

Notes of online launch of dairy position paper May 29, 2020

[Video summary](#) (4m15)

[Summary and action agenda](#) (9p)

[Full paper](#) (78p)

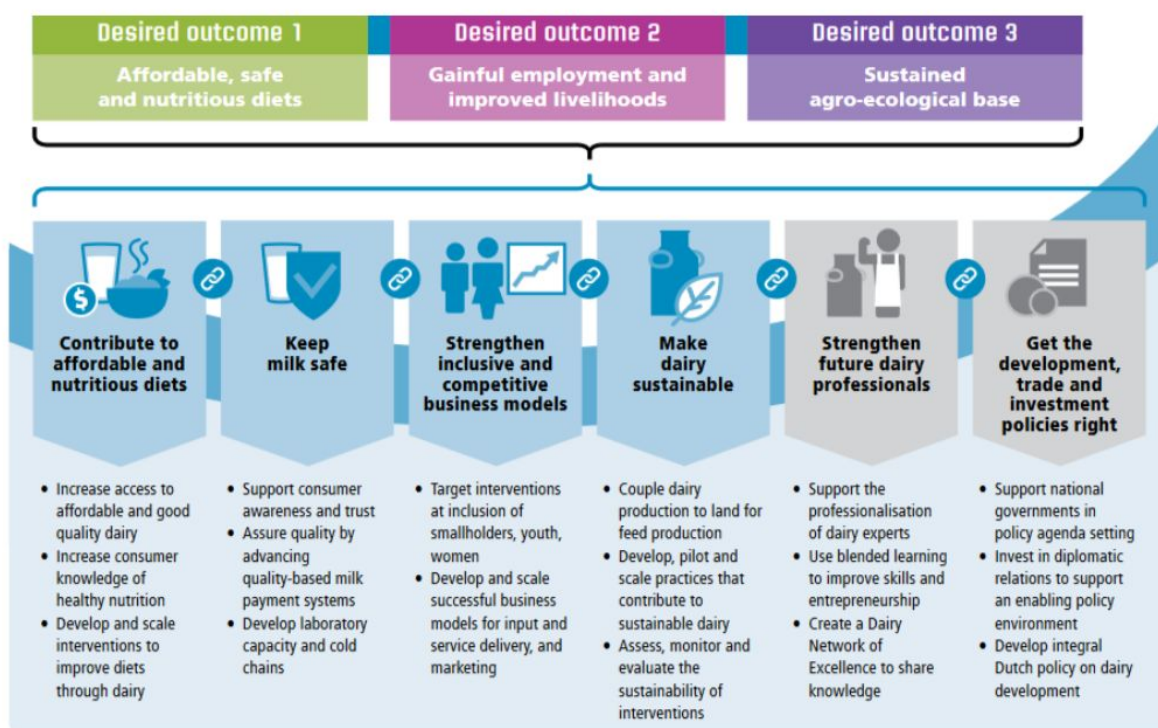
[Programme of the session](#) (6 slides)



Intro

The online event¹ was hosted by Judith Jacobs (FBKP) and Wim Goris (AgriProFocus). For the launch event in Zoom, a total of 130 dairy professionals registered, of which 85 attended the full session of 60 minutes². The welcome poll indicated participants from Africa and Asia and a mix of stakeholders represented. However, most participants were Dutch, male and above 35 years. There was a mix of stakeholders represented.

The digital position paper includes an overview and action agenda for the Dutch contribution to dairy development in Africa and Asia.



¹ Find all resources on: <https://knowledge4food.net/event/online-launch-paper-dairy-for-nutrition-employment-sustainability/>

² A strict protocol, involving pre-registration and name-check in the zoom waiting room has frustrated access for some, for which we apologize.

Reflections were given by four panelists:

Ms. Nynke Dijkstra (Triple Dairy and EARNED coalition). Triple Dairy is a collaboration of BLES dairies, Wageningen UR and Aeres Group geared towards new approaches in practical training and the transfer of knowledge in dairy. The idea is to enable lifelong learning of individual dairy professionals. Triple Dairy aims for a digital learning platform that supports formal and informal learning in combination with practical learning between the cows. Advantages are the lower cost, the attractiveness for youth and the involvement of local trainers. The EARNED coalition (see p46 of position paper) is piloting this approach through a central platform in East Africa.

Ms. Dijkstra noted a proliferation of digital learning initiatives in the Covid19 crisis, and supports the call for joint action on leverage point 5.

Mr. Marcel van Nijnatten (Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality). Thinking of the post Covid19 world, the importance of a more robust food system is clear. As a sort of X-ray, the pandemic shows us the weak links. Labour-intensive production of healthy food and food markets are vulnerable parts of the food system.

Mr. Van Nijnatten stresses 2 leverage points: keep milk safe and sustainability of dairy (the concerns are loss of biodiversity, climate change and the acreage needed for dairy and meat). The Dutch diamond approach is key and will be more relevant and stronger when working with local stakeholders. This action agenda is a success when the changes in the food system are permanent and stakeholders continue to drive the agenda further.

Questions from the chat: What is new in the report? What about the TVETs?

Ms Dijkstra: despite all efforts, the issues are still the same. Our response has new elements, especially when we work together. Mr. van Nijnatten states the TVET level is crucial to reach practitioners and make an impact on the ground. That is why TVETs are high on the agenda of the ministry.

An anonymous poll was held on dairy in relation to nutrition, employment and sustainability and on the impact of Covid-19 on the dairy sector.

- Nutrition: most give priority to all options: school milk, dispensers and intra-household distribution. A small majority agrees that poor farmers best trade milk for cheaper proteins.
- Inclusiveness: there different views on whether successful producer organisations crowd-out the disadvantaged groups. Most agree that youth opportunities are in providing services to the dairy sector, not in production itself.
- Sustainability: a small majority agrees that carbon emissions per kg of milk is a good indicator. There is clear disagreement / no opinion on the statement that resource-efficient food systems feed dairy animals if they were waste bins (a statement from [this PhD thesis](#)).
- On Covid-19, most participants expect lower consumption of dairy and more alternative small-scale dairy supply chains.

Mr. Robert Baars (Van Hall Larenstein University) focus is on the leverage point of sustainability. The situation in the Netherlands (a trade-off between high productivity/efficiency/exports and its environmental costs) is different from African and Asian countries where the focus is on intensification. A balanced food system approach is to couple dairy production to land for feed production. So there is little potential for urban dairy farming. A related tradeoff is whether to use manure for biogas or for soil health and carbon sequestration. One cannot have both.

Second issue is the parameter of CO² emission per liter of milk. See p38. This parameter cannot be used in isolation. A measure of CO² per area of land used for dairy would give a totally different picture. Looking at the Dutch support to Kenya dairy, it is successful in improving productivity but it also brings the tradeoffs with manure accumulation and feed

imports. Third is a remark on the 7 World Bank principles (p42), most are technical and not new, but the priority for the future is the enabling environment.

Mr. Rinus van Klinken (SNV and NEADAP). The exchange and learning between NEADAP partners (p3) inspired and contributed to this position paper. NEADAP aims to mobilise Dutch knowledge and inputs for dairy development in currently East Africa. The focus is now on 4 dimensions:

- Healthy diets, as aflatoxins and antibiotic residues are challenges. The approach to guarantee safe and healthy dairy products is to pilot quality based payment systems (p30) and use the results to influence wider
- Embedded services, via dairy cooperatives and other actors. The chain partners are to invest in extension and service provision to farmers.
- Efficiency and sustainability with a focus on breeding and feeding. An example is the introduction of the Rumen 8 app (see <https://cowsoko.com/rumen8>). This Australian app was adapted for East Africa and helps farmers and extension agents to compose optimal rations for dairy cows and look at methane emissions.
- Professional dairy farming which requires training, via blended learning as discussed before by Triple Dairy and also via the Practical Dairy Training Farms (p46).

Questions from the chat:

One reference is to the practical and technical booklets by [Agromisa](#) and the new ways of conveying these messages with video and phone. Another observation is on the water footprint of dairy production, which is especially relevant in the Middle East.

Mr. Baars confirms this point is not in the paper as a main concern. In general, dairy requires good access to water. This may compete with food production. Typically, water scarcity is less of an issue in the Netherlands, compared to drier areas where livestock is the only option.

Call to action

This year it is still AgriProFocus and F&BKP co-organizing events. As of next year, you can expect the NFP to continue its support for dairy and development and for other sectors where Dutch knowledge and expertise can have a meaningful contribution to SDG2.

This position paper is an overview of what is happening and trending and it has a guiding agenda for action on 6 leverage points.

NFP aims to support coalitions that have transformative propositions. A coalition is a strong collective with a direction. It is to consist of the stakeholders needed to make transformation happen at the system level. NFP is ready to support you to connect to people and knowledge around innovations with the potential to scale.

So if you have an idea for a coalition or a transformative idea on one of the 6 leverage points, get in touch with us. We are here to support you to get started and accelerate your contribution to SDG2.

Evaluation of the meeting poll.

Most participants gave good to very good scores on the position paper and the launch meeting. Most feel the length of the meeting is just right. Most participants that their next step is to read the paper and use its content in next proposals.

The host thanked speakers and participants and indicated that the World Food Day (16 oct) is a next opportunity to share updates on dairy development with each other.

Contact: Judith Jacobs judith.jacobs@knowledge4food.net
 Wim Goris wgoris@agriprofocus.com