



Opportunities for dairy farming



LIVESTOCK RESEARCH
WAGENINGEN UR



'Wageningen UR knows the ins and outs of dairy farming'

Paul Witlox, Dutch Dairy Board

Wageningen UR Livestock Research fosters a network of European dairy farmers.

Challenge

The Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs and the Dutch Dairy Board requested Wageningen UR to set up a project which would provide reliable data to evaluate and facilitate efficiency on dairy farms and the implementation of environmental legislation.

Solution

Wageningen UR Livestock Research and Plant Research International have set up a Dutch project, *Cows & Opportunities*, in which they act as leading partners. The project involves the participation of 16 dairy farmers, an experimental farm and various consultancy organizations.

De Marke Experimental Farm is evaluating measures that it has implemented to reduce nitrate and phosphorous leaching and greenhouse gas and ammonia emissions. This research farm measures and evaluates all the inputs and outputs from its dairy cattle production. Positive results are expected to provide strong indicators for possible ways to attain environmental goals. To evaluate the economic aspects of these scientific findings, 16 Dutch farms (situated in sand, clay, peat and loess regions) are also participating in the project. All the farmers are closely cooperating with relevant consultancy agencies in the field.

Results and impact

The project has identified various feasible ways and measures to improve the environmental and also

economic performance of dairy farms. The amount of fertilizer used by the participating dairy farms has dropped tremendously, without any loss in yields. This project will help the dairy sector to use farm-specific management and solutions, including 'BEX' (farm-specific excretion). It also provided the government with reliable data, facilitating receiving a derogation from the EU.

The project has been an important initiative, fostering the foundation of the inter-regional European Dairyman network, which focuses on strengthening rural communities by improving farm resource management in a profitable way. This network includes participating organizations from the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxemburg, France, the UK, Ireland and Germany.

Partners

Wageningen UR Livestock Research
Plant Research International Wageningen UR
LEI Wageningen UR
De Marke Experimental Farm
16 dairy farmers
DLV
Agrifirm
Alfa Accountants
Pijnenburg advies
PPP Agro advies

Project website

www.koeienenkansen.nl (in Dutch)
www.interregdairyman.eu

Contact

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