleased but also disappointed that she has to share the prize despite the energetic campaign by her supporters.

Both acknowledge that a major final sprint was organized on the last voting day. Soriano Candia can thank her friends in La Paz and Santa Cruz and relatives in Cochabamba for this. 'Personally, I was travelling from my home village to Santa Cruz and didn't have access to the internet.' Van den Berg used a birthday party in the afternoon to muster votes. In the evening, she got help from colleagues in Eindhoven who called on their networks.

A total of 2223 votes were cast (up to midnight on Sunday) for the ten selected thesis covers. Two thirds of the votes went to the two winners. Soriano Candia had the illustrator Marcelino Cruz Pérez design a cover for her study of the harvest and yield of products in the Amazon Forest. Cruz created a cartoon-like drawing. 'It's amazing to see how he has depicted the socio-ecological system of the Guarayos,' says Soriano Candia. 'Although he has never actually visited the Bolivian Amazon.'

Van den Berg didn't come up with her own design either. She hired a professional, Linda Ravestein. Van den Berg investigated the effect of chemotherapy on the bodies of women with breast cancer. 'I had often discussed my PhD research with her over the past few years. At first she found it a difficult subject to portray. Of course breast cancer is a tricky topic.'

Van den Berg continues: 'She has aimed for simplicity in illustrating the themes of femininity and the female shape. That let her capture the target group and the research in an image consisting of just a few lines. I got loads of comments from people who found the cover attractive and elegant.'

Soriano Candia got a lot of response too. 'Everyone asked me whether I had designed the cover myself. I would often say "yes" to test their reactions. Followed by "no, but I wish I could have".' Since obtaining her PhD, Soriano Candia has worked at the Bolivian Forest Research Institute (IBIF) where she now heads its research into integrated and sustainable development of socio-ecological systems. Van den Berg coordinates breast cancer research in the Oncology department of the Catharina Hospital in Eindhoven. **RK**



PHOTO: JAN HARRYVAN, OPUS56FOTOGRAFIE

'I got loads of comments from people who found the cover elegant'

Maaike van den Berg

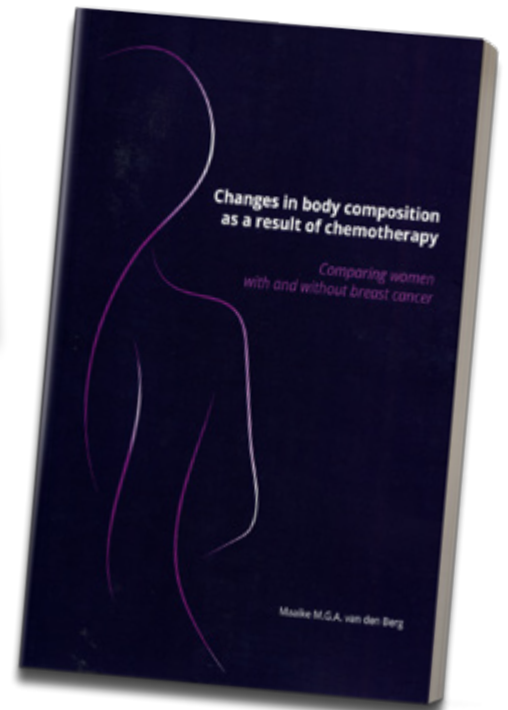
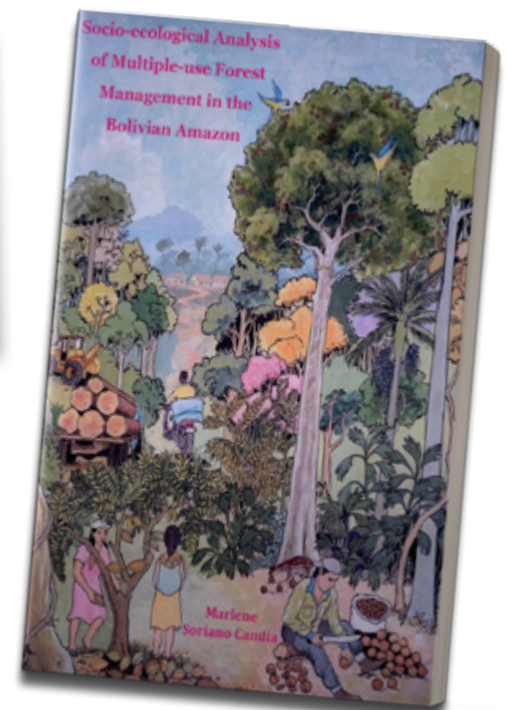


PHOTO: DAVID VELA PÉREZ

'Everyone asked whether I'd designed the cover myself'

Soriano Candia



No paper version of *Resource* was published over the Christmas holiday but that didn't mean the editors were entirely out of action. Below is a sample of the online news of recent weeks.

RELAX CORNER

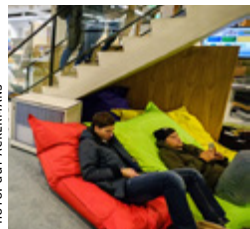


PHOTO: GUY ACKERMANS

If you'd had your fill of revising during the private study week and exam week in December, you could make use of the Relax Corner in the Forum. Here, students

could do puzzles or some colouring, read comics or play with Lego and Kapla. Or just chill out on a bean bag. The 'play corner' is part of the Student Engagement project.

PREGNANT FISH



PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK

Fish that give birth to live, free-swimming young are at a disadvantage. Their swollen bellies make it harder for them to escape danger than it is for members of their

species that lay eggs. But pregnant fish that feed their young via a placenta are leaner on average, and therefore have an easier time of it than fish that feed their young via a yolk sac, discovered PhD researcher Mike Fleuren.

BACTERIA PUT BRAKES ON ALGAE



PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK

Bacteria limit the growth of certain microalgae that have industrial potential for the production of bio-fuels and sustainable plastic. This was discovered by PhD re-

searcher João Gouveia. The result was surprising because it has been assumed that microalgae and bacteria are mutually supportive. Watch the video of Gouveia's research presentation online.

SEXISM OR RACISM?



No sooner has 2018 begun than loaded subjects are in the air, writes blogger Carina Nieuwenweg. She notes that discussions can take some unexpected turns.

'There was a rapper who called women whores. But before my fingers could hit the keyboard to make a statement along feminist/ non-feminist lines, the discussion had shifted from sexism to racism.'

MEANWHILE ONLINE

LA BRASSERIE ELITAIRE



The 'Waegheningsch' fraternity *La Brasserie Elitaire* attracted the attention of media website Dumpert. A film in which the KSers sing the praises of their fraternity

has been watched hundreds of thousands of times. 'Well-dressed, superior, *magnifique*', was how the members described themselves in the film that has been online since 13 December. Much to the amusement of internet viewers.

Check them all out at resource-online.nl

PROPOSITION

'If you don't adapt, you've had it'

For the past five years, Sanne van Gastelen has commuted almost every day in her car from Utrecht to Wageningen for her PhD research. The more kilometres she drove, the more she became drawn into the aggressive driving behaviour that she actually hates. She was puzzled by this, which led to her provocative proposition.

'By nature, I'm a well-behaved driver. If someone is stuck in the right-hand lane behind a lorry, I'm only too happy to keep back and let them out. But over the years I've gradually become less accommodating in traffic. Lots of people are noticeably much less patient and more antisocial in the car than out of it, and I've found that you get caught up in that even if you don't want to. If you don't adapt, you've had it.



Sanne van Gastelen obtained her PhD on 22 December for a study of the relationship between methane emissions by cows and the composition of their milk.

At first sight, such behaviour seems logical from an evolutionary perspective: survival of the fittest. But it's more

nuanced for social species like humans. Animals that live in social groups help one another to get ahead. This is normally the case for humans too, but that seems to go by the board in traffic. It's all about me, me, me.

I think part of the explanation is our hectic society. There is so much that we have to get done, preferably as quickly and efficiently as possible. What's more, we are often alone in the car; there's no direct social control.

What annoys me most? Tailgating! If I'm in the left-hand lane overtaking, I regularly get somebody driving up really fast behind me and then braking and tailgating me. As if he's saying: you are not supposed to be in this lane, move over! I can get really angry about this as it's so dangerous. My own flaw is that I then deliberately drive a bit more slowly...' LdK

Typical driving behavior is contrary to evolutionary beneficial behavior.



**‘I’ll always be British.
I love cricket and
English pubs’**

Wageningen leading lights: Ken Giller

Thirty years in Africa

Ken Giller, professor of Plant Production Systems, wants to figure out how African farmers can increase their food production. ‘How can we make sure enough land is left for nature, and at the same time offer young people a decent future?’ The British professor loves Wageningen but Zimbabwe calls as well.

text Albert Sikkema *Photos* Guy Ackermans and Plant Production Systems group

Chance and beer both played a role in Ken Giller’s appointment as professor in Wageningen 17 years ago. ‘I was having a beer with Eric Smaling (then professor of Soil Science in Wageningen, ed.) in a café in Cotonou, in Benin. I was there for a conference. We had a lot of fun and he said: why don’t you come to Wageningen? There was a vacancy for a professor of Plant Production Systems. I had no idea what the job entailed, but I sent off my CV. I got a reply from Johan Bouma, chair of the advisory appointment committee, saying “sorry, the closing date was three weeks ago.” But apparently they couldn’t find a good candidate, because he got in touch again three weeks later.’

EXCELLENT

Giller was professor of Soil Science at the University of Zimbabwe at the time, but he had to leave. The Mugabe government did not extend the contracts of any of the professors from Nigeria, Kenya or the UK. ‘So I’m an economic refugee,’ he says ironically. Giller still held a personal chair at Wye College, University of London, but he didn’t want to go back to the UK. ‘Things were going badly for Wye College and it closed a few years later, partly because the British government no longer wanted to invest in agricultural research.’ Instead he opted for Wageningen.

In the intervening years, Giller has established a highly successful group. And he is one of Wageningen’s most frequently cited professors. His group was pronounced ‘excellent’ by international review committees in both 2009 and 2015. He is regularly invited as the keynote speaker at conferences on a wide range of topics: food security, nitrogen fixation, agriculture, climate change and soil fertility.

As a result, Giller spends a lot of time abroad. In recent weeks he has been to Brussels to support a research programme on photosynthesis, to Seattle to update the Gates Foundation on his large-scale multimillion-dollar N2Africa project, to Nigeria for another project, and to Cape Town to speak at the Global Food Security Conference.

BREADTH

Now that the British government wants to invest in agricultural research again, Giller gets offered professorships in the UK. ‘I’ve had the option of setting up a

KEN GILLER

1956, Blaby, near Leicester, UK

1975-1978	BSc in Botany, Sheffield University
1978-1982	PhD in Plant Ecology, Sheffield University
1982-1986	Researcher at Rothamsted Experimental Station, working at ICRISAT in India and CIAT in Colombia
1986	Lecturer in Tropical Soil Science, at Wye College, University of London
1996	Personal professor in Tropical Soil Fertility at Wye College
1998	Professor of Soil Science, University of Zimbabwe
2001	Professor of Plant Production Systems, Wageningen University & Research

Ken Giller is senior fellow at the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre in Cambridge and a member of Unilever’s Sustainable Sourcing Advisory Board. He is married with two children.



group at several universities.' But he is staying in Wageningen. 'There is much more breadth of knowledge in Wageningen than at British universities. And I need that broad expertise. Our chair group studies farmers and farms. That is a clear example of a research field with social, economic, agricultural, ecological and cultural dimensions. If I have an animal sciences question, I ask Imke de Boer; for human nutrition I go to Inge Brouwer. If I have an economics-related issue, I talk to Erwin Bulte. For political questions I call Peter Oosterveer, for research involving big data, Sander Janssen, and for sociology, Jens Andersson, Conny Almekinders and Cees Leeuwis. I've got so many collaborative projects here, with all the science groups. That is a tremendous advantage of Wageningen.'

At the moment, for instance, Giller is very enthusiastic about the collaboration with Wageningen historian Frans Huijzendveld. He is doing research in northern Tanzania, in a hilly region where Giller once did his first research project as a postdoc. 'In this area the farmers had, and still have, problems with soil erosion and declining soil fertility. Researchers have documented this since 1890, and the problems haven't changed. The point is: the farmers there don't invest in measures to tackle the erosion and land degradation on the slopes. They prefer to invest in irrigation for vegetable farming in the valley, and to spend the money they earn on edu-

cating their children. If you concentrate on the patch of vegetables and maize, all you see is poor harvests. We need to understand the farmers' aspirations. Those are decisive for whether and how they invest in agriculture.'

DECENT FUTURE

Giller is enormously driven to improve the position of African farmers, but it is not easy. 'I've been working in Africa for 30 years now. The population has doubled in that time. The available land can barely feed the population, and now we expect numbers to double again within 20 years. How can we make sure there is enough land left for nature, while at the same time providing young people with a decent future? That sometimes keeps me awake at night. Really, African governments need to invest in jobs in the cities, so that rural youth can get out of agriculture. Because now all the children get a small patch of land, so farms get smaller and smaller, and more and more marginal.'

How do you turn that situation around to create sustainable agricultural development? 'I am still naïve enough to think we can improve agriculture in these countries. But I can't do that on my own and that is why I am happy with the collaboration we have in Wageningen. Another thing that helps is that I have now supervised 75 PhD students. Many of them are now in key positions in research organizations in Africa. Those

alumni are probably the most important multipliers of our efforts.'

NITROGEN-FIXERS

But Giller has another important iron in the fire. Since 2009, he has led the project N2Africa, funded to the tune of 50 million dollars by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. This project introduced small-scale farmers in Africa to nitrogen-fixing crops such as soya and other legumes. In its first phase the project reached as many as 230,000 small farmers in 11 African countries. They were given seeds of nitrogen-fixing crops, artificial fertilizer, and inoculants of the *Rhizobium* bacteria which fix nitrogen from the air in symbiosis with the crops. Next year, when the funding ends, the project hopes to have reached 750,000 African farmers.

For Giller, N2Africa is both an agricultural and a research project. He wants to achieve something with his research – 'science for impact' – and he sees farming practices as the driver of his research. 'We have introduced

'I am naïve enough to think we can improve African agriculture'

the technology in 11 African countries. Now we are learning how we can improve the technology, so the crops have a good harvest, the soil fertility improves, and diseases and pests are controlled using crop rotation.'

In this work Professor Giller encounters more institutional hindrances than plant-related problems. 'We work with different companies that supply the seed for the legumes, the inoculants, and the fertilizer. If one of these companies lets us down or supplies substandard goods, we have a problem.' The other institutional problem is the market. 'In northern Ghana, for example, we have stimulated the production of soya beans with this project. That went very well but then the price of soya went down and the farmers didn't have a good market anymore. In that kind of situation you need a market mechanism or a government that guarantees a minimum price.'

COCOA FARMING

A crucial point, says Giller, is that he researches both the technical and the socio-economic aspects of food production. 'That makes my group unique in the world. Most international colleagues focus on cropping systems, while we look at farming sys-

tems, and therefore at integration. We have to understand all aspects of the farming system. It is all about the research context: that is what decides whether your technology gets turned into an innovation. You could compare it with that toy where children have to put round and square blocks into a box. If your technology is a round block that you're trying to push through a square hole, it's not going to work.'

Giller hopes there will be a follow-up to N2Africa, but he is also launching a new programme this year, called CocoaSoils. This is an 11-million-dollar project aiming at raising yields in cocoa farming by improving soil fertility. 'We are going to work with local research institutes and international cocoa and artificial fertilizer companies to conduct field trials with the aim of increasing soil fertility in cocoa farming in Ecuador, Brazil, Côte d'Ivoire, Cameroon, Ghana, Nigeria and Indonesia. The aim is sustainable intensification of cocoa farming, because the demand for chocolate is expected to double in the coming years. Here again, we are going to look at management and best practices.'

IT HAS TO BE FUN!

Giller dislikes management work, say his colleagues. He himself says he wants to make the best use of his precious time in the office. 'I can't stand filling in forms, administration and Excel sheets, but I do invest in personnel management. Discussions with staff matter a lot to me. What is important is that I acknowledge and respect their input into our activities. I spend the time I have in Wageningen on project consultations with colleagues, supervising PhD candidates, and teaching. The main thing is to enjoy your work. I spend so much time on my job: it has to be fun! A pleasant atmosphere is important, and you need to be able to trust each other completely, because that is the only way you can really share information and discuss your research properly. This year I've been to Africa 10 times. I get inspiration in the field, and pick up new research questions. I often have to go to workshops in capital cities, but I prefer to be in villages, close to the action.'

POOL AND DARTS


He speaks Dutch fluently but if the subject gets complex or he needs to be precise, Professor Giller sometimes switches to English for a moment. He has been living in Wageningen for 17 years, but spends much of his time in Africa. So does he feel British, Dutch or African? 'I'll always be British. I love cricket and English pubs. Once, when I was in Johannesburg for a workshop with Wageningen colleagues, I played pool and darts again – and

won hands down. I played in a darts team at university in England. My wife is Dutch; I met her in England. When we lived in England I spoke Dutch with the children, so I learned the language at home.'

His command of Dutch is very useful in Wageningen. 'It is essential to speak Dutch at this university. People in Wageningen want to speak their own language, especially if things get complicated or emotional. Besides, you pick up more of what is going on if you speak Dutch. It's always a matter of context, whether you are doing research or leading a research group.'

ZIMBABWE

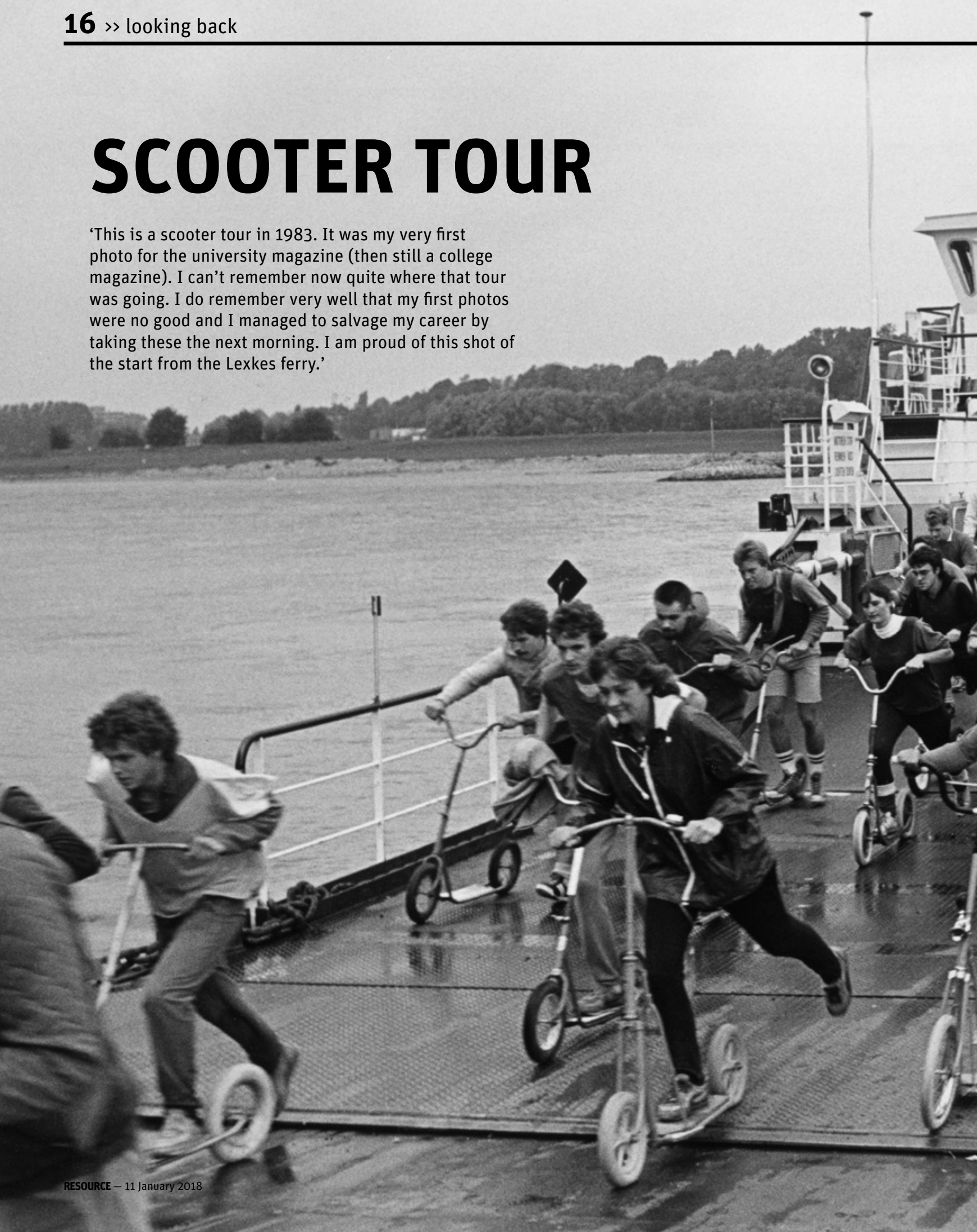
But Giller's future may not lie in Wageningen. His heart is in Zimbabwe. 'I would love to go back to build up the agriculture faculty at the University of Zimbabwe again. I only worked there full-time for three years, but I still work with researchers there. Now that Mugabe has stepped down as president, the possibility of going back has become more realistic. But I will only go if there is a genuine regime change, if the current government is completely gone.'

Zimbabwe had a rich academic culture, says Giller. 'In the 1990s it had the best university in Africa in the field of small-scale farming, but the country has suffered a massive brain drain to South Africa, the UK and the US over the past 18 years. The Zimbabwean people deserve better than that, and I would love to contribute to restoring the University of Zimbabwe to its former glory. Besides, it is a beautiful country where you can go camping in the bush surrounded by wild animals. I love going there!' 



SCOOTER TOUR

'This is a scooter tour in 1983. It was my very first photo for the university magazine (then still a college magazine). I can't remember now quite where that tour was going. I do remember very well that my first photos were no good and I managed to salvage my career by taking these the next morning. I am proud of this shot of the start from the Lexkes ferry.'



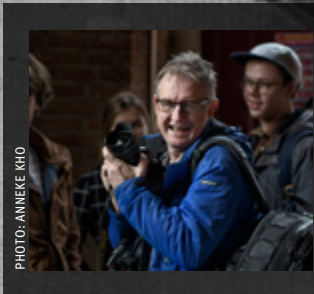


PHOTO: ANNEKE KIO

Guy Ackermans has been photographer for *Resource* and WUR for 35 years now. Capturing special moments through all those years. In this celebration year for WUR he shows us one of his most special 'pics'.



The music of THE VELUWE

Wild, the new nature film about the Veluwe area, will have its premiere next month. Sound engineer Henk Meeuwsen created the sounds of nature. And that is no exaggeration.

text Roelof Kleis *photos* Guy Ackermans

After talking for an hour, the room is suddenly filled with the chirp of a skylark. It's a ringtone. A little later, Henk Meeuwsen says that on his previous phone he used to have a different bird for each contact. 'So I knew exactly who was calling.' There are other clues in the room that this is where the soundman lives. A stuffed kingfisher stands on the sideboard. A photo on canvas of a marsh warbler hangs on the wall. And there are a remarkable number of birds on the Christmas cards. 'I try and keep it all in check,' explains Meeuwsen. 'Or else the whole room will be full of birds before you know it. There's more to life than birds.'

Although... Henk Meeuwsen, GIS researcher at Environmental Research, is undeniably the Netherlands' leading nature soundman. He built up that reputation steadily over the past 20 years with his CDs, apps and numerous appearances on the nature programme *Vroege Vogels*. Early next month, the new nature film *Wild* will confirm his mastery of this particular discipline. The film by the Ede nature filmmaker Luc Enting turns the camera on the Veluwe nature area. *Wild* follows the lives of foxes, wild boars and red deer, with supporting roles for birds such as the buzzard, raven and black woodpecker. Meeuwsen was responsible for the nature sounds, as he was previously for the film *De Nieuwe Wildernis*. This earned him a prominent place in the film's credits.

The sound recordist is proud of this. It is recognition of the significance of his contribution to the film. 'Sound is incredibly important in this film. Imagine if you didn't have the nature

sounds. There'd be nothing left. It doesn't work without the sounds of nature.' Sound adds atmosphere to a film. That applies to all films, but especially to nature films. Nature does not have dialogue that gives direction to the images. Instead, the sound creates depth and ambience. In nature films even more so than in ordinary films, sounds are composed, as Meeuwsen's working method makes clear.

DUBBING

Nature films are dubbed from start to finish. 'I basically get sent a silent movie,' explains Meeuwsen. 'I watch this silent film and have to select the appropriate sounds. That's the first stage. For example, I might see a group of red deer grazing - hinds with calves. They are on dry heathland with open woodland in the background with some sturdy Scotch pines. Then I ask myself: what would you hear? What's the time of year? Has the chiffchaff already returned, or the tree pipit? A skylark might be singing here. And over in the wood a coal tit, a finch and a tree creeper. Then I'll look for fragments containing those species.'

That is time-consuming. Meeuwsen estimates that it takes him at least an hour to select the right sounds for every minute of film. After the selection stage, the sound designer adds these noises to the film track and fills in and aligns the sound as required. Meeuwsen loves that creative teamwork. Then the film music and commentator's voice are added. Together, they determine the film's sound and atmosphere. 'Sound design also involves composing the background noise for instance, such as a rustling tree or gurgling



'If no one hears anything special, I've done a good job'


water. The sound of nature is made up of different layers that you use to compose a cohesive whole.'

GROWLING WILD BOAR

Meeuwsen enjoys a lot of freedom in his compositions. 'If you've done it well, no one will hear it or notice it. But everyone hears the mistakes. That's the paradox: if no one hears anything special, I've done a good job.' Meeuwsen takes a lot of the sounds he uses from his archive, which is a pretty impressive one after 20 years of recording sounds. Even so, he visited the Veluwe dozens of times to record new sounds for *Wild*. 'For example, I had recorded red deer bellowing 10 years ago in the wood. But then I saw that the red deer in the film rushes were standing out in the open. And that sounds totally different. Woods have different acoustics and people hear that. I want it to be just right so then I have to go out and find a new sound.'

Sometimes those field trips resulted in more than just his intended goal. Take his recording of the deep growl of a wild boar. 'I didn't even know this existed. It was a very deep, ominous sound that a boar made close to

a microphone I'd set up. This turned out to be the sound they make if they find something rather suspicious. I'd never heard it before.' Or take the sound of a buzzard close to its nest with young. 'I wanted the begging call of young buzzards in their nest. When I played back the recording, in addition to the shrill begging calls I could also hear a kind of internal groan from the parent every time the bird flew away. I don't know what it means but of course that sound is in the film.'

Meeuwsen spent about 18 months on *Wild*. He wasn't working on it every day but it was always in the background. He finds it nice work but also quite a commitment. 'It does put pressure on you. You have to perform, to deliver. You have to be available all the time and that ties you down. After two films, the film world has lost its novelty value for me and I want to spend more time on my own things. I like being creative and my own boss.' As in the *Bird-Sound Europe* app, which will eventually have the sounds of all European birds. And if the BBC calls and says they are off to Africa for six months and want him as one of their crew? 'Ah — well then I'd have to think about it.' 

Henk Meeuwsen is setting up microphones in his hunt for bird noises.



Stop giving a presentation!

Five tips for a successful presentation

All researchers have to give presentations at scientific conferences. Some find it incredibly intimidating and clam up, which is a shame because their career depends in part on the impression they make. That is why Wageningen in'to Languages is offering courses in presentation skills. Two trainers share their key tips.

text Stijn van Gils *illustration* Henk van Ruitenbeek



The trips are often amazing. Some exotic location abroad, complete with hotel and gala dinner. Yet many young researchers and students dread scientific conferences. That is because they are usually expected to present their own research. Often according to a strict timetable with 15 to 20 allotted minutes, which hardly helps their nerves. Listening critically to their talk is a group of fellow scientists who might come from anywhere and might ask all kinds of questions.

HUGE PRESSURE

A snazzy presentation is often also a crucial element in securing research funding. A lot depends on such presentations. For young researchers who want to continue after their PhD, the amount at stake can easily be a couple of hundred thousand euros — including their own salary. No grant often means no job. For researchers further on in their career, the amount can even reach several million.

But winning a grant is not easy. For example, under 14 percent of the applicants for a Veni grant had their application honoured. That puts huge pressure on young researchers.

JUST A FEW SLIDES

PhD students and other researchers who feel unable to cope with the pressure, or who simply want to be well prepared, can turn to Wageningen in'to Languages. WUR's language centre, which collaborates closely with Radboud University's language centre in Nijmegen, gives a number of different courses in presentation skills, as well as customized advice where necessary.

'We regularly see people who are about to give an important presentation and are really not very well prepared at all,' says trainer Janou Hemsing. 'We try to help them create a good presentation step by step. And that works.' Together with her colleague Inez Zondag, she came up with the following five tips.



'Being nervous is fine – I've yet to meet someone who wasn't,' says Hemsing. 'There's often a lot at stake and you don't need to pretend other-

wise. Make sure you have a way of releasing the tension. Above all, don't talk yourself into a hole, which is what often happens. People picture all the things that could go wrong in a presentation. Or they tell themselves how



bad their own research is. That kind of thinking doesn't help you give a better talk, of course. Imagine yourself as your own best friend and say to yourself what they would say. That helps you approach the presentation more positively.'

2

Include pauses

'It's important to pause now and then. That makes the words come across much better,' explains Zondag. 'You have to develop a tolerance for

such moments of silence, but just try it. Pause after you've said something important.' Another useful tip: start your presentation with three seconds of silence. Zondag: 'Those are the best presentations. Just walk up to the front and say nothing. That gets people's attention from the start.'

3

Don't start with an old PowerPoint file

'People often start off by creating their slides. Or even worse, by opening an old presentation,' says Hemsing. 'Then they say: "I've got all the slides I need for the Veni grant presentation.

slides I need for the Veni grant presentation.'

I just have to put them in the right order." That's when it goes wrong.' If you do this, the slides determine the story, which is not the intention. Hemsing: 'Start with the story you want to tell. What's your main message? What do you want the audience to come away with? Only once you've got that straight should you start thinking about your slides. Start preferably with a concise key message, then add supporting evidence. Perhaps you have already produced your slides and don't have enough time to start all over again. Then it often helps to place the last slide first, because that slide frequently has the key message hidden in it.'

4

Stand to the left of your slides


A minor but effective tip from Zondag: 'Position yourself on the left of your slides. People automatically read from left to right. If you are on

the left, they will see you first. Though I don't know whether this also applies to the Japanese, who read from right to left. Incidentally, you should put as little text as possible in your slides. Everyone knows this but a lot of people still break this rule without realizing.'

5

Stop giving a presentation

'The most important tip is actually to stop giving a presentation,' says Zondag. As soon as people start 'presenting' their work, they lose all contact

with the audience and focus too much on the content. That often comes across as rather constrained and pre-programmed. 'A conversational mode works much better and the tone is pleasanter too. So try to approach it as if you're having a conversation with your audience rather than giving a presentation.' That's how all the training courses start at Wageningen in'to Languages, says Zondag. 'We ask someone to tell us about their research. Then we keep taking a step backwards until we have created a presentation setting. That often works. People talk about their research in a more natural way, which is basically what you want to achieve in an actual presentation.' 

Go to wur.eu/into to see the range of courses offered by Wageningen in'to Languages.

Fit for the WALK OF FAME

Between the Atlas and Orion buildings on campus runs a WUR Walk of Fame. A place where extraordinary achievements or moments in our history can be immortalized. Anyone can submit a suggestion, and the celebratory paving stone is paid for by the nominator. There are about ten of them so far, the latest being for Petra Naber, WUR ambassador to secondary schools. Who else deserves a paving stone, and why?

text Yvonne de Hilster photo Guy Ackermans



Petra Naber (in red) was given a paving stone in the Walk of Fame when she left her job on 13 December.

Ferry Leenstra & Monice van Dongen



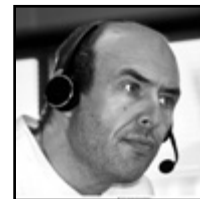
Project manager Ferry Leenstra and business development manager Monice van Dongen of Wageningen Livestock Research

Ferry: 'The Walk of Fame is a nice idea. Who should be included? **Sicco Mansholt**. He did a lot for agriculture. Even if that meant the intensive agriculture that is problematic for us now, it was needed at the time.'

Monice: '**Frank Westerman** comes to mind. He wrote very readable books about agricultural politics, and he is an alumnus. And Cees Veerman, as the prime mover in One Wageningen.'

Ferry: 'And what about **Anne Vondeling and Jeroen Dijsselbloem**? Both Wageningen graduates who have been minister of Finance.'

Johan van den Hoven



IT service desk

'Do you know who deserves a paving stone? **The lady who brings us chocolate letters every year at Sinterklaas**. She's a senior researcher at Wageningen Environmental Research. People usually come to us with complaints, and this is something positive for a change. And **Anne van den Ban**; I've got a lot of respect for him. Years after he retired he still kept up his efforts on behalf of students from Africa, so they could study here.'

Imke de Man



Master's student of Geo-information Science

'I expected to see the previous rector there, **Martin Kropff**. After all, he was an important person for the university. And the coming **GNSK** deserves a paving stone. This

Great Dutch Student Championship is special because it will be held in Wageningen. It's the 60th tournament and the second time it's been held in Wageningen. So we should start collecting to pay for a paving stone.'

Vesna Prsic



Programme Coordinator at VLAG Graduate School

'It would be nice if people from all the different echelons were represented in the Walk of Fame, because they all contribute to the success of the organization. But if it's

about figureheads, **Louise Fresco** comes to mind straight-away, as director, writer and visionary. For the same reason, **Louise Vet** deserves a paving stone. And then there is Wageningen's first woman professor. Let's see (...), that was **Clara Willige Prins-Visser**. Only in 1952? Sometimes I'm shocked at the underuse of women's talents in the Netherlands. Someone else who comes to mind is **Margreet van den Burg**, the Wageningen researcher who mounted the barricades for women in the sciences. And nature calendar man **Arnold van Vliet**, because he reaches a big audience.'

Robbert Jak



Researcher at Wageningen Marine Research, Den Helder

'**Willem Brandenburg** is the first name that comes to mind for me. He was the pioneer of seaweed research, he was way ahead of his time with his initiatives and

managed to generate a lot of publicity. Thanks to his work, seaweed developed into one of Wageningen's research fields.'

Pippi-Lotte Maessen



BSc student of Food Technology

'Yes, the Walk of Fame is still a bit empty. The people I think deserve a place there are good teachers who make Wageningen what it is. Microbiology teacher **Gosse**

Schraa. He's been Teacher of the Year as well. But to have a separate paving stone for every Teacher of the Year would be going a bit far, I think, and setting them on a pedestal. I also think **WUR's centenary celebration** deserves its own commemoration.'

Kees Hoogendoorn



Head of the finance department at Facilities and Services

'A man who has been working here for a very long time, gets involved all over the place and therefore knows a lot of people and details, is **Peter**

Booman. He is now director of Facilities and Services, and he was involved in the merger of WU and DO, and more recently in the development of the campus, including the creation of Plus Ultra and the arrival of Unilever. He is trusted by the Executive Board and he knows how to link up government, the market and the organization. But he is generally less visible to the outside world. It is a pleasure to collaborate with him, and I've been doing so for 10 years now. I can imagine you might lay a paving stone for someone like that when they retire, but if you ask me, you can do it now too.'

Robin Dukker



BSc student of Soil, Water and Atmosphere

'A teacher I had in my first year, **Gert Peek**, deserves a place in the Walk of Fame, in my view. He's good at getting people enthusiastic about soil science, and it is obvious that he

enjoys teaching. His enthusiasm and the examples he gives and comparisons he makes help you remember the material. Gert Peek really is an outstanding teacher.'

Marlou Lasschuijt



PhD research in Human Nutrition

'We, the PhD researchers from room 1.030 in Helix, nominate **Henriette Fick** and **Els Siebelink** from Human Nutrition. Henriette is our head nurse, and Els is our research dietitian for things like controlled nutrition

interventions. We couldn't run a single human study without them. For years they have been the lynchpins of the research, and they are always ready to help. So to us, they deserve a paving stone in the Walk of Fame.'

Arianne van Ballegooij



University Fund Wageningen, involved in establishing the Walk of Fame

'The idea behind the Walk of Fame was that it would keep extraordinary achievements and events to do with WUR visible. That things we have

celebrated also get a visible place in our history. For example, there is a stone celebrating 50 years of Extension Science. At UFW we take up the cudgels for the Teachers of the Year. I would like to invite anyone with ideas for a paving stone to take the initiative and lay one themselves.' ®



Songs about student life in Wageningen in the 1960s

A horse in the Hoogstraat

The milkman, the clatter of hooves and a girl on a beautiful bike. These all come into a song from 1960 about Wageningen's Hoogstraat. Kees van der Does, alias Don Lapedes, was a student at the Agricultural College at the time and wrote countless songs about his student days.

text Didi de Vries photo Guy Ackermans

Van der Does – whose nickname, Don Lapedes, is an obscure Latin wordplay referring to his mischievous nature – soon gained a reputation for his cabaret texts.

It all started when the freshers' week committee at student society SSR-W required its newbies to perform a cabaret. 'Then I wrote two songs, one of which was the 'Klooielied' to the tune of Marina, by Rocco Granata,' says Van der Does. Later singer-songwriter Jules de Corte performed at SSR-W, inspiring Van der Does to further efforts, including a poem about a louse couple on a bald head. This was followed by many more songs, poems, and performances at the student society and in the Junushof theatre.

The Agricultural College had a big anniversary in 1958, and SSR, KSV, Ceres, Unitas and


WVSV (the girls' society) offered to put on a joint cabaret. A friend of Van der Does's was one of the organizers, and he asked him to take part. He refused. 'I wouldn't even consider it,' he says. 'Relations between the societies were so bad you could bet your bottom dollar everyone would trash each other's texts. I had no interest in that whatsoever.' A couple of weeks later it turned out that each society would put on a single act. 'That meant I would be solely responsible for a cabaret act. So I decided to join in after all.' Van der Does's cabaret was a success until he closed with a then well-known student song 'Io Vivat'. 'The Ceres lads deliberately sang out of tune. In their opinion only corps (Ceres) members were real students. The rest didn't count. Unitas members were the lowest of the low in their eyes, they were plebs.'

His songwriting brought Van der Does unexpected advantages. He passed his oral exam on livestock feeds because his lecturer liked cabaret. 'That teacher's lectures were unbearable. Every week he just served up the characteristics of a feed. You can read that in a book so I never went. I had to make an appointment for my oral exam, and he said, "But Mr Van der Does, I have never seen you in my lectures." When the lecturer recognized him as 'the songwriter', his oral went ahead anyway.

He wrote countless songs about his student days. The one about the Hoogstraat (the high street) even came out as a single. He lived in a student house on the Hoogstraat and sang

about the day-to-day events on the street. 'I often looked out of the window and saw life on the Hoogstraat from above.' The recording is on his laptop. Would I like to hear a bit of it?

*'I can watch the Hoogstraat from my bedroom window
And am often filled with horror, shock and fear
What they get up to on the street down there below
I assure you, my dear friends, you have no idea.'*

Van der Does still performs at SSR occasionally. 'Five years ago I was asked to perform at a reunion. I put together a programme for the people attending the reunion, but the current students wanted to hear it too. So I did the dress rehearsal for them, with some extra explanations about the context of the texts.' In 2015 Van der Does collected some of his texts in a book. Fifty copies were printed, and he kept one. But his nicest song is not in the collection, he says. 'I wrote that one for my Filipino wife, when we had been married 50 years.' 

Listen to the whole song
about the Hoogstraat
on resource-online.nl

Students start advisory bureau

Three MSc students of Landscape Architecture and Spatial Planning have set up an advisory bureau to provide their fellow students with useful work experience.

The idea is that through their bureau, called Studentenatelier, they link students with clients. 'For students of Landscape Architecture, it is difficult to get onto clients' radar as potential sources of advice or a visualization,' say initiators Ruben Weggemans, Jeroen Schoonderbeek and Rob Stuijt.

The MSc in Landscape Architecture is a practice-oriented degree programme, say the students, yet the practical element leaves a lot to be desired. If you want to do something with your degree you have to enter competitions, in landscape design for instance. That takes a lot of time and effort. 'There is a compara-

ble bureau on campus but it focuses on other WUR domains. Landscape Architecture tends to be a bit neglected in Wageningen. So we thought, why don't we start up an advisory bureau like that ourselves?' Their website, www.studentenatelier.nl, has been online since the end of August.

At least 15 fellow students have already shown an interest, says Weggemans. 'Of course students can always get jobs in catering or supermarkets, but it is much nicer if you can do something with your degree. You work at your own level, get paid well, and you can make a start on building your network.'

Finding clients is harder, though. Every day, from a small office in StartHub, the three call potential clients such as municipalities, water boards and provincial governments. A project is



PHOTO: GUY ACKERMANS

now up and running with Stichting THUIS Wageningen, focused on Wageningen town centre. 'Six students in two groups are hard at work on this.'

'It is hard work to get your foot in the door,' says Weggemans. 'You call 100 people, 10

pick up the phone and you have a conversation with one.' People are rather reluctant to hire students, they notice. 'Our study advisor warned us that a project is a long-term commitment, but if it works we could be a valuable addition.' **LvdN**

FRESH DAILY

Get the Resource weekly news update. Sign up for it on resource-online.nl

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www.wur.eu/into



Petition: more vegan meals

Master's student Noortje Keurhorst wants more options for eating vegan food on campus. She has started an online petition.

JERKS (1)

Bonobos have a preference for the jerks among their species, shows an ingenious behaviour study by researchers at Duke University. The bonobos studied invariably chose to approach members of their species who had displayed antisocial behaviour during the tests. This constitutes a fundamental difference between these apes and humans.

JERKS (2)

The scientists explain the bonobos' penchant for jerks in terms of power. The apes interpret antisocial behaviour as a sign of social status. And it is wise to stay friends with bullies. The tendency of humans to avoid jerks, on the other hand, has to do with our capacity to collaborate.

OH GO ON THEN

Students are more likely to ask a favour, such as a higher grade or extension on a submission date, of women professors than of men, shows a study by Eastern Washington University. Women professors therefore end up with heavier workloads than men. On the other hand, they also have friendlier relationships with their students.

SPECIES

The more politically unstable a country is, the more its biodiversity suffers. This link was revealed by research at the University of Cambridge. The researchers focused on water birds because their habitat is the most diverse and the most threatened. So bad governance costs species. Not even nature reserves are exempt from this correlation.

In the petition, the Environmental Sciences student Keurhorst asks the university to offer students at least one vegan hot meal and a vegan sandwich or wrap in all canteens on campus.

Keurhorst started the petition when she discovered that the canteens in Forum, Orion and Leeuwenborch only had a limited range of vegan dishes. 'I'm on a plant-based diet and I often have to eat on campus because I live in Rhenen and I can't always take my own meals with me. I was disappointed to find that I can basically only eat soup or salad in the WUR canteens.' She has discovered that a lot of other people would also be happy to see more vegan options.

Keurhorst: 'They do have vegetarian meals available but barely any vegan options. Whereas eating is such an essential part of life. The fact that I'm not able to get a decent meal makes student life much less enjoyable for me.'

In the petition, which already has over 300 signatures, Keurhorst asks WUR to live up to its reputation as the third most sustainable university in the world: 'Your environmental footprint is much smaller when you are on a plant-based diet. Offering more vegan food is an opportunity for the university to set an example in terms of sustainable food.'

Keurhorst wants to have collected 500 signatures by the end of January. Then she will hand the petition over to the catering managers and a WUR representative. 'The aim of the petition is to show that there is a demand for more vegan food on campus and to



Noortje Keurhorst is campaigning for vegan meals.

start a dialogue. I would like to collaborate with those responsible in finding a solution.' To sign the petition, go to <https://www.petitions24.com/morefood>. **JS**

New student accommodation on Marijkeweg

There are plans for 200 new student rooms on Marijkeweg road in Wageningen. Space will come available for the new building because the Rijn IJssel College's Wageningen training school will be relocating from that site.

The training school, recognizable by the large chef's cap on the facade, will be expanding on the south side of the Marijkeweg

road. That will free up the site on the north side from early 2019. Wageningen municipality wants to grant permission for the demolition of the current building because it is unlikely that potential buyers can be found for this building. Demolition will open the way for a new student complex on the corner of Marijkeweg. However, the municipality is making it a precondition that a solution is found for the growing

numbers of cyclists travelling every day between the Marijkeweg and Haarweg student complexes and campus. In the morning and late afternoon, the constant flows of cyclists block cars using the Marijkeweg/Kortenoord Allee roundabout. The municipality thinks that problem will only increase with a new building for students on the corner of this roundabout. **AS**



Permission will be given to demolish this training college building.

Earning credits online will be easier

From now on, Wageningen students will be able to earn credits abroad by taking online courses. Together with the universities of Delft and Leiden and six foreign institutions, the university is making such exchanges easier.

Delft University of Technology has had massive online open courses (MOOCs) for a number of years. Last year, it started a trial with six other universities in which their students can do 'virtual exchanges' and gain credits at all seven institutions. Previously it was possible to take online courses at a foreign university but you still had to get on a plane for the exam.

The trial was a success and now Wageningen and Leiden universities are joining in. Anka Mulder, vice president at Delft, says the universities know one another well and trust each other to give high-quality courses. From January 2018, students will be able to take an online course given by their own university or one of the partners. That will substantially increase the range of optional courses.

In addition to the three Dutch universities, the participants are Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, the École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (Switzerland), Rice University (USA) and three Australian universities: the National University and the universities of Queensland and Adelaide.

The universities say the threshold for an exchange will be lower because students won't have to fork out thousands of euros for plane tickets and accommodation in a far-away country. Anyone unable to go on a regular exchange due to a lack of time and money will now still be able to study abroad. 'If you were desperate to attend the lectures of a certain professor in another country, you would have had to go and live somewhere else for three to six months. Now you just start up your laptop,' says WUR spokesperson Simon Vink.

An appropriately futuristic solution has yet to be found for the exams: the students will simply do them in a room in their own

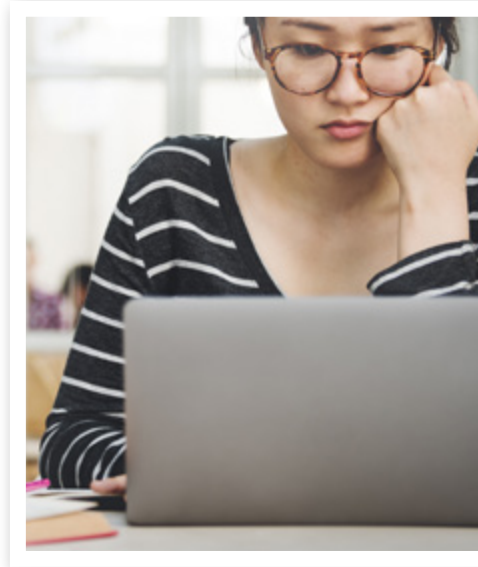


PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK

university, supervised by an invigilator. A faculty member at the university giving the course will mark the exam and send the result to the student's university. **HOP**

MEANWHILE IN... RUSSIA

'Amazed by the media'

The possibility that the Kremlin interfered in the US election, fear among the Baltic states of a military invasion and Putin keeping the dictator Assad in power: Western media often present the Russian regime in a negative light. This sometimes makes Aleksei feel uncomfortable as a Russian student in Wageningen. What is more, he is amazed by the huge contrast between Russian and Western media when reporting on the same topics.

'There is indeed regularly news about Russia, and unfortunately it is rarely positive. Even so, the accusations such as those made against Russian hackers don't always point directly to the Russian government. And you can't really hold ordinary Russian citizens responsible for all the furor in global politics. That's why I don't experience the allegations as a burden. Here in Wageningen, I feel free to think and say what I want. Of course students often make jokes about Russia and they aren't always of the highest quality.

I am prepared to discuss questions such as the situation in Ukraine but it's socially awkward when the topic is only raised in the form of a silly joke.

I'm often amazed by the differences in what is reported.



Aleksei Gerasimov is a Master's student in Earth and Environment from Russia.



PHOTO: SUN, SHINE / SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

In the Dutch media, for example, the Crimea is described as an annexed part of Ukraine, whereas in the Russian media it is presented as a reunified part of Russia. A more recent example is the demonstrations in Iran. The Russian media often emphasize that the people are protesting against interference by the US, Israel and Saudi Arabia. At the same time, I see the Western media describing it as people rising up against the dictatorship. Russian and Western media give opposed views of the events based on the interests of their countries. If any of my fellow students want to talk to me about this or discuss the news, I would invite them in particular to ask how a certain situation has been reported in the Russian media.' **TF**

YOU ON CAMPUS

The campus is pretty dead over the Christmas holiday. Most students are enjoying their freedom but Laura Pol (23) can be found in the Forum. 'I had no idea it was the holidays.'

Laura went to Rwanda to collect data for her MSc thesis, and came back last week eager to get going on it. Only to find that most of her friends were on holiday. That is not going to stop her getting on with her thesis. 'Any time I take off now, I shall regret later at the end of my thesis period. I just sit around doing nothing when I'm at home anyway.'

Laura enjoyed her trip to Rwanda. 'It was lovely and hot,' she laughs. 'And the experience of working in another culture is very interesting. That trip abroad took me out of my comfort zone, which made me start appreciating what matters to me.' Laura discovered that people are important to her, for instance. Not just friends and family, but people in general too. 'Being able to talk to people and understand them is something I val-

ue a lot.' People often asked her for money in the street. She couldn't ask them about their background and situation because she didn't

'I had no idea it was the holidays'

speak the local language well enough. So she was restricted socially by her limited command of the language, but fortunately it sufficed for collecting her thesis data.

Laura will not be done after this thesis because she is doing two Master's degrees, so she also has to write two theses. She is doing both International Development Studies and International Land and Water Management. 'I want to get on with it now. I've been studying for six years. That is not extremely long

but I do think it would be nice to finish at some point.'

She is not sure yet what comes next, after her thesis. 'I don't usually give a lot of thought to what I am going to do. I intuitively do what I enjoy, and only think about decisions when I have to make them. Everything usually works out fine.' **AvdH**



PHOTO: ANNE VAN DER HEIJDEN

PARTIES

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



KSV FRANCISCUS – TRINITY HUMANITY: MOON LANDING

Thursday 11 January from 23:00 to 05:00

Come along and enjoy an evening of men on the moon and the wonders of the universe. *Childsplay!* are performing and you get to dance on an illuminated dance floor. Go like a rocket, 'cos the sky's the limit!

CAFÉ LOBURG - SUNDAY SALSA

Sunday 14 January from 16:00 to 19:00

A lot of students are still at their parents' on Sundays. But if you happen to be in Wageningen and want a change from spending Sunday afternoon on the sofa, come along to Sunday Salsa. Imagine yourself in South America, with Latin beats and this energetic dance.

WAGENINGEN - AFFLIGEM BLUESROUTE WAGENINGEN

Friday 19 January to Sunday 21 January

The best blues bands are coming to perform in Wageningen. A different band in every pub, a full programme every evening. Well worth staying in Wageningen for! You can find more info on bluesroutewageningen.nl **AvdH**



PHOTO: GUY ACKERMANS

The forever young enjoy themselves on the dance floor at the Wilde Wereld at the Top 2000 party thrown by *Onze Generatie Draait Door* (our generation rocks on) on Saturday 30 December.

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.

Hockey on bikes

'In Melbourne I do research on the parasites that cause malaria. I got onto this project because my mother referred me to a friend of hers in Melbourne, Professor Leann Tilley. Her research sounded very interesting and in the end I sent her an email to ask if I could do a research project. She responded very enthusiastically. And a year later, here I am in Melbourne.


In my project I breed malaria parasites to get gametocytes. This is the sexual phase in the life cycle of the parasite. In this phase they can be ingested by malaria mosquitoes, causing them to spread further. In order to reach this stage, they develop from a round, flexible shape to a long, rigid one. I look specifically at the change in shape of the cell nucleus. Given that gametocytes are crucial for the transmission of malaria, more insight into their development could help in developing strategies for stopping the transmission of malaria parasites.

TISSUE CULTURE

Working with malaria parasites can be quite intensive. The parasites grow in red blood cells, and get growth medium to provide them with nutrients. We call the maintenance of the parasites tissue culture. These cultures have to be split regularly to make sure the number of parasites doesn't get too high. It is best to give them new medium every day, so I come in on at least one day of the weekend. I usually work on tissue culture in the mornings and in the afternoon on experiments such as preparing microscope slides. Working with parasites can be dangerous too. We work in flow cabinets, wear special lab coats and use a lot of ethanol and bleach. Sharp objects are banned so that in theory no infection can take place.

Working in the lab here is fairly similar to in the Netherlands. Although a lot of people here come in at the weekend too, and work late hours. I'm not particularly into that. The main thing I notice is that Australia is a very bureaucratic country. Everything has to be done according to rules and forms. In my first week I did nothing but paperwork, compulsory introductions and online training courses. At the same time, in some ways they are behind the times here. When I arrived, for instance, there was a referendum going on about whether to legalize homosexual marriage. I feel like we take that for granted in the Netherlands. It was quite funny for me when I realized that is not the case here at all. There are even a lot of people outside the cities who are still against gay marriage.

CYCLE POLO

Melbourne is a lot bigger than Wageningen; there is always something to do and there's a club or society for everyone. I started playing cycle polo, a kind of hockey played on bikes. Three colleagues of mine play often and they asked if I wanted to go along. Now I train every week and I have already taken part in a tournament. I also spend a lot of time climbing at the climbing wall. I stayed in Australia over Christmas and New Year. I spent Christmas with other international students. So no Dutch winter for me, but a few surfing lessons instead!' 

THE WORKS

Who? Imie Nieuwland MSc Biology
What? Internship on malaria research
Where? University of Melbourne



**Read all interviews on
on resource-online.nl.**

Science Cafe
Wageningen

www.sciencecafe.wageningen.nl

The Biological Clock

Dr. Ir. Sander van der Krol - Wageningen University
- plant rhythms

Prof. dr. Marcel Visser - NIOO KNAW
- seasonal timing of birds

Thursday, January 18th
19:45 - Live music
20:15 - Science
Café Loburg
FREE ENTRANCE

Music by: Troubagroove

Partners: LC BURG

Sponsored by: WAGENINGEN UNIVERSITY & RESEARCH, KLV, RESOURCE

ILLINOIS **Maastricht University** **WAGENINGEN UNIVERSITY & RESEARCH**

MCB-51403: Capita Selecta Commodity Futures & Options

Always wondered about what is happening at the trading floor of exchanges like the ones in Amsterdam, London and Chicago? Wondered about how (agribusiness) companies manage their risks using commodity futures and options? Wondered about how it would be if you were trading commodity futures in Amsterdam, Frankfurt and Paris?

The *Marketing & Consumer Behavior Group* organizes a unique course that will introduce students to commodity futures and options markets. Students will develop an understanding of the markets and how they work, gain knowledge about the theory behind futures and options markets, identify their economic functions, and develop an analytical capability to evaluate their economic usefulness. This course is taught by Professor Joost M.E. Pennings (*Marketing & Consumer Behavior Group*, Wageningen University). There are only 40 seats available. If you are interested in taking this course (3 Credits) please register with Ellen Vossen at MCB (room 5029, De Leeuwenborch, e-mail: Ellen.Vossen@wur.nl, tel. 0317-483385). You can also pick up the materials here. Lecturers are on Fridays in period 5.

In memoriam

GERDA VAN ENGELENHOVEN



Our colleague Gerda van Engelenhoven passed away on Wednesday 3 January at the age of 50. Al-

though we at Unifarm knew Gerda was unwell, we are deeply shocked at her death and shall miss her sorely. Gerda was diagnosed with cancer in the autumn of 2014. She did not succumb to despair but looked for ways of overcoming her illness. She was utterly convinced she would succeed. In the spring of 2017 she wanted to start work again but her tiredness made that practically impossible. She then decided to invest all her energy in her recovery process. She dropped in now and then, and we could see that in spite of her optimism, she was fighting a very tough battle.

Gerda started work in 1985 in the experimental garden at the Plant Protection Service. In 1987 she started work at the RIVRO, in the garden at Nergena. From 1995, Gerda worked on fruit research in the garden at Santacker in Else. And from 2003, she was based in the greenhouse complex at Kortenoord. She specialized increasingly in taking care of potato cultivation and that was her main activity at the new location, Radix Serre.

Gerda was very committed to her work. She had her own clear opinion about her tasks, and fulfilled them in her own way. It was best to give Gerda free reign, and that always worked out well. Clients were very pleased with the quality of her plants, but she didn't want compliments about that. She always replied: 'I get my compliments from the plants'. We shall miss Gerda's lively personality, not least in the canteen where she could often surprise you with pointed comments or anecdotes.

We offer Gerda's husband Rinus and the whole family our condolences and wish them strength to bear this great loss.

*André Maassen and Dolf Straathof
Unifarm*

BERTHA KOOPMANSCHAP-MEMELINK



We regret to announce that on Friday 5 January, our dear colleague Bertha Koopmanschap passed

away. Bertha was working as a senior technician at the Laboratory of Genetics when she was diagnosed with cancer in August 2015. Bertha died at the age of 62.

In 1979 Bertha started as a technician in the Laboratory of Entomology at the then agricultural college in Wageningen. In 2001 she moved to the Laboratory of Genetics where she was given the opportunity to set up a new molecular laboratory, and where she found new research challenges. During all these years and in both groups, Bertha made an outstanding contribution to both education and research. Bertha was a pillar of our chair group as well as a person who held us together. She had an exceptional sense of responsibility, and often placed the interests of others and that of the group above her own. Bertha's legacy is an impressive number of lab journals. These contain a wealth of information which will remain valuable for many years to come. The most beautiful testimony to Bertha's importance and strength is the implicit and explicit appreciation she received from those who carried out their research in our labs. Her contribution to the research was lauded in the acknowledgements in nearly every BSc, MSc, or PhD thesis.

For all of us, Bertha was a much appreciated colleague, and for many a friend as well. Our thoughts are with her husband, their two sons and the rest of her family. Let us remember Bertha as the passionate, highly skilled, and motivated technician she was over all these years. And above all, let us remember her as a kind and loving person. The coming weeks and months will be difficult. I hope we can support each other in coping with this great loss.

*On behalf of all her colleagues,
Bas Zwaan
Laboratory of Genetics*

announcements

STICHTING LENS SEEKS ACTORS

In Stichting Lens, amateur dramatists stage productions under the guidance of professionals. They are involved in all aspects of the process (text, direction, scenery and the technical side). There is still room for a few actors in the production that kicks off on Monday 22 January: 'Stories that need to be told'. In this time of hasty multimedia does anyone really listen anymore? You are going to explore this with teacher/director/ writer Anna van Diepen, using questions like 'what really matters?' and 'which story would you like to tell if you were given a platform?' The result will be a physical, narrative performance in June. More info and to sign up: www.stichtinglens.nl

APPLICATIONS FOR THE PHILIPS INNOVATION AWARD ARE OPEN

The Phillips Innovation award is the largest student-entrepreneur award in the Netherlands. Will you be the next student entrepreneur of the Netherlands? Take part in the Philips Innovation Award to get a chance to win €50,000. The award is organized for students, by students. By participating you will get personal feedback, practise important skills, receive coaching and build a network. Want to participate? Upload your business plan before 29 January at bit.ly/2A4QJga.

STUDENT (F) WANTED TO TEACH READING AND WRITING IN ARABIC

A retired lady is looking for a woman student to help her learn to read and write in Arabic. No problem if the student speaks English, not Dutch. Fee to be agreed on. Contact: 0317 416517 (if there's no response, please leave a voicemail message).

agenda

Thursday 11 to Wednesday 24 January FILMS FOR STUDENTS

Jane: an intimate tribute to Jane Goodall, the biologist who studied the social life of chimpanzees.
Thelma: From a religious rural area to Oslo; a film about self-acceptance and love.
Visages Villages: in search

of the Frenchman with Agnes Carda and photo-graffiti artist JR. *Le Mépris*: Jean-Luc Goddard's provocative existentialist classic. *Sweet Country*: critical Australian western and character study about the Aboriginal versus the white man. €6.50/€5. Location: Wilhelminaweg 3A, Wageningen.

MOVIE-W.NL

13, 14, 20 and 21 January: 15:00 STICHTING LENS STAGES NEW PRODUCTION: 'DEER'

In this production seven adults and four children offer their own, non-saccharine version of Bambi. Full of music, film, dance and lots of acting. A family show, suitable for everyone of eight years and above. About choosing as a swift-footed deer between staying fearfully on your island or setting off on an adventure. Entrance €10 (€8 for students and children). Venue: De Wilde Wereld theatre, Burgtstraat 1, Wageningen. Book on www.stichtinglens.nl.

Sunday 14 January, 15:00 SUNDAY UNIVERSITY IN THE BBLTHK

On three Sunday afternoons, WUR scientists will be giving talks on subjects close to the heart of the 'person in the street'. First off will be professor Bram Buscher (Sociology of Development and Change Group), on 'Natural capital and other fairy tales: what realistic ways are there to save the environment?' One of the most prominent solutions offered is the idea of 'natural capital', the global store of natural resources. By equating and balancing this with other forms of capital (financial, human and material), we can create a circular economy and promote further growth. There is just one problem, however: just like other fairy tales, this does not work in the real world. Venue: bblthk (Wageningen public library), Stationstraat 2.

BBLTHK.NL

Thursday 18 January, 12:30-13:20 LUNCH WORKSHOP WAGENINGEN WRITING LAB 'PLAN FOR SUCCESS'

How do you start on your writing assignment in an effective way? That's the question we aim to address during this workshop. We will provide you with the theory behind the writing process and guide you in apply-

ing this theory to your own assignment. Don't forget to bring your assignment! Be on time, as participant numbers are limited to 20. Free admission. Venue: CO106 Forum. Info: info.wageningenwritingLab@wur.nl.

Friday 19 January from 15:00 VWI NEW YEAR DRINKS PARTY

Over drinks and snacks with the VWI board, we look ahead to the coming year and back on the positive developments of the past year. We close with a networking drinks party. You are welcome to bring along a guest. Venue: THUIS, Stationstraat 32, Wageningen. Sign up on vwi-netwerk.nl.

Thursday January 25, 12:30-13:20 LUNCH WORKSHOP WAGENINGEN WRITING LAB 'OPTIMIZE YOUR PERSONAL WRITING STYLE'

In this workshop, you'll discover your personal writing style and how to approach the writing process. You will learn about typical pitfalls and how to avoid them. We will set to work practising some techniques that will help you to make your writing style a strength in current and future writing assignments. Be on time, as participant numbers are limited to 20. Free admission. Venue: CO106 Forum. Info: info.wageningenwritingLab@wur.nl.

6 February WUR CAREER DAY

Student Career Services is organizing the third Career Day. This day is a good opportunity for orientation and meeting companies, and you might even have an interview or a lunch with an employer. About 64 organizations are joining the Career Day. We have a fair, workshops, presentations etc. Registration is open at wur.nl/careerday. Deadline 28 January. Free of charge. Location: Orion building.

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

colophon

Resource is the magazine and news website for students and staff at Wageningen University & Research. Resource magazine comes out every fortnight on Thursday.

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>>TYPICAL DUTCH



ILLUSTRATION: HENK VAN RUITENBEEK

An amazingly warm welcome

My friend Joe and I arrived from France in May. We had sub-rented a room through Facebook, only to find out that it was a scam. Somebody took our money – 1200 euros – and the apartment we rented didn't exist. Immediately though, somebody from WUR let us stay in his apartment although he wasn't even home.

It gets better though: the very next day, my friend agreed to meet a girl at the church, who could rent us a room. Since he is a Christian, he went to mass. Being agnostic, I didn't. When I joined Joe at the church after mass, the priest invited us to stay for dinner. And after dinner, he even offered us two rooms at the church! I declined at first because I felt I shouldn't benefit from the church as I am not a Christian. But the priest immediately told me that he would be a very bad Christian if he refused to host me over something as trivial as religion. So we seized the opportunity and stayed at the church for three months for a very low rent.

Joe and I shared some wonderful moments with the priest: delicious meals, French wine and trips around the Netherlands. Every single Dutch person that we met during our three months here was amazingly nice and friendly, but the priest from the church topped them all. (Please note though that he only offers the rooms to those in great need – please look for an apartment elsewhere before going to him!) 🇫🇷 **Clement Risso, a French Master's student of Bioinformatics who did an internship in Wageningen**

This priest thought he would be a bad Christian if he turned away a non-Christian

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 euros and Dutch candy.