

THE INNOVATION JOURNEY

Founded in 2013, the Herenboerderij movement aims to establish 350 grassroots farms serving 175,000 people by 2030, creating a sustainable food system driven by nature. Each Herenboerderij is a cooperative of 150 to 300 shareholders, with 15 to 20 hectare farms and 1-3 part-time professional farmers, sharing producing vegetables, fruit, eggs and optional meat throughout the year. They practice regenerative agriculture and aim for zero inputs.

Herenboeren Nederland, the national foundation, supports local Herenboerderijen. The entire network of local cooperatives works together to improve knowledge, legislation, and policies for sustainable agriculture, partnering with 'Caring Farmers', 'Groenboerenplan', 'Aardpeer', and the innovation hub 'Plaats De Kleine Aarde'.



Figure 1. Rianne Joolink (left) with Menno de Vos, professional farmers for Herenboerderij Groote Modderkolk in Loenen, Gelderland.

THE INNOVATION IMPACT

Nowadays, 21 farms feed over 9,000 people across the country, with

hundreds more in the pipeline. Growth is rapid and the learning curve is steep. The main impacts are:

- (1) Co-ownership and co-production: Transforming local people from passive consumers to active co-owners and co-producers;
- (2) Localised, sustainable food systems: Creating a localised food supply that reduces the ecological footprint.
- (3) Community hubs: Serving as a breeding ground for social connections and further local initiatives;
- (4) Efficient governance structure: Strengthening local cooperative farms with centralised support for land acquisition, member recruitment and farmer recruitment.



Figure 1. Philomeen Duiniveld (right), Chair of Herenboerderij Landmeerse Loop at its official opening in Boekel, Noord-Brabant (April 2023).

USEFUL LINKS

- <https://herenboeren.nl>;
- <https://grootemodderkolk.herenboeren.nl>;
- <https://landmeerseloop.herenboeren.nl>