

 **DE STADSBOERDERIJ
ALMERE** 

Stadsboerderij De Kemphaan

Tineke van den Berg

Kemphaanpad 14
1358 AC Almere

Interview on 7th on February 2014



PREFACE

This farm was selected as a case-study in the master thesis research project “Learning from Excellence” of Clara Beck and Gratia Meijers. This master thesis is part of the project “Learning from Excellence” of the Chair group Farming System Ecology of Wageningen UR, initiated by Ir. G.J.M. Oomen and Dr. Ir. W.A.H. Rossing. This farm was selected as a case-study on the basis of an expert’s opinion as being a positive deviant.

The aim of this profile is to provide background information on the master thesis.

Clara Beck and Gratia Meijers visited this farm on the 7th of February 2014.

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SELECTION OF THE FARM

The selection of the farm took place on the basis of the opinion of experts in the field of agriculture. The expert, who selected this farm, used the following remark to describe it:

“open to the city, space for development, productive, strict with themselves in terms of inputs, everything under control, swining, on good soil”

Furthermore five criteria were mentioned by the expert that the expert saw as crucial criteria for excellent farm performance (see Figure 1). The expert evaluated the performance of farm on his criteria on a scale from 1 to 5 where 1 represents poor performance, 3 neutral/average performance and 5 excellent performance. In figure 1 the criteria and the corresponding score of Stadsboerderij Almere is presented.



Figure 1: Expert scores of Stadsboerderij on five criteria

Table 1: Other selected farms

ID	Farm	Interview Partner	Homepage
NL1	Eko de Eerste	Gerrit Marsman	http://www.eko-de-eerste.nl/
NL2	Genneperhoeve	Age Opdam	http://www.vaneigenerf.nl/onzeboeren/profiel.php?profile=34
NL3	Overesch	Jan Overesch	http://www.overesch.nl/
NL4	Eemlandhoeve	Jan Huijgen	http://www.eemlandhoeve.nl/
NL5	De Terp	Jeroen Robbers	http://www.cvdeterp.nl/
NL6	Bakker Bio	Jan Willem Bakker	http://www.bakkerbio.nl/
NL7	Naoberhoeve	Gerlof Pronk	http://naoberhoeve.nl/
NL8	De Kempphaan	Tineke van den Berg	http://www.kemphaan.nl/
NL9	Zonnehoeve	Teka Kappers	http://www.zonnehoeve.net/
NL10	Gerbrandastate	Asse Aukes	http://www.gerbrandastate.nl/
DE1	Hellweghof	Gregor Scholz	http://hellweghof.de/
DE2	Hof Vorberg	Ulfert Bewig-Glashoff	http://www.hofvorberg.de/
DE3	Gut Körtlinghausen	Gyso von Bonin	http://www.koertlinghausen.de/
DE4	Büsch Naturkost	Johannes Büsch	http://www.buesch-naturkost.de/

PHYSICAL LOCATION & SOIL

Stadsboerderij Almere is located in the surroundings of the city Almere. It is in the vicinity of a large agricultural province the Flevopolder on the east side on the west side is in the vicinity of the big city Amsterdam.

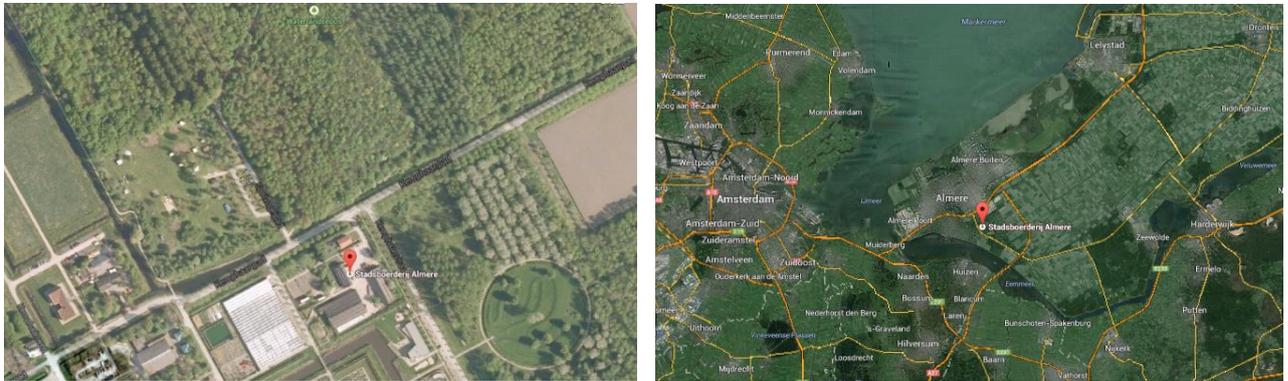


Figure 2: Geographical location

At the very moment they have crop production on 160 hectares. These hectares are rented for one year so often some hectares are used for urban development though or they get the opportunity to rent other fields. When they started 18 years ago most soils were in pristine condition some fields however they have recently manage are of inferior condition as they perceived or instance more weed problems and ploughing required more fuel. The attached soil analysis of the BLGG shows that there is only little P in the soil supply, which can be found back in the nutrient cycles that were calculated.

Stadsboerderij Almere has access to a nature area of Staatsbosbeheer where there is a meadow of 500ha that can be used as grazing area for the cows during summer.

CROPS

Almost all crops are produced for the industry. Tom Saat makes a cropping plan in advance of the growing season, in consultation with buyer parties. Some products are also sold on the market, the portion of these products however is very little.

Table 2: Cultivation plan

Crop	Size (ha)
Wheat	40
Grass Clover	40
Onion	20
Beet	14
Carrot	14
Bean	14
Pea	14
White cabbage	6
Red cabbage	2
Parsnip	2
Pumpkin	6
Corn	7
Spinach	8
Spinach seed	0.5
Broccoli	5
Mustardseed	8

ANIMALS

The cattle that are kept on the farm are in service of the arable crop production. Stadsboerderij Almere has 50 mother cows, 50 heifers, 50 yearlings, and 50 calves. These animals graze in a nature area of Staatsbosbeheer. They have chosen for the breed Marchigiana as these cows an appearance that also appeals to citizen. The cows are fed from the grass clover produced on farm, as well as wastes from the crop production of the Kemphaan and neighbor farms.

VISION OF TINEKE VAN DEN BERG

Tineke van den Berg and Tom Saat both do not have a background in farming. Tom Saat attended Wageningen university for his education. Tineke van den Berg started there as well but subsequently went to Deventer and thereafter to the HAS in Groningen. While studying, both formed ideas of what their ideal farm would look like. When they met it occurred to them that their ideal farm was quite similar.

This shared ideal was the starting point of 'Stadsboerderij Almere'. Initially Tineke van den Berg and Tom Saat considered farming abroad but they liked the idea of contributing to the future of farming in the Netherlands. Therefore they deliberately chose for farming in the surroundings of the city Almere as it is a fast-growing city whose citizens are mostly oriented towards the direction of Amsterdam while on the other side of the city the big agriculture polder ('de grote landbouwpolder') is situated. With the method of a city farm they aimed to make the connection between these two worlds. In hindsight Tineke van den Berg says that it turned out the way they imagined it.

Tineke says that a mixed farm where soil health comes first is the ideal farm. This means that a farmer should not be seduced by the production of too many cash-crop as it reduces the health of the soil. Not profitable crops as for instance Lucerne, which are good for soil fertility, are important to keep in the rotation. Keeping crops that promote soil health reduces the weed problems and results in higher product quality. She stresses that a farmer should not be seduced to only cultivate cash-crops even more as care for the soil also pays itself back economically on the long term

Tineke van den Berg describes a certain sense, 'vingerspitsgevoel' or 'groene vingers'. This is a sense she says that develops through observing, reading and thinking about consequences of actions. Her 'vingerspitsgevoel' she says developed especially by visiting other farms both conventional and organic. She says that this sense gives you the ability to have a 'conversation' with the business. Applying this sense stimulates development in two as you as a farmer learn from the business and on the other hand you also are able to see more what also stimulate the development of the business.

Tineke says that in a farm business the carrying capacity is defining. This capacity is dependent on soil types, amount of manure available and craftsmanship that is brought into the farm. Tineke says that it is important to recognize whether you as a farmer have a preference for a certain branch of the business and if so that it is important to cooperate with someone that is complementary to that. When she visits other farms she is always looking to figure out what is driving a farmer e.g. machinery, crops or cattle. She says that Tom for instance has a preference for crops on the fields whereas she has more interests in making a connection with the city. At first there was a priority to make the farm sound

in agricultural terms. Then Tineke had a more facilitating role. When this was completed the connection with the city came more into focus.

The 'openness' and becoming more visible to the city was initiated by the 'vingerspitsgevoel' as she senses that the business needed it. She says that it is important to approach the city not with 'how can we benefit, or what are possible win-win situation? but the more "What can we offer the city?". The openness to society manifests itself through a range of options. Currently through organizing a market, facilitating cultural events, hosting excursion and organizing a harvest festival there is a strong connection to the city. This strong link to the city has also resulted in sympathy for the farm and public support when city development plans were presented to convert one of their arable fields into a hockey field.

At last she says that the cows play a very important role in the farm. They are important for soil fertility but also are important for contact with the citizen as animals easier to connect to than arable crops.

They experienced difficulties in not knowing what fields they can cultivate the next year. This brings uncertainty and is difficult in making a long term plan. When they get the opportunity to manage new fields they have to manage the transition to organic. Another challenge they experience is to persuade some of their plans to the city of Almere. It often appears that they are ahead of their time.

Tineke van den Berg says that having success lies in having an idea; thinking about it, testing it on feasibility and discussing with others. Dreams are the basis of your success, she says. You have to hold on to your dream and be aware of your preferences and cooperate with someone who is complementary to your skills and preferences.

BLGG SOIL ANALYSIS

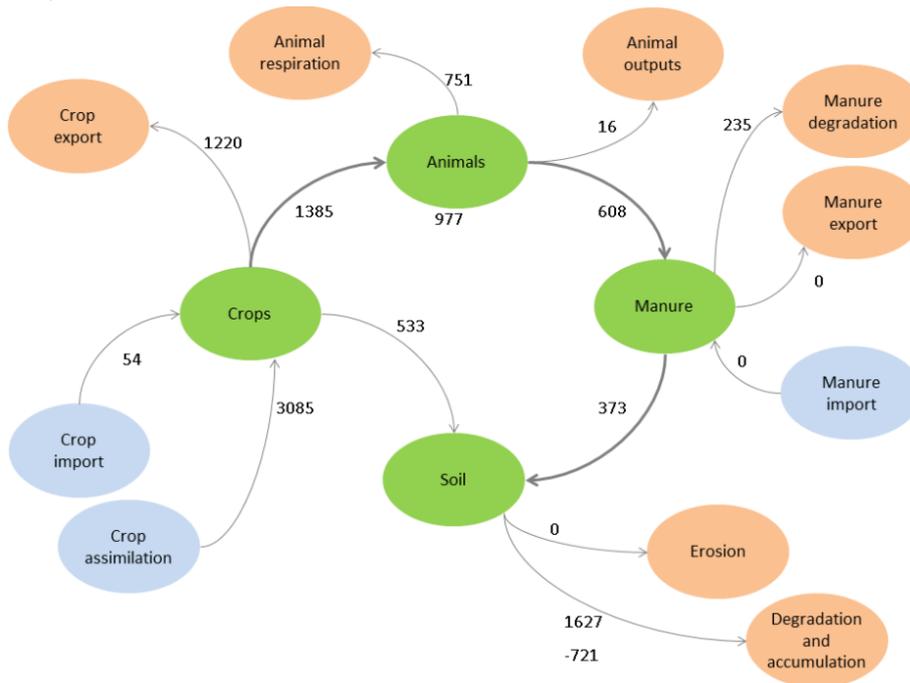
(07-01-2013)

Kemphaan	M1	M6	L5	K1	Average	Avg. target value	Deviation %
N total	2020	2380	2210	1620	2057.5		
C/N- ratio	12	14	12	13	12.75	11	15.91
N-supplying capacity	88	90	98	68	86	113	-23.89
S total	1790	2340	2030	1570	1932.5		
C/S ratio	13	14	13	14	13.5		
S- supplying capacity	45	45	45	45	45	32	40.63
P-available	0.7	0.7	0.9	0.6	0.725	3.8	-80.92
P-soil supply	37	38	42	30	36.75	69	-46.74
P-buffering	53	54	47	50	51		
Pw	28	28	32	23	27.75		
K- available	103	103	186	164	139		
K	24	24	37	34	29.75	31	-4.03
K-soil supply	6.2	5.8	6.6	6.4	6.25		
Ca- available	306	170	42	109	156.75		
Ca- soil supply	11710	12135	429	12385	9164.75		
Magnesium	96	86	90	91	90.75	119	-23.74
Sodium	22	17	14	14	16.75	27	-37.96
Acidity	7.4	7.3	7.2	7.4	7.325	7.1	3.17
C-organic	2.4	3.3	2.7	2.1	2.625		
Organic Matter	4.8	6.6	5.4	4.2	5.25	5.1	2.94
C-inorganic	1.07	0.75	0.99	1.1	0.9775		
Calcium carbonate	4.7	5.5	7.4	8.3	6.475	4.7	37.77
Clay	25	25	26	28	26	21	23.81
Silt	37	31	40	48	39		
Sand	25	32	21	12	22.5		
Clay-Humus (CEC)	234	254	230	248	241.5	205	17.80
CEC occupation	100	100	100	100	100	87	14.94
Soil life	39	50	48	25	40.5		

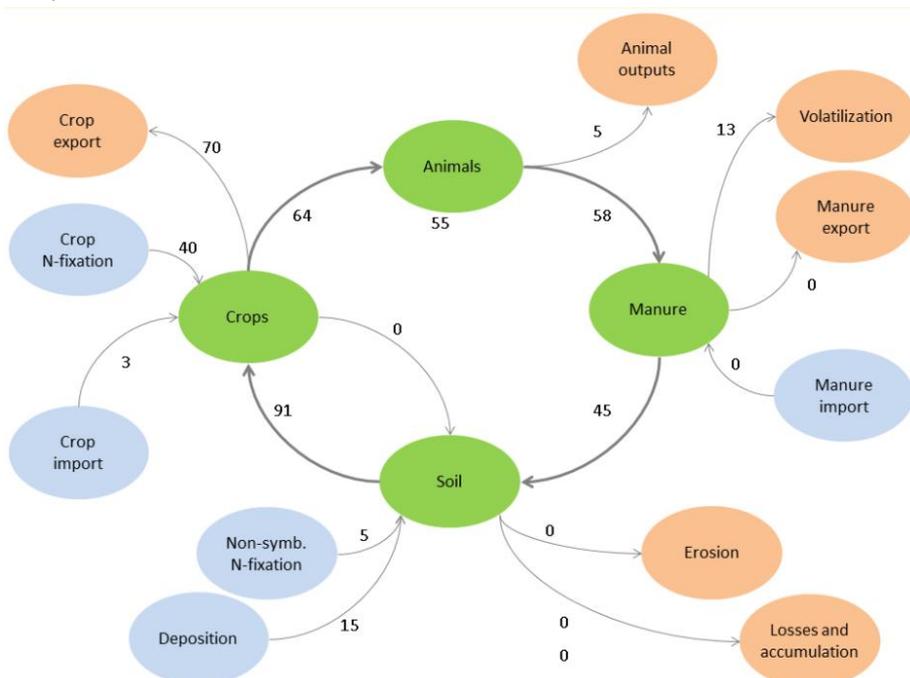
NUTRIENT CYCLES

The nutrient cycles on the following page are outputs from the FarmDesign model. For the C and the P cycle it can be considered that losses will probably lower than represented and a higher accumulation will occur, as crop residues were not taken into account. That there are no losses of N points to very good nutrient management of the farm even though the animals have a rather low efficiency, which probably stems from the fact that it is meat cattle.

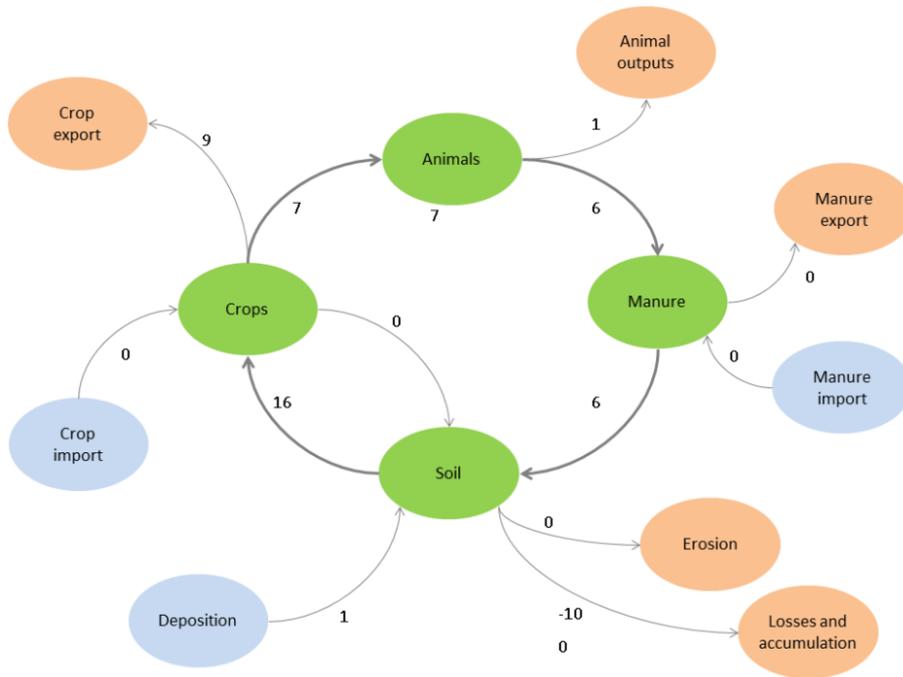
C-cycle



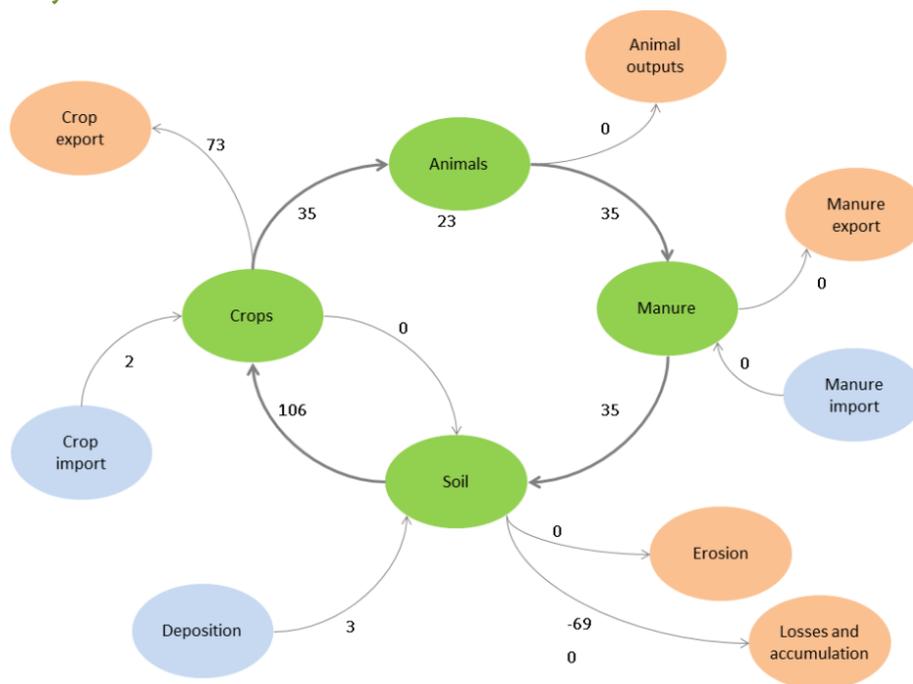
N-cycle



P-cycle



K-cycle



PHOTOS













