



Country Report for The Netherlands

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Topics of demonstration

Animal husbandry (dairy, beef, poultry meat and goat husbandry):

- Health management/welfare
- Housing and rearing systems
- Nutrition/feeding
- Quality enhancement and promotion

Vegetable, fruit and arable farming:

- Crop protection
- Soil fertility management
- New varieties/planting material
- Technologies
- Machinery
- Low input farming

Providers and purpose of demonstration

Providers

- Non-agrarian innovators
- Farmers organisations and cooperatives
- Research, education and extension
- Commercial business
- Individual farms/groups of farms

Purposes

- Information gathering/sharing
- Networking
- Technology promotion/product sales
- Knowledge creation
- Improved environmental conditions

History

Context of agriculture around 1850:

- More market production & world wide trade
- More focus on breeding and management

Demonstrations as answer to 1890 crisis:

- Dutch approach: more market orientation (instead of protection)
- Cooperatives bringing transition in practice.

Example: cooperative in Deurne, support from the priest Hendrik Roes. (Picture: one of his demonstrations without and with fertilizer.)

Around 1950 integrated approach in research, advice and education, focussed on higher production.

From 1990 shift to new targets, e.g. sustainability, and tendering of support activities.

Types of Demonstrations

- On-farm, hands-on demonstrations
- Field walk
- Guided tour
- Indoor presentations
- Machinery demonstrations
- Company fair with stand holders

Access Issues

Gender balance

In new economic activities, the women are driving forces as demonstrator and visitor. In conventional sectors, it is mostly men (75%).

Participants

Typically, large-scale manifestations dedicated to specific crops or subsectors did attract a predominant male audience that was classified as experienced farmers labelled in the age category 40-55.

Other Issues

The professional audience of demos is mainly male. It seems, experienced farmers have a strong preference to go to larger scale manifestations probably because of the variety of topics and the large amount of actors present (network function). Are demonstrations large because many farmers go there, or farmers go there because demonstrations are large?

Distinguishing Characteristics

- In recent years, demos have become increasingly larger, from single technologies to large scale manifestations with a variety of topics. It seems that farmers are not different of the rest of the community were big events attract more and more people. On the other hand study groups keep their relevance. In the atmosphere of trust information is shared and details of innovations are shown to colleagues.



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