

WUR from within: straight, sharp, transparent

No 08

Resource

DECEMBER 2020 VOLUME 15

2020 in questions
Do the WUR quiz!

From both sides
Executive Board
meets XR

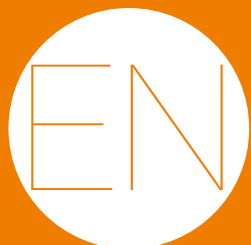
Compulsory jobs
Is that allowed?

Covid-proof action plan
to tackle work pressure

**Lack of
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causing delays

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background stories at
resource-online.nl



FOREWORD

Bright spots

I'm going to write a resignation letter. Has that thought crossed the minds of a lot of teachers lately? It did occur to one of the teachers we spoke to for this issue of *Resource*. The coronavirus has increased teachers' workload considerably and the light at the end of the tunnel is still just a faint pinprick. Teachers Ute, Hannie and Ronald talk openly about how they came close to collapse (pages 12–15). Their frank accounts show just how resilient our teachers can be. For some light relief, I recommend the annual *Resource* quiz (page 16) or the heart-warming interview (page 24) with the people behind WURth-while, which offers asylum seekers free WUR courses. Another tip: the Executive Board talks to the protest group Extinction Rebellion. Can they find common ground (page 18)? Plus, as ever, there are lots of WUR news stories, science items and features in this *Resource*, the last one of 2020. On behalf of the editorial team, I would like to wish all our readers a fine festive season with family and friends, whether face-to-face or online. We are keeping going: a new issue of *Resource* will appear on 14 January. A limited print run will be available in the racks on campus, or you can read it online via Issuu or our website resource-online.nl.

Willem Andrée
editor-in-chief





GENESIS

You can't ignore it. *Genesis*, the vast stained-glass artwork above the inner courtyard in Plus Ultra II, grabs your attention immediately. Watch out for a crick in your neck, though: it costs time to take in the artwork, which measures 10x5 metres. The Dutch artist Marius de Leeuw (1915-2000) made it in 1961 as the side wall of the chapel in De Braacken care home in Vught. When the care home was redeveloped, there was no room for the chapel. Kadans founder Wim Boers, who is from Vught, bought *Genesis* for one euro subject to the condition that he would give it a prime position in one of the Kadans buildings. He chose Plus Ultra II. The former glass facade is now a ceiling and LED lights have replaced the sunlight. RK

Photo Guy Ackermans

ERC grants

Professors Rutgerd Boelens (Water Governance and Social Justice) and Joris Sprakel (Physical Chemistry and Soft Matter) have received European grants worth two million euros each for new, ground-breaking research. Boelens studies the allocation of rights to river water around the world. Sprakel researches chemical bonds that become stronger when subjected to stress. RK



Wageningen Walks Together

Do you feel like going for a walk with someone other than your roommate or your regular walking buddy? Then sign up for Wageningen Walks Together! The idea is simple:

1. Send an email using your WUR account to resource@wur.nl
2. Write 'WWT' in the subject line
3. Tell us which day next week you want to go for a lunchtime walk...
4. ... and whether you want to meet on campus or in the town centre.

We will pair you up with another lunchtime walker and we'll set up a meeting, including time and location.

NB: To register for walks in the week of Monday 28 December, please send us an email by Wednesday 23 December. To register for walks in the week of Monday 4 January, please send us an email by Wednesday 30 December. Also, keep an eye on our social media accounts.

Internship? 'Come along after the coronavirus'

A lack of internships and thesis places is causing delays for students.

Since the coronavirus epidemic started, students have had difficulty finding internships and places for graduation projects. This is causing them to fall behind with their studies. Dean of Education Arnold Bregt: 'You often need to do lab work or fieldwork for your thesis. But lab capacity is lower because of the Covid measures and human interaction is more difficult in studies such as Nutrition and Health. There is simply less chance of a physical graduation thesis place.' On top of that, teachers have less time available for thesis supervision because they spend so much time on online and blended education. 'That adds to the capacity problem.'

Internships

Internships are also hard to find. Bregt: 'Many companies are not

taking people on right now: "Come along after the coronavirus," they say. Some degree programmes allow you to write a second thesis rather than doing an internship. That can be a solution for students who are interested in the research side. Others have so many problems with the thesis that they would rather do an internship.'

'A working group of about 15 lecturers and professors from different parts of WUR will be looking at the issue,' says Bregt. 'We will identify what exactly is happening and look at how we could help. For example, could some lecture halls be converted into labs so as to increase the capacity? What are the options for online internships? I don't yet have an answer but I'm curious to see what creative solutions they come up with.' LZ



Students often have to do lab work or fieldwork for their thesis. That is more difficult to arrange now because of the pandemic. Photo Eddy Teenstra

Teachers still have a high workload

85 per cent of WUR teachers say the work pressure has increased since the pandemic.

This finding comes from an evaluation by Tim Stevens (Education and Learning Sciences). 'The workload was already high before Covid,' says Stevens. 'Then it increased further still in periods 5 and 6 of last academic year due to the switch to online teaching. Teachers had more time to prepare for period 1 of this academic year, and more options for a blended approach with a mix of online and in-person classes. Teachers are highly motivated to give the best possible education, so many teachers have put in more time

to get it right. Some of those teachers are now more optimistic about the quality of their teaching but others say this has just increased the work pressure and stress.' Stevens expects the workload to stay high

'The organization and logistics have become much more complex and demanding'

for now and he warns that teachers cannot keep this up for much longer. 'This is also what some of the teachers say when replying to the survey's open questions. Many teachers said they were exhausted

after the period of blended online and campus teaching. The organization and logistics have become much more complex and demanding.' LZ

You can find more results from the survey at www.resource-online.nl. See pages 12-15 for some teachers' experiences. If you want updates on this study, you will find a link in the online version of the article to the Microsoft Teams group WUR Education in Covid-19 times: Research results.

Typical Dutch 'Gezellig'



Illustration Henk van Ruitenbeek

Dutch people are hard workers but they also know how to have fun. That's what I have discovered since I moved to Wageningen. Before moving to the Netherlands, I had the wrong idea that Dutch people were very serious. That's true when they work. However, they concentrate their working hours so they can finish early and enjoy their free time. It

was very difficult for me to adapt to that because as an Italian I always had a long break for lunch. Then I started to follow the Dutch routine and now I too have a lot of hours left to do sport and see my friends. What surprised me most was what happened after I made some Dutch friends.

They really know how to have fun. I felt part of their group immediately as they asked me a lot of questions about Italy. Even in Covid times with no parties allowed, they know how to make an evening 'gezellig' (like cosy but there's no real translation). You need just a few friends, some beers and sometimes a board game called Catan. They also

love cooking together and I have been introduced to traditional Dutch dishes like *Boerenkool*, a typical winter meal of mashed potatoes with kale.

I want to conclude with an anecdote.

This week I wanted to buy a big Christmas tree from a market gardener just outside Wageningen. My Dutch friend said:

'Don't worry! We don't need a car... we have a bike!' She put the tree on the basket of her bike and cycled through a storm holding onto the tree with one hand. Dutch people really do everything by bike.

The Dutch may be serious but they know how to make an evening 'gezellig'

Do you have a nice anecdote about your experience of going Dutch? Send it in! 300 words max. Send it to resource@wur.nl and earn 25 euros and Dutch candy.

This Typical Dutch was sent in by **Marta Battistel**, an MSc Biology student from Italy.

68,730

That is how much was raised in euros for an emergency fund for students in dire financial need because of the coronavirus pandemic. To date, 24 students have received emergency support. Most of the students applying are international students who have got behind in their studies due to the pandemic. There is still funding available. You can find a link to the application page in the article about this on our website. LZ

Work pressure action plan

WUR has updated its measures for tackling work pressure. This was prompted by the coronavirus crisis plus a request by the ministry of Social Affairs to draw up an action plan.

In the past few years, the Executive Board has given the extra income from growing student numbers to the chair groups to let them hire more teachers. These investments appeared to have reduced the work pressure among teaching staff by the start of 2020, but the coronavirus threw a spanner in the works.

In the action plan, Arnold Bregt notes that Wageningen teachers' pleasure in their work has declined due to the coronavirus crisis and online teaching.

WUR had already taken measures to reduce work pressure, such as chair massages and courses on 'dealing with stress'. But the campaign group WOinActie and many lecturers find this Vital@work programme an insult as it treats work pressure and stress as an individual problem and not a systemic issue.

The board is now considering new measures to reduce the workload. Earlier this autumn, the board allocated millions more euros to the chair groups for extra teachers and now the groups will be getting 3000 euros each for a student assistant. WUR also wants to reduce the administrative burden for lecturers. The WUR Council will discuss the action plan in January. AS



The best of 2020

If you are at a loose end during lockdown, why not vote for the 2020 Resource Cover Prize? Online voting for the best PhD thesis cover starts the week before Christmas on the Resource website. A new feature this year: in addition to the public poll, a jury will consider the 10 selected covers. Both assessments will get equal weight. You have until Friday 8 January 2021, 12:00 midday Dutch time, to cast your vote. resource-online.nl

New Young Academy member

Meteorologist Chiel van Heerwaarden has been chosen as a member of the Young Academy, part of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences. As a member of this select group of 50 young academics, he wants to shift the focus from quantity to quality in the evaluation of scientists. He also thinks a wider range of skills should be considered when assessing researchers. 'For example, it costs a lot of time to write software and build datasets but such work is seldom rewarded.' WUR currently has two Young Academy members: marine ecologist Lisa Becking is the other. Van Heerwaarden studies the influence of clouds on the power generated by solar panels. RK

► Wim de Vries: nitrogen law is ambitious

Minister of Agriculture Carola Schouten's nitrogen bill, which was tightened last week to make sure it got enough support to pass in Parliament, is very ambitious, says WUR nitrogen expert Prof. Wim de Vries. We cannot achieve the target of a 50 per cent reduction in emissions of nitrogen compounds in 15 years with technical measures alone.

First the Cabinet wanted reductions of 26 per cent by 2030 whereas the Remkes commission had recommended 50 per cent by 2030. Now Schouten's negotiations with three opposition parties have led to an

The Netherlands cannot achieve its targets with technical measures and tailored solutions alone

obligation to cut levels by 50 per cent by 2035. 'You won't achieve that just with technical measures, such as less protein in animal feed, separating out manure, diluting manure and low-emission barns,' says De Vries. Livestock numbers need to come down too. Buying up livestock farms near nature areas does not do much to help the nitrogen emissions situation. 'The blanket of nitrogen compounds covering all of the Netherlands needs to be reduced. I'm all for tailored solutions near nature areas but you also need generic policies to achieve the target.' De Vries thinks the first priority is to get clarity on what farmers need to do. 'You need policy for large-scale farmers who want an intensive, sustainable business under strict emission rules and policy for farmers who want an extensive setup and to be paid for eco-system services. In addition, you can buy out some of the farmers.' AS

Read a longer version of the interview with De Vries on resource-online.nl

Fat particles cause puddle of water on yoghurt

Some people mix it in while others prefer to drain the layer of water that forms on the top of yoghurt. But the unappetizing puddle may soon disappear thanks to a new WUR discovery.

Like cottage cheese, paint and coatings, yoghurt is a type of gel: a liquid containing small particles that hold it together. Given enough time, the particles separate from the water in a process known as syneresis. But some gels seem more prone to this process than others. Thomas Kodger and his colleagues in the Physical Chemistry and Soft Matter chair group have discovered why: it all depends on the particles the gel consists of.

Molecular friction

Not every gel has the same components. Gels like yoghurt contain droplets of fat that hold the liquid together while other gels, like paint, contain solid particles. These particles slowly attract each other and form clumps, expelling water like a sponge being squeezed. The type of particle in the gel affects how this process works. Fat forms smooth round droplets that glide past each other, pushing away the water. Solid particles, by contrast, are more angular and have a rougher surface, making it more difficult for them to slide past each other. As a result, they push away less water and display less syneresis than occurs in gels with fat particles, like yoghurt.

The researchers did not make their discovery in a bowl of yoghurt but in an artificial system in the lab. 'Edible gels contain all sorts of ingredients that could affect the study of syneresis,' explains Kodger. That is why the researchers simplified their

Smooth particles push away the water more easily

gel down to three essential components: water, particles and a soapy

substance. The latter forms a stabilizing layer around the particles. Because they used the same soap and conditions in making both gels, the type of particle was the only possible explanation for the difference in syneresis.

Rough coating

Now researchers know that the smooth exterior of fat droplets exacerbates syneresis in gels they can find a solution for it. One solution might already be in the works at WUR. Researchers at Biobased Chemistry & Technology are designing a substance that forms an edible layer around fat droplets. 'The layer is rough, making it harder for the fat droplets to glide past each other easily,' Kodger says. He suspects that this rough coating will reduce the puddle of water on top of your yoghurt. Research in the coming year will show whether that is really what happens. NVTWH



Photo Shutterstock.com



A Little Wiser

Isn't alcohol-free wine just grape juice?

Alcohol-free drinks, particularly beer but also wine, are growing in popularity,' says Karin Schroën, professor of Food Process Engineering. 'Not just as a stand-in for when you aren't allowed alcohol but as part of a healthy diet.'

Alcohol-free and regular wine are both made from the same basic ingredients: grape juice and yeast. Unlike pure grape juice, alcohol-free wine goes through a fermentation process. 'There are two ways to make alcohol-free wine,' says Schroën. 'You can use yeasts that produce very little alcohol. Genetically modified yeasts make that possible, but not everyone's a fan of that.'

Alternatively, you can extract the alcohol after fermentation by means of distillation. There are various methods, including using low pressure to transform the alcohol into a gas. Schroën: 'But distillation also removes the volatile flavour compounds. Those flavour compounds can be recovered from the residue afterwards and put back in the wine. In practice that turns out to be easier than trying to remove only the alcohol.'

There is one problem: flavour compounds are more soluble in water with alcohol than in pure water. 'That makes it difficult to achieve the same flavour profile in an alcohol-free wine. Because

fewer flavour compounds dissolve in water, it tastes different to regular wine.' A sobering fact: alcohol-free wine is usually not completely alcohol-free. As long as it contains less than 0.5 per cent alcohol it is legally allowed to be labelled alcohol-free. A small amount of leftover alcohol often stays behind during the production process and most alcohol-free wines contain between 0.02 and 0.05 per cent alcohol. Incidentally, that applies to most fruit juices too, says Schroën. 'All fruit juices ferment a bit of their own accord.' It's a technical challenge but there are some wines that really don't contain any alcohol at all and are therefore halal. TL

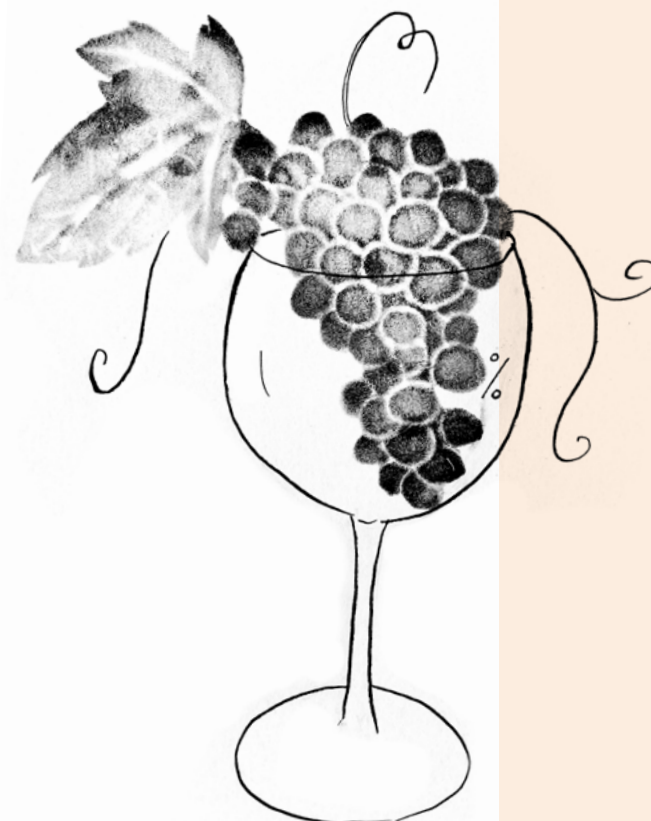
'Flavour compounds are more soluble in water with alcohol than in pure water'

Karin Schroën, professor of Food Process Engineering

Every day we are bombarded with masses of sometimes contradictory information on pressing issues. In this feature, a WUR scientist gives you something to hold on to. What are the facts of the matter?

Every question makes you a little wiser. Do you dare to ask yours? Email us at redactie@resource.nl

Illustration Marly Hendricks



Palm oil is bad for the environment, but not *that* bad

European sunflower oil and rapeseed oil are not necessarily better for nature and the environment than palm oil from the tropical rainforests of Indonesia and Malaysia, according to a new study published in *Nature*.

Palm oil plantations in Southeast Asia have certainly destroyed large swathes of tropical rainforest, including orangutan habitats, while the resulting land drainage and forest fires create massive CO₂ emissions and reduce biodiversity. But other oil crops do not score much higher, shows the study, which emeritus professor of Wildlife Ecology and Conservation Herbert Prins contributed to. Oil palm is a highly efficient crop, producing 39 per cent of the world's cooking oil on 'just' 22.5 million hectares, or 6.6 per cent of the global oil crop acreage. Soya beans perform considerably worse in that regard, producing much less oil from an acreage five times larger. The soya industry therefore causes far more deforestation than palm oil plantations.

Red List

The 'European oil crops' score remarkably poorly too. Crops like rapeseed and sunflowers yield three to four times less oil than oil palm, despite covering a greater surface. Admittedly, those fields

Cultivation of rapeseed and sunflowers for oil also endangers many Red List animals

have not been carved out of tropical rainforest. But they do not capture CO₂ in the form of trees, and they use large amounts of fertilizer and pesticides. The researchers also looked at biodiversity, including how many mammals, amphibians and birds in the cooking oil producing areas are on the Red List maintained by the conservation organization IUCN. Oil palm cultivation in Indonesia and Malaysia threatens 472 species on the Red List, while in Europe rapeseed and sunflowers endanger 227 and 189 species respectively. Considerably fewer, in other words, but still a lot. The researchers' conclusion: don't single out palm oil when it comes to sustainable agriculture. *AS*



Oil palm. Photo Shutterstock



Finally: a way to eradicate red mites

Heating your chicken barn to at least 45°C kills all red mites.

If poultry farmers heat their barns to at least 45°C before new laying hens arrive, all the red mites in the barn will be killed, a WUR study shows. Poultry farmers keep their laying hens for 80 to 90 weeks, after which they are replaced.

Red mites are a tricky pest to deal with. They live in cracks and holes and crawl out

Red mite is a tricky pest to deal with

at night to suck the blood of the chickens as they roost. Wageningen researchers had already shown that pesticides have little effect in a barn with a lot of dust, and

cracks where the mites can hide.

But it now turns out that heating the barn between two groups of laying hens is a good option. Researcher Monique Mul and two Master's students placed nylon bags containing red mites or their eggs in four empty poultry barns in six different places, for example in cracks between two wooden planks, in the air vent or under a layer of manure. Then the barn was heated to 45°C or more with a pellet stove. This temperature was maintained for at least 48 hours. Afterwards, all the red mites and their eggs were dead.

Heating the barns of laying hens is an effective method for eradicating red mites, concludes Mul and her co-authors in the journal *Veterinary Parasitology*. *AS*

Drenthe's 'stray deer' can stay

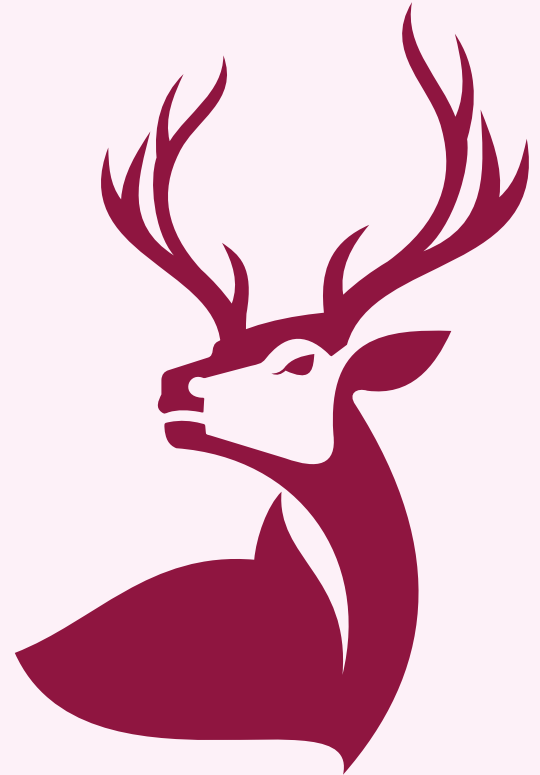
The red deer that took up solitary residence in Drenthe some time ago will not be culled after all, the provincial government decided last week. A good decision, thinks animal ecologist Hugh Jansman, whose team has been researching the animal's genetic background. 'A robust population requires freedom of movement.'

Initially the province insisted the deer had to be shot, but it backed down from that position last week. Partly due to pressure from nature lovers, who delivered a petition with 27,000 signatures, the hunting rifle will not be dusted off unless the deer causes damage or becomes a nuisance. 'So the province is choosing to interpret the zero tolerance policy as a zero damage policy,' suspects Jansman. As researchers into the genetic makeup of red deer populations in the Netherlands, Jansman and his colleagues in the Animal Ecology team (Wageningen Environmental Research) are quite often asked to trace the origins of 'stray deer.' 'Migration is entirely natural behaviour for red deer. We just make it much more difficult with our fences and rules. I do enjoy seeing a deer just doing its own thing, showing that we don't have everything under perfect control in our neat and tidy Netherlands.'

Natural selection

According to Jansman, traffic and agricultural interests are the main reasons red deer have so little space for migra-

tion in the Netherlands. Isolation can undermine the vitality of the species, he warns. 'For groups that can mix freely with neighbouring herds, through corridors for example, a population of about four hundred red deer is sufficient to prevent inbreeding. For isolated populations that number is much higher: 4000. We don't even reach that number in the whole of the Netherlands, which has at most 2500 red deer,' he concludes. Then there is also the intensive management of deer populations. Every year around 50 per cent of the Dutch red deer population is culled. 'What impact does that have on the resilience of our red deer population?' Jansman asks rhetorically. He tells the story of an unmanaged red deer population in Scotland, in which the calving period moved forward by several weeks over 40 years as a genetic response to climate change. Jansman: 'Aren't we literally killing off genetic adaptations to, for instance, the changing climate among Dutch red deer? Natural selection barely gets a chance.' When asked for a solution, he men-



'Aren't we literally killing off genetic adaptations to the changing climate among Dutch red deer?'

tions the perspective adopted by the map of the Netherlands in 2120. 'With much more space for well-connected nature areas, where thriving populations of wild animals can live and apex predators like the wolf are free to do their thing. That way it won't be a fight between nature and agriculture like it is now and we won't be such gardeners of nature as we are now.' ME

'I do enjoy seeing a deer just doing its own thing'

A dream

In the blurb after my name at the bottom of these columns, it says I dream of keeping a few cows of my own one day. Someone recently asked whether I couldn't think of anything better. Something better than a cow? No!

During my final years as an undergraduate, I kept ending up in projects relating to cattle farming and nature conservation. It's no different now I'm doing my PhD research. You're always with cows, some of my friends say. I don't mind at all. Despite everything, there's great potential wherever people, cows and nature meet.

In order to really understand that combination, it's essential to get outside regularly. You have to talk to farmers and other stakeholders.

'Why not get some dwarf goats, they say. Much easier'

Look at birds and plants. But sometimes I wonder if that's enough for me, whether I shouldn't start keeping a few cows of my own. To explore that interface between agriculture and nature myself, albeit on a miniature scale.



Vincent Oostvogels

Of course I know that it's perfectly possible to research cattle farming without keeping cows yourself. And I know keeping a couple of cows wouldn't give me any insight into the choices 'real' cattle farmers face. And yet, the idea of having my own cows won't let me go.

Still, I get discouraging advice from all sides. You can talk about having children as if it's the most normal thing in the world but bring up the idea of a few cows and most people only see objections. Why not get some dwarf goats, they say. Much easier.

Having your own cows can soon seem unachievable. Especially if, like me, you didn't grow up on a farm. Of course, keeping cows is a lot of work and to be fair I don't know how exactly I would set it all up, particularly in the immediate future. But surely, at some point in the distant future, it must be possible?

Vincent Oostvogels (25) is in the first year of a PhD on biodiversity recovery in dairy farming. His dream is to be able to keep a few cows of his own one day.

Teachers in times of Covid-19

ON THE EDGE

Wageningen lecturers are drowning in work. Work pressure and stress have increased enormously because of the coronavirus and there are hardly any silver linings. Three lecturers describe how they (almost) crashed. 'I wanted to resign.'

Photos Guy Ackermans



Text Albert Sikkema

'You hear from teachers everywhere that it's become busier,' says Ute Sass-Klaassen. 'More students are requesting guidance and because of the coronavirus crisis it all has to be done from behind a computer.' Work has only got busier in recent months for the prize-winning lecturer in Forest Ecology and Forest Management who frequently makes the teacher of the year shortlist. Her inbox is overflowing with questions and requests for supervision. 'I feel like I'm juggling ten balls at the same time. Sometimes I'm stretched past my limits. I always have to be doing something, I can't sit still or take a moment to unwind. I don't have enough time for reflection, it's constantly full steam ahead. But I still feel I don't have enough time for student supervisions. I taught very intensively for eight weeks in the first period. Afterwards there was a huge mountain of tasks and emails waiting for me. You really have to build in some down time after a period of teaching like that, but I can't anymore. That has consequences for my private life: I don't have much time for family and friends and I do everything in a rush.'

Kick

Sass-Klaassen knows she is on the edge, but she just is a very dedicated teacher. 'I worry about the quality of

education. The groups are getting bigger and I can see the distance between teachers and students growing. I know what good teaching looks like: a team of enthusiastic teachers who are experts in their field and can provide students with up-to-date knowledge and applicable skills. I love designing new courses, with excursions, enthusiastic guest lecturers, and practical sessions all falling into place like pieces of a puzzle. And I want to be able to teach in a certain atmosphere, with a group that forms a bond by the end of the course. Managing that gives me a real kick, but I have to do more and more to get that kick.'

When the going gets tough, she gets stressed easily. 'The last few months we had trouble with the student registration system Osiris which made it difficult to find good internships for the students—I'm also the internship coordinator. When we heard that we had to change how we coordinate internships and theses, giving us even more work to do, that was the final straw. What use are emails thanking me for my efforts when at the same time they pull stunts like this!?'

Winging it

There is a clear pattern among the Wageningen teachers. They are motivated, want to deliver good teaching, and are now hitting the wall because they are doing too much. That is not just because the growing number of students means they have to do more supervision. It is

'I BECAME A
DEADLINE JUNKIE'



Hannie van der Honing

also because of the coronavirus crisis, which meant they had to scramble together an online teaching system and now barely see their students.

Ronald Osinga, a lecturer in Marine Animal Ecology, was already suffering from stress and a high workload before the coronavirus crisis. 'In our group, the number of thesis students has grown particularly fast. Last academic year I supervised at least 20 theses, a personal record. Supervising theses has become my core business. I can't do any research acquisition or write my own articles anymore.'

Then came the lockdown. 'I was in my bedroom recording all sorts of videos for my lectures. That cost a lot of time. You have to prepare them and sometimes you need three takes to get the recording right. I could see the piles of work growing. I was flying through all sorts of tasks, but I was winging it. Too often I found myself thinking: if we had discussed and thought through this student project more thoroughly we could have got more out of it.'

'Our chair group tries to turn down as few students as possible, because we don't want students to have to delay their graduation. But that demands a lot of creativity and produces a lot of extra work. The work piles

up, though the workload does make you more efficient. I became a deadline junkie, but I reached a point where I couldn't keep up anymore. That happened a few times in the past year. Around the summer holidays, that led me to conclude I don't enjoy my work anymore. A startling realization because I'm 53 years old and it's too soon to retire. What I want is to get back to the situation where I have enough time to do things well.'

The last straw

Hannie van der Honing, a lecturer at the Laboratory for Cell Biology, also ran aground this year. Her stress levels had been rising in recent years too. First she put a lot of extra time into developing a course in English, then she worked long hours teaching after the introduction of the Extended Daytime Schedule, and then came the switch from Blackboard to Brightspace. And student numbers were growing the whole time.

The coronavirus crisis was the final straw. 'In period 5, I taught a course for 235 students. Campus closed the Thursday before the course began. We had to switch very quickly to an online format. I spent days at the computer in my kitchen putting everything in Brightspace while trying to help my daughter with her school-



 Ronald Osinga

work at the same time. Within ten days of lockdown I got such bad RSI I couldn't slice a pizza.'

Van der Honing is a highly motivated teacher, so what did she do? 'I switched to making videos, together with a colleague, for the online practicals. I would record the voiceover for the videos in WhatsApp and my colleague made films with the microscope. I also made quizzes and asked my husband to put them on Brightspace in the weekends, because I couldn't do it myself anymore. The students were enthusiastic about the videos, which was very energizing.'

'But after the exams I fell into a motivation slump. I had to teach another course in period 6 and I was dreading it. The microscopy practicals had to be done online for that course too, so I had to make videos again. But there was almost no live interaction with the students, and that affected me. Normally you can see if students are picking up the material and that gives me energy, but online you don't get any impression of that. When students criticized the course I felt personally hurt. Most of the students actually gave positive feedback, but I didn't

see it that way. In retrospect I think that was a sign that I wasn't doing well. The students felt alone, I felt alone, but this online Covid teaching was the only option.'

Resignation letter

She went on holiday, a lovely relaxing break. 'But when I had to do a training course in my first week back on the new exam system ANS I started to panic: I don't want to deal with this too! In period 1 I taught a course and the odd practical. I started getting panic attacks and I couldn't sleep. Colleagues noticed the change in me and saw the tears welling up when they asked how I was doing. I thought to myself, I'm going to write my resignation letter. But then I thought: no, better to call in sick.' Three months later, Van der Honing is still working and is sleeping well again. 'I'm enjoying my work again, I don't know why. Maybe it's because of the contact with students. I'm now teaching three groups of 12 students and that's fun, it gives me energy.'

She's still dealing with an extra workload because of the Covid-19 rules. 'In January we have a course for over 100 students. Normally we'd do the practicals in a big lecture hall. Now, because of the Covid-19 regulations, we have to offer each practical five times to smaller groups.

Hopefully we can after this lockdown. We also have to put everything online, because students with colds have to be able to follow the practicals from home.’ But Van der Honing is taking better care of herself. ‘I’ve stopped working weekends and I regularly go running during the day. I’m only working four to six extra hours per week; I know colleagues who are working far longer hours.’

Success

Ronald Osinga has also managed to get a handle on his situation. ‘We talked about potential solutions with the group. We’re taking on two additional lecturers. That will relieve some of the pressure. The new lecturers are starting now, which will allow me to clear my schedule and spend two months working on an EU proposal. This proposal came up unexpectedly, but it’s a huge opportunity. So, in consultation with my colleagues, I’m jettisoning my other tasks. It’s an enormous help to me; now I can focus on my own research for a while.’ Osinga is also going to start supervising PhD and Master’s students again, but far fewer than last year.

Ute Sass-Klaassen has not found a solution yet. ‘I like to do a variety of things, because I can incorporate all of those experiences in my teaching. I can’t muster the energy for projects like the Twitter tree, which I used to do in weekends. I would like to have a younger colleague working alongside me.’

Van der Honing heard the rector say that lecturers struggling with their workload might have to lower the quality of their teaching. ‘But Wageningen lecturers

‘THE STUDENTS FELT ALONE, I FELT ALONE’

‘I’VE STOPPED WORKING WEEKENDS’

don’t want to do that. You have to go for quality, to help your students, even in these difficult times. It’s that high quality that gives me energy.’ But that quality is under pressure, says Ronald Osinga. ‘Student satisfaction is going down, because WUR’s strength is the high number of contact hours and those are now being squeezed. It’s nice that that WUR has been named the best university in the Netherlands for the 16th time, but in our group we sometimes say we’re the victims of our own success.’ ■



Ute Sass-Klaassen

20 QUESTIONS ABOUT 2020

The news this year was dominated by the coronavirus. And yet life went on, and we did the best we could – as you can see from the subjects touched on in the 2020 News Quiz. The answers are on page 31. But have a go first.

Text Roelof Kleis



01

An anonymous party placed a piano in the wetland garden near Atlas in the summer as a protest. Against what?

- A WUR doesn't do enough for students' musical education
- B WUR refuses to put a piano in the Forum for general use
- C WUR needs to change its tune on the matter of attracting companies
- D WUR should not sacrifice academic integrity to the private sector

02

In the film *Boy meets Gun*, which was partly shot on campus, a Wageningen professor plays a leading role. Who?

- A Professor of Evolutionary Philosophy Maarten Moreau
- B Professor of Human Nutrition and Health Sander Kersten
- C Professor of Climate and Phenology Arnold van Vliet
- D Professor of Evolutionary Virology Gorben Pijlman

PhD candidate Boy van Droffelaar shows that leaders get better by spending a week

- A stacking shelves in a supermarket
- B joining in on the shop floor
- C meditating in a monastery
- D camping in the jungle

20

The battle against single-use cups saw the introduction of a new alternative, the Billie Cup. What is it made of?

- A Recycled paper
- B Plastic
- C PLA
- D Wood

15



WHO SAID WHAT?

Connect the quote to the right person

'I've always been a sower.' (A)

(1) Joris Sprakel in his inaugural lecture

'I'm not naturally optimistic.' (B)

(2) Sports fanatic Paula Harkes in her thesis

'You don't have to excel in every part to get on stage.' (C)

(3) Teacher of the Year Arie Nieuwenhuizen in his acknowledgements

'I enjoy telling stories.' (D)

(4) Parent adviser Hermien Miltenburg in her farewell interview

19

16

Upfield, a former Unilever division, is coming to campus to work on plant-based

- A butter
- B margarine
- C desserts
- D milk

17

The Rotterdam police rushed to the Erasmus Bridge in force because of plastic researcher Paul Vriend. Why?

- A They thought he was throwing plastic in the water
- B They thought he was a terrorist
- C They thought he wanted to jump off the bridge
- D They weren't thinking anything: it was a false alarm

18

WUR students won the 4TU Impact Challenge. With what?

- A A collapsible home workspace
- B A juice made of cacao pulp
- C A vending machine for herbs
- D A wave breaker

Katharina Hanika won Science's annual Dance your PhD competition with a...

- A breakdance
- B clog dance
- C belly dance
- D street dance

14



'The development of the coronavirus is very worrying; it could turn into a global epidemic.' Who was so prophetic? In February!

- A Jelke Fros, winner of the Beijerinck Premium for a talented early career virologist
- B Professor of Virology Wim van der Poel, who researches minks and Covid-19
- C Extraordinary professor of Veterinary Arbovirology Jeroen Kortekaas
- D Chair of the Executive Board Louise Fresco, in her column in the newspaper *NRC*

03

Women have written fewer academic articles in the coronavirus period than men. Why?

- A Women don't really like working from home
- B Men who work from home keep getting in the way
- C Women don't get around to writing because of all the housework
- D Men work harder than women when they work from home

04

The Entomology chair group's project *Insects for Peace* retrains former FARC combatants in Columbia to farm insects. Which insects do they farm?

- A The soldier fly
- B The killer bee
- C The locust
- D The fat-bottomed ant

06

Students made a podcast *Taste of Recovery* about the loss of smell and taste. Who for?

- A Flu patients
- B Coronavirus patients
- C Cancer patients
- D Diabetes patients

05

WUR recycles paper as...

- A Toilet paper
- B Serviettes in the canteens
- C Coffee cups
- D Wrapping paper in the WUR shop

07



08

The concept *MyWURSpace*, centred on the idea of a flexible workspace, never made it off the drawing table? Why?

- A We prefer to have our own workspace
- B We prefer working at home
- C The plan proved too expensive
- D Covid put a spanner in the works

12

A typically Dutch bird was in the spotlight at the Opening of the Academic Year. Which one?

- A Lapwing
- B Curlew
- C Godwit
- D Skylark

11

Mark Roosjen received his PhD degree certificate in a golden tube. Why?

- A He was the first PhD student to defend his thesis online
- B He graduated *cum laude*, which gave him the right to a certificate presented in a golden tube
- C He was the 7500th PhD student to graduate from WUR
- D His doctoral research was about the golden triangle of WUR, the government and the private sector

09

PhD student Jarst van Belle cross-bred an indigenous plant for the production of plant-based oil. What is the plant called?

- A Chia
- B Flax
- C Rapeseed
- D Huttentut

10

Rem Koolhaas's exhibition, *Countryside, The Future* featured agricultural innovations including those of Wageningen. Where was it?

- A In Sydney Opera House
- B In the Ciudad de las Artes y las Ciencias in Valencia
- C In the Guggenheim Museum in New York
- D In the Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam

09

Campus has been no smoking since 1 July. Where are you still allowed to smoke?

- A In the toilets
- B On the edges of campus
- C At the bus stops
- D On the Bornsesteeg

13



Executive Board meets XR

The Wageningen Extinction Rebellion campaign group has been protesting for over a year now and efforts have been made to start a dialogue with the Executive Board. Are they getting any closer?

Text Willem Andrée Photos Guy Ackermans



Extinction Rebellion (XR) demands transparency from WUR about collaboration with the private sector. They want a strong policy on the climate and ecological crisis, and they want students and staff to be involved in decision-making. Since the group started protesting they have met with the Executive Board and engaged in a climate policy dialogue with Rector Magnificus Arthur Mol. But XR keeps on protesting. Time to invite one of the XR students Solina Diallo and Executive Board member Rens Buchwaldt and ask them if they are getting any closer.

Solina: 'We want to know what reasons and risks are considered when WUR starts a collaboration with private companies. When Unilever started on campus we found it difficult to find detailed information about the process that led to the decision.'

Rens: 'We can't find all the solutions and answers on our own anymore. There are a lot of challenges in this world and we want to have a positive impact. We feel

the need to work together. This means working together with NGOs and other universities or institutions, as well as private companies. We have a policy on how we would like to engage with companies, which you can now find online. If new companies come to campus there are criteria and intentions that need to be in place. First, they have to be open to being part of our WUR ecosystem. Knowledge institutes have to be active within the domain of WUR and be of interest for our students or researchers. Also, they should share their facilities with us, and vice versa. Can they add something and help us create impact? That is the process we try to engage in with them.'

Solina: 'Of course we should not stay in our ivory tower. But we think that WUR is sending the wrong message. The companies that are on campus are not diverse. They all have the same vision on, for example, the future of the food system. There are many other food systems and visions of sustainability. Right now WUR is focusing on multinationals which create new demands that require a lot of

'It needs to lead
to something'



'WUR is sending the wrong message'

technology and resources, and centralize power within the food system. This sends a message that WUR aims primarily at private sector collaboration.'

Rens: 'You have a good point about the diversity of the ecosystem. We are a scientific institution and we need to widen our horizon. On the other hand, we have 180 parties and companies on campus, so there are many different views present. I agree with you that the companies on campus tend to be the bigger ones. But we recently purchased Nergena, a building between the fields to the north of campus. It is a chance for the smaller organizations to join us that don't want to be in the industrial heart of the campus. NGOs could move in there.'

Solina: 'It is helpful to get an explanation like this. But I still think you should show students and staff more about the processes that are going on, and show us that you see that certain decisions can be controversial.'

Rens: 'If we plan collaboration or new policy, we interact with different stakeholder groups like the WUR Council and the Student Staff Council. But one conversation about a topic is not enough, I agree with you on that. So we also try to engage with others outside these official parties, for example the session Rector Arthur Mol held with XR about the climate crisis. We need to work together.'

Solina: 'And to work on a fundamental change. Wageningen aims to create science with societal impact which is an inherently political act, but shies away from taking a political stance on climate change.'

Rens: 'WUR is a big mix of opinions and we take these into account. So if you look at the future of food, there is not one vision we can declare to be *the* vision. We need to constantly engage in all these different aspects and move forward. Different paths lead in different directions.'

Solina: 'But the political aspect is still missing. The argument we usually hear about this is that WUR is not a political organization. I would love to see WUR acknowledge that there *is* a political component to food production. This should be part of the conversation.'

Rens: 'We have our Social Sciences group that deals with the political side. And in other groups too, we have the socio-economic side, as well as the technical side. The answer isn't only in a political solution or in a technical solution. It's a combination.'

Solina: 'In the strategic plan you can read that we create societal value and are pursuing science that is close to society. Don't you see a conflict there? Don't we inevitably create something political with the science we promote to the world?'

Rens: 'The primary aim is that we want to achieve impact. But to do that, we need to be independent, reliable and honest. We should not make one-sided statements, or we will lose our ability to have an impact. And we will lose our position as a source of knowledge and factual information.'

Solina: 'I'm glad we are having this discussion, but it is a process and we will keep on demonstrating until something



fundamentally changes in the way students and staff are being engaged.'

Rens: 'You should, as long as we can engage about it. It needs to lead to something, not just be demands.' ■

See also wur.nl/transparantie and wur.eu/transparency

The answer to the big questions is seldom clear-cut. In *Two sides*, people with different views on a complex issue engage in dialogue.

Is an 'indirect vaccination obligation' OK?

'NOBODY WILL BE FORCED INTO IT'

People without a Covid-19 vaccination might not be allowed into bars or on planes, suggested minister of Health De Jonge. Would that amount to compulsory vaccination in disguise? No, says WUR ethicist Marcel Verweij. 'It could motivate people to get vaccinated, but I see that as a positive side effect.'



Text Tessa Louwerens

Various polls have shown the number of people planning to get a Covid vaccine hovering around 70 per cent. The question is whether that will be enough to protect the whole country. The minister of Health, Hugo de Jonge, recently suggested that when the Covid-19 vaccine becomes available, people who get the vaccine will be able to return more quickly to 'the old normal'. Those who do not get inoculated might not be allowed to attend events or go to a bar, for instance. That comment rubbed a lot of people up the wrong way, who thought it smacked of covert compulsory vaccination. Allowing more freedoms to people who have been vaccinated is entirely justifiable, according to WUR ethicist Marcel Verweij. He maintains it bears no comparison to compulsory vaccination. Verweij is a professor of Philosophy and for years was a member of the Health Council of the Netherlands' Vaccinations Committee. 'As a human, you have a moral duty to take responsibility and

help prevent the spread of the virus. We're already taking on that responsibility: we don't shake hands, we keep our distance, wear face masks, get tested and go into quarantine. Various measures restrict our freedom and some of those are imposed on us, like the temporary lockdown. Such measures are justified because they help prevent the spread of the virus. But if you get vaccinated, those restrictions will no longer be necessary.'

Freedom

To what extent should the government be allowed to limit people's freedom? 'Restrictions on freedoms should be proportional. That is, no more severe than what's strictly necessary to achieve the goal. You always have to weigh individual freedoms against the public interest.' Our individual freedoms are secured by the constitution, which guarantees every person the right to self-determination. That includes the right to decide what medicines are put in their body. Verweij:

'That's true, but constitutional rights are not absolute. Freedoms can be limited if doing so prevents harm to others. Both the constitution and the European Convention on Human Rights stipulate under which conditions it is justifiable to curb those freedoms. One example is protecting public health. A policy that relaxes certain regulations for vaccinated people can be justified if the vaccine is available to everyone and, even more importantly, if it is clear that vaccination will prevent the spread of the virus and lead to group immunity. Incidentally, we don't know for sure that the latter is true for the Covid-19 vaccines.'

Indirect

Verweij thinks the phrase used by De Jonge – 'indirect vaccination obligation' – was an unfortunate choice. 'Nobody will be forced into it, and those who



Photo Shutterstock.com

refuse the vaccine won't go to prison. That does happen in Belgium, for instance, to those who refuse to vaccinate their children against polio. That really makes vaccination compulsory. For Covid there won't be anything like that – the only coercive element is in the quarantine measures. If the vaccine proves effective at preventing infections and reduces the risk of infecting others, it will offer us another opportunity to take on responsibility for protecting each other. Existing measures like quarantine would then become unnecessary and people who have had the vaccine could get more freedom of movement.' According to Verweij there is another

argument. 'Limits on freedom have to be proportional. If someone who has had the vaccine is forced to quarantine despite not being infectious that would be disproportionate and ethically indefensible.'

Consequences

Verweij thinks we should not see this as a punishment or reward. 'We're now in a situation where there are strict rules. Vaccination offers us a chance to recover more freedoms, because it would eliminate the need to stick to other precautionary measures. If getting vaccinated means that you no longer have to quarantine at home, you're still free to refuse the vaccine. The compulsory part is the quarantine, not the vaccine. There's no question of obligation, covert or otherwise. The same applies to airline companies that require people to show proof of vaccination. It might motivate people to get vaccinated, but I see that as a positive side effect, not as a means of

'THOSE WHO REFUSE THE VACCINE WON'T GO TO PRISON'

'VACCINATION OFFERS US A CHANCE TO RECOVER MORE FREEDOMS'

compulsion. You're free to choose not to get the vaccine, but freedom also means that you have to accept the consequences of your decision.' ■

WUR contributed to the first UN report on soil biodiversity

Soil needs to get off the ground

The UN has published its first report on biodiversity in soil. 'This report aims to put soil on the map,' says one of the initiators, Wim van der Putten.

Text Roelof Kleis

The report *State of Knowledge of Soil Biodiversity* was published on World Soil Day (5 December). This was a special day for extraordinary professor of Functional Biodiversity Wim van der Putten. He can justifiably call the report his baby. Van der Putten played a key role in the decision by the FAO (the UN Food and Agriculture Organization) to produce this review. As one of the editors, he had a big influence, along with soil scientist Peter de Ruiter (WUR Biometris and Global Soil Partnership). With contributions from Liesje Mommer (Plant Ecology and Nature Conservation), Thom Kuijper (Soil Biology), Stefan Geisen (Nematology) and Jaap Bloem (WEnR) as well, WUR has had considerable input.

The report gives an exhaustive overview of the useful services to society delivered by the soil and soil life. But it remains unclear how much biodiversity there is in soil.

'That's right, we don't know. Estimates say 24 to 40 per cent of the biodiversity on the planet is in the soil. We do know that most of the biodiversity is microbial. A couple of years ago, I estimated for a piece in *Nature* that a handful of earth will contain 5000 different species. The question is how you extrapolate that handful to the planet.'

Is that a weakness?

'No. The importance of biodiversity lies in the network that determines the soil functions. It doesn't really matter whether a handful of earth contains 5000 species or 5010.'

I also didn't see an opinion on the state of the soils around the world. What kind of a state are they in?

'I would have liked to include that too, preferably with maps. But it turned out to be a step too far. That's a pity. The FAO policymakers were more interested in a report that gave a clear overview of everything. The next challenge is a report like that with distribution maps and an assessment of the state.'

What kind of a state are Dutch soils in?

'We don't yet have a good picture of the biodiversity in the Netherlands either. We currently have the project "Under Ground Level", funded by the National Postcode Lottery, in which we are making a start on a soil biodiversity atlas for the Netherlands. We will be setting up a calibration centre in Lelystad and at the Netherlands Institute of Ecology in Wageningen, where I also work. We will have demonstration projects there to determine the biodiversity in Dutch soils and we will work on a database as a model for worldwide distribution maps.'

Is such a special position for soil diversity necessary? If the biodiversity above ground is fine, surely it will be below ground too?

'That's the question. If I say our soils are not in a good condition, many people in the Netherlands will be very indignant. "What do you mean, not in a good condition? We have the most productive farmland in the world. Surely the soil can't be poor?" But our intensive grassland soils are currently in the same state from a

'The soil biology, the soil life, is crucial for the supply of ecosystem services.' Photo Shutterstock.com



soil biology perspective as the arable land. And there is a lot of room for improvement in the soil biodiversity of arable land. Too often, soil is considered from a physical and chemical perspective. But it is the soil biology, the soil life, in particular that is crucial to the supply of ecosystem services such as carbon sequestration, curbing greenhouse gas emissions, forming the soil structure, suppressing pests and limiting leaching of nutrients such as nitrate into the groundwater.'

What do you see as the three most important recommendations of the report?

'We need to see the soil as a multifunctional whole, we have to protect the soil properly and we have to find ways of producing food that don't ruin the soil.'

Is the current effort to embrace sustainable agriculture a game-changer for soil?

'That depends on how it turns out in practice for the soil. Sometimes sound policy is drawn up but what happens in practice is very different to what you had expected. So I'm cautious. The important thing is for soil in all its glory and in all the system's facets to be taken into account in policy.'

What is the biggest challenge for soil researchers at the moment?

'Look beyond soil and link up with other disciplines such as crop research, crop breeding and biodiversity studies. We actually started doing that in the 1990s, connecting up what happens below ground to what happens above ground. We need to open up the black box of the soil and translate this into something people can understand and appreciate. If you build on a plot of grassland, you lose not just the grass but also the soil and all its biodiversity and functions. If people can realize that and act on that basis, then we will really have achieved something. Soil needs to become mainstream.' ■

'If you build on a plot of grassland, you lose not just the grass but also the soil and all its biodiversity'



FROM ASYLUM CENTRE TO WUR: FREE COURSES FOR REFUGEES

Wageningen University is offering various free courses for asylum seekers in its WURth-while project. The people behind this initiative hope that it will let the participants feel like ordinary students again rather than refugees. They get a buddy to show them the ropes.



Text Coretta Jongeling

You have to wait a long time to get your residence permit. I want to put that time to good use,' explains Rania

Hayiou (29), a Syrian refugee. She is one of the WURth-while participants this period. Ellinore van Driel is a volunteer and coordinator for the project: 'WURth-while is intended for asylum seekers who have arrived recently in the Netherlands and attended university in their home country. They can do up to four courses at WUR, one per period. The courses are in a variety of subjects

from Programming in Python to Immunology & Thermoregulation.' Van Driel checks whether the course fits with the participant's knowledge and previous experience. Then she pairs them up with a buddy, a Dutch student who can help them with practical matters and show them the ropes in Wageningen. 'Of course, we prefer to do that face to face so all the participants and buddies can meet one another. But it mostly has to be online now, which is a bit less personal.'

Intercultural

Rania Hayiou is doing the Intercultural Communication course. She lives in the asylum centre in Wageningen and is originally from Aleppo in Syria. After a long and difficult journey, she ended up in the Netherlands, where she applied for asylum. She studied Arabic literature in Syria. She is very pleased she registered for WURth-while. 'You have to wait a long time to get your residence permit. I want to put that time to good use and develop some skills. I want to improve my English and Dutch, and get to know young people in Wageningen. I

also think it's very useful to learn about intercultural communication as people from so many different cultures live in the Netherlands.'

Sifra Eigenraam (23), a Nutrition and Health MSc student, is Rania's buddy. 'A friend told me about this project and I thought it would be interesting to get to know someone from a different culture. At first, I helped Rania with her studies, for example following a lecture online or using TimeEdit.' Rania: 'Studying here is so different to Syria. There we did everything on paper.' 'But it's not just



Rania Hayiou (right) with her buddy Sifra Eigenraam. Photo Duncan de Fey

‘Studying here is so different to Syria’

Rediscover yourself

In the most recent period, 13 asylum seekers studied at Wageningen University. Five had done courses before this period. Rania also intends to continue in January and has chosen Career Exploration. ‘What do I enjoy, what would I want to do in the Netherlands? I really need to rediscover myself. I have now lived in Wageningen for a year and I spent a year getting here. It has been so long since I was working and studying. I’d eventually like to get a qualification in social work so that I can help people.’

Van Driel looks back in satisfaction at the recent period. ‘The feedback from both the participants and the buddies has been incredibly positive. We only started the buddy system this period and lots of people say they really value that contact, especially in the current situation.’ There are already 11 applications from asylum centres for the next period. Would you like to be a buddy? ■

about studying,’ adds Sifra. ‘We went for a walk once in the Arboretum to get to know one another better and we want to meet up again soon now Rania’s back in Wageningen.’

That wasn’t possible for a while because Rania was in quarantine in Apeldoorn. She caught the coronavirus and was

not allowed to stay in Wageningen. ‘It wasn’t easy. The quarantine site felt like a prison and I was very sick and short of breath. I also didn’t have a laptop. So even when I started to feel better, I couldn’t get on with my studies, which I was really annoyed about. Fortunately, I can catch up on those assignments.’

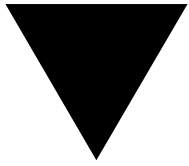


Hello Louise, hi there Arthur, Surprise! I've just come to say goodbye as I'm about to retire. We won't be holding any receptions in January either. So we probably won't see one another again. That's why I thought What a shame. Are your offices also really quiet because everyone's working from home? It's good though enjoyed working with you. But now I have to get going with my barrel organ. We're expected in the town to my New Year's speech on www.wageningen.nl/nieuwjaarstoespraak. I'll give you a wave. Wishing you



Drawing Henk van Ruitenbeek, inspiration Arie de Groot (vhdt.nl)

having a New Year's reception next month in the town hall, of course, and you probably won't be
t I'd pop by with my barrel organ. That's a pity, did you have to cancel your skiing holidays too?
h that your students are sticking so well to the rules - you can be proud of them. Anyway, I've really
centre, to liven things up a bit there. If you like, on 1 January from 10:00 you can watch and listen
all the best for 2021. Cheers, Geert van Rumund, Mayor of Wageningen.



Key people: Fonzy Kwartén

They are indispensable on campus: cleaners, caretakers, caterers, gardeners, receptionists — the list is long. *Resource* seeks out these key people. This time, meet Fonzy Kwartén (24), a ServicePoint IT worker in the Forum. Text Milou van der Horst Photo Guy Ackermans

‘People should feel welcome to approach us. I’ll have a chat, make a joke, offer them a cup of coffee. It’s always nice when someone goes off with a smile on their face, even if you couldn’t solve their problem. Angry people are the part of my job I like least. I understand their frustration but being grumpy about it doesn’t help anyone
‘We provide support for WUR laptops and smartphones and make sure that people receive their devices on time. We also help students when they have issues with their accounts and laptops.

‘When I tilted the laptop, his entire breakfast of milk and chocolate cornflakes fell out onto my desk’

I work with people from lots of different cultures and with lots of different IT problems with all sorts of laptops and technologies—the university has as many as 900 software packages. So you do have to be flexible to work in IT. You also have to be able to keep up with the latest IT developments, otherwise you’ll run into trouble quite quickly. I always used to play around with computers: taking out components, replacing them, looking things up, doing research. But it wasn’t till I was 17 that I realized I wanted to work in IT. Thankfully IT always keeps running, even during the coronavirus crisis, so I don’t worry too much about getting enough work. I just keep at it.
We get different questions now people are working from home. More people

come back with broken laptops, for example. Recently someone came by who really had no idea why his laptop wasn’t working. When I tilted it, his entire breakfast of milk and chocolate cornflakes fell out onto my desk. A bit gross, yes, but in cases like that I just put on my gloves and get to work with cleaning foam.
We try to work as safely as possible. It’s important that ServicePoint stays up and running so that people can keep working from home. And I don’t want to take the virus home with me because I’ve got a four-month-old son. Yes, I’ve got a pandemic kid. It was very busy at ServicePoint when Elijah was born because people wanted to upgrade or replace their laptops before a potential lockdown. My colleagues stepped in for me and even offered to help out at home, haha. Yup, we’re a very close-knit team.’





Campus ♦ companies

Cano-ela

Currently, food companies use canola oil to create foods like mayonnaise. They extract the oil from seeds in a long, complex process in which half of the canola (a kind of rapeseed) is wasted. The Wageningen start-up Cano-ela has developed a better process. It isolates all oil, fibres, proteins, vitamins and minerals from the canola, using a new extraction process with water. The fibres can be used in bread, the proteins in meat substitutes, and the oil in mayonnaise and salad dressings. 'All the components are used, so we don't have any waste,' says Juliana Romero.

Juliana developed the new extraction process during her PhD research in the Food Process Engineering group. This process is the basis of her company Cano-ela, which she founded at the start of this year. With a team of three people, she is developing the company further in the Starthub in Plus Ultra II. She is currently

'All the components are used, so we don't have any waste'

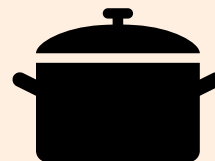
talking to food companies about supplying ingredients derived from canola (or other oil-rich seeds). She is also

looking for investors for a pilot plant to scale up the extraction process. Estimated costs: 700,000 euros.

Romero has high expectations. 'This processing technology can produce functional, sustainable and healthy foods.' Students should note that she will be looking for interns in the coming year to help develop the products and business. AS

There are about 100 companies on campus. We introduce you to one of them in every issue of *Resource*. This time it's Cano-ela in Plus Ultra II.

All the flavours of the world can be found in our WUR community. *Resource* editor Luuk Zegers takes us to... the Netherlands to share a seasonal variant on a classic Dutch dish.



Flavours of WUR

Christmas *wentelteefjes*

'You see the typical Dutch inventiveness and thrifty habits in our *wentelteefje* [a kind of eggy bread]. Old slices of bread are turned into a festive meal using a few simple ingredients. *Cucina povera* Dutch style. I often make this variant in the days after Christmas.'

- 1 Beat the egg and the milk in a large bowl. Add a tablespoon of sugar, a large pinch of cinnamon and the lemon zest, and stir.
- 2 Dip the slices of bread or stollen into this mixture until they are completely soaked but not yet falling apart. Take them out of the bowl.
- 3 Melt the butter or margarine in a frying pan. Fry the soaked slices, turning them over until they are golden brown on both sides.
- 4 Serve the wentelteefjes hot with a sprinkling of cinnamon and, in this Christmas version, icing sugar.
- 5 The Dutch normally eat their bread with their fingers but you can use a knife and fork for wentelteefjes!
- 6 Enjoy!

Ingredients (for 8 wentelteefjes):

- 8 slices of old bread (or slices of a Christmas stollen/fruit bread in this festive variant)
- Approx. 250 ml milk (non-dairy if you want)
- 1 egg
- sugar (granulated or cane sugar)
- cinnamon
- grated lemon zest (optional)
- in this variant, icing sugar for decoration
- knob of butter or margarine for frying



Luuk Zegers (30)
Resource editor

Irregular Opening Hours

Christmas
Holidays 2020

Forum

| | 2020/2021 | The Building | The Library | Student Desk | IT Service Point | WURshop | Restaurant | Grand Café | Wageningen in'to Languages |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|--------------|-------------|---------------|---------------------|----------------|------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|
| Monday | 21 December | 8 am - 8 pm | 8 am - 6 pm | 10 am - 12 pm | 8 am - 5.30 pm | 9 am - 4.30 pm | Closed | 10 am - 2.30 pm | Closed |
| Tuesday | 22 December | 8 am - 8 pm | 8 am - 6 pm | 10 am - 12 pm | 8 am - 5.30 pm | 9 am - 4.30 pm | Closed | 10 am - 2.30 pm | Closed |
| Wednesday | 23 December | 8 am - 8 pm | 8 am - 6 pm | 10 am - 12 pm | 8 am - 5.30 pm | 9 am - 4.30 pm | Closed | Closed | Closed |
| Thursday | 24 December | 8 am - 8 pm | 8 am - 6 pm | Closed | 8 am - 4 pm | 9 am - 4.30 pm | Closed | Closed | Closed |
| Friday Christmas | 25 December | Closed | Closed | Closed | Closed | Closed | Closed | Closed | Closed |
| Saturday Christmas | 26 December | Closed | Closed | Closed | Closed | Closed | Closed | Closed | Closed |
| Sunday | 27 December | 10 am - 6 pm | Closed | Closed | Closed | Closed | Closed | Closed | Closed |
| Monday | 28 December | 8 am - 8 pm | 8 am - 6 pm | Closed | 8 am - 4 pm | Closed | Closed | Closed | Closed |
| Tuesday | 29 December | 8 am - 8 pm | 8 am - 6 pm | Closed | 8 am - 4 pm | Closed | Closed | Closed | Closed |
| Wednesday | 30 December | 8 am - 8 pm | 8 am - 6 pm | Closed | 8 am - 4 pm | Closed | Closed | Closed | Closed |
| Thursday | 31 December | 8 am - 8 pm | 8 am - 6 pm | Closed | 8 am - 4 pm | Closed | Closed | Closed | Closed |
| Friday New Years Day | 1 January | Closed | Closed | Closed | Closed | Closed | Closed | Closed | Closed |
| Saturday | 2 January | 10 am - 6 pm | Closed | Closed | Closed | Closed | Closed | Closed | Closed |
| Sunday | 3 January | 10 am - 6 pm | Closed | 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.

Orion

| | 2020/2021 | The Building | Bike basement | The Spot | Restaurant |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|--------------|---------------|----------|------------|
| Monday | 21 December | Closed | Closed | Closed | Closed |
| Tuesday | 22 December | Closed | Closed | Closed | Closed |
| Wednesday | 23 December | Closed | Closed | Closed | Closed |
| Thursday | 24 December | Closed | Closed | Closed | Closed |
| Friday Christmas | 25 December | Closed | Closed | Closed | Closed |
| Saturday Christmas | 26 December | Closed | Closed | Closed | Closed |
| Sunday | 27 December | Closed | Closed | Closed | Closed |
| Monday | 28 December | Closed | Closed | Closed | Closed |
| Tuesday | 29 December | Closed | Closed | Closed | Closed |
| Wednesday | 30 December | Closed | Closed | Closed | Closed |
| Thursday | 31 December | Closed | Closed | Closed | Closed |
| Friday New Years Day | 1 January | Closed | Closed | Closed | Closed |
| Saturday | 2 January | Closed | Closed | Closed | Closed |
| Sunday | 3 January | Closed | Closed | Closed | Closed |

Leeuwenborch

| | 2020/2021 | The Building | Coffee Bar / Restaurant | Library |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|--------------|-------------------------|---------|
| Monday | 21 December | 7 am - 10 pm | 10 am - 2 pm | Closed |
| Tuesday | 22 December | 7 am - 10 pm | 10 am - 2 pm | Closed |
| Wednesday | 23 December | 7 am - 10 pm | 10 am - 2 pm | Closed |
| Thursday | 24 December | 7 am - 6 pm | Closed | Closed |
| Friday Christmas | 25 December | Closed | Closed | Closed |
| Saturday Christmas | 26 December | Closed | Closed | Closed |
| Sunday | 27 December | Closed | Closed | Closed |
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| Friday New Years Day | 1 January | Closed | Closed | Closed |
| Saturday | 2 January | Closed | Closed | Closed |
| Sunday | 3 January | Closed | Closed | Closed |

Entrance is only possible after registration at the reception desk.



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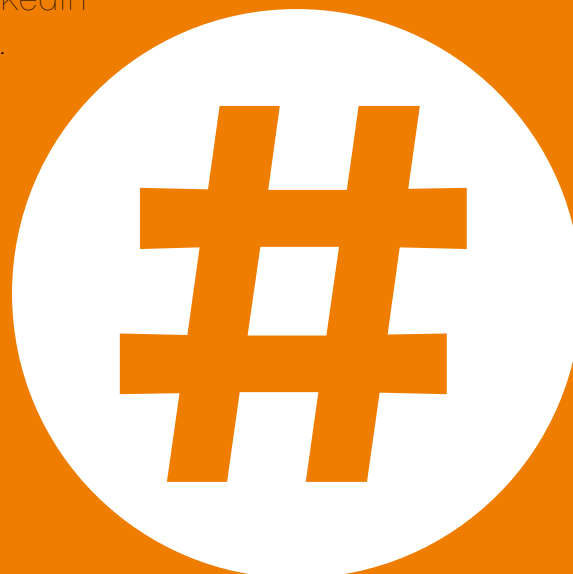
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Resource

WUR from within: straight, sharp, transparent



IN MEMORIAM

MARK VAN SMAALEN

Our colleague Mark van Smaalen passed away unexpectedly on Tuesday 8 December. He was just 58 years old.

Mark started working as an analyst for the former RIK-ILT institute in 1987. His 33 years of service at the Food Safety Authority NVWA and at Wageningen Food Safety Research were characterized by an unwavering commitment to microbiological research.

With his distinctly calm demeanour, Mark has taken many colleagues under his

wing over the years and schooled them in microbiology. Mark was a kind and down-to-earth person who valued the social side of his work as much as the professional side. He was greatly appreciated by his fellow colleagues.

Mark was the *pater familias* of the microbiology team. He will be deeply missed.

On behalf of his colleagues and the Wageningen Food Safety Research Management Team

Colophon

Resource is the independent medium for students and staff at Wageningen University & Research. *Resource* reports and interprets the news and gives the context. New articles are posted daily on resource-online.nl. The magazine is published every fortnight on Thursday.

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Answers to the Quiz (pages 16-17)

| | | | | |
|-----|-----|------------------|------|-----------------------|
| 1 D | 5 C | 9 C | 13 B | 17 C |
| 2 A | 6 A | 10 December 2020 | 14 C | 18 D |
| 3 B | 7 C | 11 C | 15 B | 19 A-4, B-1, C-2, D-3 |
| 4 C | 8 C | 12 D | 16 B | 20 D |





It's nearly Christmas and many of our international colleagues can't go home, for example because they would have to go into quarantine there for two weeks first. Who has tips for international WUR staff and how we can help one another this Christmas?

Guido Camps, researcher in the Nutrition and Health group and the OnePlanet Research Centre



Calling on WUR

This is a problem many international students and staff members face. I would therefore like to call on WUR to take care of its internationals and organize an online event where we can celebrate Christmas and count down to New Year together.

Yosapol Harnvanichvech – PhD student in Biochemistry

Progressive dinner

At the moment you can have three guests as long as you all keep 1.5 metres distance. That's perfect for a 'progressive dinner' where you go from house to house and everyone serves one course. Meet up at the home of the person doing the aperitif, then walk to the house of the person serving the next course and so on. You won't spend too long in badly ventilated rooms, you get some fresh air, and the exercise will help you work up an appetite. That will make for a varied, sociable evening with delicious food. Enjoy!

Sanda Lenzholzer – professor of Landscape Architecture and Spatial Planning

Creative energy

As an international, I'm happy to share three of my Christmas plans with you. I hope they will give you some inspiration. During the holidays, I will bake cakes for my colleagues who have been very supportive during the coronavirus pandemic. I will also enjoy a walk through Sonsbeek Park or the Veluwe National Park and finally I will sit down with a hot drink and pour all my creative energy into a new painting. A little tip if you are not so creative: you can always buy a paint-by-numbers kit.

Yu Lei – PhD student in Environmental Technology

New traditions

It's not just international staff and students – lots of Dutch people won't be seeing their friends and family during the festive system either. We're basically in the same boat. That gives me comfort and also offers opportunities to create new traditions. For instance, you and all your colleagues could order a meal from the same restaurant and enjoy an online dinner. Or invite an international colleague to celebrate Christmas with your family. And send loads of cards and presents to your friends and family. That way, you feel connected to one another.

Lin Batten – Law group research assistant

NEXT WURRY

'I started my PhD about six months ago but I'm not enjoying it at all. While I don't want to be a "failure", I'm increasingly thinking of quitting. But people around me tell me that quitting is career suicide. Who has some advice?'

*PhD candidate N.
(full name known
to the editors)*

*If you have advice or tips for this Wurrier or if you need some help yourself, **email your tips or request (max. 100 words) by 5 January to resource@wur.nl, with subject 'noWURries'.***