

Opening remarks by Theo Peters, Chargé d’Affaires
Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands
at the Seminar on Sustainable Food Production (Livestock and Meat)
on 22 November 2023 at Kudan Kaikan Terrace

Dear distinguished guests, dear guests,

Good afternoon. Thank you for the opportunity to open today’s seminar on sustainable food production, with its focus on livestock and meat.

And welcome to all speakers, panelists, and all of you present here.

Today is a great opportunity as we will be updated with the latest developments in sustainable livestock and meat production.

We have a wonderful line-up of speakers.

First of all, we have Dr. Laurens Hoedemaker, Chairman of the Central Organization for the Meat Industry (COV), and President of the European Federation for Meat Production, Meat Trade and Livestock Trade, as our key-note speaker. He will tell us about recent developments in sustainability, trust and proof in the meat and livestock sectors in Europe and the Netherlands.

He has come all the way from the Netherlands to Japan, just for this seminar. We are very grateful for his commitment to share his insights on sustainable meat production in the Netherlands and the EU with you, distinguished representatives from Japan’s media, government and most of all Japan’s industry.

Next, we will hear from the government. Mr. Freek Vossenaar, Special Envoy from the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality will tell you what the Dutch government is doing to address issues and clear obstacles on the way towards sustainability in the livestock and meat sectors.

Then we will turn our attention to Japan. Mr. Tetsuya Kuroi, Deputy Executive Director of the Agriculture & Livestock Industries Corporation, will brief us on the Japanese approach to achieve sustainability in these sectors.

In addition, we are graced with presence of six distinguished panelists who will discuss major issues regarding sustainability: carbon footprint, sustainability claims, animal welfare, and Japan’s role as a major food importer. I am looking forward to a lively and insightful discussion.

The objective of the seminar is to acknowledge and assess issues that both the Netherlands and Japan are facing, and to explore opportunities for collaboration in this field.

In the last decade, we have seen lots of alternative protein products launched on the market, amid a worldwide protein shift. We have seen insect burgers and insect crackers, and vegan cheese and vegan burgers, but our diets still are heavily dependent on conventional livestock and meat products.

We have become more and more aware of the impact livestock and meat production have on nature, the environment and climate. Therefore, it seems it's high time to tackle these issues together.

As you all know, the Netherlands has enjoyed more than 4 centuries of amicable and commercial relations with Japan, and our joint future will be ever longer.

Our ties will only become stronger in the coming years, as the Netherlands government has recently announced its official participation to the Expo 2025 Osaka Kansai, which will take place from 13 April to 13 October 2025.

The theme of Expo 2025 Osaka Kansai is 'Designing Future Society for Our Lives'; an ambition that strikes a chord with the Netherlands. Together with partners across the globe, the Netherlands is striving to solve many challenges facing our societies and our planet.

The theme of our Pavilion is "Common Ground". We can only solve the challenges of the future together. During the Expo, we will pay special attention to 7 global issues:

- Peace, justice and equality
- Climate change
- Water Security
- Food Security
- Energy Transition
- Healthy Living, and
- Digital Transformation

Many of these issues are relevant to today's topic: sustainable livestock and meat production.

I hope today's seminar will prove **meaty** and fruitful for you, and that it will serve as a platform to share knowledge and connect stakeholders from both countries for future collaboration. That we create a common ground for cooperation for the next 4 centuries and beyond.

Thank you for your attention.