



Ministry of Agriculture,  
Nature and Food Quality

“The Netherland’s  
vision on agriculture –  
transition to circular  
agriculture”  
stressing the importance of healthy soils

Jasper Dalhuisen

*Mazovia Circular Congress, Warsawa*



## Agriculture, nature and food: valuable and connected

The Netherlands as a leader  
in circular agriculture

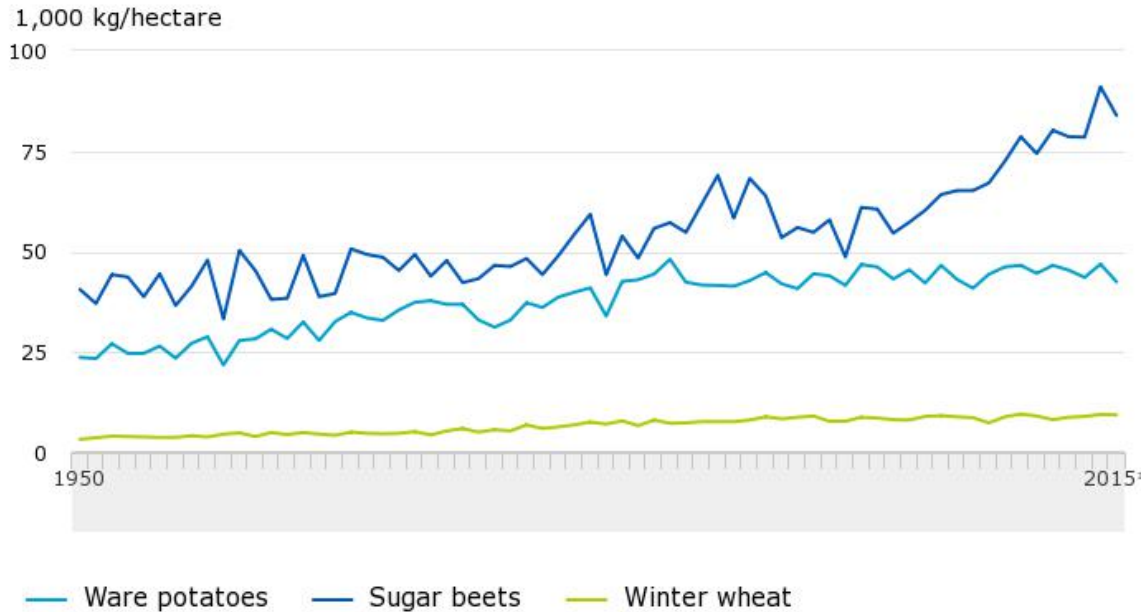
- 1 Short introduction to The Netherlands
- 2 The Dutch Agricultural- and Horticulture sector
- 3 A short history of the development of the Agricultural- and Horticulture sector
- 4 Agriculture, nature and food: valuable and connected. The Netherlands as a leader in circular agriculture – focus on soils
- 5 The way ahead and questions



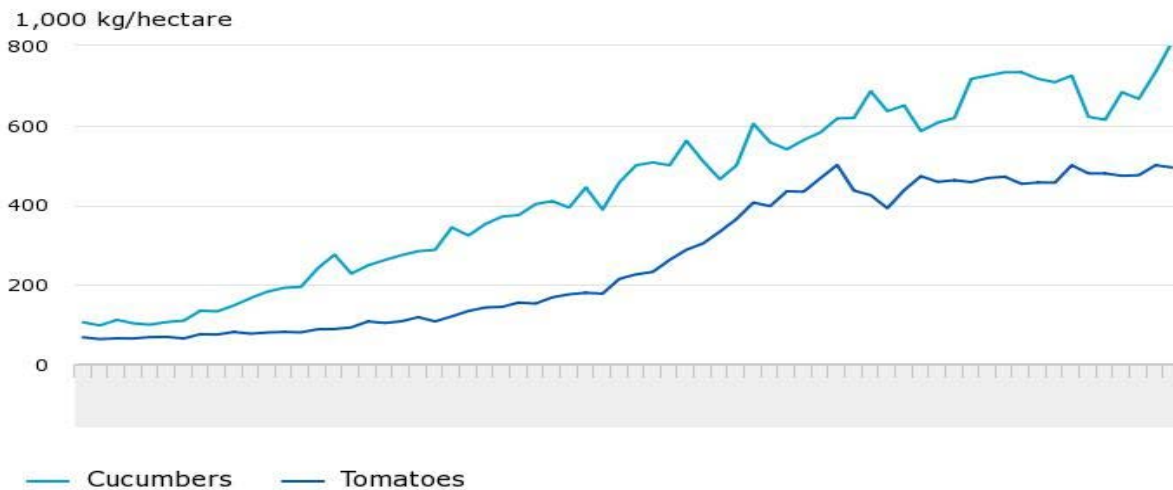
- > Surface: 33.783 km<sup>2</sup> (no water area included)
- > Population: 17,181,084 people (date 1/1/2019)
- > Population density: 510 people/km<sup>2</sup>
- > Number of farms (2018): 53,906 (97,389 in 2000)
- > Number of cattle (2018): 3,690,000
- > Number of pigs (2018): 11,934,000



## Arable crop yields



## Domestic yield of vegetables under glass



# Dutch agriculture and horticulture: productive!

- > The production value of agriculture in the Netherlands increased.
- > Intensification and scaling-up accounted for the strong growth in both agricultural output and productivity
- > The area covered by an average holding was around 5.7 hectares in 1950, versus 32.4 hectares in 2016.



## Dutch agriculture international oriented

- The export of agricultural goods is estimated at 90.3 billion euros in 2018
- The second largest exporter of agricultural goods in the world.
- 70% of the production is exported, also a high share of re-export in the Netherlands



## Intensive high productive farms: side effects

1. Large-scale uniform landscapes
2. High levels of manure and of fertilizer and pesticide consumption
3. Large numbers of animals were housed in increasingly dense environment
4. Loss of biodiversity

# Agriculture, nature and food: valuable and connected.

*The Netherlands as a leader in circular agriculture*

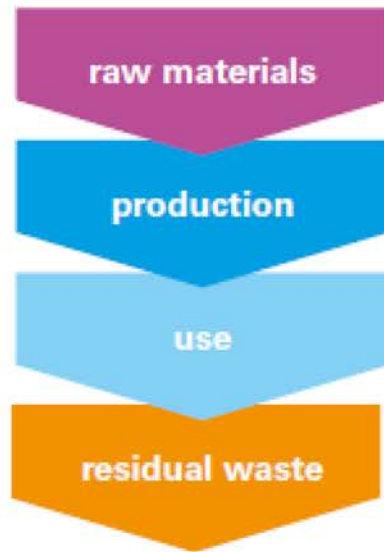
- › Global player, but current production methods are not without cost. The Netherlands faces serious social and ecological challenges.
- › The Netherlands needs to prevent depletion of soil, freshwater supplies and raw materials, halt the decline in biodiversity and fulfil our commitments to the Paris climate agreement.





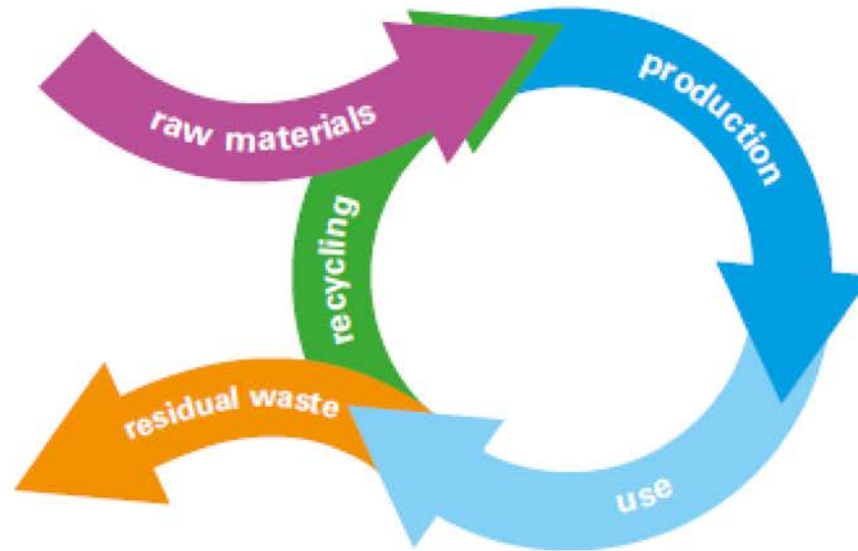
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LINEAR ECONOMY



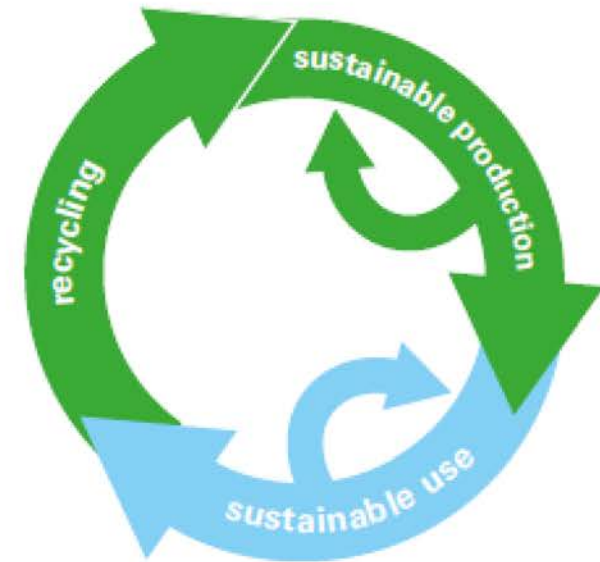
(a)

ECONOMY WITH FEEDBACK LOOPS



(b)

CIRCULAR ECONOMY



(c)

*Do it locally if you can, and regionally or internationally if you have to.*





Good quality agricultural soils important for:

1. better soil fertility, better yielding potential
2. sustainable crop production, less correction needed with resources
3. better water quality,
4. water buffering, climate adaptation
5. higher biodiversity
6. carbon capture, climate mitigation.



## Dutch Soil Strategy Note

- Social tasks linked to soil strategy; Climate statement, biodiversity etc
- Target 2030 all agricultural soils sustainably managed, also basic circular agriculture and with sustainably managed soils we also achieve climate change; 0.5 Mton carbon fixation in agricultural soil
- Program approach along four tracks: (1) knowledge development and dissemination, (2) adjusting policy frameworks (CAP, lease, manure policy), (3) agro-chains (innovations and making them economically attractive), (4) regional (knowledge infrastructure to strengthen regional initiatives with broad soil knowledge)
- Program together with relevant public and private parties



1



2



3





# The way ahead

- › Making a vision to 2030 more concrete!
- › Promoting the vision in Brussels (CAP)
- › How to reconcile circularity with the Dutch being the second exporter of the world
- › Role of the government
- › Circularity as a business model





# Thank you!

› Questions?

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