

Agriculture in transition

The Netherlands, 4 – 15 May 2009

Analysis, design and management of sustainable agriculture

Course Focus

Sustainability is a key word in modern agriculture and is an essential element in agricultural development worldwide. It is both a catchword and a genuine concern in discussions on the future of agriculture and society. Such discussions concern issues like the profitability of farming, reduced emissions of nutrients, efficient water use, chemicals and/or CO₂, soil conservation and regeneration of soils, loss of biodiversity, balanced development between urban and rural areas, new market opportunities both regionally and internationally, producer organisations, poverty alleviation, and social structures.

Many different stakeholders in business and private or public sector institutions have to cope with this change of focus in development, which is often referred to as '3P': People, Planet and Profit.

For professionals who are interested in this change of focus, this course offers background, theoretical aspects and practical approaches for research, policy, production, processing and market development.

This course addresses a wide range of issues including consumer concerns, processing and chain development as well as issues involving climate, soil, people, plants, animals and cultural aspects at farm, regional and higher levels. It demonstrates differences and similarities between small, mixed, specialised and large farms regarding aspects such as access to local, regional and international markets, long supply chains, community orientation and commodity orientation.

Aims and objectives

The course aims to improve the participants' knowledge on the main aspects of sustainable agriculture, as well as on practical tools to analyze and design sustainable farming systems. After completing the course, the participants will be able to relate their own practices and problems to similar experiences from elsewhere. They will gain improved access to modern approaches, literature and practical methods and updated networks. And last but not least, they will be able to apply the basic principles of system analysis and design to their work, in both quantitative and qualitative terms.

Training methods

The course gives the participants the opportunity to learn from the broad international experience represented not only by our trainers, but also by other participants. We facilitate the exchange of knowledge and experience through a variety of formats: lectures, practicals, demonstrations, brainstorming sessions, group discussions, and assignments. We use case studies to illustrate theoretical concepts, and field visits and excursions to demonstrate relevant practices in Dutch agriculture.

Who can participate?

The course will especially benefit mid-career staff in business, administration, research and education, as well as those in private and public organisations. Entrepreneurs and advisors will also benefit by meeting colleagues and by having time to reflect and gain a new perspective on the topic, which is often missing in the hustle and bustle of daily life. In most cases the group will comprise a mix of technically and academically oriented participants with the aim of



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promoting active participation with much interaction and generation of new ideas.

The basic prerequisite for participation in the course is active interest and professional experience in the topics to be addressed. Participants should be competent in English, and have a BSc degree or another academic qualification.

Course Programme

The course consists of three components:

- Lectures on practice and theory of sustainable farming (e.g. pesticide use and food safety, nutrient balances, emerging diseases, trade and regulations, certification, policy/education and on the advantages and disadvantages of specialised vs. mixed farming, large vs. small scale, crops vs. livestock and conventional, organic and fair-trade production and marketing systems)
- Practical tools for analysing and designing sustainable farming systems (e.g. system diagramming, stakeholder analysis, participatory methods, hard, soft and complex system tools)
- Working in small study groups on issues with the aim of developing individual action plans for their own situation.

The course includes field trips with assignments, and outside speakers are invited for some of the lectures. The participants will not only exchange experiences, but will also generate new ones. They do this by working actively together, by using a flexible programme suited to their own needs and the issues they raise, and by focusing on work in study groups.

Certificate

Participants will be awarded a Certificate of Attendance.

Fees and accommodation

The course fee is **€ 2900**. The subjects in this course are related to the training programme on Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and food safety. In case this course is combined with one course from the IPM training programme, the fee is € 3500. The maximum fee for any combination of courses will not exceed € 5150.

The fees include administration costs, lecture materials and field trips, but exclude board and lodging.

Participants will be accommodated at the Wageningen International Conference Centre (WICC) on the basis of full board and lodging. Prices are available on request.

Fellowships

A limited number of fellowships are available from the Netherlands Fellowship Programme (NFP) for nationals of certain countries. Candidates who wish to apply for such a fellowship should begin the application procedure as soon as possible. Candidates must **FIRST** apply to Wageningen International for admission to the course. Acceptable candidates will receive a letter from Wageningen International indicating that they have been **PROVISIONALLY** accepted. Candidates can then apply for a NFP fellowship through the Netherlands Embassy or Consulate in their own country.

Please note that NFP fellowships are not available for a combination of this course with courses from other training programmes.

Applications for NFP fellowships should be submitted to Wageningen International before **1 November 2008**
More information: www.cdic.wur.nl/UK/Courses , www.nuffic.nl.

Wageningen International can NOT provide any funds to finance the participants and regrets it is unable to assist applicants in obtaining sponsorship.

Application

The deadline for application directly to Wageningen International, with funding other than an NFP fellowship, is **4 April 2009**. Early application is recommended. For additional information and online application, go to: www.cdic.wur.nl/UK/newsagenda/ and click on the course of your interest.



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Fellowship application deadline: 1 November 2008
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Our terms and conditions are available at www.cdic.wur.nl