



@AeresUASIntOffice



#Alumni - Aeres UAS (University of Applied Sciences) - CAH Dronten

Dear alumni,

What a joy to finish this academic year at the university, with colleagues and students, celebrating this year's graduation with family and friends in one room without wearing face masks!

This has been a challenging year for every one of us. The positive thing about challenges is that they push us to look at things differently and it can be the start of improving things or creating something new. At the same time we start to appreciate things in challenging times that we took for granted beforehand. Challenges are crucial for learning and innovation!

Mobility is one of the key elements in internationalization. We have students coming to study with us from all parts of the world. We also send students as part of their studies to partner universities abroad. All our partner universities have offered their studies in an online mode over the last year, so our students have not traveled abroad for studies. Aeres, as one of the few universities, was still able to receive international students. Due to our scale we can be flexible and we were able to start the study year with an organized quarantine for students who needed it. From the very start we have agreed that all international programs should be offered in class when possible. We are very grateful for the fact that we succeeded to organize it like this. At the same time our staff did the utmost to train themselves in online didactics and the use of online tools for teaching which we put into place at times of lockdown.

Last year a total of 3500 students studied at our university in Dronten and 700 at our location in Almere. More students than ever before and we are still getting more students next year! Last year we had 243 students studying in international programmes and these students have 31 different nationalities. This week we have 31 international students graduating. Obtaining a Bachelor or Master degree is an achievement in itself, but students who graduate this week have really been challenged and I want to congratulate them with this major achievement.

I also want to congratulate our staff because I think COVID didn't put them into survival mode but made them excel. Last week we received the results of the National Student Enquiry in which our students scored our academic programs in 2020-2021. Our International Food Business and European Food Business programs got a general mark of 4,02 and higher (on a scale 1 – 5). Our short Bachelor

degree programs even received a 4,30 score, which puts our international programs in the top 5 of the Dutch UAS programs!!!

There were more things we could celebrate in 2020-2021. To name just a few: our new English taught Master programme in Almere got accredited. The Master Food Systems Innovation will start in September 2021. One of our international alumni, Moritz Huber, got nominated as one of the 100 young professionals actively contributing to sustainability (*DJ100*). And our International Food Business students joined the Ecotrophelia challenge and won first prize for the product they have developed: vegan ice-cream based on yellow peas. These students will participate in the European final this fall.

I am proud of our students and our staff. They form an amazing team creating a learning space today in order to face the challenges of tomorrow. In a month's time we will move to a new building at the world expo Floriade in Almere. Next to this new building we have the start-up village and I really hope to see Aeres alumni using this location to launch their new businesses.

During the summer Aeres will finish the new building in Almere and continue working on the expansion of our current building in Dronten. After summer we will start revising our education. The SDG's and 21st century skills will get an important role in our education.

For now its time to relax and enjoy time with family and friends!

I hope to meet you again after summer, somewhere sometime!



Natasja Spaargaren
 Head International Studies & Consultancy



Congratulations on your graduation! The new members of Aeres international alumni family!





Things I learned at Aeres I can now put into practice



Moritz Huber, European Food Business alumnus 2020. He came from Germany to study in the Netherlands. During the 3rd year project "Student Company" he started a food company "SauerCrowd" that was so successful, that stopping the business was not option. On the contrary, it had to be developed further. Therefore he was granted the "Green Starters" track. That is a special program for the 4th year students with entrepreneurial mindset: students fulfil the requirements of the graduation year while running their own company. In June 2021 Moritz made it to the "DJ100" (Duurzame Jonge 100) list. That is a list of the 100 most sustainable young frontrunners in the Netherlands. We spoke to him a week after the DJ100 list was announced about the past, present and future.

Let's go back to the very beginning: why did you choose to study European Food Business program?

M: Because I simply felt the need to make an impact in the food landscape in Europe and there was not a very wide choice of study programs available. I think it is just coming up slowly. And when I googled European food business, business and food entrepreneurship, systems change then it was the first one popping up.

Why were you thinking that you need to change something in the food system?

M: I think it's a deep desire, generational need to

bring change to any system in this world. And I personally worked in professional kitchens before and I was always into food. So I felt if I can make an impact, then it has to be within the food landscape.

At this moment if you look back to when you were a student, and what you are doing now, do you think you have managed to take the steps to change that landscape, to make some impact?

M: I think I was very over-ambitious at the beginning, as every student is. You think you change the world within seconds.

But you need that ambition, otherwise..

M: Yes, exactly! But during the last two years being an impact-driven entrepreneur/entrepreneurial activist I think I have made local changes and changed the perception of certain people when it comes to food and how/where we source it.

Tell us about your project – what are you doing now, what kind of impact are you creating?

M: So I started a company based on creating food, but also spreading a certain mission. I am doing that with a medium of fermented food. Fermentation is for me pure alchemy and in very close connection to nature and preserving food in the most natural way. We innovate basically new fermented products or also re-innovate products that have been existing, like sauerkraut, kimchi. Now we are more in the plant-based dairy replacement section. In doing so we basically try to super transparently show our chain to our customers. And show also to other food producers how important it is to be transparent in the chain and circular.

You represent a short supply chain, work with local suppliers, but who are customers who appreciate this approach?

M: I think it started in the first year only with the classic as the Dutch would say ►





“geitenwollensokken” (literally translating: goat wool socks) customers. So people shopping at organic stores, who are already know with that kind of approach for producing and consuming food. But now we have found out that over the last half year, year or so we also attract more people in de Randstad area, in the cities, in organic stores, in delicatessen stores. People who focus on their own health.

Has Covid had any impact on your business? On how people consume food or what they expect from food. Has it maybe been beneficial?

M: In in terms of customers seeking for more healthy alternatives – definitely! There was way more curiosity due to people having time again to look into new foods and approaches. And especially the “Mind-Gut Journal” – the educational platform we offer for free saw a big spike, because people realized that there is immune system that lies within our gut and we can nourish it and feed it, and support it ourselves. We don’t have to wait until a vaccine comes to get out of our house again. It was also possible just to change the diet a bit and become healthier that way. And in doing so also doing something good for the planet. We do see that right now that everything is opening up again, demand is decreasing a bit, probably because people travel again, go to restaurants and so on. That was expected. But I do believe that we will not go back to normal. I think we will be confronted with these issues over and over again. Focusing on health and the health of the planet – I see a lot of potential.

One of the things that you are doing right now is extending your product portfolio. You are going from fermented foods to plant-based alternatives for dairy products.

M: Also fermented, by the way. The basis of our products is always fermentation.

So this new product, plant-based butter, can you tell more about it? What is it, how did you come up with it?

M: Before we only had fermented vegetables. Me myself mainly eating plant-based I was always very frustrated with not being able to have my [dairy] butter anymore. But if you want to cut out the cow in your diet then you have to stop eating cheese and butter. And the only thing available on the market was margarine. And margarine tastes pretty awful. You can’t compare it to butter. Nine months further we innovated in our kitchen in Amsterdam a butter based on fermented plants (actually plant milk that is fermented) and healthier fat alternatives. It tastes exactly like

butter and that was our goal. Now we are about to innovate further, scale it. It is a very interesting process.

I think you are pioneering the market with this product...

M: Definitely. Of course there is margarine, there are companies cutting out palm oil. But you want the same experience as with butter (it’s purely a question about taste now; it’s really trying to get the same taste), and then with 60% less environmental impact of the product.

You said you see a lot of potential in the market and we are not going back to where we were. What future do you see for yourself and your company for the coming 5 years?

M: To be honest it is very difficult to look 5 years forward. At this moment I am not even able to look half a year forward. Because there are so many implications when you are a start-up: you are running on low budgets, you try to convey a message, you try to enter the market. Then you enter the market and then there is usually this next step where you either you stay small and do your day-to-day business. Or you get an investment and grow bigger, become more impactful, but also have way more responsibility. I am actually right now in a phase where I am a bit taking myself out of the company and trying to reflect on what I really want. Me personally. Do I want this scale or is it more local impact?

Why this change of thoughts? Make it big!

M: Yes, that is what everyone is saying 😊 I have been working for almost two years in the row. I just feel that I need a little summer break and then probably I will be energized enough to take on the next challenges.

What would you need for that? An angel investor?

M: Yes, we are taking currently to an angel investor. There are different rounds of investment; this one would be a very early one, so it is quite risky for all entities involved. I am busy with writing pitches, predictions for the next years. All the beautiful economical things I learned at Aeres I can now put into place now!

Imagine, if it would be Christmas now and you could make one wish, what would you wish for?

M: My wish for the world would be that we don’t go back to normal and remember all the lessons we have learned. Knowing the data and the science that we have this deadline (2030), I hope that people don’t rush out again and stay hedonistic ▶





in their consumption behavior. Small companies like SauerCrowd and so many other companies that really really try to make a true impact, not only look at making more money, that they become the most successful businesses.

You are making small steps and these small steps are not left unnoticed by other people. You got a place in the list of DJ100 (Duurzame Jonge 100). Those are young entrepreneurs, young professionals and students who demonstrate that a sustainable future is possible. Can you tell us more - what does this "award" mean for you?

M: It is a big honour to be in the list of the top 100 young people (*younger than 32*). There were amazing candidates, I mean there were hundreds of candidates and they were all doing beautiful things contributing to the systems' change in any direction. I was one of the few people in the category "Food". Funnily we look into the food chain somehow not as a first but one of the last points where we could make/bring change. It shows that more and more people are busy with the topic "food" and being in that list also shows that the whole approach of circularity, trying to stay local is taking on; there's a positive view on it, in general. And it is a very Dutch (Netherlands-focused) prize, so I finally managed to break out of the Amsterdam bubble and go country wide.

Will it open any doors for you, offer any opportunities?

M: It's more like a trademark, more like a certification – people put the sign in their website communicate about it, it just builds a lot of trust. And definitely it drove some engagement towards our page, towards "Gut-Mind Journal". On the side track – you just mentioned that you are very much in Amsterdam bubble, the company is Amsterdam-based (*work at Kitchen Republic*), you yourself come from Germany. Do you have any plans to bring some change to the German food market?

M: I tried, I tried very hard. I think with the butter there will be a big chance because with kimchi and kraut (*what we did before: fermented veggies*) – there is already a big market in Germany. It's already very popular and mainstream. Big newspapers talk about gut health, about probiotics, about food in general.

Is it more in Germany than in the Netherlands, is awareness higher in Germany than in the Netherlands?

M: Yes, way more. We are trying already for a year to enter the German market, but there is very good local competition. In the Netherlands it is a teeny-



tiny niche. The whole organic food sector is super small in the Netherlands, still. But I think it will change but it is still very small. By the way, if you want to try out our fermented products, at once, and want to do it in the most convenient way then there is a special promotion in week 28 (*that is when this newsletter is published*). Every organic store in the Netherlands has the possibility (*and for sure every Ekoplaza, Marqt stores*) to offer 20% discount [on our products]. Feel free to grab a jar of kimchi or kraut and enjoy fermented food.

And butter?

M: Butter will take still a while. We are still in innovation process. I think we will launch it by the end of the year. Good things take time 😊 Until then, don't feel rushed, and maybe take a look at the "Mind-Gut Journal" if you to read a bit about topics like bacteria, gut-health etc. We always have two students from VU (*Vrije Universiteit*) and a student in the lab working constantly on these projects and we share the research with people for free.

And as usual the closing question: what do you wish to the fellow alumni?

M: Stick with your initial idea why you became a student, why you wanted to bring a change and never loose that. Once you are out of the university and the big world comes rushing at you, you may lose sight at times. I do that as well, even though I am probably one of the most motivated people. I have seen in that transition there come moments when you really think like "we can't make it anyways... civilization is doing whatever..." These thoughts are very low frequency. We need more energy and support for each other. That's why I also love to be alumnus and talk to students, just too keep the sparkle up! ■





Work, hobby and passion – all in one. Dairy aficionado Piet



Piet in Pakistan

When we drink a glass of milk or eat breakfast cereals with milk or yoghurt, or eat a sandwich with cheese, we rarely think about what impact dairy sector has on livelihoods around the world. But as simple as it may sound, it can change lives. And Piet Tesselar has seen it in his 40 year long journey as a professional trainer/consultant for the dairy sector.

On a sunny day at the beginning of July he was celebrating this remarkable milestone, 40 years of work in education sector, together with his colleagues from Aeres University of Applied Sciences, Department of International Studies and Consultancy. While colleagues were busy preparing snacks to share, we sat down and went down the memory lane.

Can you bring us back in time and tell how your journey in education begun, how it all started?

P: How it started, indeed. So when I finished my studies at Wageningen University (*study program Livestock Management*) I was thinking at that time – I will not enter into education and I will not go to Friesland* (**one of the 12 provinces in the Netherlands*). I myself am coming from the Province of North Holland. And North Holland and Friesland at that time were competing provinces especially in dairy farming. But anyway, in the end it happened that I was contacted by the director of Practical Training Centre (PTC) in Oenkerk with the request whether I could join their team. At that time there was a shortage of trained/educated people who could do this kind of job. And then he said: "You, of course, will get a function in education, but also you'll be able to travel abroad for missions. That is also part of your job description." So that was promising because already during my studies I was quite interested in livestock management in other countries. So then I joined the team and for seven years worked indeed as a trainer and also course coordinator, but I was mainly training Dutch students. Over the years I was involved in a few missions abroad and then at a certain moment

they needed a project manager for Pakistan to set up a livestock training center "from scratch". Then I was asked to implement this project, and that was actually my first long term experience abroad.

How long did you spend in Pakistan?

P: I lived there for seven and a half years. Initially I had a contract for one of the half years to start up and then see how it would go. Then after the evaluation the decision needed to be made: to continue or not and it was decided to continue. At that time I was working for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (*they hired my services from the Practical Training Centre*), but my superior (*you can say officer*) was located at the Netherlands Embassy in Islamabad. So the first phase of the project of one of the half years proved successful, then second phase of three years was initiated. During this second phase I also initiated a second project which was focusing on training female extension workers. Both projects were implemented side by side, so at a certain moment there was a team of four Dutch people along with local consultants to implement both projects. After a period of 7,5 years I went back to the Netherlands while both projects were still ongoing. I still went there, few years after for short-term coaching missions. After 10 years projects concluded and were handed over to the Ministry for Livestock and Dairy Development (*both the training center and female training programs are continuing up to date*).

When I came back to the Netherlands, I was thinking about returning back to the Practical Training Centre in Oenkerk and returning back to my old job as a lecturer/trainer, but the idea was not that much appealing. I was considering to move to another/ new job. But then I was contacted by CARE in the Netherlands (*CARE International is a humanitarian relief organization with offices in various countries*). They approached me with the request whether



I would be willing to join their team in Bosnia Herzegovina for implementing an emergency relief program. That was at a time when the Civil War had just ended there (on December 14th 1995 the Dayton Peace Agreement was signed).

When I came back from Pakistan it was March 1996 and I was approached in April 1996 and then I decided - let me do that! Better than to re-join my old job. It was of course a different responsibility – it was about implementing an agricultural relief program in one of the Muslim enclaves ravaged during the war. Everyone has heard about Srebrenica, but there are two other enclaves where the same thing more or less happened: Gorazde and Zepa. So I was working in Gorazde. People in rural areas, Muslim people, in that time fled to the town of Gorazde and the rural areas were completely destroyed: infrastructure, homes, livestock, everything was destroyed, killed or stolen. Many people in Gorazde Town had fled to Europe. But especially farmers fled to the town and just barely survived. When our team arrived it was our job to rehabilitate the rural areas: infrastructure, roads, electricity, helping people to rebuild their homes. And when that was done then I came along with my agricultural rehabilitation program and then I

could offer them for example, a pregnant heifer, if they met certain conditions, or a group of sheep, or a greenhouse or something else. That always went hand in hand with setting up an extension program and other services to help people along while they were rebuilding their farm.

How long did you spend on this project?

P: Five years. As I said, I was mainly focusing on dairy. I distributed there a few thousand pregnant heifers. And not Holstein Friesians by the way, but mainly Simmental from countries like the Czech Republic or Austria or Germany. These animals were very sturdy, strong, and they could survive the tough conditions in that country. So once people had re-built their lives again, could return to their farms including their dairy cow (and in the Bosnian culture milk is a very important food ingredient in daily life) they started producing.



After a while the demand grew for setting up milk collection centers. The final step was to set up a milk processing plant. Step by step. In those five years I was able to start from zero and build up the whole dairy value chain. So when I left the whole dairy value chain was in place and people could buy locally produced dairy products. It was a very interesting and challenging experience, but also one of the best periods during my professional career.

And then the next challenge.

P: So then I came back and then immediately CORDAID, another emergency relief organization, contacted me whether I would be interested to join their team in Afghanistan. Then I worked almost one year in Afghanistan in Kandahar, setting up an emergency relief programs for nomadic people who fled the desert areas in the

south of Afghanistan and stayed in refugee camps. Most wanted to return back to their old way of life. This was only possible once it was certain that water wells in these desert areas were still there. These were special, very deep water wells. To make sure that these water wells were still there and operational a survey together with those nomadic people was implemented. Of course repair work had to be implemented through "food for work" programs. And then for people in the camps we started distributing flocks of sheep so that they could already get used to shepherding these animals before they could move out into the desert areas again.

After one year in Afghanistan my bosses at the Practical Training Centre informed that they needed my services in the Netherlands for implementing an international training program. It involved a diploma course sponsored by NUFFIC of six months duration. Initially I worked as a lecturer/trainer, Later on as the coordinator. Every year we had around 20-24 participants who mostly came on NUFFIC sponsored fellowships, some were privately funded. At the same time I was also involved in many other small training projects.

In that time I also worked a lot in Eastern Europe, Ukraine, Russia in livestock training projects which were also very interesting and not only from a technical point of view. For instance experiencing real winter in Russia!

And then how did you roll in at Aeres, your current employer?

P: So I continued working at the Training Centre until it went bankrupt in December 2017, very much unfortunate. The Training Centre was very much depending on secondary and higher agricultural schools in The Netherlands to bring their students to the Training Centre for practical training. For the services rendered they would compensate the Training Centre, and that kept us afloat. Funding for practical training for secondary schools and colleges however gradually decreased leaving no other option than bankruptcy despite the international work which was going quite ▶



Piet in South Sudan

good. After the bankruptcy I was thinking what to do next and there were some options. Some consultancy agencies were interested in my services, but then also Aeres contacted me. During the job interview with Natasja (*our boss*) we agreed that I could continue more or less with the same work I was doing at the Practical Training Centre, mainly participating in tenders, writing project proposals, acquiring projects and then also implementing those same projects. Besides also training in international training programs. So under those conditions I joined initially for half a year just to see from both sides how it would go. And then after half a year it was mutually decided to continue.

You have experience which you have built up in 40 years. You've seen many things in many countries. Is there anything what you've seen that has surprised you or has been such a special experience that you will never forget it?

P: There have been many experiences, but one recent special experience was attending a cattle market in South Sudan. South Sudan is very much livestock oriented, having your own cattle is very important. If you want to be a respectable member of the society then you need to have cows and many of them. It doesn't matter whether they are big or small, but you need to have cows with very big horns. And the Dinka's (*the nomadic tribe there*), with whom I was implementing a training project invited me to attend a local livestock market where they traded cows. And indeed you could see many cows there. I already knew that Dinka's were tall people and maybe you've heard about them (*even the American NBA is going to South Sudan to select fresh candidates for their basketball competition because of the*

size of the people). And of course myself I am not that tall, and then with my colleagues who are a bit bigger than me, I joined that cattle market. Then I really felt like a dwarf, In between those people I could not see anything; on average people were at least (at least!) two meters tall!

And what has been the most rewarding for you in your 40 years of educating people, training people? What is what you like the most in your job?

P: When looking back at my career, then the best period was actually my time in Bosnia. There I was really able to help desperate people to find purpose and some joy in their lives again. The civil war in Bosnia was terrible. Everything was destroyed. When I arrived there, there was not a house that was fit for habitation, so in the beginning I also had to stay in a house without windows, only plastic, no water, no electricity, just a roof to keep us dry. That was about it. Every morning going to a natural spring to collect water and cooking on a wood stove. Those were the conditions we were in, the local people had it even worse. And many of those people had lost a lot of family members in that war. Initially the only hope these people had was to survive the war. And once they survived the war then their future looked so terrible for them. People could not see how they ever could return to their old way of life again. So initially, in the first year after the war, there were many people who committed suicide as they could not stand that future. People were completely in despair. And then still being able to help those people to rebuild their homes, rebuild their farm, so that they were able to rebuild their old lives again gave me a lot of job satisfaction.

Was it also not hard for you sometimes, emotionally, to be there, and to see all that?

P: Yes, indeed there were sometimes heart wrenching experiences. One time we went up in a mountainous area, it was in the autumn season, very cold. And then you could still find here and there pockets of people, who had survived the war without fleeing to town. We had heard that there was a group of people living somewhere very far out, who also needed our help (*within the framework of the rehabilitation program*). So that day I went there with a local extension worker and local staff as I did not know the way. And then after half a day of travelling up the hills and mountains and walking a certain distance (*because the roads were very bad*) we found that pocket of people in a very tiny village. In a village that was completely destroyed and with only older people, I think at least 70 plus, who had survived the war by hiding in a tent made from parachute cloth. Sometimes food was dropped in the area to help people. They were surviving on apples. Can you imagine? Nothing else. Apples. That was the only food they had to survive on and they had not seen a single person within the last year visiting them. And then you come across such a group of people. They were, of course so grateful, crying when they saw us ... [moment of silence].

So you started your career in 1981. We're now in 2021. It's been 40 years. What have been the most remarkable developments in the dairy sector that you have experienced? I believe it is day and night difference how the dairy sector was back then and how it is now.

P: There is no comparison. Looking back at those 40 years every time you come across innovations ►



Piet in Indonesia

and you teach people, you train people. And every time you think - well, now we have reached such a technical level, we cannot surpass that level anymore. Maybe there will be some few more innovations, but it cannot be that much. That is of course completely wrong! Innovations keep coming and the sector is still moving/ developing at a pace that I can not imagine where we will be in another 40 years' time. What I've experienced in the past 40 years is just incredible. Starting with horse carts in my younger years, and I still remember when my father bought his first tractor (*that time I was maybe four or five years old*). And the situation now when most physical work at a dairy farm can be mechanized and automated, up to milking and feeding. Almost everything, except inseminating, can nowadays be done using mechanization and automation. Many processes can be very closely monitored, you know exactly what is happening. Am convinced that the dairy sector will continue to move upwards as far as technical performance is concerned. And training and education will always remain an important part in that process.

At least in Europe we talk a lot about animal welfare and that we should save the planet and livestock is so bad for the environment, especially cows with their methane emissions. We should reduce our animal protein intake. What do you think will happen with these developments - are they going to somehow negatively influence the dairy sector? What will

be the demand for dairy products in the future? What do you think about these developments globally?

P: In general the welfare of people in many developing countries is still going up and it will continue to go up; that is a certain trend and luckily so. People will be better off and it is also certain when people are better off they will drink and eat more dairy products and eat more meat. The demand for milk and meat therefore will only go up in the foreseeable future. At the same time it is very clear that livestock sector is contributing a lot to climate change and greenhouse gas emissions. Something needs to be done as well, so there's already a lot of research taking place at this very moment. Already for years methods are developed that will reduce methane emissions from cows, and in general carbon dioxide emissions on dairy farms. Milk processing plants in the Netherlands are already imposing strict standards on dairy farmers with regard to carbon dioxide equivalents per liter of milk produced. And this standard will be tightened rapidly, and by 2030 it should preferably be zero, so you should be climate neutral. So dairy farmers in the Netherlands will be forced one way or another to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions.

Do you think they will succeed by 2030 to live up to this?

P: It will be tough, but I'm sure when processing plants are insisting farmers will find ways using different methods. For instance farmers having

very big barns can cover them with solar panels. New feed additives are researched which can bring down methane gas emissions and there will be other options coming for sure. You never know what the future holds. It can be that in the future we will even not need a cow anymore to produce milk. If you can develop an artificial rumen and capture the fermentation products and use these to make artificial milk, who knows... In the Silicon Valley in the United States they already are trying this. So it might be that in 10 years' time people no longer need cows to produce milk.

The same as we won't need cows to produce meat, right?

P: Even meat. There are laboratories that can produce artificial meat using stem cells. I am sure all these technologies will help to get climate change somehow under control. And we have to, because we are already experiencing, even today, the impact of climate change, which is quite severe.

You just said that you never know what the future holds. That's true, but do you have any dreams for yourself for the near future?

P: I still have one year to go before it is my official retirement and of course I have a big network of people all over the world. Even after my retirement, I still intend to continue. Maybe not 100%, but a bit lower pace to continue implementing projects in the same work area where I have my expertise. It is my work, but it is also my hobby and my passion as well, even after 40 years. ■



The Village Food Pioneers Program: Apply Now!



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Do you have your own food-related company that is looking for a “boost”, or are you dreaming about having one? Then it’s time we introduce you to the Village Food Pioneers Program in Almere!

The Village Food Pioneers Program offers fifteen workplaces for [starting] food entrepreneurs free of charge from September 2021 onwards. As a participant in the program you will become part of a close-knit community. With the guidance of coaches and experts, you will develop both your professional self and your company. The purpose of these 6 months is to bring your company to the next level in a relatively short period of time!

The ideal profile of a Villager

- An entrepreneur who dares to dream big
- Entrepreneurs of all ages, fresh out of school or those who have made a career switch
- Is excited to work in an English speaking environment
- Has taken the first steps towards setting up their own business or;
- Someone who has already set up the business, but is still looking for ways to develop
- Someone who aspires to work in a vibrant workspace together with other food professionals

What do we offer?

- A free workplace for 6 months in the Village
- A community of like-minded people
- 2-weekly meetings with all residents
- A mentor: someone who will help you with all your questions
- Access to training modules of Aeres Hogeschool
- Access to the annual program of Flevo Campus such as Flevo Campus Live, Meet-ups and Floriade Dialogues
- Access to the network of Flevo Campus, Food Hub and Impact Hub
- Vouchers worth 6 hours of coaching to be spent on professional guidance and personal development
- Exposure during the Floriade Expo

Why should you apply?

The Village Food Pioneers Program will help you define what value your product or service can offer to your clients. You will learn how to tell the story of your business perfectly and build a strong business around it. By practicing your business pitch on potential partners and clients you will receive valuable insights on how to improve your business even further.

Application deadline: July 30, 2021



Two Aeres international alumni Julia Neundorf (*Food and Health programme*) and Patrick Burgess (*International Food Business programme*) welcomed their first child, a baby boy, on April 15, 2021.

Congratulations to proud new parents! May your baby be blessed with good health, love and laughter!