

Green Business Westland

> GROWING THE FUTURE

New: World Horti Center
'Westland has a world first,
and a fantastic dynamism' | 8

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Westland is the centre of the world's main greenhouse horticulture cluster. **Continues to innovate, thanks to the synergy created by the business community, teaching institutes and government organisations.** Is the logistics hub of Europe. Produces high-quality food, flowers and plants innovatively and sustainably.

'Peppers not pills. Westland, the green pharmacy, is sitting on a gold mine!' | 4

Interview with GP and standard bearer for the Netherlands Action Plan for Fruit and Vegetables **Tamara de Weijer**

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The vision of the former mayor **Sjaak van der Tak**

'500 million consumers throughout Europe are stocked within 24 hours!' | 14

Complete fruit & vegetables chain and the biggest flower auction in the world

Pioneering solutions to meet global challenges



Westland is a dynamic municipality. In this relatively small area of just 9000 hectares, we come up with pioneering solutions to global challenges. We produce high quality food products, flowers and plants, sustainably and innovatively, to improve the well-being and welfare of people all over the world.

The Westland area is the world's main greenhouse horticulture cluster. Over the last 120 years, Westland has become the international hotspot when it comes to growing indoor crops. As early as 1918, Westland growers started planting indoors to extend the growing season of their tomato crop. The development and exchange of knowledge make innovation possible. An unparalleled cluster of greenhouse horticulture companies and related industries. Importers, exporters, packaging and repackaging companies, growers, breeders, R&D, suppliers, transporters and warehouses, and many more. A cluster like this concentrated in such a small area is found nowhere else in the world.

With the opening of the World Horti Center, the region now has a campus where the business community, education and government can come together. The international innovation hub is also the main innovation centre of the international greenhouse horticulture sector, where business, research, demonstration, teaching and education converge. It is also where local and international greenhouse companies innovate and do business.

Westland's geographical location is unique. Situated close to Schiphol and the Port of Rotterdam, our logistics hub can reach 500 million European customers within 24 hours. Our mentality is our defining feature: we work hard and efficiently, while always looking for ways to create synergy through partnerships. Many companies have chosen to establish their business in Westland.

www.westlandhortibusiness.com

Facts & figures



500 million consumers

can be reached within 24 hours from Westland



670 greenhouse horticulture companies

(CBS, Feb. 2017)



4500 hectare horticulture area

(CBS, Feb. 2017)



8.2 billion euros

import to the Netherlands



16.5 billion euros

export from the Netherlands

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“The Dutch have become world leaders in agricultural innovation, pioneering new paths to fight hunger.”

(National Geographic, September 2017)

Our dream



ZERO
HUNGER



GOOD
HEALTH
AND
WELL-BEING



CLEAN
WATER
AND
SANITATION



AFFORDABLE
AND
CLEAN
ENERGY



DECENT
WORK
AND
ECONOMIC
GROWTH



RESPONSIBLE
CONSUMPTION
AND
PRODUCTION



CLIMATE
ACTION



LIFE
ON
LAND

A strong horticulture cluster to make the world better

On the 9000 hectares that comprise Westland, we work hard to put knowledge and innovation to use to contribute to the sustainable development goals. No more hunger, good health and well-being, reduced energy and fossil fuel use and cleaner water: the United Nations goals form a common thread that runs through the industrious sector.



M.A. C.J. Schouten

Minister of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality

'The Dutch horticulture sector reflects a dynamic and pioneering entrepreneurship. This is absolutely evident in the agricultural export figures of our country in 2017. Together, we have achieved a record sum of nearly 92 billion euro! The Dutch horticulture sector plays a prominent role in this. More and more horticulture businesses work according to the principle of Het Nieuwe Telen (literally: a new way of cultivating). This is a principle that focuses on sustainable use of energy, water and crop protection. This can result in saving energy of 35 to 50%. In Westland, all the links in the chain collaborate in order to become the first climate-neutral region in the Netherlands by 2030. This is a goal that we look forward to realising.'



Jan Huitema

Member of the European Parliament VVD / ALDE. Member on the AGRI committee, Substitute on the Environment committee

'The Municipality of Westland, the Glass City of the Netherlands, is the Silicon Valley of horticulture. Our international colleagues look up to the knowledge and innovations of the greenhouse horticulture sector in the Netherlands. We are five, maybe even ten, years ahead of other EU countries. We must retain this leading position. And we should also be proud of it!'



Ahmed Aboutaleb

Mayor of Rotterdam

'Rotterdam and the Westland are inextricably linked. The people of Rotterdam eat fresh products from Westland every day. Many Westland products are transported to the hinterland on Rotterdam's excellent transport connections such as the Port, railway and road haulage. And the knowledge of the Westland greenhouse horticulture companies ensures that food can be grown in a responsible way anywhere in the world. They thus make a significant contribution to the world's food provision.'



Maarten Oostenbrink

Managing Director Ludvig Svensson BV

'Many ideas for innovative solutions originate from growers. By keeping the dialogue with the sector open, we are always aware of the problems that growers face and what their needs are. We can then address these with new products and applications. In the current scenario of increasingly complex technical projects, collaboration is essential. By consolidating our knowledge and experience, we strengthen each other.'

'Peppers not pills. Westland, the green pharmacy, is sitting on a gold mine!'

Together with over 500 fellow doctors, Tamara de Weijer, GP and standard bearer for the Netherlands Action Plan for Fruit and Vegetables (Nationaal Actieplan Groenten en Fruit), is working hard to raise awareness of a healthy diet.



'As chairwoman of an association for doctors and nutrition (Vereniging Arts en Voeding), I am very happy to see the increasing attention being given to a healthy diet. In particular, the symptoms and medicine use associated with lifestyle-related diseases such as type 2 diabetes can be reduced, or even disappear altogether, with a healthier diet.' Dr Weijer often meets with the Dutch Ministry of Health, health insurers and even television presenter Humberto Tan to raise awareness of this idea. 'We are not going to solve the problem with pills, powders and injections alone. What we need to do is tackle the root cause. That means working on prevention, but also on raising awareness amongst doctors, trainee doctors and specialists. Of course, this does not just apply to diabetes. Research shows that cardiovascular disease, intestinal diseases, migraine complaints, mental problems and skin disorders can all benefit from a healthier diet!'

Costs

The GP points out that 'peppers rather than pills' applies in an absolute sense. 'Of course, as doctors we are not against medication, but it is better if we can reduce it, or even eliminate it altogether. And then of course there are the huge costs involved.' According to Dr Weijer, the costs of medication, healthcare and absence through illness could be considerably reduced. 'And we need to do this, because of our ageing, growing population. This is why we are talking to the Ministry of Health and why a healthy diet is being included in the ministry's national prevention plan.'

Green pharmacy

Three years ago, Dr Weijer was also unaware that most of the vegetables in the Netherlands come from Westland. 'I had no idea. I then visited some growers, together with Rob Baan, and came into contact for the first time with tomato, pepper and other vegetable producers. A whole new world opened up to me, and I saw that we were sitting on a gold mine with Westland. This little part of the Netherlands really can contribute to the country's health. A true green pharmacy: something that the region should be even prouder of than it is, and could promote even more!'

The future

The Vereniging Arts en Voeding was set up in 2016, and 500 doctors have now committed themselves to Dr Weijer's vision. Dr Weijer took a sabbatical to concentrate on the healthy eating debate. 'We still have a long way to go, not just in the Netherlands, but in Europe too. There is also progress to be made in terms of the exchange of knowledge: in Lithuania there is an Institute of Lifestyle Medicine, and I would love to see that in our country too. We have contacts at Harvard University, and with Jamie Oliver, who fights against obesity in children. He really is a fantastic international figurehead! It would be wonderful if these people could come to Westland to take a look at the philanthropists at work there: your growers!' www.voedingleeft.nl



Column



Rob Baan is the owner of the international micro-vegetable company Koppert Cress, and a champion of a healthier world. His mission: 'Let's take a fresh look at natural food and health.'

Mother nature is not just something that we see in the National Geographic or on 'Keep out' signs in the park. Humans too are nature. However, there is no obesity in nature, and wild animals are never overweight. Nature organises its own resistance, while we people need to think carefully about what we are doing. Of course, you can clean office air using ozone and electrical filters, but there were plants 200 million years ago that could do it much better, and more naturally. A green wall, an office full of plants and a natural air supply will feel and sound much better than laboratory air.

Most Western diseases are caused by lifestyle, and it therefore makes sense to solve this not with pills, but with a healthy lifestyle. We should therefore return to our user instructions as humans.

What can we catch to keep ourselves alive? Not using a gun or a fishing rod, but what can you catch just using the resources that you were given at birth? Because that is how you are made: to pluck a fish from the water, a mouse, eggs in the breeding season, honey, a lizard, maybe a duck or a rabbit. But most days, you will have to make do with a lot of edible plants, because that is what we are.

Greenhouse horticulture allows us to bring nature closer to people and our cities. We can now do this with almost zero emissions, thanks to technology, and organically, thanks to biological pest control. Here, in Westland. www.robbaan.com

What is so special about Westland?

To find out, we put some questions to the sector.



Leo Marcelis
Wageningen University & Research

Why do plants grow better in purple light?

The light from more and more greenhouses is turning the sky purple at night – why is that? Professor Leo Marcelis of Wageningen University explains.

'Lighting has been used in greenhouses for a long time; it increases production and improves the quality of the crop. Traditionally, the lamps used in greenhouses emit a yellow or orange glow, but growers are slowly turning to LED lighting. It is possible to adjust the colour of LED lighting, and it also has the benefit of being much more energy-efficient. Red light is very good for plant growth, and our research shows that mixing this with five to ten percent blue light gives the best result at the moment. In terms of energy consumption, red/blue is also the most efficient colour. Of course, this could change again in five years' time, because the use of LED lighting is still developing.'



Peet van Adrichem
Demokwekerij

How is it possible to grow tomatoes here using five times less water?

In Westland, an average of 12 litres of water are used to grow 1 kilogram of tomatoes. In Spain, this requires 60 litres of water – 5 times as much. How is that possible? Peet van Adrichem, from Demokwekerij, explains.

'We grow our tomatoes in greenhouses that use a closed climate control system, and we dose the water more precisely. The quality of the water is also important: in Westland we recycle rainwater, whereas in Spain they usually use groundwater, which is dirtier. This means that you need to dilute fertilizers with a larger amount of water. Of course, we also have a milder climate, so it is not all down to technology. Here, the plants may lose seven litres of water per square metre on a hot summer's day, through evaporation. In Spain, of course, there are plenty of such days. It will be possible to use even less water per kilogram of tomatoes in the future. Scientific research has shown that four litres per kilogram is possible, and a record of five litres has already been achieved, in completely closed greenhouses in the middle of the desert!'



Marco van Soerland
Trias Westland

How does the greenhouse horticulture sector manage to continuously reduce its use of fossil fuel?

Greenhouses have a huge energy demand and, certainly in Westland, are at the forefront of innovative and sustainable solutions. Marco van Soerland, director of the geothermal energy project Trias Westland explains.

'Growers want to work more sustainably, while also managing their energy costs. You will see all kinds of measures being taken in the greenhouses to reduce the energy and heat demand and to make use of renewable energy. It is certainly possible in and around Westland to use renewable heat as a widespread alternative to natural gas. One example is geothermal energy, but other options include heat from biomass and waste. One interesting project is Trias Westland, which is researching whether enough warm water can be recovered from a depth of four kilometres to meet a significant part of the heat demand in Westland. It is the first time that we have drilled to such depths in the Netherlands. A total of 49 companies are involved in the project – all co-owners. Warm water is pumped up and sent to the greenhouses through a warm water network, then the cooled water is pumped back into the ground to be warmed again by the earth's core. Many more greenhouse growers in Westland are coming together to research, and switch over to, renewable heat.'



Angelo Vermeulen
TU Delft

What can horticulture learn from space travel?

Horticulture can learn a lot from space travel when it comes to the closed greenhouse system, circular concepts and the recycling of resources. Angelo Vermeulen, researcher, biologist and space travel expert employed by TU Delft, NASA, ESA and other institutes, explains.

'Circular thinking has been around in space science for a long time. From sweat to waste, everything is re-used in a space station, for example to feed the plants that produce oxygen for the astronauts. If the horticulture sector were to switch to a completely closed system in which waste water is purified, plant remains are turned into new nutrients and heat is used as an energy source, it would be circular. Everything in the greenhouse is re-used. Food is then no longer produced using fossil fuels, to the detriment of the environment. Furthermore, no pesticides or insecticides are needed, because the system is closed. When it comes to water recycling, growers could certainly learn a lot from space travel, as there is no water in space and so you have to be very prudent with it. Ultimately, this gives the grower a more reliable harvest, because he controls all the elements in the closed system.'

'We as a company need the knowledge and expertise available in Westland to continue to innovate'

Smiemans Projecten builds unique, high-profile glass constructions all over the world: from the deserts of the Middle East to far-flung corners of China. It also developed a now well-known circular glasshouse concept for Queen Elizabeth and World Horti Center. The roots of this family business lie in Kwintsheul: roots that its owner Jeroen Smiemans is happy to embrace. 'Westland is our breeding ground.'

'We build unique glass constructions, not for horticulture but for use as garden centres, atriums, botanical gardens or public buildings. The focus is on the design: we always want to make something special.' The traditional pitched roof is not seen much in Smiemans designs; even so, it was chosen for the World Horti Center. 'It fits in with what you see here in the area, it is iconic of the region,' he explains. 'But because the building has various floors, a school and plenty of visitors, we needed to approach it very differently from a technical point of view. Insulation and climate control were also important factors, and had a large impact on the construction.'

Smiemans makes use of the basic principles of the well-known Westland greenhouses in its designs. 'We use the techniques available and follow developments closely. For example, how can you design the climate system differently? We use the knowledge available in the horticulture sector and apply it. We also work together with Westland suppliers of computer and electrical systems, for example. Such companies lie at the foundation of a good project – and we continue to spread our wings from our home in Kwintsheul.' www.smiemansprojecten.nl



Photo: Glenn Mostert



'The difference between success and failure is knowledge'

'From leading seed companies and breeders to processing companies and logistics service providers. Greenport West-Holland's strength is that all the Food & Agri companies are clustered there. The entire chain is together in one place,' says Ruud van der Vliet, commercial director of Rabobank Westland.

'Westland has a commanding production, processing and trade position in Greenport West-Holland. In terms of production, what are immediately visible are its greenhouses. Westland has about 2,300 ha of greenhouses, making it still the largest contiguous greenhouse area in the world!'

According to Van der Vliet, Westland stands out for its knowledge in managing greenhouse horticulture companies from end-to-end. 'This includes cultivation techniques, labour deployment, energy consumption and plant physiology. These are used efficiently and effectively around the world. Despite far-reaching automation, it is this knowledge that makes the difference between success and failure!'

'knowledge makes the difference between success and failure!'

Rabobank Westland has long been the bank for the horticulture sector in the Netherlands, facilitating about 60% of all the greenhouse horticulture companies in the country. 'Both floriculture and greenhouse vegetables. In times of economic prosperity and increased consumption of floriculture products and greenhouse vegetables, we benefit from the positive developments in the sector. But during the crisis, the problems were enormous.'

It is in Rabobank's interest that the sector flourishes. 'An entrepreneurial spirit is crucial in the sector. We support scaling up, collaboration and internationalisation where possible and where justifiable. We believe that the sector will become even stronger if we continue to support the better organised companies with a good marketing infrastructure.'

According to Van der Vliet, success is becoming increasingly dependent on collaboration. 'With this in mind, Rabobank stimulates and promotes collaboration, both horizontal and vertical collaboration in the chain.'

www.rabobankwestland.nl

An international marketing strategy

'Knowledge will be our main export product'



For 13 years, he was the mayor of the horticulture capital. However, since October last year, Sjaak van der Tak has a new job: chairman of LTO Glaskracht, where he represents the interests of growers throughout the Netherlands. As such, he now looks at the region from a different perspective. Time, therefore, to hear what he has to say about the opportunities, developments and challenges for the area.

'Wherever I go – from Friesland in the north of the Netherlands to Limburg in the south – people look up to Westland. The region is at the forefront of the Dutch greenhouse horticulture sector: a position that the region needs to maintain. This is even clearer to me in my new job.'

People often think that the Westland mentality is the reason for its success, but van der Tak believes otherwise. 'In other horticulture areas too, people have the same enterprising spirit and work just as hard. In fact, they face greater challenges because horticulture as an economy often does not receive the attention it deserves. He believes that Westland's strength lies in its expertise and innovation. 'Everyone I take to visit Westland says the same: "they are miles ahead here".'

The former mayor is pleased with the World Horti Center. 'It is wonderful to see a plan become reality. Already, there is a fantastic dynamism; expertise now really is close at hand. A big step has been taken with the MBO Westland VET college; now they need to work towards a university of applied sciences (HBO college). Westland needs young, clever people here; it is essential that we rejuvenate the region!'

'Everyone I take to visit Westland says the same: "they are miles ahead here".'

To market

Westland has much more to offer than tomatoes and flowers. 'Horticultural expertise will be our main export product of the future – whether related to sustainability or energy. We need to market this at the international level. Westland has so much to offer the world – they can solve global issues right here! As far as I am concerned, this is also their marketing strategy: to bring health and well-being to millions of people, and sustainably too.' By making knowledge an export product, Westland

can also hold onto its leading position in the future. 'Brexit, for example, does not make things easy for the sector. With a licence to produce, we can also apply our knowledge and expertise elsewhere. Greenhouse complexes are being built in more and more places; southern Germany is an up and coming area, and ornamental plants are already being grown in Africa. Smart Westland companies are starting to open branches abroad: working local for local, but in accordance with Westland standards.'

'They bring health and well-being to millions of people, and sustainably too.'

Cooperation

As a former mayor, van der Tak recognises that the government has a role to play in this. 'I am very happy that Westland has been included in the current coalition agreement. Together with the new Minister of Agriculture, we hope to make good progress and increase the focus on the sector.' The local municipality also has a role to play. 'Greenhouse horticulture areas need to continue to modernise, and they need to address the road network, including extension and widening of the N222. They need to ensure that the World Horti Center campus continues to grow, with an HBO course. The business community is responsible for setting out the marketing strategy. Companies can do this by working together, as well as with the local LTO Glaskracht branch and the growers' association. A cluster to cluster cooperation strategy could work really well.'

Even so, cooperation between the business community and government in Westland is exceptional. 'Wonderful connections are already being made within the clusters, which is unique in this business climate. With such dynamism, they will attract plenty of potential investors and companies!' www.ltoglaskracht.nl

'Westland has a world first, and a fantastic dynamism'



While Jaap van Duijn, who was one of its initiators, walks through the World Horti Center, he explains his vision. 'What makes it so unique is the convergence of the worlds of government, education, enterprise and research: a real world first. Everything is gathering momentum, and the dynamism between education, government and the business community is so stimulating!'

The iconic building of the World Horti Center officially opens its doors in March 2018. Four areas converge at this Westland campus next to Royal FloraHolland: school and education, field research facilities, the year-round trade fair and a meeting place for a wide range of target groups. Van Duijn believes it is only logical that Westland was chosen as the location for the campus. 'Westland plays a large role in the horticulture sector, and not just financially. This is often where innovation takes place, and the strong spirit of enterprise in the region helps put us on the map internationally. By the way, this for the whole of the Dutch horticulture sector, with a focus primarily on the future. Sustainability and internationalisation are of course a part of every facet of the campus. Finally, we are putting our modesty aside, opening our doors and proclaiming it to the world. Together we can achieve global goals.'

World Horti Center comprises the whole of the Dutch greenhouse horticulture sector under a single roof. Van Duijn explains: 'Every year, we bring 25000 professionals into contact with one another to make a difference all over the world. The government can initiate projects here, and demonstrate its commitment. We want to provide a structural platform and facilitate contact with the province, the Ministry of Agriculture and Brussels. The teaching here is innovative and focuses on horticulture at every level, from VET college to university. The World Horti Center business community represents almost half the total export turnover in flowers, plants, fruit and vegetables in the greenhouse horticulture sector. Many suppliers in advanced technical applications, seed and breeding

companies and the logistics sector have a permanent presence: it really is the crème de la crème! Finally, Proeftuin Zwaagdijk has a prominent research laboratory in the building. A fantastic greenhouse horticulture centre, on neutral ground, where we all share our knowledge, innovate and work together even better than before!'

'Every year we match 25000 professionals to one another at World Horti Center to make a difference all over the world.'

Young talent

World Horti Center also focuses on young talent. 'Without a new influx of young people, the sector will be unable to continue to develop, and certainly not at the speed required,' explains van Duijn. 'A focus on talent is therefore needed at all times, in all situations. We need to breed talent, starting with the right courses to meet industry requirements, but also by motivating students. Only then will we find the very best talent.' The initiator calls the development of HBO courses to match the MBO courses already available a historical moment. 'Bringing higher education to Westland is history that will be written this year; a wish finally fulfilled. The influx of new students is fantastic. New students who can teach us about high-tech horticulture. With the opening of the



World Horti Center
Europa 1
2672 ZX Naaldwijk, Westland

www.worldhorticenter.nl



BIOGRAPHY

From 1971 to 2008, Jaap van Duijn was CEO and co-owner of the Dutch Flower Group. As initiator and chairman of Greenport Food & Flower Xperience, he works on improving the image of the horticultural sector and on reaching and connecting a wide range of target groups through a sophisticated combination of business activities and education.

‘Westland is the nursery of my business successes. Personally, I am happy to be able to do something in return for what the greenhouse horticulture sector and export has done for me. I have seen in my work what can happen if people really work together and seek one another out to achieve progress.’



‘We need our young people: they can be true philanthropists!’

World Horti Center, such initiatives are gaining momentum!’ Van Duijn is also highly enthusiastic about the Greenport Hub, a partnership between Leiden University, Delft University of Technology and Erasmus University Rotterdam. ‘For the first time, there is real interest in horticultural companies at the highest level of education. We are going to make the relationship even closer with hackathons and interactive lectures for students and companies. These will be outstanding lectures that can be attended free of charge – something I had never dared dream of has now become reality...’

‘With the opening of the World Horti Center, initiatives are gaining momentum!’

According to van Duijn, work needs to be done to improve the image of horticulture as an innovative sector, certainly outside Westland. ‘High-tech companies such as Rijk Zwaan, Priva, Koppert Cress, Nature’s Pride, Hoogendoorn, DFG and many others are in urgent need of young talent. There are opportunities for a promising career in horticulture, but young professionals have no idea how cool it is here. I believe strongly that our sector will grow, but it is only possible with the right people – good people are the most important capital in every company.’

The new philanthropists

Van Duijn believes that scouting talent in future generations needs to go further than increasing the number of courses on offer in Westland. ‘I see an important role for the younger generation, and I’m talking about children as young as eight years old. Children this young sometimes think about what they want to do when they are older. We need to make them more aware of the world’s challenges and the UN development goals. The Museon museum for science and culture in The Hague has put together a wonderful exhibition on this subject. Wouldn’t it be great if children in Westland could visit Museon and come into contact with the future and, in turn, if children from The Hague could visit our centre and learn about the great companies and research housed here. We need to tell them the horticulture story! We need to give form to this connection with the greenhouse horticulture sector. The technology and the knowledge needed to banish hunger with sustainably-produced healthy food is available here. It will be years before we achieve this, and I may not be around to see it... which is why we need these young boys and girls! They can be true philanthropists!’ We therefore need to develop an education programme together with the municipality, schools, Tomatoworld, Museon and World Horti Center, says van Duijn.

Cooperation and co-creation

With its prominent horticulture sector, the Netherlands is sitting on a gold mine. ‘We are working hard to improve our profile and market position. The quality is high, and we are strong in innovation,’ continues van Duijn. ‘Test labs, vertical farming and digitisation are well under way. Agrologistics is currently good for about 20% of the total Dutch export (CBS), but this can be increased even further if we connect to the world at large and face the challenges together. World Horti Center can give an enormous boost where this is concerned. We are focusing on synergy to accelerate innovation – it is no longer a case of “every man for himself”.’ Looking around and participating in co-creation with other sectors is a must for van Duijn. ‘Eventually, we would like other sectors to also have a presence around the campus. Knowledge institutes, ICT or innovation start-ups would be a perfect addition. There is a huge demand and need in the horticulture sector when it comes to robotics, mechatronics or the bio-based industry. We really do find ourselves at the cusp of the future.’



Danny van Uffelen
Participant

A lively fair and all year round

‘Dynamics that you won’t find elsewhere’, that’s the way Zentoo marketing man Danny van Uffelen describes the atmosphere at the World Horti Center. The chrysanthemum growers association is one of the participants of the Food & Flowers plaza. Since the opening of the building, Van Uffelen works nearly every day at the stand of the association and gets the support from his colleagues. The first floor of the World Horti Center has a professional look. ‘We managed to lay out our entire cultivation process on 50 m², presenting our assortment and showing the development in digitalization and sustainability.’

‘Implementing new products and services has always been a challenge. Trade fairs were only held for a few days in the year and therefore you didn’t have the opportunity to introduce new concepts to every customer or lead. Now we have a fair all year round and we can come in contact with our business associates as well as all the sales links.’

“We have far strong links in a weak sector. This means that we can really work on collaboration and partnerships.”

Van Uffelen also sees many opportunities in the cross-pollination among his colleague stand holders. ‘The colleagues here at the plaza also receive customers each day. Obviously, these are also interesting contacts for us and vice versa. Because we are from another sector, for example potted plants or flower bulbs, we can develop new concepts and co-create. Especially for the retail sector, this has immense potential! If this succeeds, then we have tackled the innovation strength of the WHC. That means we can offer the consumers even better service.’

Van Uffelen really enjoys the cooperation with MBO Westland, Demo-kwekerij and Greenport Hub. ‘We are able to generate enthusiasm among local students and scout for trainees. The threshold here for making contact is very low. And there are many things happening here. I had never heard of – let alone thought of – participating in a hackathon. Suddenly you’re receiving the crème de la crème of the university students who device solutions for the business operations, unbelievable!’ www.zentoo.nl

The World Horti Center is ‘green’ in all its facets

The building is full of sustainable applications. It has sustainable building materials such as aluminium and recyclable double glazing (HR++). The roof is made of highly insulating polycarbonate plates that, apart from providing good insulation, also reduces the external light and warmth by 40%. This keeps the building at a pleasant temperature in the summer. The building also has floor heating and cooling driven by a heat pump. The pump runs on 150,000 Watt generated by solar panels.

The greenhouse’s 6,400 m² research department is fitted with state-of-the-art applications. Rainwater is used for the crops while climate controlled windows create natural ventilation and, when combined with screens, can make best use of the weather conditions. The building of the four kilometre deep geothermal heat source, Trias Westland, on the nearby Lange Broekweg will provide power to the premises in the future.



WHC facts



1200
students



100
participants



6500 m²
research-
center



266
seats
Rabatorium



25.000
annual
visitors



15
meeting
facilities

“This is the heart of the innovation in horticulture, so obviously we belong here!”



Wendy Meijer
Participant

Investing in the future

‘New international contacts and introducing young talent to the sector,’ are the most important reasons for Certhon to participate in the World Horti Center. Certhon, as a participant in Demokwekerij, is located at the ground floor of the year-round trade fair. Wendy Meijer tells on behalf of the company that this is foremost an investment in the future. ‘This is the heart of the innovation in horticulture, so obviously we belong here! Innovations will be developed here and we want to on top of things.’

‘We build modern greenhouses for the horticulture sector and we are mainly innovative by developing growth cells and technical systems. In addition, we link the various techniques for construction, climate, irrigation and electronics to cultivation. Naturally, we have a beautiful showroom at our own location, but the World Horti Center is where we meet international visitors,’ explains Meijer. ‘During events we man our stand so that we can promote our company, but we have also invested in virtual stand staff. That way, there is always someone present at the place 24/7!’

Cooperating with schools is also an investment in the future for Certhon. ‘We have a huge demand for young technical talents, both on Higher Professional Education (Dutch: HBO) and Secondary Professional Education (Dutch: MBO) levels. Here we hope to make these young people enthusiastic about traineeship, project and jobs. That way, we can continue to innovate and grow in the future.’ www.certhon.com

Simon Kok
Student

Companies want to get to know us

‘This is not an ordinary school building,’ says Simon Kok, a third-year student who has moved to the campus along with his class peers in September 2017. ‘If you walk down the halls or have a break, you encounter all sorts of business people. There are many very fine role models. You can easily strike a conversation with them, because they would like to hear from us what we think of the place.’

The young student is studying Business & Management at MBO Westland. According to him, the study programme here is really very different. ‘Everything in the programme, the entire chain, is geared to trade in the Westland region. Traineeship has become very important, therefore building a network is very useful, and we do lots of projects. Doing your best during traineeship helps you with your career. The companies are also very keen on getting to know us; we are the employees for a later period,’ says Kok keenly.

“If you want a trainee position, you can very easily find it here, but you do have to desire it.”

Kok has watched as the building continued to develop and he is very pleased that now it is finally completed. ‘We are able to enter the Demokwekerij at all times and also during events we almost always have access to the building. It is truly an accessible and meeting point for everyone. You encounter interesting people in this place!’

The student is filled with ambition and has a clear vision of his future. ‘In the future, I would like to work for a company such as Dutch Flower Group or Best Fresh Group, a big and professional company. I want to develop and move up in my career, but I also want things to remain personal. First, I am going to continue studying – commercial economics. Unfortunately, that’s not possible right now in the Westland region, so I will have to go to Rotterdam, The Hague or Leiden. That study programme will also be less oriented on horticulture. Who knows, perhaps this study programme will also be available here in the future. I would really be pleased with that!’ www.mbo-westland.nl



Creating a bridge between university and horticulture with hackathons and interactive lectures

University students conduct research or study in the heart of the sector



The emergence of the World Horti Center has attracted a full spectrum of education to the heart of horticulture. The new Greenport Hub is part of a university partnership called the Leiden-Delft-Erasmus Centre for Sustainability. Coen Hubers leads this initiative and explains.

‘This hub enables students to do research or to study in the heart of the horticulture sector,’ Hubers relates. ‘We started this in the beginning of 2017 and together with the participants in the World Horti Center, we have shaped this study track and given it content. Together with the students, we will work on devising solutions for complex issues in horticulture. That might be in the field of robotics, business administration or biology.’

The interdisciplinary Greenport Hub was established at the beginning of 2017 in order to serve as a bridge between the horticulture sector and the universities of Leiden, TU Delft and Erasmus. ‘Therefore, alongside HBO and MBO study programmes at the World Horti Center campus, these universities are also present. That is unique in the world! We focus on a teaching programme based on four subjects: Horticulture 4.0, Circular Economy, Health & Wellbeing and Sustainable Urban Deltas.’

Hackathons are part of the teaching programme. This first took place in December 2017. ‘Forty students from the Erasmus University worked 30 hours on ten assignments for Westland companies. In a brief period, the students managed to come up with thorough analyses and solutions for business cases. We were not the only ones impressed by the students; in fact, the participating companies were ecstatic!’ according to Hubers. ‘This was a confronting situation, but extremely inspiring. They listened closely to us. We also took them to our family business and in a brief period, they translated this knowledge into a long-term plan. I am immensely impressed. This is the way to familiarise such high-potential students with the horticulture sector,’ reacted Erik Persoon from Forever Plants, one of the participants. Willemien Houtsma and Ferdy Wilbrink, both second-year students in Business Administration reacted: ‘We had no idea that the horticulture sector is such an innovative world. This hackathon was a real eye-opener. This is really innovative and super cool! I hope that we do this more often and we certainly want to learn more about this sector.’

As part of the Honours programme of RSM (Rotterdam School of Management), the first hackathon became the kick-off for a long-term partnership. ‘This combination of education and the business world will not be a one-time occurrence. In 2018, there will be follow-ups with new hackathons for biology students from the University of Leiden and technology students from TU Delft. Furthermore, we are organising inspiring and interactive lectures. We will look at what horticulture can learn from space travel,’ concludes Hubers. www.centre-for-sustainability.nl

OUT OF THE BOX

Students start a company for combating food waste

Four ambitious students from MBO Westland have a dream: less food waste. Therefore, they established their own company (Out of the Box) for this school project. One of the initiators, Rens Knijnenburg, told us: ‘We pick up fruits and vegetables from various greenhouses and logistical companies. These products are sub-standard; they’re malformed, too ripe or have the wrong colour. But there is really nothing wrong with how they taste. Yet, they cannot continue further in the supply chain. We take these products and pack them in a box, which we supply to homes or to companies.’

Knijnenburg studied Business & Management in MBO Westland. For this project, they had to create a fictitious company. ‘However, very soon our company became a real company.’ The network of young people helped them with getting products and a part of the distribution. ‘It emerged that many growers and logistical companies have to contend with a surplus of good fruit, but not good enough. On the other hand, many companies want to have their employees eat more fruit, so we supply a box with 40 pieces of fruit.’

The students are located in the World Horti Campus and that has many advantages. ‘This gives us immediate exposure and we easily come in contact with companies,’ Knijnenburg explains further. ‘They come here for conferences and that’s when we distribute flyers to well-dressed people. As young fellows we enjoy lots of good will,’ he chuckles. The students do however expect to go further with this venture. ‘Even after we graduate, we want to continue studying. The contact with the customers during delivery is too much fun to stop at this point!’ www.outoftheboxfruits.nl



Dynamic arena for developing talents

HortiHeroes provides young-talent with start-up mind-set and innovation skills

HortiHeroes will start operating in the spring of 2018. Ten Westland horticulture companies will challenge a new class of young, potential employees from a dynamic arena. A unique talent programme will teach them – according to start-up principles – how to innovate even better in the horticulture sector. It is time to get to know more about these heroes. Bas Allart has been appointed coordinator for HortiHeroes.



‘The Westland region provides worldwide services, although so few people are aware of this fact. Young people under 35 hardly know anything about this,’ explains Bas Allart. ‘You can truly develop a fantastic career in Westland, at all levels. Leading companies, such as Best Fresh Group and RijkZwaan, collaborate on the HortiHeroes programme. All these companies will shortly appoint a selected group of employees. Previously, knowledge meant power, nowadays sharing knowledge means power.’

‘Previously, knowledge meant power, nowadays sharing knowledge means power.’

During the past two years, HortiHeroes has been making preparations. A few founding fathers are promoting the launch. Allart relates: ‘We have spoken to employees, human resources departments, directors and the municipality. Wishes clearly emerged from all these discussions. The nourishing base for innovation must be improved in order to offer talented people more challenging work environments and to attract them. It is essential to attract new companies and retain the current ones.’ Most Westland companies have

developed their own talent programme, but according to Allart, the strength of HortiHeroes lies elsewhere. ‘Precisely because we are currently tearing down the walls surrounding these companies. You work together with other talented people and you see how other companies work internally. This creates a strong network and added collaboration. Essential for innovation.’

‘Innovation is only possible by doing it.’

The main goal of the programme is to provide young employees with a start-up mind-set and innovation skills. Horticulture companies can register a selected and talented person. ‘Innovation is only possible by doing it. That is why well-known companies such as Airbnb, Tesla and Spotify are so successful. The intensive programme lasts 12 weeks, one day per week and the content is immediately applicable in their daily work. Guest speakers from within and outside of the sector join in. Three months of lessons is followed by one-on-one coaching.’ In addition, Horti Heroes will collaborate intensively with the World Horti Center and Westland Marketing. ‘We have to tell the outside world far more about the wonderful things happening here,’ concludes Allart. www.hortiheroes.com



60 students will work on a follow-up study of drones in greenhouses

On the 1st of October 2017 a large follow-up study will begin regarding the use of drones in greenhouses. Sixty students from InHolland will cooperate on this study in the coming two years. Study coordinator Lucien Fesselet tells us: ‘Our goal is using drones to improve internal processes inside the greenhouses. This will improve the cultivation turnover, increase the quality of the harvest and reduce the quantity of pesticides used in the greenhouses.’

As a student, Fesselet had started this study project on his own, but he received so much attention and even a subsidy to expand the study. ‘For the first time, InHolland is able to set up and carry out such a comprehensive study that spreads over several different education disciplines. For students, this is a unique insight into the profession. Students do research in a genuine start-up manner that offers them lots of freedom.’

The use of drones is tested in practical situations in the Westland region. ‘We not only do research at the school locations, but also in greenhouses of three growers. This includes an orchid cultivator. The students come from various educational backgrounds. A nice aspect is also that all the school disciplines are mixed in this project, from robotics to mechatronics, communication to financing!’ www.inholland.nl



'500 million consumers throughout Europe are stocked within 24 hours!'

The Westland region is not just a concept due to its greenhouse cultivation, also in terms of agro logistics, the region has a unique position. The hub from producer to consumer. In only 24 hours, the Westland region can supply 500 million consumers throughout Europe. The industrial areas in Westland make full use of the nearby infrastructure and constitute the link to the entire continent.

The location of Westland in relation to logistical hotspots is one of the success factors for the agro logistical sector. The port of Rotterdam, two airports and a direct connection to the roads network contribute to this success.



ABC Westland Agri & Food

Where the complete fruit & vegetables chain converges

Sorting, packing, ripening, cooling and transporting. ABC Westland is the hub within the chain and is surrounded by service-providing companies, producers organisations and Food Center Westland, a wholesale centre for the retail trade and catering sector. From production, import to consumers, everything is located here on 55 hectares. www.abccwestland.nl

Advantages of this location:

- ✔ More than 100 companies from the Potatoes, Vegetables & Fruits sector
- ✔ Facilities throughout the chain
- ✔ Short lines and efficient cooperation
- ✔ Close to developments in the market
- ✔ Connected directly to the consumer market
- ✔ Reduction of CO2 footprint by means of sustainability
- ✔ 24/7 supervision of hygiene and safety



16.000 solar panels

Creates a sustainable zone and the biggest producer of solar energy in the province of South Holland!



Honderdland Business Park

Room to grow in agro logistics - literally and figuratively

In recent years, reputable companies in agro logistics, such as Greenpack, Nature's Pride, Cool Control, LBP and Quality Queen, have decided to locate themselves at the Honderdland Business Park. This industrial zone, located right along the A20 motorway, is constantly developing in order to become the largest industrial zone in Western Europe. www.honderdland.nl

Advantages of this location:

- ✔ Mix of large (international) companies and small specialist companies in diverse sectors
- ✔ Growth in the next 10 years
- ✔ Own business premises with its architectural design
- ✔ Strategic location alongside the motorway
- ✔ Close to the ferry to the UK and the port of Rotterdam
- ✔ Infrastructure is continuously developing, such as building the Blankenburg tunnel and Safety route



270.000 m²

of parcels are still available for growth during the next 10 years!



Royal Flora Holland

The biggest flower auction in the world

In the sector of ornamentals, Royal Flora Holland is the biggest service provider and market place. Flowers and plants from this establishment in Naaldwijk are traded all over the world. A location in this industrial zone means that companies are operating from the heart of international trade and distribution and benefit from its facilities and services. That means full focus on their own business activities! www.royalfloraholland.com

Advantages of this location:

- ✔ Direct connection with the distribution chain
- ✔ Short delivery times and lower transport costs
- ✔ Infrastructure geared to transport
- ✔ Business premises can be purchased or rented
- ✔ Connecting to a stable market place network
- ✔ Facility business is outsourced (s.a. IT, catering, security)
- ✔ Co-profiting from knowledge and innovation



1947 million cut flower, 115 million indoor plants, 59 million garden plants

were sold on the flower auction in Naaldwijk in 2016

The importance of temperature
when transporting flowers by sea

A sea of flowers

Every day, flowers are transported across oceans and delivered to consumers by Intergreen. In collaboration with partner nurseries, Intergreen has created an unique and optimal transport chain. A journey that has ten times less CO₂ emissions!

People all around the world enjoy fresh flowers. It is essential to pay attention to quality and freshness during transport. The focus is on speed. Traditionally, flowers have been transported all over the world by air in order to get them to the consumer as soon as possible.

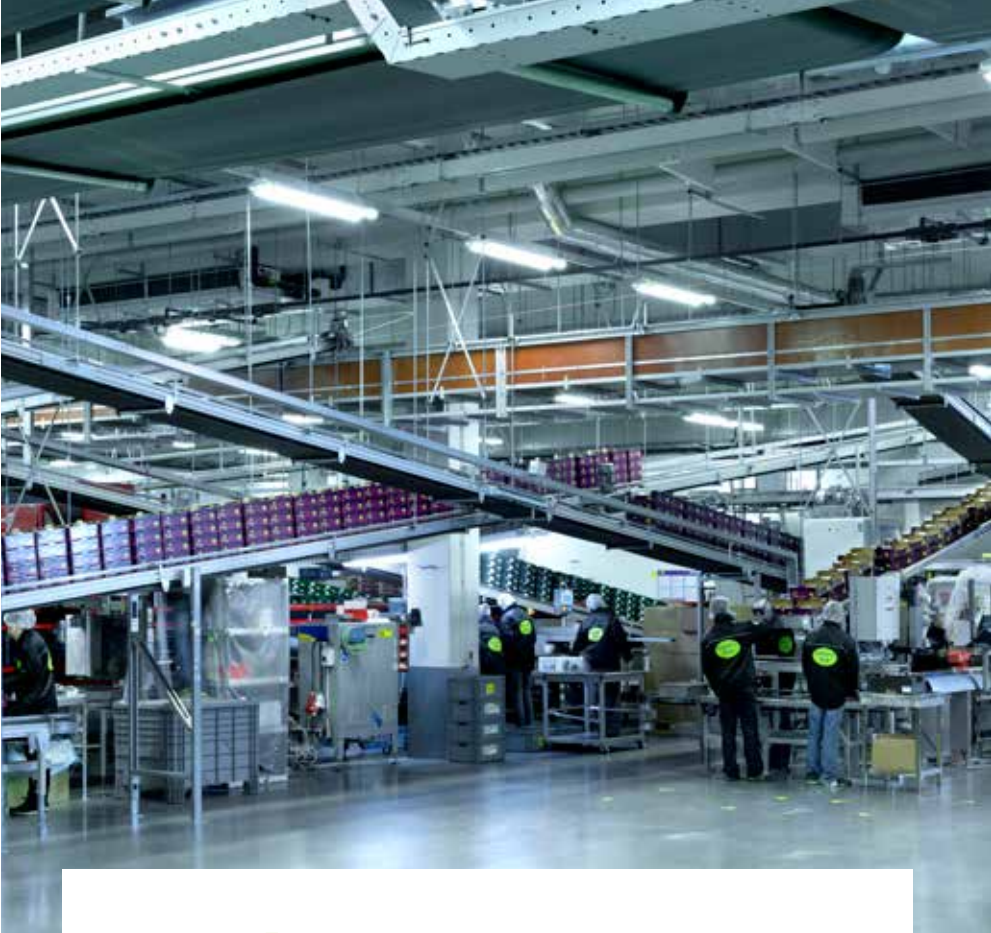
Sustainable alternative

Intergreen greatly values innovation and sustainability. That is why over 10 years ago, the company began world first transport by sea as an alternative. The CO₂ emission of flower transport by sea is ten times less than by air. We have carried out a lot of tests on various flowers and gained immense knowledge.

Importance of temperature

The most important factor to keep flowers fresh during a 14 to 25-day journey by sea is temperature. After the journey, the flowers still have to stand in a consumer's vase for a guaranteed number of days. Every step in the chain must be followed meticulously. After harvesting, the temperature of the flowers must be reduced as soon as possible. A stable low temperature is essential during the entire journey. For this, Intergreen uses an accurate monitoring system that continuously measures the temperature. This guarantees that the flowers arrive under the right conditions and comply with the consumer's expectations.

With a turnover of approximately 180 million Euros and 350 employees, Intergreen is one of the largest subsidiaries within the Dutch Flower Group. Intergreen specialises in the delivery of ready-made bouquets, potted plants and garden plants to supermarket chains. www.intergreen.nl



Trade in exotic fruits and vegetables

Well-known traders in exotic fruits and vegetables, such as Nature's Pride, Westfalia Fruit Africa, Euro West, BUD Holland and Yex have also opted for establishing their business in Westland, also due to the logistical network. The distribution process within this market of fresh produce is extremely important. Packing, cooling, ripening and obviously transport are part of the cycle in the trade of these fruits and vegetables. Everything must be handled in the shortest time possible in order to supply these products to the consumers in a fresh condition.

A total of 168 pallets with exotic fruits can ripen at the same time at the site of Euro West and Westfalia Fruit Africa in Poeldijk. A bit further down in Honderdland, the African trader has its marketing and sales office. Zac Bard, the manager of Westfalia Fruit Africa has this to say about the location in Westland: 'Being close to the port of Rotterdam means that we can increase our volume. The port has a world-class infrastructure and it is centrally located. This means that we can transport our avocados and mangos quickly, properly and cost efficiently inside Europe; of course after they have ripened in Westland. The region has lots of knowledge about fresh produce and the local population is well trained and has a fantastic work mentality.'

Shawn Harris, the founder of Nature's Pride, says the following about Westland: 'It is not only the location and its proximity to the sea port and to airports, but also the immense concentration of fresh produce and logistical services. For us this means that we are able to deliver our exotic produce fresh, efficiently and swiftly to consumers in Germany, Belgium, Scandinavia and Eastern Europe.' www.naturespride.nl

Westland → Port of Rotterdam

Westland → Ferry to England

Westland → Rotterdam The Hague Airport

Westland → Amsterdam Schiphol Airport

⌚ 18 min / 27 km

⌚ 14 min / 10 km

⌚ 16 min / 25 km

⌚ 35 min / 54 km



COLOPHON

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Texts

Sanne Bakker, ensanne.nl

Translation

Flow Languages

Editing

Angelique de Wit, Ilse de Wilde

Design

Creativiteiten

Printing

Groenprint

Visual material / Photography

Thierry Schut (cover), Michel Kort, Rolf van Koppen, Arjan de Jager, Glenn Mostert, Gerard Vlekke, Richard Kok, World Horti Center, Trias Westland, Rabobank Westland, Royal FloraHolland, InHolland, HortiHeroes, Out of the Box, Intergreen and others.

Establishing your business in the Westland region?

Join an agro logistical cluster at a global level.

When it concerns flowers, plants and vegetables, the Westland region is the hub that handles a large share of the international trade. With smart alliances, the cluster ensures that a large mix of products is delivered to the customer fast, based on demand, long-lasting and at very attractive prices.

The Westland region as a business location in a nutshell

There are various reasons why the Westland region is the most attractive business location for agro-related companies:

- ✓ The moderate sea climate is ideal for vegetables and ornamentals
- ✓ Solid infrastructure of suppliers and service providers
- ✓ Located at a strategic logistical junction
- ✓ Close proximity to the port of Rotterdam and Schiphol Airport
- ✓ Good approach and exit roads
- ✓ Hinterland with great purchasing power of more than 250 million people: Europe!
- ✓ Westland drive and mentality bring about business
- ✓ Unique hotspot for expertise in building greenhouses
- ✓ Access to specialised easy-to-reach knowledge found in cities such as Rotterdam, The Hague, Leiden and Delft

Are you interested in moving to the Westland region and establishing your business here?

We will be pleased to talk to you. Please contact Westland Marketing.

E-mail: info@westland.info



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To publish this newspaper, we have planted six trees and that way we compensate for releasing CO₂; that makes this newspaper CO₂ positive.

