

## Holiday wishes from the section board

The coming festive season is very different from other years. The pandemic asks a lot of resilience from all of us. As section board we deeply respect your work ethic and your resilience in coping with the whole situation. Also we appreciate the many initiatives to stay in contact with more isolated colleagues who live here in The Netherlands alone, far away from their relatives. More than ever we wish you a merry Christmas and a happy new year!

*Hans, Alfons, Wilfred, Sander, Bedir and Laura*



## Rooftop farms and Christmas dinner

An interview with Alice Bischof, PhD student at the Business Management & Organisation group, by Jacco leguijt

In The Netherlands, the Holiday season is a time of celebration. The Christmas dinner is a loved tradition. Despite the Holiday bounty, our current food system is facing serious challenges to provide the current world population with healthy food. And it's not just the current world population. The United Nations predict that the world population will have risen to ten billion people by 2050. The Wageningen University & Research dedicates a lot of its research to make sure that by 2050, everyone will have access to healthy food. One way of farming that can help to create an abundant and resilient food system is urban agriculture. It reduces food miles to a minimum, it provides a way for cities to reuse nutrients in waste water, and its green and edible landscapes beautify the city. By producing food within the city limits cities increase their resilience and improve food safety.

Alice Bischof is a PhD student at the Business Management and Organisation group. Her research is about the business models of urban agriculture organisations under the EU Horizon 2020 project EdiCitNet (Edible Cities Network). "Urban agriculture means growing food within the judicial borders of the city", she explains. "There are a lot of different forms of urban agriculture, ranging from high-tech commercial enterprises working with vertical gardens and aquaponics to low-tech community gardens pursuing primarily social purposes." Urban agriculture has the potential to be much more than growing food. Working together to grow food is good for people's physical health, as well as their mental health. "I worked in a garden with people between fifty and seventy years old", remembers Alice Bischof. "They would make jokes about how they didn't need to see a psychologist because they were meeting and having fun."



Stories like these emphasize how urban agriculture can have positive effects on people. Urban agriculture initiatives are widespread in many cities around the world. The Business Management and Organisation group helps the Edible Cities Network by analyzing the business models of urban agriculture organisations. For EdiCitNet, these analyses will help understand how these organisations become viable and can flourish while producing social, economic and/or environmental value. Healthy organisations make for healthy cities. This is important, because the United Nations predict that by 2050 seventy percent of the world population will live in cities. With a little imagination, I can see the ingredients for Christmas dinners being grown within the city limits.

## A kiss for granny

A Christmas story, by Jacco Leguijt

"Here are the cookies, David. Can you bring them to granny?" Little David nods. It's a cold day, but he wears a coat and his mittens. Granny made them for him, those mittens. They keep his hands warm, even when it's freezing. And it is freezing cold, since the sun is almost down. His mother hands him a cookie tin. "Don't drop the tin" says Judy, David's older sister. "Mom and I spent all afternoon baking them. We want grandma to have cookies, not crumbs." David wraps his arms around the tin. "Of course I can hold them" he says. "I'm almost five!" His mother smiles at him. "I am sure that you can hold the tin, David" she says on an encouraging tone. David turns around, and walks through the garden to the street. The street lights are already on. Above them the sky is turning dark blue, and one silver star is already shining.

David crosses the street and walks into the park. He walks towards grannies house, that is on the other side of the park. The silver star shines above her house. There is smoke coming from the chimney, and it dances pale around the light of the star. David looks to his left and his right, and crosses the street. When he stands before the picket fence that surrounds granny's garden he stops. The gate is closed. Normally he can open it. But now he has his hands full, and he will not let go of the cookie tin! With a frown he looks at the gate. Perhaps he can kick it open? The door of granny's house opens. "David, is that you?" Granny appears in the door opening. Light streams out into the dusk. David's grandmother wraps a blanket around her shoulders, and steps outside. Calmly she walks to the garden gate. "What is it, sweetheart? Can't you open the gate?"

David hands the cookie tin to granny, over the picket fence. He wants to open the gate now his hands are free. "Wait, David" says granny. "We have to be a little careful these days, coming close to each other. We have to keep our distance." David remembers. Granny isn't feeling well. She has a nasty cough. That is why she can't come over for Christmas dinner. It's why he is bringing her the cookies. He remains on his side of the gate, standing still. "Why are you looking down?" Granny asks it calmly. Her voice is gentle. David shrugs. "I just wanted to give you a kiss." He looks up. His hands are fists in his mittens, when he wipes the tears from his cheeks. "Look" says granny. She kisses her hand, and blows the kiss towards him.

David's face brightens. He smiles and does a little dance. He does wat granny does, and blows a kiss towards her. She grabs something invisible out of the air. With her hand against her heart she says "thank you for your kiss, David. Will you give my best wishes to your parents and to your sister?" David nods, with a smile from cheek to cheek. "I will" he says. "I love you granny!" He looks to his left and to his right, before he runs across the street. As fast as he can little David runs through the park, his face beaming with joy.

