

Mansholt Business Award for Sustainable Entrepreneurship 2018

Judicium

Based on the advice of the jury, the board of the University Fund Wageningen is honoured to hand out the award to two prize winners, to encourage them and facilitate future growth of their promising young companies: Ms Chantal Engelen, co-founder of Kromkommer, and Mr Ruud Zanders, owner of Kipster. Both award winners bring new approaches to sustainable food production and clearly voice their view on social responsible entrepreneurship.

Chantal Engelen, co-founder of Kromkommer

Chantal Engelen is the saviour of ugly veggies, she speaks for the vegetable plants that happen to have grown into a shape that may be out of the ordinary but are just as healthy and tasteful and deserve to be eaten. The name of her company "Kromkommer" is a word play on the Dutch words 'krom' for crooked and 'komkommer' for cucumber: "crooked cucumber". By promoting misshaped vegetables to the masses, she was able to turn the usual consumer preference for identical and straight cucumbers to the awareness that what looks wrong, is actually right.

Chantal Engelen showed an early interest in food and sustainable consumer behaviour with her studies in Food and Dietetics at Hogeschool Amsterdam and Management, Economics and Consumer Studies at Wageningen University & Research. She increased her knowledge and experience in food consumer marketing and communication by working at a bakery chain, Unilever, La Place, Dr Oetker and her involvement in the Youth Food movement. She built her first own enterprise to battle food waste as co-founder of Too Good to Waste early 2012, which she developed with co-founders Lisanne van Zwol and Jente de Vries into Kromkommer in 2013. Kromkommer is a social enterprise that contributes to the reduction of the waste of fruit and vegetables by changing the way people think about the quality of produce. Together with a *Kromcommunity* of growers, stores and restaurants the company produces fresh vegetable soups for sale in supermarkets and food service. Kromkommer received several awards and was included in the *Trouw Duurzame Top 100 2017*.

The jury appreciates how Chantal Engelen uses a fresh and appealing approach to make a large general public aware of food waste. Smart use of social media and community building increase the outreach of sustainable food use beyond the usual channel of organic food chains. A major challenge for Kromkommer lies in its strength and weakness: its easy adoptability is great in terms of consumer engagement and fighting food waste. However, the idea is easy to copy, which makes it harder to build into a long term sustainable business model. Can Kromkommer expand to restaurants? Or go beyond the Dutch borders and go international?