

**Field tour May 29**

#### **4. Sustainable land use and social functions**



During this tour you will visit farms where food production is combined with social care, education, enjoying landscape and recreation. Farming is seen as more than sustainable land use. It is a way of living.

##### **Henricus Hoeve ('Henricus Farm')**

Our first destination is Beneden Leeuwen, some 40 kilometres from Nijmegen, where we meet Mr Henk Hoefnagel, a dairy farmer with the ambition to produce his milk climate neutral within five years. A few years ago, he started to grow willow trees. The wood of these trees is shredded to be used for litter in his compost stables. The litter changes into compost for his land. Above it makes his stables comfortable for his cows. At this moment, Henk is finding out how his enterprise can grow towards completely circular production, within a few years. An essential part of Henricus Hoeve is providing work for people in need of social care. The social functions of this enterprise are as important as its food production. Profit means sharing wealth here.

##### **Park Lingezen**

We bring a short visit to Park Lingezen, the huge landscape park between the cities of Arnhem and Nijmegen. We can see some food forest that have been planted in 2016 and will be informed about sustainability initiatives.

##### **Doornik Natuurakkers ('Doornik Natural Arable Fields')**

[Growing old grain races](#) combined with hedges and trees in a seven years old established area at Bommel occupying 30 ha, close to Nijmegen.

Farmers: Louis and Corrie Dolmans.

**General:** Farm is based on the establishment of a rich bird area combined with the production of old grains and vegetables. The area is also used for recreation and education.

**Integration:** Nature and food production can be profitably combined. Rows of indigenous shrubs and trees provide the natural habitat of 60 different bird species. The hedgerows also provide shelter for arable fields where old varieties of grains are produced. Recently walnut trees are intercropped with the arable fields to increase biodiversity. The dream of Louis is to integrate also livestock (pigs) in this system. One field will be used for a food forest including a 'smoothie-path'.

**Benefits:** Ecology and economy go together on this farm. The farm is economic profitable although only 16 ha of the 30 are used for growing food crops. Income is also gained by maintaining a biodiverse environment which is financially rewarded by the local government. The remaining lands are hedgerows, broad flower strips, strolling and bicycle paths and a nature education classroom plus field amphitheatre.

**Contribution:** During the first years of Doornik Natuurakkers surrounding farmers did not believe that agriculture and nature can benefit each other, but this is gradually changing, also thanks to many field excursions. The farm has a biodynamic certification. The old varieties of grains are highly wanted by modern bakeries, which want a special product. The area is daily used by recreating people, just to walk or to be in a rich natural environment. You enter a singing bird area!

**Must see:** The Netherlands have lost 200,000 km of hedgerows after World War II, due to upscaling and intensification of agriculture. This farm proves that hedgerows are very beneficial for food production (creating micro climates) and biodiversity. Together the hedges, the birds and the flowers approve to be a healing landscape on a regional level.