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RESOURCE [EN]

For everyone at Wageningen University & Research

no 15 – 29 March 2018 – 12th Volume

**INTERNATIONAL
EDITION**



Greenhouse without grower

Difficult to digitize green fingers | p.12

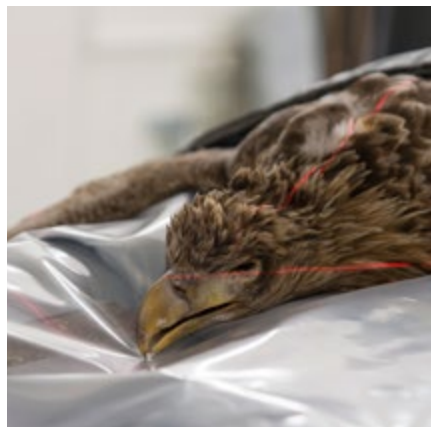
NOT SO MISERABLE

Anyone passing Rijnveste last Saturday could see them sitting there: the members of Ellende (misery) fraternity and their dates. To get in the mood for the KSV ball that evening, the Ellende sub-committee Beun had taken the makeshift hot tub – think waste timber, plastic sheeting and duct tape – out of storage and stoked it up. ‘As we soaked, we had a high tea and played musical bingo with laminated bingo cards,’ says Thomas Visser. ‘Hooting cars and cheering cyclists went past all afternoon.’  LdK, photo Guy Ackermans



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WUR AND THE CITY

The university is no longer a presence in town. This is a oft-heard complaint among Wageningen residents these days. The concentration of teaching and research on the campus on the outskirts of the town is felt in the town centre. All very different to the era when the *Sower* was first unveiled in front of the Agricultural College's headquarters on the Salverdaplein in 1926. There's a nice story about the *Sower*, the emblem of the university, in this magazine (see p. 18). The *Sower* had to join the move to the campus too, and has been standing in front of Atlas since 2012. The spot he vacated on the Salverdaplein had never been filled until now. Student society Nji-Sri has provided a replacement: *The Young Agriculturalist* (see p. 27). This statue represents an agriculture student. There are other signs of change too. For this first time in the history of the town, a student party is on the municipal council (see p. 4). Spring is in the air.

Roelof Kleis, editor



>> [Students learn sign language for charity | p.6](#)

TWO COUNCIL SEATS FOR STUDENT PARTY

The swearing-in ceremony for Wageningen's new municipal council on Thursday 29 March was a historic occasion. For the first time, a student party is represented on the council. With two seats, Connect Wageningen has entered the local political arena.

The party founder and leading candidate Mark Reijerman is 'incredibly happy and grateful' for the 1300 votes and two seats Connect won, even if he had secretly hoped for three seats. 'In terms of numbers in Wageningen, it would be proportionate for young people to have 11 seats, almost half the council. And most of those young people are students.' This is not reflected in the council, though. And it is precisely that unequal representation that made Reijerman – then a council member for the local Stadspartij – decide a year ago to start his own party geared to young people.

This makes Connect Wageningen the latest link in a chain of events started in 2010 by the democrats of D66, who put student Peter Veldman forward as a candidate for election. Veldman became the first student to sit on the council in decades. Connect is the first actual student party on the council, although Reijerman keeps pointing out that



Delight as results came out for students Mark Reijerman (centre) and Rani Temmink (left) of the new party Connect Wageningen.

PHOTO: SVEN MENSCHER

it is a party for all youth.

It remains to be seen what Connect can do with its new position. On Wednesday evening, Reijerman set out his vision on the coalition for Jan van der Meer, who is charged by the largest party, GroenLinks, with forming a coalition that is 'as green, progressive and left-wing' as possible. Reijerman refuses to be pinned down though. 'We stand outside the traditional spectrum. We look at what is going on in the town and what could be im-

proved on. We want a green and social town.'

Besides the recurring topics such as student housing and safer cycle routes, Connect wants to focus on tackling work stress, burnouts and isolation. Reijerman: 'We do have policies on loneliness among elderly people, but not for young people. But this is an important theme, including for the many international students and staff at WUR.' Connect also wants to ensure that students who live in Wa-

geningen are actually registered with the municipality. Many don't bother at the moment, says Reijerman. That costs the town money and distorts the picture of the scope of problems like the housing shortage.

Reijerman himself will continue to be actively involved in Connect, but not as a councillor. The second and fourth candidates on the list, Rani Temmink and Romy Stijssiger, will represent the party on the municipal council. **✉ RK**

WHICH WUR TEAM IS THE MOST SUSTAINABLE?

Wageningen University & Research could become even more sustainable, believes Green Office Wageningen. So the group launched the Green Impact Challenge this week. The idea is that WUR teams decide together who is the most environmentally friendly.

Competing to be greener, that's the crux of it. Green Office says it is all about relatively simple acts such as switching off the computer when you leave work, printing on both sides of the page, carpool-

ing, and turning down the air extractors in laboratories. Practical steps towards reducing waste and energy consumption, and making our footprint smaller.

The challenge was launched on Tuesday 27 March in a classroom in the Forum. 'WUR is the most sustainable university in the world, according to the UI GreenMetric World University Ranking,' said Green Office manager Linde Berg at the event. 'But instead of priding ourselves on that first place, we should see it as a challenge to do even bet-

ter.' The Green Office has developed a Green Impact Toolkit. This is an online form that provides an action plan. Staff and students who form a team can set themselves certain goals. The bigger the effect a goal has on sustainability, the more points it can win them.

The Green Impact Toolkit will be made available on the WUR intranet this week. On Sustainability Day on 10 October, bronze, silver and gold medals will be awarded to the winning WUR teams.

Green Impact started in the UK 12 years ago. By now 476 organizations and over 4000 participating teams around the world have taken up the challenge. Between them, they have started a total of 320,000 initiatives to boost sustainability. **✉ KvZ**

Teams wishing to take part in the Green Impact Challenge can contact greenimpact.org.uk/wur.

ANOTHER STEP TOWARDS OPEN ACCESS

Agreements between the Dutch Universities Association VSNU and the publishers Springer and Oxford University Press have brought open access publishing one step closer this week.

The deal with Oxford University Press (OUP) means that until 2020, all articles by Dutch researchers in OUP's 'hybrid' journals will be freely available to anyone. Hybrid journals are those to which the library has a sub-

scription and in which authors can publish open access at no additional cost. For WUR, though, OUP is a minor player. Only one percent of the roughly 2.7 million euros the library spends on publishers every year goes to OUP.

A deal was also reached with Springer Nature earlier this week. The German publisher is a pioneer in the field of open access. Last year, there was open access to 84 percent of all Dutch articles

in Springer Nature journals. After Sweden, that is the highest proportion in Europe.

The VSNU reached the first agreements with Springer Nature on a combination of a subscription with open access in 2014. The contract has now been extended until 2021. For WUR, Springer is a major publisher, accounting for 10 percent of its spending on journals and books.

📧 RK

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'My' newt

Two weeks ago, I was on the phone standing in front of Helix. It was pleasantly sunny and the campus was clearly in a spring mood: crocuses around Atlas and students lounging on the Forum steps. In short, spring was in the air. Unfortunately the temperatures plunged again a few days later. During that cold period, my thoughts kept turning to a copse on campus.

While I was making that phone call in the sun, I was looking at the ground. At which point I caught sight of a creature that also clearly had spring fever. A newt crawled out of the grass and onto the stone in the direction of the sliding doors. Having just come out of hibernation, it looked at me rather in surprise when I picked it up to prevent it being squashed underfoot or between the doors. Because the temperatures were due to drop again, I placed it in a copse next to a ditch with a tree stump that would make a good hiding place. Perhaps it could consider hibernating a bit longer.

Now that spring seems to be here to stay, I'm enjoying the nature. I can't wait for the swans to build their nests again in possibly the least suitable site in all of Wageningen, right next to the Forum. It might be a little childish, but I also hope 'my' little newt survived. 📧

In his previous column, Camps invited the Nijmegen professor Roos Vonk to debate with him. On the Resource site, Vonk has accepted that invitation. Camps and Vonk are currently discussing what form that debate should take.

Guido Camps (34) is a vet and a postdoc at the Human Nutrition department. He enjoys baking, beekeeping and unusual animals.



in brief



PHOTO: SGLUY ACKERMANS

>> WASTE SHELF

The first in the Netherlands

The first *Verspilling is Verrukkelijk* (Waste is Tasty) shelf was launched in the Jumbo supermarket in the Tarthorst in Wageningen on Tuesday 20 March. Over the next six months, WUR researchers will be studying consumer acceptance of 'surplus' products in this living lab. The shelf is the product of collaboration between 18 entrepreneurs from the *Verspilling is Verrukkelijk* platform, MVO-Nederland, WUR and Wageningen municipal council. The shelf displays products made of foods that would otherwise have been thrown away, fed into a digester or processed into animal feed. Things like soup made of crooked vegetables or beer made of stale bread. The shelf was ceremoniously opened by WUR board president Louise Fresco, mayor Geert Rumund and supermarket owner George Verberne. 📧 TL

>> RADIX CARPARK

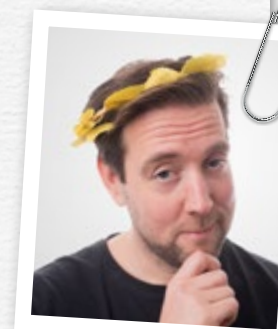
Ground floor open

The new carpark at Radix was opened officially on Monday 26 March. Because construction was delayed by the cold weather, however, the two upper storeys are still closed. Depending on the weather, the first floor will open mid-April and the second mid-May. The new multi-storey carpark offers parking for 420 cars. Out of doors there are also 137 spaces at the back of the building and 96 at the front, as well as six charging stations for electric cars. 📧 TL

>> GROPER

Caught in the act

A man who asked women on campus to help him get in and out of his wheelchair and car took advantage of their helpfulness to molest them. The man was caught in the act by WUR staff earlier this month. They took photos and reported the incident to the police. The university asks students who have been bothered by the man to report it. He was caught playing the same trick on campus back in September, says spokesperson Simon Vink. After that, WUR banned him from the campus. 📧 KvZ





EARN MONEY WITH PATENTS AND APPS

Now the Dutch government commissions less research, Wageningen Research needs to find other ways of making money.

Resource asked experts in the organization for suggestions and got two: apply for more patents and sell more apps.

The Wageningen research institutes currently do a lot of subsidized public-private research projects which need top-up funding. So there is a need for commercial contract research as well, so that Wageningen Research can invest in research itself. But what business models do you need to do that, wonders director of the Plant Sciences Group Ernst van den Ende. He is in the working group that is pondering Wageningen Research's business model with the new strategic plan in mind (see inset).

Wageningen researchers should protect more of their discoveries with patents, reckons Paul van Helvert, intellectual property manager at WUR. Patents fit into a research strategy in which you clearly offer your expertise on the research market. If that market requires protected knowledge, you

should patent it. So you should know, says Van Helvert, what the needs are of the companies in your research field.

At present WUR applies for an average of 20 patents a year. With a more active patent policy, that number could be doubled, thinks Van Helvert. Most patents generate little direct income, but some are worth a lot. So you don't generally get rich from patents, but they do protect your position and generate new assignments and turnover.

According to Ruud van den Bulk, business development manager at the Plant Sciences group, the institutes could also sell more apps. 'Our researchers develop all sorts of models, in the fields of crop growth, climate and animal diseases, for example. Those models are protected by copyright, which means WUR owns the software and source code. You could exploit these models so that other people can use them for calculations. You could offer them in the form of an app, for example.'

Several examples of this already exist. One ex-worker at WUR has started exploiting crop growth models for greenhouse horticul-

ture in his company B-Mex. He produces software for supporting decisions in horticulture on the basis of WUR computer models. And WUR has developed an app for arable farmers which predicts plant diseases and advises on how to control them. The app is a new business model for all the institutes, says Van den Bulk. **AS**

Theme: Business model

WUR plans to present a new strategic plan this autumn. One of the 10 themes it will address is the business model of Wageningen research. Would you like to join the discussion? Then you can. The working group on this theme has not set dates yet, but you can already sign up with Jeanine van der Straten, jeanine.vanderstraten@wur.nl.



PHOTO: HUGH JANSMAN, WAGENINGEN ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCH

BROKEN BONES

The CT scan made of this Eurasian sea eagle showed numerous fractures, including of the left wing and leg. The three-year-old male was

found dead near the Oostvaardersplassen. Researchers from Wageningen Environmental Research and the Dutch Wildlife Health Centre (DWHC) examined the animal together with the veterinary faculty of Utrecht Uni-

versity. It was the first time a sea eagle had been scanned in the Netherlands. The researcher think he flew into something and collapsed. **TL**

MEMORIAL CEMETERY FOR SOLDIER FLY LARVAE

On the floor of Impulse near the seating lie 56 carefully arranged lines of small rectangular black stones. Around them are pink and white carnations. One visitor accidentally kicks a stone. An act of desecration, it turns out. Because this is a tiny memorial cemetery.

You can read the inscription using the magnifying glass that lies beside it: 'Here lies an unknown soldier sacrificed for our homeland.' And on the ribbons around the carnations: 'To our black soldier fly larvae. Thank you for consuming our ever-growing food waste and decaying matter. We really appreciate the new proteins you produce for animal feed, and are eternally grateful for making our food production more sustainable.'

This cemetery is a tribute to the

larvae of the black soldier fly, who lay down their lives to provide us with food. This is just one of the 10 artworks in Conversation Pieces, an artistic event held on 27 March in Impulse. For this project, art students at the Gerrit Rietveld Academy in Amsterdam were paired with WUR PhD candidates.

The designers of the cemetery, Pauline Rip, Seonmi Shin and Naomi Lamdin, were inspired by the research of PhD candidate Stijn Schreven at the Laboratory of Entomology. He studies the interaction between fly larvae and bacteria in rotting waste, and looks at how it can be harnessed so that waste is broken down safely and efficiently. Schreven, who also helped organize the exhibition, hopes the artwork will help to get people accepting insects as a source of food. 'A lot of people are disgusted by larvae be-

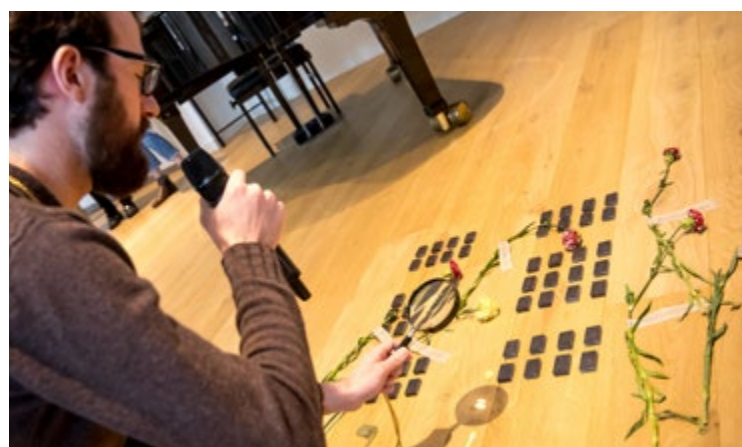


PHOTO: SVEN MENSCHER

Entomologist Stijn Schreven: 'In this artwork, the death of the larvae is commemorated, in recognition of their contribution to sustainable food production.'

cause they associate them with death. That association is kept up here, but turned around. Here it is the death of the larvae that is commemorated, in recognition of their contribution to sustainable food

production.' The point being that the larvae get processed into animal feed. 📷 TL

Look at the photo series on resource-online.nl

WUR HUB OF EUROPEAN ANIMAL WELFARE CENTRE

Wageningen Livestock Research is going to lead the first European Reference Centre for Animal Welfare, the European Commission has decided. The centre will focus on the welfare of pigs to start with.

Livestock Research is joining the Friedrich-Loeffler Institute (Germany) and the Department of Animal Science at the university of Aarhus (Denmark) in the consortium that will form the new reference centre on animal welfare. The first thing on the to-do list is to find an alternative to docking pigs' tails, says project leader Hans Spoolder of Wageningen Livestock Research. 'There is a law against routine tail-docking but it still happens. Neither farmers nor inspectors can see alternatives at the moment, because not docking tails leads to all kinds of health and welfare problems too.'

The centre is going to offer EU member states all kinds of technical and scientific support for monitoring compliance with the law. 'Our aim is to help farmers and local inspectors get a grip on the problem. By identifying risk factors, for instance, so that inspectors can identify them better and give more specific advice on how to improve welfare. Because it is not all about handing out fines.'

The reference centre will form a network of national contact persons in all the EU member states. 'On the one hand, we want to be in touch with people who have substantial expertise to contribute. And on the other hand, we want to build up a training network to find the best way of disseminating relevant information.' 📷 TL



Resource is looking for new Dutch and international bloggers for Resource Online.

Requirements: interesting personality, opinionated, good writer, student at WUR, funny, open minded, curious. Interested in the job? Please leave us a message at linda.vandernat@wur.nl

RESOURCE
For everyone at Wageningen University & Research

resource-online.nl

'STOP CREATING DEAD LANDSCAPES'

Landscape architects who design their landscapes with a blueprint in mind create 'dead' landscapes that cannot develop. This is landscape architect Paul Roncken's challenging message in the controversial thesis for which he received his PhD this month: *Shades of Sublime*. The thesis investigates the so-called 'sublime' experience of landscape.

Derived from the Latin *sub limen* (below the threshold), the word sublime refers in this context to the subconscious impact of the landscape. 'It is really a kind of mindfulness,' explains Roncken. 'You are in a natural environment and you get something out of it. That usually goes smoothly. You read a landscape and you know how you should use it. If you come to a red traffic light, for instance, you know you should wait. The place communicates that, and you get the message. Until it goes wrong. And *that* is the sublime experience. The routine, standard pattern, gets broken and you cannot relate to the environment. That, at least, is my version of the sublime, which is relevant to the challenges facing us today, such as designing megacities, energy landscapes and nature-inclusive agriculture.'

NON-PLACES

Roncken dissects this sublime experience for us. His analysis delivers six distinct landscape archetypes: landscapes can be legible, horrific, neglected, portal, liminal and unrepresentable.

A 'neglected' landscape, says Roncken, is one we can't do anything with. 'These are the non-places, like the back of a petrol station. In effect, it is the opposite of a legible landscape. But those places are of use to society or as a niche biotope.' Portal landscapes are Roncken's favourites. 'These are landscapes which form cross-connections between different experiences. You smell



This 1868 painting by Johan Hendrik Weissenbruch shows a legible landscape, says landscape architect Paul Roncken.

a certain smell at a place, and that reminds you of your grandmother's soup. That changes the way you experience the place. This is probably the most creative form of the sublime experience.'

FICTIONAL DIALOGUE

Roncken's thesis is a monograph – an academic treatment – on the sublime. As such, it is not your standard collection of academic articles. This is unusual enough in Wageningen, but what really makes his book different is the fictional letters and theatrical dialogues it contains. These include imaginary dialogues about the sublime between philosophers such as Immanuel Kant, Longinus and Edmund Burke.

At first, this approach was a bridge too far. Roncken: 'At some point, my supervisors were convinced but my examining committee blocked it. They wouldn't even read it. That brought the project to a standstill for two years.'

A solution was eventually

found through the layout. The dialogues were placed after the various parts of the thesis like illustrations. Roncken: 'I wasn't allowed to present any new facts in them. The letters ended up on dark grey pages halfway through the book.'

According to Roncken, the letters and dialogues are essential to the thesis. 'In those forms I can have the freedom of a designer. The designer's attitude is to look for alternative realities, in the sense of: but what if it had been different?'

MEANINGFUL

So what do those six different flavours of landscape mean for the practice of design? According to Roncken, landscapes should be designed so that all six kinds of experience of the sublime come into play. In this, he rebels against the established approach to design, in which people's preferences are a limiting factor in designing the landscape. 'So you should design landscapes in ways

that build in fluctuation. If you let a natural system evolve, these six archetypes will appear of their own accord. Leave it to nature.'

Roncken calls this 'Serious Landscaping'. 'Stop making dead parks and squares. Stop designing to a blueprint and create the landscapes nature needs. I call that designing for a broader clientele. Not just designing for humans, but also for animals, plants and micro-organisms. That may not always produce the most aesthetically pleasing landscape for humans, but it will produce meaningful landscapes with better ecosystems and more biodiversity.' **✉ RK**

Besides his thesis, Paul Roncken created a website: storybuilder.jumpstart.ge/shades-of-sublime. Here he portrays the six landscape types using illustrations from children's books.

PILGRIMS BRING IN A LOT OF MONEY

Every year, hundreds of thousands of pilgrims make their way to Santiago de Compostela in Spain. This is good for the local economy and generates about 1500 additional jobs, says professor of Regional Economics Wim Heijman.

Religious tourism is on the rise, says Heijman, and the pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela, in the Spanish region of Galicia, is a good example. The region gets millions of tourists every year, and over 200,000 of those tourists are pilgrims. One third of all visitors to the city of Santiago de Compostela are pilgrims. Heijman: “The advantage for the region is that pilgrims come all year round, whereas “ordinary” tourism is often seasonal.” These pilgrims need food and overnight accommodation. And they buy the odd souvenir. Heijman and his colleagues calculated the economic impact of pilgrims on Galicia, and published their findings in the *International Journal of Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage*.

The calculations revealed that in the year 2010, pilgrims contributed between 59 and 99 million euros to the region’s coffers. ‘Pilgrims spend less

than other tourists, on average,’ says Heijman. ‘But this is still a fair-sized contribution.’ On top of the revenue, this religious tourism generates at the least 1362 and at best 2162 extra jobs. There are a total of about one million jobs in the whole of Galicia, so the number generated by pilgrims is still relatively small, but it is significant for the city of Santiago.

The effects are not limited to the tourist industry, either, says Heijman. ‘There are also indirect effects. A restaurant needs ingredients, for instance, which gives a boost to other sectors such as farming or fisheries. These effects are reflected in our analysis too.’

It comes as no surprise that places of pilgrimage are good for the economy. Heijman: ‘They knew that back in the middle ages.’ For Galicia, the effect has been quantified now for the first time. ‘There are also people who would prefer to see fewer tourists, because they make it busier and cause house prices to go up. With the research techniques we used, we can see what the consequences of a growth or decline in tourism would be for incomes and job opportunities.’ **TL**



The Camino de Santiago in the Spanish region of Galicia is very popular with contemporary pilgrims.

VISION

‘Artificial grass may be safe but it’s definitely not sustainable’

American researchers claim there is no connection between playing sports on crumb rubber turf and lymphoma. ‘But the possibility that artificial grass is carcinogenic is only one of the reasons why it might not be a good idea,’ says Bernd Leinauer, professor by special appointment at the Centre for Crop Systems Analysis.

What do you think of the results of the American research?

‘That may well be the outcome but crumb rubber has only been on the market for 10 to 15 years. Often you need to do research for a longer period to get reliable results. There was a time when smoking was thought to be safe; it only turned out much later to cause huge damage to health. The rubber that is used in crumb rubber contains substances that have been identified as carcinogenic, so a correlation between artificial grass and getting cancer is quite possible. But I don’t know whether there is a causal link. It’s always good to be alert and perhaps you need to err on the side of caution sometimes. But there’s much more wrong with artificial grass — the medical issue is just one part of the story.’

What other issues are there?

‘Artificial grass has a relatively short lifespan. Especially with soccer, you notice the playing experience is not as good after 10 to 15 years compared to the start. Then the artificial surface has to be replaced. That leaves you with a huge pile of plastic that you have to dispose of, but artificial grass is very difficult to recycle. On top of that, artificial grass requires a lot of upkeep even though it’s marketed as low maintenance. Maintenance turns out to be a big expense. And then you have the high water usage. Especially in hotter regions such as Southern Europe or the south of the US, you need vast amounts of coolant water to keep the artificial pitches playable. So artificial grass is not necessarily a sustainable alternative to natural grass.’ **RV**





PHOTO: HIROTAKA KATO

The researchers studied the effect of the plant hormone auxin in species of moss that have existed for hundreds of millions of years.

MYSTERY OF PLANT HORMONE SOLVED

The plant hormone auxin drives almost all the growth processes in most plants. Until now, no one knew how that one substance could cause all those different reactions. By going back in time, professor of Biochemistry Dolf Weijers and his colleagues have cleared up this mystery.

Every species of plant reacts to auxin in its own way. This is because in every cell it activates unique ‘switches’, which switch different genes on and off. Weijers: ‘Although the hormone was discovered 100 years ago, we still don’t know very much about how it works, particularly how it is possible for such a simple molecule to drive so many different processes.’ With funding from NWO – Weijers has a Vici grant – he and his team studied how this switch system in plants came about and evolved. They published their findings in *eLife*.

Previously, scientists have usually studied the reaction to auxin in model plants such as *Arabidopsis thaliana* (thale cress). On the

basis of these studies, researchers know that the ‘switches’ with which plants react to auxin consist of three different kinds of protein. Different species of plant make slightly different variants of those three proteins, making a range of combinations possible which determine how the plant reacts to the hormone. In *Arabidopsis*, for example, more than 4000 combinations of the three kinds of protein are possible. Weijers: ‘We wrestled with that complexity in *Arabidopsis* for a very long time, trying to pinpoint how the hormone worked. The disadvantage is that you make assumptions that may only apply to those relatively young species of plant. That is just like discovering something about mice and then saying it applies to all animal species.’

GENOME ARCHAEOLOGY

Weijers and his colleagues took a different approach: they looked at the genetic material of over 1000 plant species, including ancient species such as algae and seaweeds. Working like genome ar-

chaeologists, they mapped out the evolution of the switches step by step. Weijers: ‘Green algae developed the first bit of the switch about 800 million years ago but we come across the complete system for the first time in terrestrial plants.’

The researchers then went on to test the reactions of algae, mosses and ferns – which represent various stages of evolution – to auxin and proved that the reaction to auxin got more and more complex in the course of evolution, so that more and more genes are driven by it. They also looked at the genes of liverworts, plants which are like living fossils in that they have changed very little over the past 500 million years. Here they saw that even though the reaction to auxin had become more complex over time, the steering system worked in a similar way throughout that time.

MORE PRECISE

Weijers sees this study as a breakthrough for plant biology and a nice example of how bio-infor-

matics, evolution biology, biochemistry and genetics can reinforce each other. ‘Every system, including proteins, came about through evolution ultimately. It is crucial to see them in that context. You could call it evolutionary biochemistry.’

With this knowledge, Weijers believes it will be possible to control plant growth more precisely. In agriculture and horticulture, for instance, auxin is used to get cuttings to form new roots. But it can also be used in some plants to deal with weeds: auxin makes the weed literally grow until they die. Weijers: ‘These applications have been developed by trial and error: you throw auxin at them and see what happens. But nature has conducted a lot of these experiments in the last few billion years too. Now that we understand the rules of the game, we can get more control over it. You might be able to create aubergines without any seeds, for instance, or ensure the plant puts down more roots where you want it to. But we haven’t got that far yet.’ **TL**

On the *Resource* website you can find daily news bulletins, opinions, videos and photo series. Here below, a sample of what's on offer online.

'DON'T EXPORT MANURE'



Can we solve Dutch agriculture's manure problem by exporting manure to northern France and Germany? No, writes Gatzke Lettinga in an opinion piece on the *Resource* website.

The emeritus professor of Environmental Technology says the agrarian sector must focus on closing the cycle on a regional scale.

AFTER THE EMOTION...



After a period dominated by emotions, a more reasoned debate has now developed on social media on the issue of nature management in the Oostvaardersplassen reserve. We

can see this from an analysis by WUR researchers Thomas Mattijssen, Bas Breman and Tim Stevens. This is part of the four-yearly Nature Outlook report that fuels the debate on the future of nature in the Netherlands.

LAMBS



Due to the cold weather you don't see many of them out in the meadows yet, but it is lambing time. Dorothee Becu brought two little cuties along to Atlas last week. She

is not only a website manager at WUR, but also a sheep farmer. It's busy on her farm in the Betuwe at the moment. 'I have now decided to cut my working hours, because otherwise I can't keep up with it all.'

'MORE PHILOSOPHY'



Retired tropical agriculturalist Toon van Eijk attended the seminar What is Life, part of the WUR centenary. He was disappointed with the contents of the seminar, he

wrote in an online opinion piece. He did see 'the practical Wageningen can-do mentality, which I value very highly, but it might be advisable to play a bit more attention to philosophical questions about science.'

MEANWHILE ONLINE

FAMELAB



Wen Wu and Emmanuel Nyadzi have won the Wageningen preliminary rounds of Famelab, an international science communication competition. The

PhD candidates managed to convince the jury in three minutes, thanks to their creative way of explaining their research. The pair will represent Wageningen University at the national finals in Utrecht on 9 May.

Check them all out at resource-online.nl

PROPOSITION

'Food hypes can seem like a religion'

Meinou Corstens did her doctoral research in the Food Process Engineering group. In one of the propositions that accompany her thesis, she suggests a link between food and religion.

'I personally really enjoy eating tasty *and* healthy food. I've also noticed that friends and family are increasingly interested in health and food trends. But those hypes generally don't have a scientific basis. The trends are usually set by bloggers or vloggers. These days, you have a lot of organic shops and there are more and more shelves with organic products in the supermarket too.

"Organic" refers to the way in which the products are produced, taking animal welfare and the environment into account. That might be better

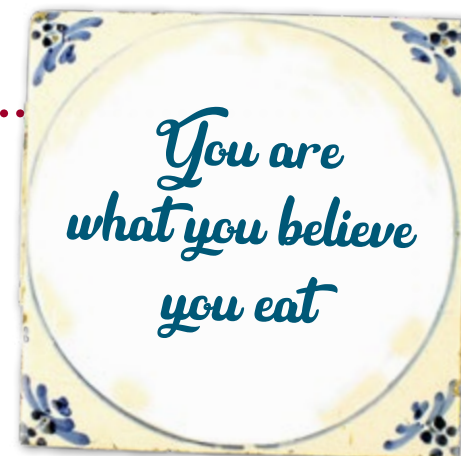
for the planet but it doesn't necessarily mean the products are better for us. Organic chickpeas are not necessarily healthier than

non-organic chickpeas. A packet of organic cookies made using organic cane sugar can still contain 45 grams of sugar for every 100 grams of cookies. Yet people often choose organic food because they think it's healthier.

Dietary hypes sometimes seem to have almost religious overtones in people who follow trends such as veganism, *The Green Happiness* and superfoods. Like people who believe in a supreme being and find this gives them direction and something to hold onto.

My research has nothing to do with hypes and everything to do with obesity. I developed a microcapsule that generates a feeling of being satiated in people who are overweight so that they eventually feel less need to eat.

Ha ha, no I'm not personally overweight. I gave birth to a baby boy nine months ago and I'm already back to my normal weight. I live healthily but I'm mainly lucky with my genes.' **KvZ**



Meinou Noëlle Corstens will graduate with a PhD on 6 April for a study of the delayed release of fats from microcapsules and the effect this has on food intake.



WANTED: COMPUTER WITH GREEN FINGERS

A smart greenhouse that controls itself without any human intervention? It's possible. In fact, it will exist in 10 years' time, says horticultural researcher Silke Hemming. She is coordinating a challenge in which international teams will design such autonomous greenhouses.

text Albert Sikkema *illustration* Pascal Tieman

At present, horticultural farmers determine what happens in their greenhouses. They might have a climate computer that records and adjusts the temperature, humidity, CO₂ levels and incident light. They may even have a 'fertigation' computer that controls the supply of water and nutrients. But ultimately it is they who press the buttons. Based on their own knowledge and experience, they decide what to do in order to

maximize production while using as little fertilizer, water, energy and pesticide as possible. Dutch growers are among the best in the world in that regard, says researcher Silke Hemming of the Greenhouse Horticulture business unit of Wageningen Plant Research in Bleiswijk.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Even so, Hemming—who leads the Greenhouse Technology research team at WUR—expects to

see autonomous greenhouses controlled by artificial intelligence in the near future. There is growing global demand for high-quality food grown with the minimum impact on the environment. Greenhouses can produce that food, and increasing numbers of businesses are therefore investing in greenhouse horticulture. 'These newcomers have much less knowledge and experience than our growers. Of course you need to train these people, but perhaps you could also use IT and artificial intelligence to replace that knowledge and experience.'

Some of the technology is already available in the current high-tech greenhouses. They have sensors that measure the temperature, humidity, CO₂ concentration and incident light, using that data to steer crop growth. Hemming: 'These sensors generate data. The question is what do you do with it. That takes you from data to management advice. For example, it might be 25 degrees, which is good



'WE WANT TO HAVE A ROBOT CHECK PLANTS FOR PATHOGENS'

SILKE HEMMING

for the crop. So the grower or computer wouldn't need to do anything. But the data from the other sensors also has to be assessed and combined to give a recommendation and action; that may result in a lower temperature giving the same yield but with lower energy consumption. The computer can also use data from the past – what worked then will work now too.' This gives you the simplest control system for a horticultural greenhouse, says Hemming.

A more advanced system can also turn that data into a prediction or a recommendation for the future. 'A crop growth model could help here, an algorithm that calculates various scenarios for the future and then gives the grower a recommendation, or directly takes over control of the greenhouse. Then you have an autonomous greenhouse. The ultimate situation is when you give the computer an instruction – "I want to produce one kilo of tomatoes in six weeks" – and it then adjusts the entire system to achieve that goal.'

REPLACING THE PRACTICED EYE

But we are not there yet, as only some of the information about the cultivation of fruit and vegetables is available digitally. The biggest omission currently is what the grower sees with their own eyes while walking around the greenhouse. They may notice the leaves of the young plants drooping slightly. Can a camera record that and turn it into a cultivation recommendation? Later, the grower sees how much fruit there is on the plants and whether it looks ripe. Can a camera register that with equal precision? And what about spotting pests such as whitefly? Growers regularly check the underside of leaves for pests. Is there a sensor that can take over this task? Hemming: 'We want to work towards having a robot or sensor check plants for pathogens, followed by a little cart with pesticides driving up to the infected plants and spraying them where needed.'

This example makes clear that new sensors, robots and artificial intelligence need to be developed first to replace the grower's practiced eye and green fingers. But the sensors also need to communicate with one another properly so that the digital grower initiates the right actions.

CHALLENGE

The experience with picking robots shows how difficult it is to develop an autonomous greenhouse. WUR has developed several such robots, for example for cucumbers and roses, but there are still not any commercially available picking robots. Hemming: 'The growers expect the robot to pick *all* the flowers or vegetables but that is still really difficult.' So they still prefer casual labour, mainly from Eastern Europe. Even so, you will need picking robots too in the

ultimate autonomous greenhouse, says Hemming.

Which means there is work to do for the participants in Wageningen Plant Research's Autonomous Greenhouse Challenge. The institute is making a modern greenhouse complex available in Bleiswijk to five international teams, each of which will get 96 square metres in which to design and operate an autonomous greenhouse. WUR will be actively inviting teams but others can also apply on their own initiative via the special website. In early June, an international jury will select the five best teams from among the applicants. Those teams will start building their computers with green fingers in early September. **B**

If you are interested in the Autonomous Greenhouse Challenge, see autonomousgreenhouses.com.

TENCENT INVESTING IN AUTONOMOUS GREENHOUSES

The Chinese internet company Tencent is the main financier of WUR's Autonomous Greenhouse Challenge, with a contribution of 150,000 euros. What is more, Chief Exploration Officer David Wallerstein is donating 50,000 euros of his own money to the competition. The American joined Tencent in 2001. With a slogan of 'how to improve the world with technology', he is looking for new investment opportunities. He was in Wageningen this month.

Innovative food production is a new market for internet companies, says Wallerstein. Tencent previously invested in a company that uses radar images for precision agriculture and a company that measures whether plants are suffering from heat or water stress using sensors. Now the Chinese Google wants to see whether computers could be better at managing a greenhouse than people. 'We are looking for new models for indoor farming because we think we need this to feed the growing world population sustainably.' Wallerstein expects computers to generate new management options that increase yields or save on costs.





Students on the new Master's in Metropolitan Analysis, Design and Engineering (MADE) look out across Sydney Harbour.

Urban planners of the future

Turning motorways into parks for strolls or using the remains of a demolished prison to build an environmentally friendly neighbourhood. Students taking the brand-new 'urban MSc' in Metropolitan Analysis, Design and Engineering (MADE) have loads of ideas about the city of the future.

text Tessa Louwerens *photos* Maartje Meesterberends and Nina Bohm

A photo shows a group of students looking down on Sydney Harbour from Observatory Hill. It is dry and sunny, but that is not always the case, explains student Carola Raaijmakers. 'Sydney has a lot of problems with water. Sometimes it's too dry but when it rains, you get a deluge in a short period, which leads to flooding.'

Raaijmakers was in Sydney last February for a course on smart water management and mobility. This is part of the new two-year Master's degree in Metropolitan Analysis, Design

and Engineering. As of last September, this Master's is being offered by Wageningen University & Research and Delft University of Technology through the Amsterdam Institute for Advanced Metropolitan Solutions. The degree focuses on urban issues. That is because an estimated 70 percent of the world's population will be living in towns and cities in 30 years' time; half do currently. That raises questions such as how to make sure all those people have enough food, stay healthy, and live in pleasant and safe conditions in an environmentally friendly manner.

The first cohort of 18 students is a mixed group with different backgrounds, ranging from Architecture to Nutrition and Health. Programme director Erik Heijmans sees this as a strength of the degree. 'Students work together and combine the knowledge each has in their own expertise.'

TURNING MOTORWAY INTO PARK

In Australia the Dutch students were visiting the campus of the University of Technology Sydney. They were there to brainstorm about the future of the city. Carola Raaijmakers:

'Each little group was working on a different district, thinking about what it should look like in three months, three years and 30 years. But of course that little bit of the city isn't self-contained, so we had to coordinate things properly with the other groups. A lot of high-rise flats are being built in our district. We had to think about how you can make sure people can access the area properly. At the moment there are a lot of cars in the city but we think there

70 percent of the world's population will be living in cities in 30 years' time

should be more trams and metro systems in the future. We also had the idea of turning the elevated motorway that crosses Sydney into a High Line park for cyclists and walkers. Like the one in New York.'

THE CITY AS A MINE


Most of the projects the MADE students work on are closer to home, namely in Amsterdam. 'That's a well-organized city that is still growing. So that produces new challenges,' says programme director Heijmans. 'The city is a living lab where students can test their ideas directly in practice.'

In their introduction week, the students explored the city and produced a video clip. 'We looked for areas for improvement,' explains student Toni Kuhlmann. 'For example, you see elec-

tric vehicles that are clogging up the crowded cycle paths even more. And on Wednesday mornings the streets along the canals are full of bin bags because they don't have separate wheelie bins. That's why it is difficult to separate out waste.'

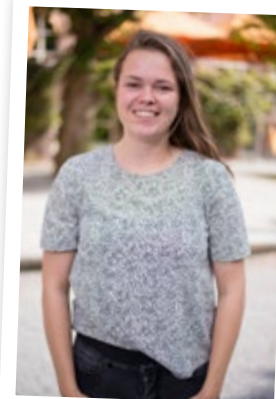
As Amsterdam grows, new buildings are constantly being erected, says Kuhlmann. 'I find it interesting to see how you can use a circular-economy approach in construction, for example with urban mining where you reuse as much of the material as possible when you demolish a building.' An environmentally friendly neighbourhood is currently being built on the site of the former Bijlmer prison, whereby materials from the old prison are given a new purpose. 'If you take out the windows carefully, you can reuse the glass,' explains Kuhlmann. Copper from the old gas and water pipes can be reused in electronic goods.

FREEDOM

The topics the Master's students work on are very diverse. That will give them lots of options after they graduate, reckons Heijmans. They could for example end up in the private sector, working for the government, or in research. Students are also given the freedom to fill in the programme as they wish. Heijmans: 'We set the bar high and require our students to show a lot of flexibility and creativity. It's not just about the theory; how you apply that knowledge in practice is particularly important.' 

'THE DIVERSITY APPEALS TO ME'

Carola Raaijmakers decided to follow up her Bachelor's in Landscape Architecture in Wageningen with the new MADE Master's. 'I wanted to be working on practical applications rather than just design. The diversity and small scale appeal to me. There's just 18 of us students now, so we soon became a close group. It is nice that everyone has a different background because that teaches you to look at things differently. As a landscape architect, I mainly look at the connections between a system and the landscape. If it rains, I want to know where the water goes and how it's discharged. Whereas an industrial designer, for example, will know far more about the functionality of the materials used to make the discharge system.'

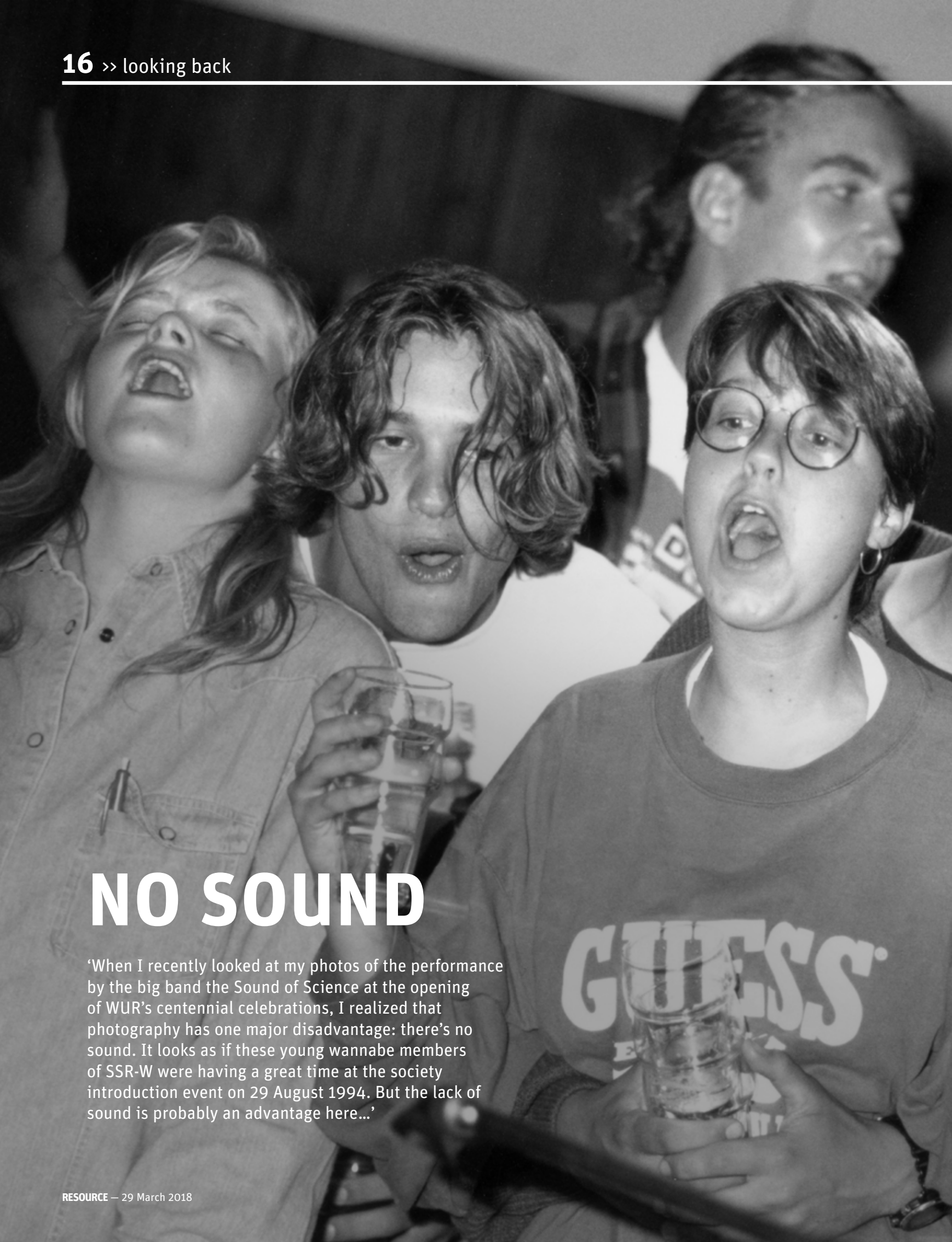


'I THOUGHT IT WOULD BE MORE TECHNICAL'

Toni Kuhlmann started MADE after completing a Bachelor's in Future Planet Studies at the University of Amsterdam. 'I'm interested in sustainability in cities. Only I expected the degree would be more technical. The emphasis is basically on the social sciences, which means a lot of repetition for me. But I think I'm one of the few who see this as an issue; most of the students have a technical background. The information provision is still rather chaotic sometimes. For example, it was only confirmed two weeks before the start that the Master's was going to go ahead. But that is not so surprising given that it's the first year and different universities are collaborating on this Master's. I am enjoying it and anyway, I'll get to fill in my own programme much more in the second year.'



In their introduction week, the students explored Amsterdam.



NO SOUND

'When I recently looked at my photos of the performance by the big band the Sound of Science at the opening of WUR's centennial celebrations, I realized that photography has one major disadvantage: there's no sound. It looks as if these young wannabe members of SSR-W were having a great time at the society introduction event on 29 August 1994. But the lack of sound is probably an advantage here...'

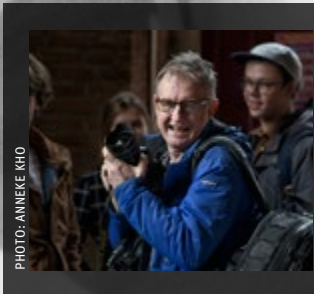


PHOTO: ANNEKE KHO

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 some of his most special 'pics'.

Wageningen's icon had a difficult start

Begging bowl for The Sower



100years
1918 — 2018

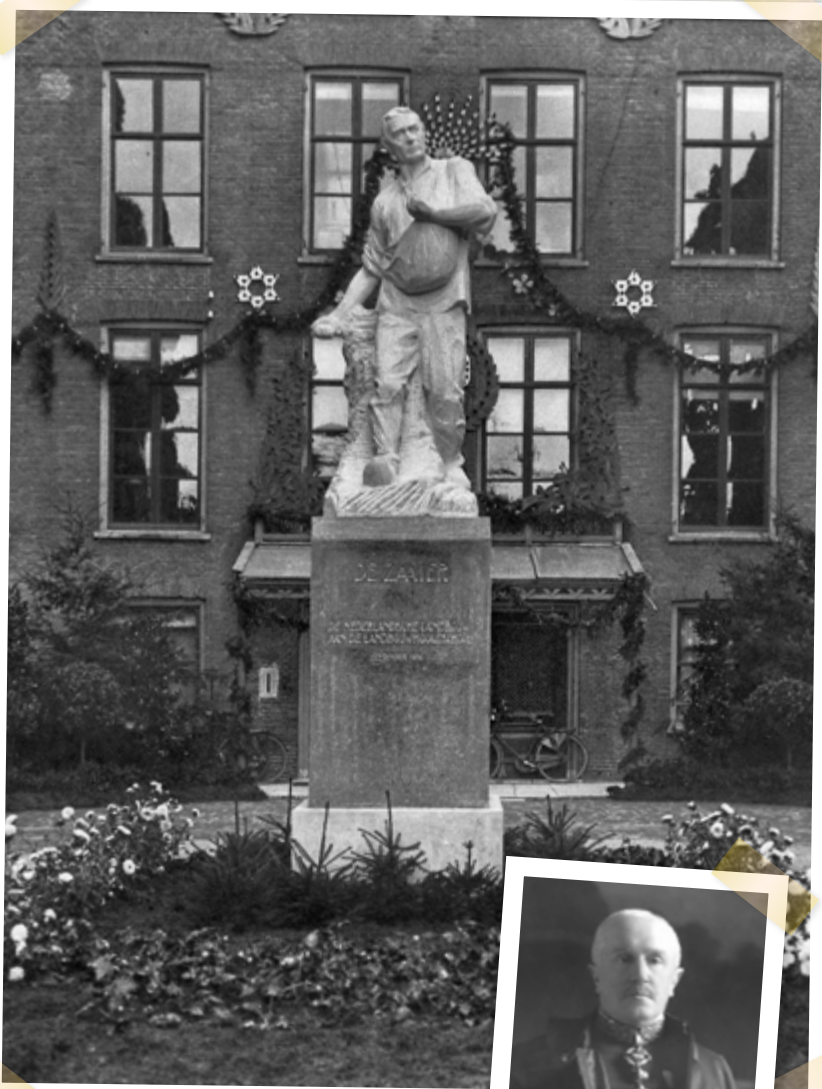
Salverdaplein, Duivendaal, in front of Atlas — wherever Wageningen University's board went, *The Sower* followed. He proudly symbolizes the sowing of knowledge. But how did the university actually end up with the statue? The real story is rather more prosaic than the myth.

text Rik Nijland photos Guy Ackermans and WUR archives

To put an end to one misconception: *The Sower* is not a gift from the grateful residents of Wageningen, as is stated on Wikipedia and also in previous *Resource* articles. The money for the statue was raised in fits and starts by the agricultural sector. It seems as if two separate events on 14 September 1926 have blurred into one over time.

That day was the occasion for festivities in Wageningen, with the official celebration in the city that afternoon of 50 years of agricultural education. The municipality presented a gift to the Agricultural College: not a statue but a plot of land and 25,000 guilders for a new laboratory.

Earlier, just before lunch, a select group had already gathered in Salverdaplein for another high point, the unveiling of *The Sower*. Two ministers turned up, along with the Queen's Commissioner, the mayor, various professors and the sculptor August Falise. Only Prince Hendrik, Falise's hunting companion, was missing — he failed to make it on time.



▲ *The Sower* shortly after it was unveiled in 1926. Chairman of the Agricultural College board Schelto van Citters (right) had great difficulty raising the necessary funds.



1926

14 September 1926
The Sower is unveiled in
Salverdaplein



▲ *The Sower* in its current spot on campus.

TOILING

A film camera was on hand to record the unveiling. The images (no sound) can still be found in the WUR archives but they are so blotchy that you can barely tell the wife of the rector magnificent apart from the men in dark suits (she cuts a cord, after which the cloth slides off). And *The Sower's* head is not shown when the scene reaches its climax.

It is clear at any rate from newspaper reports that the nobleman Schelto van Citters, chairman of the board of the Agricultural College, gave an impassioned speech. 'This statue speaks of Labour and Trust, Work and Prayer, Science and Religion,' he told his audience. 'This is not the statue of some peasant randomly scattering seed; on the contrary, it speaks of serious labour, of toiling and working to properly prepare the soil where he will be sowing.'

Few of those present would have realized that 'toiling' was also an apt description of the fundraising for the artwork. While three years of going around with a begging bowl had now finally resulted in *The Sower* standing proudly on

THE TERM 'CROWDFUNDING' HAD YET TO BE INVENTED BUT THAT WAS WHAT THE SOWER COMMITTEE WANTED

his pedestal, the bills were still a long way from being paid. Two weeks later, Van Citters himself coughed up a hefty sum to save face.

EMPTY COFFERS

Yet the story of *The Sower* had begun so promisingly three years earlier, in 1923. To mark the occasion of the Agricultural College's fifth anniversary, the Wageningen artist August Falise donated the design for a three-metre bronze statue. He also promised to pay for the pedestal. This generous gift posed a dilemma for the college as it did not have a budget of its own; it had to appeal to the national government for every penny it spent. And the government was keeping

a tight rein on the purse strings.

In fact, it was busy implementing drastic cuts because the coffers were empty. Government funding for the young Agricultural College was cut by a third in the space of two years, while the budget for research was halved. There was no room for any extras. A phone connection in the Laboratory for Technology? Rejected. The government did not even budge when the professors in the main building complained that they were unable to keep their laboratories clean because of all the soot from the heating stoves — even though there was allegedly danger of an explosion. Central heating was out of the question.

CROWDFUNDING AVANT LA LETTRE

In an effort to do something with Falise's gift despite this difficult climate, a committee was set up in 1923. Van Citters was the chairman and the nobleman Willem Laman Trip, the Agricultural College administrator, was the secretary and treasurer.

He explained in an agricultural science journal



▲ Removal men take *The Sower* down from its pedestal in Salverdaplein in 1990.

MORE SOWERS

Other universities around the world also have statues of sowers. The latest was unveiled in 2000, on the campus of the University of Oklahoma. The oldest university sower is probably one that was cast at the end of the 19th century and donated to Duke University in 1914.



what August Falise intended: 'A sower, the symbol of the Agricultural College, that sows seeds across the country that will germinate to produce a rich harvest.' Laman Trip philosophized further: 'Is this not also a representation of the link that binds science and practice, the scientific sower who gives and scatters, the practical farmer who acts according to his instructions and harvests.'

The symbolism was nice but this was also a fundraiser talking. The term 'crowdfunding' had yet to be invented but that was precisely what the committee had in mind. The 'agricultural base' – i.e. the Netherlands' farmers — would have to donate the 6000 guilders that were needed to cast Falise's statue. All the national and regional agricultural societies and cooperatives were sent a letter. If they were to donate 10 guilders and each of their members one guilder, 'then the funds for the statue would be found'.

But the agricultural base was apparently unconvinced of the added value after 50 years of agricultural education in Wageningen and five

◀ Duke University's *Sower* in the US.

years of an Agricultural College. The campaign petered out after two months, by which point about 40 guilders had been promised. In the summer of 1925 — the country's finances had now improved slightly — the committee resumed its fundraising efforts so that the unveiling could be part of the celebration of 50 years of Wageningen agricultural education in 1926.

BACKWARD DISTRICTS

Some regional agricultural consultants warned against being too optimistic. 'My expectations are not high given that (...) nearly all my contacts are with farmers in the most backward districts,' wrote one. 'I don't expect there will be much enthusiasm amongst those who enjoy material benefits from the work of the Agricultural College for contributing to the aforementioned goal,' thought another.

The sceptics were proved right. Laman Trip became increasingly downcast in his correspondence. In April 1926, when they had only raised 920 of the required 6000 guilders, he wrote: 'In these circumstances it will not be possible to unveil the statue in September.' He also gave an explanation for the disappointing pro-

'THE SOWER IS A SYMBOL THAT SHOULD MAKE A DEEP IMPRESSION ON THE FUTURE AGRICULTURALISTS'

ceeds. The Netherlands was in the middle of aid campaigns for the victims of major floods in the river areas and of the tornado that had devastated the centre of Borculo. The Wageningen fundraisers could not compete with so many natural disasters.

After consulting with Falise, the committee therefore decided to go for a simpler, smaller statue, just over two metres tall, to be executed in French limestone (*Euville marbrier*) rather than bronze. The artist gave a rough estimate for the statue of 1500 guilders. Time was running out and although they still needed another

1990

1990 *The Sower* moves to the new administration centre in Duivendaal

500 guilders or so, the sculptor was given the go-ahead. As for much of his work, Falise outsourced the execution: the sculptor Hendrik Maurits Hagedoorn got to work using a plaster model. The artist did pay the occasional visit to the site in Scheveningen where Hagedoorn was working.

HIS OWN MONEY

When the final bill came, it turned out that the estimate had been far too optimistic. The statue cost 1226.61 guilders plus 644.10 for the transport, pedestal, inscription and installation. When the costs of stationery and postage were added, *The Sower* came to over 2000 guilders. There is also no sign in the archives that Falise ever paid for the promised pedestal. Although a new begging letter only raised a few tenners, Laman Trip was still able to breathe a sigh of relief four months after the unveiling as all the bills had now been paid. Chairman of the board Van Citters had paid 400 guilders of his own money, the association of owners of Dutch East Indies sugar companies gave 200 guilders and participants at the conference of East Indies




▲ When the university celebrated its 75th anniversary, the event featured a 15-metre-tall replica of *The Sower*.

agriculturalists, held in Wageningen in December, made up the remaining shortfall with donations totalling 150 guilders. The big agricultural businesses of the day had come to their aid.

ICON

Back to 14 September 1926. After the fervent speech by Van Citters, an irritated Jan Kan, the Minister of the Interior and Agriculture, spoke. The *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant* newspaper had already printed his speech by mistake, so Kan made do with a couple of sentences. The audience would just have to read the rest in the newspaper. Some reporters still printed the intended speech anyway. ‘Anything that can nurture the aesthetic sense in the generation that will follow us is of immeasurable value. What is more, *The Sower* who sets off to sow seeds, the image of nature eternally renewing itself, is a symbol that should make a deep impression on future agriculturalists.’

The statue certainly has made an impression; it has grown to become an icon of Wageningen, a symbol for sowing knowledge. When the 75th anniversary of university education in Wageningen was celebrated with the Bergfeest, 25 years ago now, it featured a 15-metre-tall replica of *The Sower*. A cartoon clip was also made in which students from the art school in Tilburg sketched a somewhat ironic picture of the Wageningen science that gave birth to *The Sower*.

Van Citters would undoubtedly not have been amused. In his incredibly earnest speech in 1926 in Salverdaplein, when he kept up the appearance of a generous agricultural sector, he spoke the solemn words: ‘And now he sows, brave and strong through his appropriation of what science has given him (...). See, this is what is our still young College can glory in spite its short life: that it has managed to bind the practical farmers to it in the free exercise of pure science.’ 

Wim ter Beest of the WUR Document Management and Logistics Department, the researcher Gerben Kuipers, Wageningen municipal archives, Gelders archives and De Casteelse Poort museum all contributed to this article.



THE ONLY SOWER COLLECTOR

The flat of Gérard Urselmann (78) in Enkhuizen is full of sowers, mostly but not exclusively male. He has statues, drawings, advertising material, postcards, stamps, ashtrays, plates, medals, you name it. He even has a pocket knife with a sower.

Collecting is in his blood, says Urselmann. In 1984 he spotted an illustration of a sower by the artist Jean-François Millet. ‘I thought, this shows my life. As a child I used to sow turnip seeds, later I worked for the seed company Syngenta, and I like the parable of the sower in Matthew 13. Since then I’ve focused my collecting on sowers. As far as I know, I’m the only one.’

Urselmann has had two exhibitions in Wageningen, the last one in 1993 to mark the 75th anniversary of university education. His collection includes a few references to Falise’s *Sower*: for example on a packet of sugar from the Agricultural College and on postcards, but also in the form of a small replica (where the face is too round) that the local tourist office once sold. ‘Many artists have never actually seen a farmer sowing seed,’ says Urselmann. ‘If the right hand is held out forwards, the right leg should be pointing back, but the artist often chooses a more static position because they find it more attractive.’ However *The Sower* in Wageningen is doing a good job, says the collector. ‘Falise was very observant.’



▲ The collector Urselmann also has a packet of sugar sporting a picture of Wageningen’s *Sower*.



2012 *The Sower* moves to campus

ARE YOU FREE TO DO THE RESEARCH YOU WANT?

The Dutch science academy KNAW is concerned about academic freedom. It thinks that the private sector has too much influence on research, for example because a lot of funding is allocated through the Top Sectors, in which companies are involved. Academic freedom is also a topic in the discussions about WUR's new strategic plan. How free do WUR's researchers feel?

text Stijn van Gils illustration Henk van Ruitenbeek

Gerlinde De Deyn



Personal professor of Soil Quality

'I basically feel unrestricted, but it's becoming more difficult. We are being influenced in our research aims. You now have a mandatory application section even for the Vidi grants, which are supposed to be for basic research. I wouldn't be surprised if you now have less of a chance with a purely fundamental proposal. I think it's a pity that research is becoming less free and unfettered in this way. It's not so much of a problem for me personally. **My research lends itself to collaboration with companies and that collaboration sometimes genuinely helps me to do my job better.** I have had situations where I wanted to research a whole range of factors and the collaborative partners then helped me to select the most important ones. That needs to be acknowledged.'

Wieger Wamelink



Ecologist, Wageningen Environmental Research

'I feel free to research what I want but you do need to be creative. For example, it's difficult for me to find funding for my project on plant growth on Mars. So now I'm resolving that with crowdfunding. Sometimes I can't immediately find funding so I put projects on the back burner. When there's more money available, I pick them up again. I'm fine with doing

contract research in between and answering other people's questions, but clients have no say about the conclusions. They know that and I've never had any problems with that. At the same time the focus on the Top Sectors does concern me. **There is hardly any money for environmental research now because companies don't get an immediate benefit from it and so they don't contribute.** You can make up for this to some extent with alternative forms of funding such as crowdfunding but that's not a structural solution. It is no coincidence that Wageningen Environmental Research is going through such tough times.'

Christian Fleck



Associate professor of Systems and Synthetic Biology

'There is nobody telling me what I should do, so in that sense I'm free. But even so, job performance appraisals are mainly about how much funding I raise for research and less about the number of publications I'm involved in. **To secure funding, I need to think strategically and focus on certain themes, so that restricts my freedom.** There is a strong focus on simple indicators like the impact factor of the journals we publish in. This is sometimes said to be due to business thinking but I think it runs deeper. I think there's a lack of trust and a reluctance to give researchers freedom. That is a trend across Europe. I do get the impression that the Netherlands is obsessed with public-private partnerships, as if the involvement of companies automatically makes the research better. But companies have to make a profit, which often makes them very conservative and focused on short-term goals. Good research needs vision and freedom. The greatest scientific breakthroughs are achieved with truly free research. Nobel prizes are won with research that is unfettered.'

Emely de Vet



Professor of Health Communication and Behaviour Change

'The short answer is **yes, I feel unrestricted. My research budgets mainly come from second-stream funding, which is the funding for fundamental research.** In my case from NWO, and primarily from the medical and health section of NWO, ZonMw. That's because my research is mainly about how



to encourage a healthy lifestyle. In my experience, the private sector does not influence these programmes. It is true that many calls have a clear focus and that applications need to fit in with that call to be successful. My impression is that the focus is determined very carefully based on compilations of the available knowledge and programme studies, often jointly with scientists. So you can influence this as a researcher but you do then need to be talking to them at the right time.'

Mirte Bosse



Postdoc researcher, Animal Breeding and Genetics

'I find this a difficult issue. I feel I have all the freedom I want within the parameters of my research. I can decide for myself what data to collect and how to analyse it. But I do feel restricted in deciding what kind of research and what research questions to ask. Last year I won a Veni grant that I will start on in June. **Such grants are specifically intended for fundamental research, but even in those research proposals you still have to describe how that knowledge will be used.**

This does sometimes push my research in a different direction. I think this is a bad development because the really major discoveries often occur in areas you are not expecting. As a genetics researcher, for example, I'd like to look more at evolution but that is much less relevant for the animal breeding sector.'

Erik Poelman



Tenure track researcher, Laboratory of Entomology

'I feel completely free to research what I want but there is increasing pressure on unfettered fundamental research. It's becoming more and more difficult to find funding for my basic research because of the huge competition for grants.

I sit on assessment committees and I see then that too many excellent research proposals are unable to obtain funding.

Getting grants within the Top Sectors is not a foregone conclusion. I can't always submit applications for pre-competitive research that fits in well with a grant call because I don't have the necessary private parties. Companies are inundated by researchers who want to collaborate as a way of getting funding. But companies look very specifically at what knowledge will bring them most benefit. And who can blame them? This preselection reduces the diversity in the research even before the proposals have been assessed for their scientific quality. I would therefore like to see some of the money taken back from the Top Sectors and spent on unrestricted basic research.'

The woman who brought comedy to Wageningen

Aged only 25, Emma Holmes is the founder of the well-known Wageningen Comedy Club. Originally from the UK and a former student of Van Hall Larenstein university of applied sciences, she now performs as a comedian and organizes empowerment storytelling workshops in Wageningen and beyond.

Back when she was completing her Bachelor's thesis, Holmes noticed the lack of 'affordable alternative entertainment' in Wageningen. 'Where's the punk theatre, the poetry, the comedy?', she would wonder. At the same time, the idea of performing as a comedian herself started to grow. Holmes, who is originally from the UK but lived in France from the age of 11, completed her BSc in Food Technology in 2015.

IN A DORM ROOM

Before the comedy club was even an idea, she received an invitation by a comedian to perform — for the first time in her life — in Wageningen. This initial attempt at stand-up comedy was 'terrifying', she says. However, that did not stop her. After this first experience, she posted a message on Facebook to see whether students would be interested in watching comedy or even performing themselves. The support she received was massive, so she started giving workshops.

The first workshops in March 2015 took place in a dorm room, where three people with no experience in comedy would meet to figure out where to start. Only a few months later, in October 2015, the Wageningen Comedy Club hosted its first stand-up comedy night. Emma and her team welcomed a much larger audience — mainly students — than they were expecting. In fact, they somehow managed to fit in around 50 more people than the venue's official capacity. Since then, they have put on at least one show every month, most of which are sold out with audiences of over 100 people.

Holmes got the inspiration for hosting storytelling shows in 2017 after visiting a storytelling event in Amsterdam. She recently also teamed up with Jessica Duncan, Teacher of the Year in 2017, to organize special storytelling evenings on diversity and integration that also empower social minorities.

NERVOUS

Although Holmes says that 'working for yourself is hard', she loves her job and she already has a few plans for the future of her company. She intends to stay in Wageningen though, which she really likes. According to her, 'in Wageningen you'll always find support for anything new you want to accomplish'.

To this day, she still gets nervous before performing. But comedy has changed her life by making her more content, more balanced and more confident. As Holmes describes it, performing has given her an outlet for her hyper-energetic self. 'Comedy is so powerful in communicating messages and educating people, and I think that is something I would like to explore more over the next few years,' she adds. **KT**

More information:
facebook.com/WageningenComedyClub



Emma Holmes: 'Comedy is so powerful in communicating messages and educating people.'

'My first attempt at stand-up comedy was terrifying'

Watch the video on resource-online.nl/video





PHOTO: GUY ACKERMANS

Students Michelle van Maanen, Amber Yau and Lisa Verhoeven (from left to right) have lunch with residents of Pieter Pauw nursing home.

Students help out in nursing home

Seven students were tasked with doing some voluntary work by their student society KSV Franciscus. They spent ten hours helping out in Pieter Pauw nursing home, run by healthcare provider Vilente. What started as a compulsory task grew into a longer-term voluntary commitment.

The common room in the nursing home is divided into a kitchen-diner and a living room. There are two old paintings of farm life on the wall, and a lot of easy chairs. They look as though they come from a secondhand store and make for a cosy, domestic atmosphere.

LUDO

It is lunch time at Pieter Pauw nursing home in Wageningen. The table has been laid with traditional Dutch tableware, chocolate sprinkles, peanut butter, apple syrup and currant bread. Mrs Ten Berg is eating a slice of bread and peanut butter with a knife and fork. She has a mischievous look in her eye. Lisa Verhoeven can't help laughing when Mrs Ten Berg says she gets a lot of visitors, luckily, but her neighbour needn't come anymore because they always quarrel. Verhoeven helps serve lunch and keep the residents company. She is

a first-year student of Business and Consumer Economics.

Lisa Verhoeven and Michelle van Maanen, a student of Food Technology, sometimes play a game of Ludo with Mrs Ten Berg, and they usually lose. 'Which is just as well,' says Mrs Ten Berg, 'because I'm a bad loser. Yes, I'm quite a character, you know!' Opposite her sits Mrs Haverhals, 98 years old and never ill. Her husband died a long time ago. 'But I have Knuffie,' she says, pointing to a teddy bear on the table. Mrs Haverhals's zimmer frame is parked against the leg of her chair.

One of the supervisors is standing in the open kitchen that looks out on the dining room. 'These residents are still fairly independent, but the residents nextdoor all have serious physical disabilities,' she says. 'We really have to work in pairs there in order to use the hoists if we wash the residents, for instance.' These are the times when it is handy to have volunteers such as Lisa and Michelle around to pay attention to the other residents, having a chat, doing a puzzle with them or taking them for a little walk.

DIFFICULT

The first time the students came to Pieter Pauw, the residents regarded them with suspicion. 'I found that very difficult,' says Verhoe-

ven, who had never had any contact with elderly people with dementia before. 'I felt a kind of hostility. The residents didn't want to talk to us at all. And certainly not play games.' Now the students are greeted with enthusiasm. Verhoeven and Van Maanen find the work they do here satisfying and worthwhile. 'Because I come here and see what it means to suffer from dementia, or another condition, I have become more conscious of my own health,' says Van Maanen, 'and of the fact that I live in a country where this kind of care is on offer.'

The only man in the group, Mr Jongasma, sits at the head of the table during lunch. He slips slowly down his chair. 'It hurts,' he says, almost unintelligibly. Mr Jongasma has Parkinson's disease. Verhoeven often sits with him and doesn't find it easy. 'He often wants to stand up but if the supervisors are busy elsewhere, I have to keep pushing him gently back into his chair.'

Lunch is over. One of the ladies settles into an armchair, while Mrs Ten Berg helps with the washing up. The clock above the dresser has stopped at 12 o'clock. The students say goodbye. It's time for lectures. **KvZ**

At the request of the nursing home, residents' names have been changed.

BEES

Researchers from Bayer and the University of Exeter have identified enzymes in bees that are responsible for the rapid breakdown of some neonicotinoids. This paves the way for the development of 'neonics' which do their deadly work without harming bees. Bee-friendly neonics – from Bayer, no less!

PAINKILLERS

Mice that are hungry are less sensitive to chronic pain, researchers at the University of Pennsylvania have discovered. A case of first things first. A small group of 300 brain cells is behind this suppression of pain. The discovery opens up possibilities for new ways of dealing with chronic pain. That's if we can play the same trick as the mice.

DIP

Fish with full stomachs have to swim at the back of the school. Scottish researchers demonstrated this in schools of minnows, members of the carp family. The digestion process makes it harder for the fish to manoeuvre their way around and they fall behind. Dominant individuals – which have grabbed the most food – have to pay for their success with a temporary loss of frontrunner status.

STRONG GENES

Chinese researchers have sequenced the genome of the American cockroach. Quite a job because the creature turns out to have almost as many genes – 20,000 – as humans. The researchers believe this extensive package, with many genes for identifying smells, fighting infections and digesting food, explains the species' success. But the cockroach wouldn't survive a nuclear war. Cold comfort.



Learning sign language for charity

Talking Hands, a foundation set up by Wageningen students to support deaf children in Uganda, is organizing a sign language course in the Leeuwenborch this month.

Talking Hands was set up in 2014 by six BSc students of International Development Studies. Its original name was New Hope School for the Deaf Foundation. 'We started by supporting a school for the deaf in Uganda,' says co-founder Imme Widdershoven. 'We expanded our range of activities later.' This led to the name change. Talking Hands is now an official foundation with charitable (ANBI) status. 'Sign language is a very different way of communicating, but it is highly intuitive so you soon understand what someone is trying to say,' explains Widdershoven. She discovered this when she visited the school for the deaf in Uganda. 'There you see where the money goes to, and that



Participants in the first lesson, on 21 March, learn the basics of sign language.

PHOTO: SVEN MENSCHTEL

boosts your motivation.' Co-founder Douwe de Vries: 'As a student of Development Studies you learn a lot about the inefficiency of development aid. That demotivates people who want to make positive changes in the world. This way you can still uphold the ideals you started out with through something tangible.'

The course is now being run for the fourth year in a row, each time in collaboration with Gebaar Ede. Talking Hands also runs other activities such as a film evening at the Heerenstraattheater on 10 April, with two documentaries and a crash course in sign language. The foundation raises a total of about 15,000 euros a year for the charity. **AvdH**



PHOTO: SVEN MENSCHTEL

Chinese singing contest

On Saturday 24 March, Wageningen student Senhao Wang won a singing competition for Chinese students from all over the Netherlands. The Master's student of Urban Environmental Management beat 19 other Chinese students, including another three from

Wageningen, in the Wisdom&Wonder pavilion on campus. Wang has been singing all his life, he explains in a video *Resource* made for the competition. He competed in the preliminary rounds of The Voice of China and would really have liked to become a professional singer. **LvdN**

Watch the video
on resource-online.nl



Nji-Sri gives the town a statue

Student society Nji-Sri has made Wageningen a present of a statue: the *Young Agriculturalist*. The statue was unveiled in the Salverdaplein on Saturday 24 March.

Artist Peter Roovers designed the statue in 1969 for the student society, which was housed in Deventer at that time. It represents a student at the National College of Tropical and Subtropical Agriculture, then located in Deventer. With a society cap on his head and textbooks under his arm, he is leaning nonchalantly on an old plough.

The original ceramic statue was placed on De Brink in Deventer, but fell prey to vandalism and had to be moved to safety. When Nji-Sri moved to Wageningen, the society decided to have a new, bronze statue cast, which was

erected on De Brink in Deventer in 2005. The statue now standing in Wageningen is a copy of that statue. Its presence here can be credited to Wageningen's mayor Geert van Rumund, who was given a small replica of the statue at Nji-Sri's anniversary in 2010 and commented that he would like a bigger copy for the town.

That wish has now come true. The *Young Agriculturalist* stands between the trees on the east side of the Salverdaplein, facing the Nieuwstraat, where Nji-Sri is located. And a stone's throw from the place where the *Sower* used to stand in front of WUR's old headquarters.

With its gift to the town, Nji-Sri underlines its connection with Wageningen. The society was established in Wageningen in 1904 and moved to Deventer with the Colonial Agricultural



PHOTO: GUY ACKERMANS

Sculptor Frans Erdsieck (right) and honorary president of Nji-Sri James van Lidth de Jeude unveil the Young Agriculturalist in the Salverdaplein.

College in 1912. The college returned to Wageningen in 2006, as part of Van Hall Larenstein University of Applied Sciences. Nji-Sri moved too, and is now a student club for the whole of Wageningen University. The un-

veiling in the Salverdaplein was attended by dozens of members. They shared beer and herrings and treated every speaker to the society's greeting: 'Slamat', which means something like 'it is good'. **GRK**

MEANWHILE IN... SRI LANKA

'The riots reminded me of the civil war'

Earlier this month, Sri Lanka declared a state of emergency after riots against the Muslim minority. The violence in the Kandy district was ignited by the murder of a Buddhist man, of which a group of Muslims was accused. Elackiya Sithamparanathan explains how the conflict is rooted in the division of her home country along ethnic lines.

'Sri Lanka is a country split between three major ethnic groups. The Sinhalese people are in the vast majority, with about three quarters of the population. The Tamils and Moors are minorities. Then there is also a division according to religion: Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism and Islam. The violence this month was mostly by Buddhists towards Muslims. Rumours were spread that Muslims try to limit the population growth of other ethnic groups by putting sterilization pills in restaurant food. Regardless of whether these stories are true, they fuel hatred.

On the other hand, the minorities in Sri Lanka sometimes feel that they are oppressed by the government, as the Sinhalese dominate parliament and the army.

The recent incidents reminded me of the civil war between the Sinhalese and the Tamils, which ended in 2009. Maybe the government



Elackiya Sithamparanathan is a PhD student from Sri Lanka, at the environmental Technology chair group.



PHOTO: CROWDS/PARK/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

Police inspect damage after the rioting in the Kandy region.

also thought of that; it intervened strongly this time in order to restore peace. During the two-week state of emergency, the troops were given rights to search and arrest people without a warrant. And probably even more effective was the blocking of all social media platforms so that people were not able to initiate more riots.

I think Sri Lanka will be a divided country for a while longer. People from my generation of Tamils still feel distant from the Sinhalese because of memories of the civil war. And there is a language barrier. Sinhala is very different from the Tamil language. Among the generation that is currently growing up, things are slowly getting better. All children have the opportunity to learn both languages at school. Hopefully this will facilitate better interaction and understanding in the future.' **GRK**

YOU ON CAMPUS

Sunglasses on, Nina Flohr (24) from Germany wheels her bike to the Asian Express in Campus Plaza on a bright spring day in March. 'Because they've got great noodles and tofu.' She is in a hurry. 'Sorry but we have to be quick because the lunches are 3.50 now and they go up to more than 5 euros if we get there late.'

A little later, we're sitting at the window of Asian Express. 'They always put so much food on your plate that I can never finish it. But it's really good!' She continues chatting enthusiastically about the university and her studies. 'I decided to come to Wageningen because I was looking for a way to combine Environmental Sciences and International Development Studies, which I can do here by taking a double Master's.' Even though she is talking to someone she's never met before, Nina is as open and bubbly as can be. She loves it here in Wageningen. 'What I miss about Germany though is the bread. Dutch bread is just not the same.'

Wageningen's sustainable and multicultural vibes seem to attract a lot of foodie students. Nina is one of them. She loves cooking. 'I think you kind of have to when you're a vegan.' Her favourite recipe is banana bread. 'My best friend and I often make it together. She's also vegan.'

'You have to love cooking when you're a vegan'

The organic farm shop De Hoge Born on campus is popular among students. Nina also goes there, but her favourite place for shopping is the organic market on Saturday in the town centre. 'It's a whole social experience. We go grocery shopping with friends and then we have coffee together in a cafe.' Although Nina is currently focusing on her courses, she is already thinking about the summer. 'I'll be going to Peru. This will be a



PHOTO: EVA VAN DER GRAAF

great chance to practice my Spanish, which I started learning recently. I'd also like to go to South America for my thesis and internship.' Nina definitely wants to do more travelling. 'I think the combination of International Development Studies and Environmental Sciences opens up a lot of doors for me, but it also means I could end up in any country. So who knows where this path will take me one day?' **EvdG**

PARTIES

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

LUCA - HAPPY EASTER PARTY

Sunday 1 April from 23:00 to 04:00

Not going home to the family for Easter? Come and party with the other 'stayers' then! Monday is a day off, so you can nurse your hangover on the sofa all day.

ARGO - VARSITY OPEN PARTY

Thursday 5 April from 22:00 to 05:00

Argo doesn't throw many open parties, but when the rowing club does something it's usually a success. Be there!

UNITAS - FINGERLICKIN' PLEASURE CRUISE

Thursday 31 May from 22:00 to 04:00

Fingerlickin' has been part of the Wageningen scene for years and they are going on a Pleasure Cruise again this year! It's not for a while yet but space is limited on the boat. So book your tickets now. **E**



PHOTO: SVEN MENSCHER

At the Plastic Soup Event in the town library on Sunday 25 March, singer-songwriter Rogier Pelgrim presented the videoclip for his new song *Doe Jij Mij Weg?*

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.

A peek into the Cuban kitchen

'My entire degree programme has been focused on sustainable tourism with the smallest possible environmental impact. For my thesis, I wanted to give it my own twist – I am Italian, and a love of food runs through my veins. I wanted to find out how a country's identity is reflected in its food culture. Due to its unique political situation, Cuba struck me as a great place to research this connection.

NEXT-LEVEL GASTRONOMY

If you look around in Havana, you see the legacy of a formerly completely communist country that is now experimenting with a soft form of privatization. I particularly looked at the rise of the *paladares*, small private restaurants, and *casas particulares*, homestays that you could see as Cuban Airbnbs. Since 1993, the government has been issuing permits that allow people to own a small restaurant. At the same time, the entire country has opened its borders for more foreign food imports. I was curious to see how the availability of new products is influencing what the locals eat and what they offer tourists.

Before these changes, tourists used to say that Cuban food was boring and plain. Food availability was always a big problem under the communist system. Since the tourism boost, which peaked in the period since Obama visited Cuba in 2016, gastronomy has also been taken to the next level. Restaurants offer a lot more now than the traditional rice and beans. Everywhere in Havana you can even eat Japanese, Italian, Indian, and many more types of food.



INTERVIEW OVER COCKTAILS

I gathered all my data through interviews with restaurant owners, hosts at the *casa particulares*, Cuban families and a food distribution expert. I met them through the contact I had in Havana. Cuban people are very warm and easy to talk to. The best thing was that for many of the interviews, I was invited to have dinner or drinks. Almost all of my interviews were accompanied by a cocktail – or two. My favorite was the daiquiri with fresh mango.

Cuban people are proud of the communist legacy of their country. "*No es fácil*", is what they all say; they have to work hard, but food is always guaranteed. On the other hand, people working in the tourism sector also see the benefits of a little bit of capitalism. Besides the opportunity to make a living serving food to tourists, they are happy to eat more varied food themselves. Many Cubans find their traditional plate complete these days: not just rice and beans, but also a piece of fish or meat every now and then. Before the shift this was hardly ever the case.' **LH**

Read all interviews on resource-online.nl



THE WORKS



Who? Simone Ciuffi, MSc Leisure, Tourism & Environment
What? Thesis research on the availability of food in the context of increased tourism
Where? Havana, Cuba



Orion Irregular Opening Hours March and April 2018

	2018	The Building	Bike basement	The Spot	Restaurant
Good Friday	30 March	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed
Saturday	31 March	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed
Easter Sunday	1 April	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed
Easter Monday	2 April	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed
Monday	23 April	8 am - 6 pm	8 am - 8 pm	8 am - 8 pm	11.30 am - 1.30 pm
Tuesday	24 April	8 am - 6 pm	8 am - 8 pm	8 am - 8 pm	11.30 am - 1.30 pm
Wednesday	25 April	8 am - 6 pm	8 am - 8 pm	8 am - 8 pm	11.30 am - 1.30 pm
Thursday	26 April	8 am - 6 pm	8 am - 8 pm	8 am - 8 pm	11.30 am - 1.30 pm
Friday King's Day	27 April	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed
Saturday	28 April	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed
Sunday	29 April	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed

Leeuwenborch Irregular Opening Hours March and April 2018

	2018	The Building	Coffee Bar/ Restaurant	The Library
Good Friday	30 March	7 am - 10.30 pm	Closed	Closed
Saturday	31 March	8 am - 5.30 pm	8 am - 5 pm	Closed
Easter Sunday	1 April	Closed	Closed	Closed
Easter Monday	2 April	Closed	Closed	Closed
Monday	23 April	7 am - 10.30 pm	8 am - 5 pm	8.30 am - 6 pm
Tuesday	24 April	7 am - 10.30 pm	8 am - 5 pm	8.30 am - 6 pm
Wednesday	25 April	7 am - 10.30 pm	8 am - 5 pm	8.30 am - 6 pm
Thursday	26 April	7 am - 10.30 pm	8 am - 5 pm	8.30 am - 6 pm
Friday King's Day	27 April	Closed	Closed	Closed
Saturday	28 April	8 am - 5.30 pm	Closed	Closed
Sunday	29 April	Closed	Closed	Closed

After 6 pm entrance is only possible after registration at the reception desk.

Forum - Irregular Opening Hours March and April 2018

	2018	The Building	The Library	Student Desk	IT Service Point	WURshop	Restaurant	Grand Café	Wageningen in'to Languages
Good Friday	30 March	8 am - 11 pm	8.30 am - 5.30 pm	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed
Saturday	31 March	10 am - 6 pm	10 am - 6 pm	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed
Easter Sunday	1 April	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed
Easter Monday	2 April	10 am - 6 pm	10 am - 6 pm	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed
Monday	23 April	8 am - 11 pm	8 am - 10 pm	10 am - 5 pm	9 am - 10 pm	9 am - 4.30 pm	8 am - 7 pm	8 am - 5 pm	9 am - 5 pm
Tuesday	24 April	8 am - 11 pm	8 am - 10 pm	10 am - 5 pm	9 am - 10 pm	9 am - 4.30 pm	8 am - 7 pm	8 am - 5 pm	9 am - 5 pm
Wednesday	25 April	8 am - 11 pm	8 am - 10 pm	10 am - 5 pm	9 am - 10 pm	9 am - 4.30 pm	8 am - 7 pm	8 am - 5 pm	9 am - 5 pm
Thursday	26 April	8 am - 11 pm	8 am - 10 pm	10 am - 5 pm	9 am - 10 pm	9 am - 4.30 pm	8 am - 7 pm	8 am - 5 pm	9 am - 5 pm
Friday King's Day	27 April	10 am - 6 pm	10 am - 6 pm	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed
Saturday	28 April	10 am - 6 pm	10 am - 6 pm	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed
Sunday	29 April	10 am - 6 pm	10 am - 6 pm	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed

During working hours, the building is open to the public. After working hours, entrance is only possible with a WUR card.

Announcements

SOS: TRUMPET PLAYERS NEEDED

The WUR big band Sound of Science is looking for new trumpet players! We had the honour of performing as a top act for the WUR centenary, unlike the Arctic Monkeys. So if you're a trumpet player looking for a band and you enjoy a mix of swinging jazz, blues, funk and Latin, contact jos.meeussen@wur.nl.

WUR ARTISTS WANTED

Are you an artist as well as a student or member of staff at WUR? The WUR library is offering exhibition space in the display cabinets on the third floor of the Forum. A unique chance to exhibit your work (free) to a broad audience: 300-500 students come to the library every day. We have a preference for three-dimensional art, but other art forms are possible too. Interested? Email monique.braakhuis@wur.nl.

STORIES ABOUT 50 YEARS OF SHOUT

This year, Shout celebrates 50 years of defending LG (BTQ) rights in Wageningen. A working group on homosexuality in Wageningen was set up in 1968, leading to the Homogroep and later to Shout. We want to record these 50 years of history, creating an almanac for which we would like to collect stories and photos. Please email your memories to info@shout-wageningen.nl.

ALPHA COURSE FOR STUDENTS

We go back to the basics of the Christian faith and discuss existential questions. Sample the course (no

commitment) on the first evening, 5 April at 18:30 at Markt 25. The whole course consists of nine evenings with a free meal, a speaker, discussion groups and drinks. Visit our Facebook page or email alphawageningen@gmail.com.

Agenda

Thursday 29 March to Wednesday 11 April

FILMS FOR STUDENTS

Breakfast at Tiffany's: a classic rom-com for Easter. *The Florida Project*: a social masterpiece about a young mother and daughter in a budget hotel. *The Insult*: a realistic Lebanese drama about a minor incident that escalates into a national issue. *I Tonya*: a biopic about a foul-mouthed figure skater. *Weidevogels in het Binnenveld*: a special nature documentary. *Vivan Las Antipodas*: a unique journey around the world to places that are diagonally opposite each other on the globe. Venue: Wilhelminaweg 3A, Wageningen. Price: €6.50/€5.

MOVIE-W.NL

Thursday 5 to Wednesday 11 April

ONE WORLD WEEK
During the 7th One World Week we'll celebrate the international scope of our education and research as well as the diversity in our WUR community. We focus on intercultural cooperation, sharing knowledge and experiences and having fun together by sharing cultural traditions from all around the world. In short: a cultural week for everybody! Take a look at the programme: bit.ly/OWW2018.

Thursday 5 April, 12:30-13:20
LUNCH WORKSHOP WAGENINGEN WRITING LAB / WUR LIBRARY 'SEARCH EFFICIENTLY IN THE RIGHT DATABASE'

There are many places and ways to look up information. Knowledge of databases and search strategies will help you to find scientific publications on your topic in an efficient and systematic way. Learn about tips and tricks. You can bring your own research question to get advice. Free admission. Be on time, as participant numbers are limited to 20. Venue: Forum

PCO425. Info: info.wageningen-writinglab@wur.nl

Thursday 5 April, 16:00
WEES SEMINAR: 'DRIVERS OF RNA VIRUS EMERGENCE'

Dr Israel Pagán (Center for Plant Biotechnology and Genomics, Madrid) will present his research on how genetic and environmental factors drive virus speciation and emergence. Afterwards: drinks and discussion. Prior to the seminar Dr Pagán will give a workshop for MSc and PhD students. Venue: Orion C2035.

WEESWAGENINGEN.NL

Monday 9 April, 19:00-22:00

FABLAB WAGENINGEN – INTRODUCTION COURSE

In this course you learn about the laser cutter, the vinyl and sticker cutter and 3D printers. As well as theory we offer you hands-on experience with the machinery. In two practical assignments you set to work independently or in small groups, going through all the steps in the design process: designing, creating the right machine settings, and then producing the product – or having it produced. Once you have taken this course you can become a member of FabLabWag and work independently.

FABLABWAG.NL

Wednesday 11 April 18:30-22:30
W.S.R. ARGO'S ANNIVERSARY SYMPOSIUM: 'BRAIN GYM'

In honour of its 55th anniversary, Argo is collaborating with the WUR centenary committee on a symposium on the mental power of sport. Top sportspeople stand out for their stamina, discipline and drive to win. What makes up the mentality that enables them to get the best out of themselves time and again? And how can you achieve the best attitude for delivering top results, and what kind of mental training does this take? Find the answers to these and other questions at the symposium in the Wisdom & Wonder Pavilion on campus.

WSR-ARGO.NL/LUSTRUMSYMPOSIUM

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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ISSN 1389-7756

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Design

Geert-Jan Bruins, Paul Gerlach

Translators

Clare McGregor, Susie Day, Clare Wilkinson

Printer

Tuijtel, Hardinxveld-Giessendam

Subscriptions

A subscription to the magazine costs €58 (overseas: €131) per academic year. Cancellations before 1 August.

Advertising

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Publisher

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>>TYPICAL DUTCH

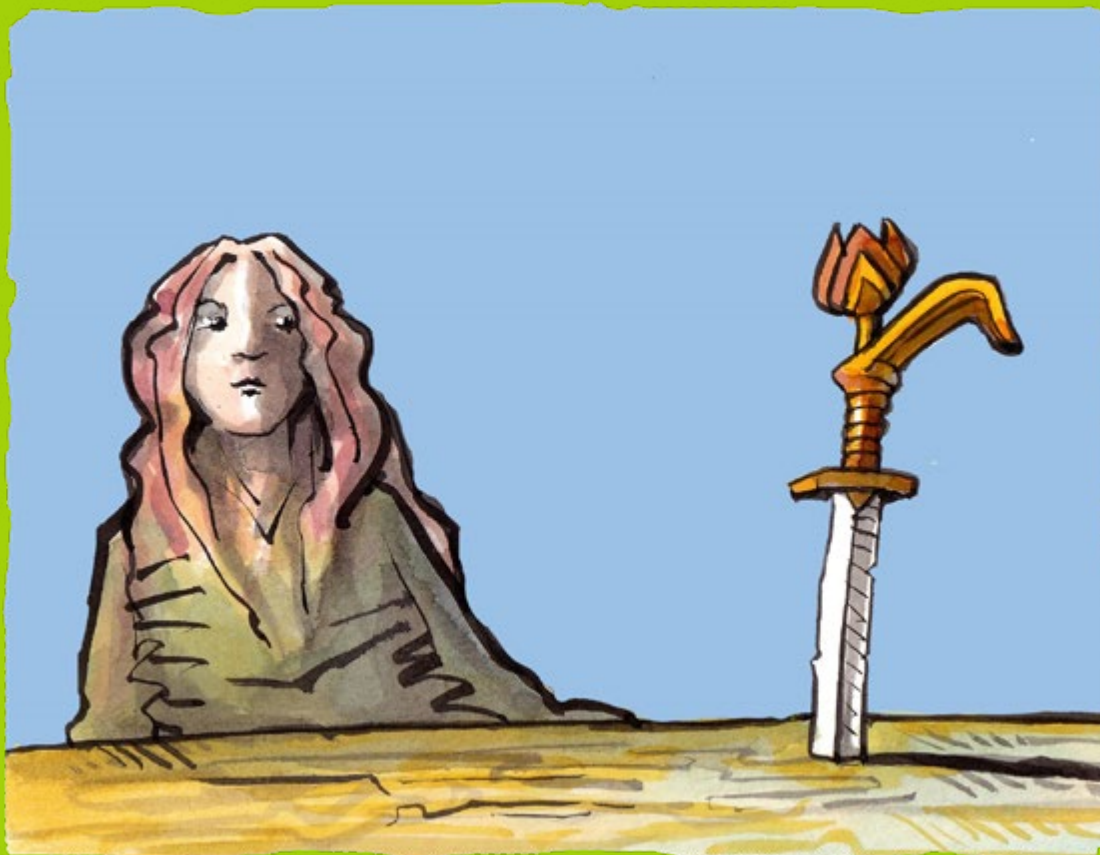


ILLUSTRATION: HENK VAN RUITENBEEK

Be assertive!

Coming from Chile and having lived in Germany for the past four years, I have learned the hard way how honest and straightforward Europeans are when it comes to sharing their opinion. Little did I know, however, that the Dutch would stand out in this respect.

I remember how anxious I was when I realized that most if not all of my classes during the next few periods involved group work. Writing assignments on your own is hard enough; add four or five people and you have madness. You not only need to leave everyone satisfied with the final outcome of your work, but you also have to get used to the very honest and straightforward reviews you get from your peers. Even our professors warned us internationals: the Dutch just go straight to the point. No time wasted. It's like a free-of-charge-and-unexpected reality check, and a coaching experience you never asked for.

As a Latina, I saw the potential on several occasions for fights and friendships destroyed. But that never happened. The Dutch are not just honest and straightforward, they are assertive! And although this can feel harsh at first, it also has its good points. I learned that when Dutch people give you a compliment, they actually mean it. Learning to cope with this environment, I discovered skills I didn't know I had and I realized I'm actually terrible at other things I thought I was good at. Now I can say I have improved a lot academically thanks to the assertive reviews from my peers, but I also learned a very important skill for my future career and life. **📍 Gabriela Escobar Sánchez, Erasmus Student on the MSc in Environmental Management, from Chile**

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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.