

Worries about unknown risks

Residents living near lily fields

Postdoctoral Education Toxicology Course
Risk Communication
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Programme

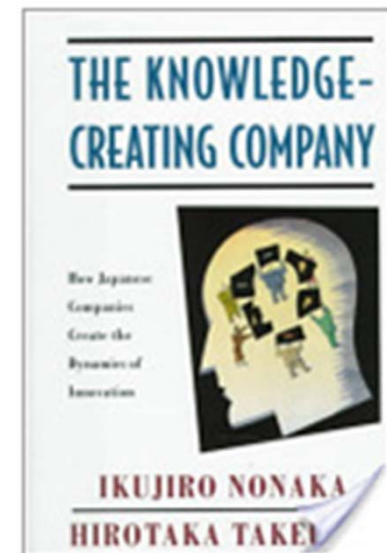
- Introducing myself
- Issue of residents living near lily fields
- Dilemma
- Recent developments
- Lessons

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Zoeken

Leefmilieu (Eng: Human Environment)

- NGO: Environmental association
- Founded in 1991
- Small staff of volunteers + large network
- Working on environmental and nature issues
- Supporting local community groups



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english



Zoeken

Leefmilieu (Eng: Human Environment)

Issues:

- permits of companies
- air pollution
- right to know and right to participate
- pesticides
- low frequency noise
- livestock industry
- protection of nature
- woodburning by households

Website: www.leefmilieu.nl

Background (1)

- Dutch are famous for their bulb farming
- Important export product
- Import countries want products without bugs and fungi



Background (2)

- The bulbs are treated heavily with pesticides, in the season several times a week
- Lilies are very sensitive, so they are the champions of pesticide use total 100 – 125 kg per ha pro year with some very poisonous types.



Background (3)

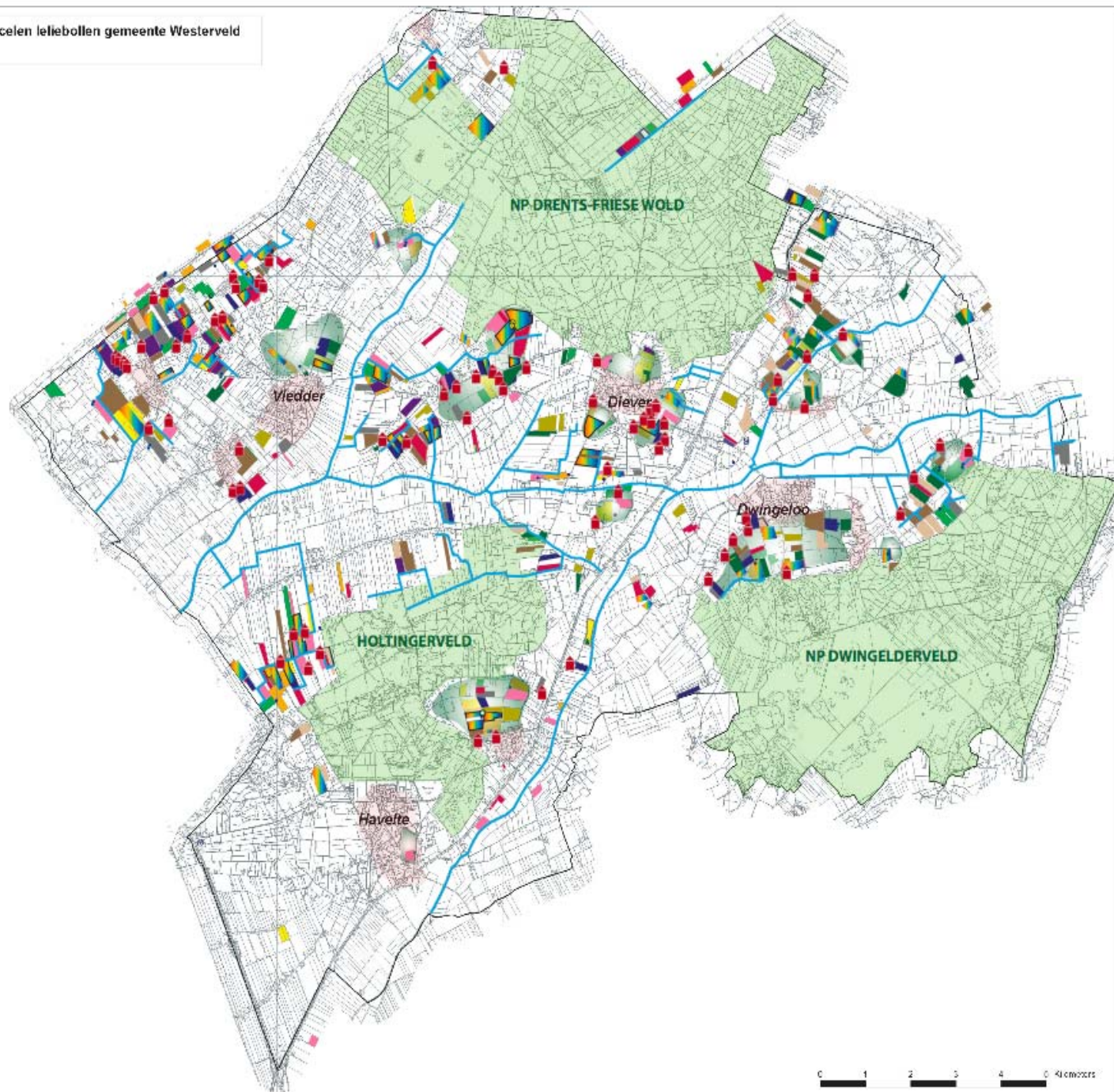
Cultivation of lilies is spreading across the country

2015: 5.838 ha

Bron: CBS



Overzicht percelen leliebollen gemeente Westerveld



Legenda

- spoelplaats
- * voormalige spoelplaats
- pompstation
- grondwaterput

Leliepercelen (jaar van teelt)

2001:	172 hectare	33 percelen
2002:	204 hectare	41 percelen
2003:	245 hectare	41 percelen
2004:	224 hectare	39 percelen
2005:	185 hectare	41 percelen
2006:	218 hectare	43 percelen
2007:	206 hectare	38 percelen
2001 t/m 2007 teeltherhaling		
2008:	195 hectare	45 percelen
2009:	113 hectare	24 percelen
2010:	156 hectare	29 percelen
2011:	188 hectare	41 percelen
2012:	265 hectare	46 percelen
2013:	175 hectare	36 percelen
2008 t/m 2013 teeltherhaling		

- Beschermde natuurgebieden
- Watergang
- Essen
- Tuinen en erven
- Dorpen

Stichting
BOLLENBOOS

0 1 2 3 4 5 kilometers

Pesticides

- Pesticides are chemicals meant to kill organisms
- They are handled carefully by
- the people working with them
- Heavy regulated
(use by farmers, in food etc)



But...

no regulation
concerning
risks
for residents



Residents

- Smell and see pesticides application on the fields several times a week
- See all the safety measures
- Inform themselves about the chemicals
- Find out that scientists say that the exposure on residents near the fields never has been investigated

Dutch situation may differ from other countries:

- high levels of pesticides use
- fields are scattered, often near houses, schools, nature areas



Worries

A lot of uncertainty

- Can I let my children play in the garden when the pesticides drift is coming from the field?
- I can smell the pesticides long after the straying has stopped, when is it safe to eat outside?
- Should I close my windows? How long?
- I am pregnant should I take precautionary measures?
- I grow vegetables in my garden, it is safe to eat them?



The problem is even larger

In lily farming the use of pesticides is very extreme, but its also large on

- other bulbs,
- ornamental plants,
- fruits and
- seed-potatoes

A lot of people are exposed

There are also no regulations for i.e. the distance between a school yard and a bulb field

Reactions of other stakeholders

Farmers:

- The pesticides are strictly regulated.
- We work very careful with pesticides
- On a daily basis we work with pesticides and we are not worried, so why should residents worry?

Local authorities:

- Enforcement of pesticides is a national responsibility
(Netherlands Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority)
- We cannot take measures because we there is no prove that people become ill due to pesticides exposure.
- In spatial planning we have no instruments to separate bulb fields and residential areas, schools etc.

Dilemma

Given the fact that scientific information on the effects on pesticides on residents is lacking. How would you advise a worried citizen?

Discuss this dilemma with your fellow participant.

Follow up

- After local groups of residents became active
- National television program put it on the national agenda
 - Zembla: 8 January 2011. *Gif in de Bollenstreek*
- Dutch Parliament asked questions
- State Secretary of Infrastructure and the Environment asked the national Health Council for advice

Advice of the Health Council of The Netherlands published in 2014

<https://www.gezondheidsraad.nl/en/publications/gezonde-leefomgeving/crop-protection-and-local-residents>



The screenshot shows the website of the Gezondheidsraad (Health Council of the Netherlands). The header features a large blue 'G' logo on the left and a navigation menu with four items: 'Home', 'News', 'Publications', and 'About us'. The background of the header is a photograph of a Dutch landscape with a large tree, a grassy hill, and a traditional Dutch house with a windmill in the background. Below the header, there is a section titled 'Crop protection and local residents' with a small icon of a plant growing from a seed. The text in this section discusses the use of chemical plant protection products on agricultural land and the potential health risks to local residents.

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Crop protection and local residents

Does the use of chemical plant protection products on agricultural land expose local residents to a risk of health impairment? This question has been examined by a committee of the Health Council of the Netherlands. Its findings are set out in this advisory report. Little research has been carried out in this area. There is some evidence, mainly from studies carried out abroad, that the use of such products can pose a health risk to local residents. Accordingly, the Committee feels that there is sufficient reason to initiate an exposure study among this section of the population here in the Netherlands, and to adapt the approval procedure for plant protection products. It also identifies measures that can reduce local residents' exposure.

RIVM starts large research program in 2014

<http://www.bestrijdingsmiddelen-omwonenden.nl/>



Research on exposure of residents to pesticides (OBO-project)

Approximately 90.000 people in the Netherlands reside within 50 meters of flower bulb or fruit cultivation. Because it is unclear how many of these people are exposed to pesticides or if their health is at risk as a result, RIVM is coordinating scientific research into the exposure of residents to pesticides.

The research will be based upon advice from the Dutch Health Council and is carried out by order of the Dutch ministries for Infrastructure and the Environment and of Economic Affairs.

It will be carried out in phases, beginning with residents near flower bulb cultivation. Secretary Mansveld from the ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment has informed Dutch parliament about the research outline and project phases.



Lesson: Handle with care

- Information is easy available
- A lot of people are highly educated
- Residents put a lot and time and effort in informing themselves
- Local authorities often lack knowledge and instruments to handle problems
- People trust science, but not necessarily health officials
- Worries of residents can point at scientific knowledge gaps
- Farmers (and their organizations) are not used to react on worries of residents (“the rural area is ours”; “they are not from here”)
- This type of issues cuts deep in local communities and the families living there

Other lessons? Discussion?

Active local group you can find at www.bollenboos.nl



De Stichting Bollenboos bestaat uit burgers uit de gemeente Westerveld die zich zorgen maken over de nadelige gevolgen van de lelieteelt in Drenthe.

Stichting Bollenboos wil dat meer mensen zich realiseren dat het telen van leliebollen risico's kan opleveren voor de gezondheid en een bedreiging vormt voor het milieu en het landschap. Stichting Bollenboos spoort de gemeente Westerveld en de provincie aan om maatregelen te nemen teneinde de groei van de milieubelastende lelieteelt tegen te gaan en de nadelige gevolgen ervan te beperken.