

Your Majesty,

Dear guests

Responsible growth touches on the major issues of our time, as well as on the development of our organisation. I'll briefly explain the philosophy behind the development of our campus so far and I will illustrate what the future may have in store.

In the late eighteenth century, landowners started realising that knowledge was useful and essential to agricultural practice. This served their own interests also, as they often profited from the farmers that leased their land.

Farming courses started springing up around the country, often on the estates of landowners like Staring. These became regional **mini campuses** that educated farmers, and helped stabilise our unpredictable food yields. In those days, crop failure was more rule than exception.

New agricultural schools, surrounded by arable land for demonstrating and testing, began popping up in the mid-nineteenth century. **Campuses** were also being developed by the government and the agricultural sector.

In response to new market developments, the agribusiness began concentrating, with the banking world, the dairy sector and the trade organisation as frontrunners.

Rabobank, FrieslandCampina and the Greenery are the heirs of this development. The power of concentration was becoming clear in the market and in production.

Scientific developments in the late nineteenth century facilitated better agricultural education, and especially the demand for higher education became apparent. The seed of our own organisation was planted in the local secondary school, which would later evolve into the State Agricultural College, de Rijks Hoogere Landbouwschool. This school offered higher vocational and university-level education on **campuses** at Salverdaplein and Duivendaal. In 1918 the school became a part of the university system as the Landbouwhogeschool. The ceremonial opening was performed by His Royal Highness Prince Hendrik.

A new situation unfolded after World War two: our honorary doctor and Minister of Agriculture, Sicco Mansholt, revealed his plans to transform the Netherlands into a self-sufficient country. The Landbouwhogeschool and agricultural researchers were asked to help improve and safeguard food production. They explored scientific and technological solutions and made them available for the farmers and industry.

Huge investments in research and education flooded into Wageningen and modern **campuses** were developed at De Dreijen and Kortenoord. With the old campuses still in use, the Landbouwhogeschool was now spread out over several locations. Each discipline had its own spot, which did not really stimulate collaboration.

Nevertheless the policy proved to be successful and the Netherlands was quickly becoming self-sufficient and even an important exporter of agrifood products. This success, however, meant little attention was paid to side effects like over-fertilisation, pesticides and animal welfare. Social protests were ignored and the sector quickly lost support. Our organisation also felt the impact as our budgets and student numbers started to plummet.

In response to the crisis, an important step was taken in 1998: practical research, DLO and Wageningen University joined forces to create Wageningen University and Research centre.

The next logical step was to combine facilities, which in Wageningen led to the formation of this **campus**. There were three main reasons for doing so: synergy between market-oriented and academic research, efficient operations through concentration, and modernisation of equipment and facilities.

[*<Start Animatie>*](#)

Allow me to share with you our vision on our campus for 2025 entitled: *a Gateway to smart food in a green world*. A working group has given this vision a great deal of thought over the past few months. This vision will help shape future actions and give guidance to the further development of our campus. It will be a dynamic natural habitat for research, education and innovation.

<stop bij de ingang> Near the entrance you can see the FrieslandCampina Innovation Centre, to be opened soon. In 2025, this area may also house an auditorium for various scientific, education and business purposes.

<naar de stop bij Cofco> In 2025 the area to the south will house research departments of national and international companies. Cofco, China's largest food processing company and our partner in developing urban agriculture in Beijing, may be one of them.

<naar stop bij Orion> Orion, our new education building, is located at the centre of the campus. It was designed by Ector Hoogstad Architects and built by Heijmans and partners.

<naar de stop bij incubator/techhal> This southern area also includes the technology hall, with its cutting-edge research facilities. These are available to researchers, major corporations, small and medium enterprises and start-ups, that are housed in incubators and other business complexes close to the tech hall.

<vlucht naar ontmoeting> This is the heart of our campus. Bringing people together is one of the objectives of Wageningen Campus. In the area near the Impulse building and the main reception hall by the bus stop, campus inhabitants and visitors can meet and inspire each other.

<vlucht naar CampusPlaza> Campus Plaza offers housing to 450 students and PhD's. Small-scale retail companies - like AH To Go - perfectly reflect the energy and creativity of a campus that never sleeps.

<vlucht naar noorden> But it does not stop in 2025. Let's take a look at the future beyond that. To the north Wageningen Campus is expanding and our community is clearly thriving. Many leading organisations in our domain will have settled here.

The World Food Centre in Ede yearly attracts half a million visitors and the Gelderland Food Valley tops the international rankings. With the support of the municipalities in the Food Valley region, the province of Gelderland and the ministry of Economic Affairs, Wageningen Campus enables the Dutch knowledge economy to blossom. And more importantly we're well on our way to providing 9 billion people with healthy food and a healthy living environment.

Your Majesty, ladies and gentlemen: Wageningen UR has an excellent relationship with the royal house. Our King even learned new water management techniques here, but only after he graduated elsewhere.

And I for one hope that in 2025 we will see the first royal graduate accept her degree right here on this spot in the Orion building.

Thank you
