

YEAR REPORT 2025

STICHTING BOERENGROEP & INSPRINGTHEATER



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Content

Content	2
Part I - Stichting Boerengroep	4
1. Introduction to Boerengroep	4
1.1. About Boerengroep	4
1.2. Boerengroep Principles	7
1.3. Our partners	8
1.4. Financial Resources	9
1.5. The people of Boerengroep	10
2. Complete Overview Activities of 2025	11
Academic year 2024-2025	11
Academic year 2025-2026	12
3. Specification Activities Boerengroep 2025	13
3.1. Excursions	13
3.2 Themed breaks	14
3.3. Food Film Fest	15
3.4. Farm Experience Internship (FEI)	16
3.5. Other co-organized activities	19
Otherwise & RUW	19
Agroecologie Netwerk	19
Mycelia of Hope	20
3.6. Networking Activities	21
3.7. Publications	22
3.8 Community Kitchen	22
Part II - Inspiringtheater	23
1. Introduction Inspiringtheater	23
2025 in General	23
2. Inspiringtheater organization	24
3. Specification Inspiringtheater Activities 2025	24
3.1. Jump in sessions	24
3.2. Forum Theatre Course (2x: September & November)	25
3.3. Inspiringtheater Workshops	25
3.4. Performance: An uncomfortable Christmas	26

Part I - Stichting Boerengroep

1. Introduction to Boerengroep

1.1. About Boerengroep

Since 1971, Stichting Boerengroep (*Peasant Foundation*) aims to connect the university (students, research and education) with the reality and challenges of farmers and peasants in the Netherlands and worldwide. *“The education at the university was very theoretical and moreover it often gave a wrong impression of the reality of farmers and peasants,”* states Jan Douwe van der Ploeg, one of the founders of Boerengroep. Therefore, Boerengroep started to conduct interviews with farmers. These interviews were then taken into the university where researchers were questioned and stimulated to conduct research on the true needs of (family) farmers. The foundation of Boerengroep followed the big farmers' protests of 1971 in Brussels. Half a million farmers were on the streets to protest the Mansholt plan and the students who started Boerengroep wanted to support them and dive into the struggles farmers were facing. Until the moment of today, Boerengroep is still fighting for social, just and sustainable food production. We do this by bringing students into the fields and farmers into lecture rooms at the university.

By bridging agriculture-related forms of science, practice and movement, Boerengroep contributes towards the development of a critical view on reality by students – the future policy makers, researchers, teachers and possibly even farmers. We stimulate students to work together in interdisciplinary and international groups, with many different actors which all have different realities and different types of knowledge. We realise this by organising critical discussions, field excursions, capita selecta courses, lectures and exchanges. Also, we listen to the voices of the food producers and take their challenges – as well as their innovative practices – to the university, to work towards a fair and sustainable food production system in the world. We connect all these people and we actively search for research questions from the field: from peasants, farmers and gardeners. Our strength is thus to bridge the gap between science and reality and this is of crucial importance at a university. Thanks to Boerengroep, it is ensured that students can gain a critical view and connection to reality, which is an important characteristic of the scientist.

Irene Cardoso (professor of Soil Science at the Federal University of Vicoso, Brazil and vice-president of the Brazilian Agroecology Association) explains about the importance of our activities:

“What I like about it [the international summer course of Boerengroep], is the way that the students can be connected to the reality, but in a way that they feel free to become part of this reality.”

Pablo Tittonell (former professor Farming Systems Ecology, Wageningen University and current coordinator of the National Program on Natural Resources, Environment and Eco-Regions of the National and Agricultural Research Institute of Argentina) adds to this:

"It is important that students develop a different dimension in a way that they learn about agriculture and agroecology. For instance, a classic example is how a crop, or a plant, responds to the additional nutrients. So you can go to your lectures in the university and first of all the two axes are always there. On those axes you have for instance how much Nitrogen there is available [x-axis] and how much the plant grows [y axis] and there is a nice curve. Well try to find that somewhere in reality. It is completely different. First, because there's not only two axes, there are many more. And second, because there's so much variability, so much heterogeneity, so many other things going on, and that gives you a multidimensional perspective of how things are. Still, when you go back to the classroom, and you sit there, we're going to ask you about this curve, and you are going to have to know this. But you will know this, together with what you have seen in the field. So you can judge that knowledge, those models of reality, with a different eye once you've seen things in the field."

Under the banner of 'Inspringtheater', Boerengroep organizes workshops, courses and produces theater performances in collaboration with students/employees of Wageningen University. Inspiringtheater brings creativity in the world of science and uses participatory theatre techniques of *Theatre of the Oppressed* to encourage dialogue, critical thinking and empowerment.

Inspiringtheater originates from 'Het Boerentoneel' (Farmers theatre), which was founded by Boerengroep in 1972. Theatre plays concerning agricultural issues were performed, followed by substantive discussions. Nowadays we use an applied drama technique and participatory theatre practices created to empower audience individuals to determine social change: Theatre of the Oppressed. The founder of the methodology of Theatre of the Oppressed, Augusto Boal, worked with peasants in Brazil, which had a huge effect on society by empowering the peasants and farmers. By participating, audiences are enabled to make decisions, to address critically the issues presented to them and to reflect on the social life within a safe environment offered by the theatrical design.

Boerengroep aims to:

- Approach agricultural topics from different angles: connecting social science with natural science; academic theories with practical challenges and innovations;
- Highlight the (im)possibilities and challenges that farmers, peasants and gardeners face;
- Create understanding for diversity of opinions and stimulate a critical attitude towards your own position;
- Stimulate transparency and awareness of the food production chain to support a critical attitude of consumers, farmers, researchers and students;
- Realize fair and vital agriculture by:
 - Visualizing the situation of farmers today and in the future through knowledge exchange amongst farmers, students, consumers, and professionals
 - Stimulating local economies, in order to improve the position of the food producers
 - Building, defending and strengthening agroecology and Food Sovereignty movements to discuss and activate in order to shed light on present-day issues in agriculture and discern pathways of change

In this way, Boerengroep and Inspiringtheater wish to stimulate a critical attitude towards agriculture and food. The Boerengroep Core Team currently consists of two coöordinators, a chair, a secretary, a treasurer and several active volunteers.

1.2. Boerengroep Principles

CHART OF BOERENGROEP PRINCIPLES

Boerengroep is a critical yet constructive association that connects students and farmers striving for sustainable food landscapes. Through different disciplines and a hands-on approach, Boerengroep addresses the resilience of our food systems, food sovereignty, the empowerment of local territories, farmers' rights and justice in the agrarian sector together with farmers, farmer organizations and educational institutions.

01 CRITICAL THINKING

We aim to awaken the critical mind, a voice that asks 'why'. We engage people to question the dominant power structures in society, in the agricultural sector and in the university. What are the main paradigms? Who chooses what we are taught? Who decides how we farm? We are not passive, but in a position to keep an open dialogue going. From there grows the knowledge that we can actively help change oppressive structures.



CURIOSITY AND COMPREHENSION



We look at the agricultural sector and the university with a curious mind. How do these systems work? What are obstacles for a transition in the food system? In order to prompt change, we must first observe, ask and understand. We interact with people from different fields and perspectives and strive to understand a little bit more every day. We build upon scientific knowledge as well as traditional knowledge.

03 PRACTICE FIRST

We focus on embodied learning and are practice oriented. We don't start from an idea that has to be forced to the world. Rather, we go to the farmers and get our hands dirty to see what reality is like before approaching its challenges from a theoretical viewpoint. We aim to avoid becoming indoctrinated by a theoretical frame.



CONNECTING THROUGH DIVERSITY



We aim to bridge gaps between theory and practice. We want to foster collaborations and connections between groups of people and networks of farmers, across ideological divides. To find solutions for healthy food systems and sustainable food landscapes, we need to cross borders and open up our bubbles. We seek inclusiveness and empathy in approaching different visions for agriculture. Diversity is key, both in terms of building (agro)biodiverse systems as in bringing the right people together to foster creativity and resilience.

05 CREATIVE EXPRESSION

We share a safe space: a space to discover, to be vulnerable, but also to confront. We are a solidary group and seek to bond with each other on different levels: head, hearts and hands. We come together, working outside or studying our passions. Creative freedom and expression – for instance through Inspiringtheater – offer us another source of insights as well as an outlet.



06 POSITIVELY PASSIONATE

We are a passionate group and we harbor that positive energy. We are critical but we approach challenges as opportunities for positive change.

BOERENGROEP.NL

STICHTING BOERENGROEP - FARMERS FOUNDATION

INSTABOERENGROEP

1.3. Our partners

- Students and PhDs of Wageningen University, in order to support them with the organisation of events they find important to address, e.g. a symposium or movie screening;
- Chair groups at the Wageningen University, like Rural Sociology Group (RSO), and Farming Systems Ecology (FSE). We are in close contact with chair groups in order to discuss thesis topics, internship opportunities and organizations of events and courses. We supervise on average 2 interns per semester with Boerengroep, so that students have a place to work on topics they find important to share with others, while gaining work experience, broadening their professional network and having the informative opportunity within an international organisation with 50 years of experience. Moreover, we are actively involved in offering thesis topics to students that are related to agriculture-related challenges of the realities that peasants, farmers, gardeners and indigenous communities face;
- Farmers, both local farmers and elsewhere in the country, who seek a closer connection to the university, such as Tuinen van de Egel, Ommuurde Tuin, Schapenstreek and many more. This group expands every year;
- Networks, like Voedsel Anders, Toekomstboeren, ASEED, Milieudefensie, Green Active Network (GAN), Agroecologie Netwerk, Cultivate Collective, Stroomgebied Zuid Veluwe, and Slow Food;
- Foundations, like RUW, Otherwise, Stichting Herenboeren, Landbouwbrigades (Belgium);
- International research and advocacy institutes, like TNI, Louis Bolk Institute;
- International human rights organizations, like ActionAid and BothEnds;
- Educational Institutes like Warmonderhof and Van Hall Larenstein;
- Farmers Unions, united in Platform Aarde Boer Consument (Platform ABC; '*Earth, Farmer, Consumer*'), of which we are part as well. Platform ABC unites farmers/peasant organizations (Nederlandse Akkerbouw Vakbond (NAV), Nederlandse Melkveehouders Vakbond (NMV) and Vereniging voor Biologisch Dynamische Landbouw, with the X min Y Solidariteitsfonds and the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF).

The goal of ABC is to work together towards a social and economically sustainable agriculture. The platform ABC envisions an agriculture that strives towards regionally closed cycles, and considers human rights, the environment, animal welfare, and a healthy soil. Furthermore, peasants/farmers should receive a fair price for their products. In order to reach these goals, ABC argues that food and agriculture should not be part of the free market and that the production of several agricultural products should be regulated, so that a fair income is guaranteed, both here in the Netherlands, as well as in the rest of the world.

Together we organize:

- Critical discussions, lectures, dialogues about agricultural topics, both practical topics as well as political topics related to farming and food production;
- Capita selecta courses at the Wageningen University, like the international 3 ECTS summer course Farm Experience Internship;
- Field trips to farms and gardens throughout the Netherlands;
- Research mediation between university (researchers, students, education) and the needs of peasants, farmers and gardeners in the Netherlands and abroad. Boerengroep stimulates others to provide us with research questions and their challenges, particularly during the Alternative Thesis Market we organize with other organizations. We can then find students who can work on this as their internship or thesis;

- Working groups together with chair groups such as RSO and FSE, we stimulate students to organise events of their own interest, related to food production and the reality of food producers. This is partly done via 'Farmers Tales';
- Conferences, like Voedsel Anders Conference, De Nieuwe Boer is... Biobeurs, BioVelddag, etc.
- Markets, like Reclaim the Seeds;
- Interviews with farmers in cooperation with Toekomstboeren, Boerengroep members often go to the field to conduct interviews with farmers on topics like access to land, innovative ways of farming, agroecological approaches or the effect of climate change;
- Interactive theatre, 'Inspiringtheater' which is an important part of Boerengroep. Inspiringtheater provides students a critical view on developments in agriculture in an interactive form of theatre.

1.4. Financial Resources

Boerengroep mainly received finances in the form of subsidies. **Wageningen University** is the main source of income, which we use for structural costs such as paying the coordinators of Boerengroep and Inspiringtheater. With the subsidy we also cover other organisational costs like insurances and bank costs.

The **Committee Activity Support (CAS)** of Wageningen University offers partial support for some costs related to activities that we organise (for students) in Wageningen, such as costs of excursions, lectures, gifts for speakers, travel costs etc. We used the CAS to help fund our events so we don't have to ask participants to pay large amounts of money as we believe our activities should be open to all students.

The rest of the costs for Boerengroep's activities are covered by a combination of small participation fees and occasional gifts from sponsors/partners/subsidies.

The activities organised by Inspiringtheater were mainly covered by contributions of commissioners and the CAS. In the future years we hope to be able to find a more stable funding base next to the subsidy of the WUR to be less dependent on sponsors and donations by our partners. Securing more stable funding to promote agroecology and educate students is our financial goal for the coming years.

In the attachments you will find out financial result of 2025

1.5. The people of Boerengroep

The Board and active members in 2025

Name	Position	Period
Aron Ortega	Treasurer (current)	Since January 2024
Axel Hernandez	Chair (former)	From December 2024 to August 2025
Valentijn Struik	Secretary (former)	From June 2025 to September 2025
Catriona Chen	General Board Member	Since September 2025
Nori Kovacs	Secretary (current)	Since October 2025
Gerben Bakker	General Board Member	Since November 2025
Julia Borland	Excursion Coordinator	Since November 2025
Androniki Mina	Promotion Content Creator	Since December 2025

Interns of Boerengroep in 2025

Name	Period
Ruben Zwaan (Reclaim the Seeds 2025)	December 2024-March 2025
Thomas Jongelings (Fair food for everyone project)	February - June 2025
Martina Dondiego (Mycelia of Hope project)	February - June 2025
Sofia Marcon (Farm Experience Internship)	May - August 2025
Anna Kerkhof (Fair food for everyone & Brandneteltuin)	July - November 2025

Employees in 2025

Name	Function	Start	End
Alex Sint Nicolaas	Coördinator Boerengroep	April 2024	March 2025
Marcha van Wijk	Coördinator Boerengroep	May 2024	-
Vera Bommeltje	Coordinator Inspiringtheater	April 2025	-

9

2. Complete Overview Activities of 2025

Academic year 2024-2025

Event	Date
Excursion Green Ass Garden	January 11
Ommuurde Tuin Working Day & Class on Soil Life, Bokashi & Compost	February 17
Soup Kitchen	February 26
Agricultural & Agroecological practices around the world	March 17
Reclaim the Seeds	March 28-30
Campfire dreaming session	April 3
Reclaim the Seeds workshop	April 6
Excursion Groene Takken	April 19
Panel Session Feminism & Agroecology	April 24
Excursion Eetmeerbosch	May 21

Lunch Lecture: Healthy food for everyone	June 6
Woman and agroecology: stories from India	July 1
Farm Experience internship	July 14th-August 8
(Themed) Breaks	Biweekly
Open Meeting	Once a month

Academic year 2025-2026

Event	Date
Summer AID MRF activity and info market	August 18-19
Resisting Big Oil: Indigenous peoples' struggles for land and dignity	September 4th
Critical Perspectives at WUR	September 10th
Boerengroep weekend	September 20-21
De Brandneteltuin Working Day & Harvest Feast	October 12
Excursion Herenboerderij Goedentijd	November 1
Workshop Dragon Dreaming	November 17
Food.Film.Fest: Outgrow the System	November 19
Food.Film.Fest: The Last Seed	November 26
Food.Film.Fest: Six Inches of Soil	December 4
Excursion Tuinen van de Egel	December 7
(Themed) Breaks	Biweekly
Open Meeting	Once a month

3. Specification Activities Boerengroep 2025

3.1. Excursions

Our first excursion was on the 11th of January to the **Excursion Green Ass Garden** in Amsterdam. Samantha Feelix gave us a tour through the garden and led a workshop on composting and how to make your own set up to make compost in your garden. We enjoyed a nice lunch together and did some light work around the garden.

The next excursion was to **Groene Takken** on the 19th of April. At the Groene Takken, Pip Gilmore inoculates mushrooms on wooden logs in order to upgrade the wood and give it a second life after cutting. Pip gave a farm tour, explained about the mushroom growing process and answered all our questions. Afterwards we helped her out with the inoculation of the logs. The participants were really enthusiastic, asked a lot of questions and wanted to start their own mushroom farm in their home country.

On the 21st of May we went to **Boerderij Eetmeerbosch** in Nijmegen. With a mixed group of Boerengroep participants, people involved at Eetmeerbosch and volunteers, we engaged ourselves with the practical and organizational dimensions of operating a CSA farm that implements solidarity payment. Through a reciprocal event we contributed to the work on the farm, and became familiar with the practical reality of the self harvest CSA. We received a farm tour through the no dig garden, the food forest and the green houses. During an interactive session after lunch we discussed mechanisms to enhance inclusion and accessibility of a CSA garden, with a special emphasis on solidarity payment. Elske educated us about solidarity payment and its origins, while Merel explained the initiatives and partnerships that Eetmeerbosch performs, focused on involving people that potentially experience barriers with participating in a CSA. Furthermore, students were invited to share their perspectives on involvement with CSA's and were encouraged to provide suggestions on making the farm more accessible.

After the summer break, we started the new year with our **Boerengroep weekend excursion** (20 and 21 September). This weekend was themed Introduction to Agroecology and we headed out to Zonnegoed, the farm of Joost van Strien. Famous for his no shit (animal manure) farming and use of strip cropping to increase biodiversity around the farm. A large group of about 20 new WUR students joined us to learn about Agroecology. During the first day we had an extended farm tour by farmer Joost van Strien, who showed us the fields and machines he uses for his strip cropping. Joost also explained how he started farming and how he introduced the no shit technique of using green manure instead of animal manure. After the farm introduction Darleen van Dam gave a talk on the Introduction of Agroecology explaining the different pillars and her experiences in practice. After a potluck lunch we did some farm work in different fields under supervision of farm worker Tobias. Followed by a theater workshop facilitated by our former and current Inspiringtheater coordinators Johanna and Vera. After a cosy dinner we put up our tents and enjoyed some drinks at the fire. The second day started with a pancake breakfast, cooked by Marcha and Aron. After breakfast we had a parallel session with 2 workshops; A Humanure workshop by Marieke and the Living Soil workshop by our Boerengroep Coordinator Marcha. After a good lunch we

headed back out to the field to finish our farm work. Although windy and rainy we succeeded with removing lots of weeds from the kale and thyme fields. All educated and satisfied we packed up our tents and made the way back to Wageningen.

Heading deep into autumn times on the 1st of November we went on a Excursion to **Herenboerderij Goedentijd**. This is a small-scale, cooperative farm in Alphen (close to Tilburg), owned by 250 local households. Together, they decide what they want to eat and hire farmers, who work on the land for them. There are different vegetables, fruits and even pigs, cows and chickens. The farm needed to do the last tasks to prepare the land and the farm for winter. Tasks we supported included preparing the greenhouse for winter, weeding, and making sauerkraut. Additionally, the group joined local volunteers for a morning coffee and pastries as well as lunch, including sandwiches and soup. It was nice volunteering alongside the local community members as well and hearing more about the unique ownership structure at Herenboerderij Goedentijd. A lot of us had the opportunity to work both on farm work / work on the field as well as on sauerkraut-making.

Our last excursion of the year was on the 7th of December to **Tuinen van de Egel**, a market garden that is part of the Capitalocene Foundation (Stichting Kapitalocean). The foundation focuses on purchasing monoculture agricultural land from the market and making it available to those who would otherwise have limited access, including small-scale farmers and non-human life. At Tuinen van de Egel, 10% of the land is a small organic garden, 40% food forest, and 50% space for other life. Students really enjoyed getting to work alongside other Boerengroep members, as well as members of the Tuinen van de Egel community. They enjoyed being able to select the task they worked on and adjust their task between the morning and the afternoon. Many students were able to try a skill / task out for the first time - such as using an angle grinder (for disassembling old infrastructure) or planting a tree.

3.2 Themed breaks

Every other Thursday, Boerengroep and Inspiringtheatre organize a *Boerengroep Break*. The intention of the break is to gather informally with the community members and spend some time to meet each other in an open setting, instead of a lecture or excursion for example. **Most breaks in 2025 were themed**, meaning that there would be a small program on topic to discuss. The themes varied broadly, from Dutch politics to seasonal rituals or brainstorming about inclusivity and diversity in Dutch smallholder farms.

Breaks that were not themed, were more gatherings in which we had some drinks together at the Rhine or in Onder de Linden and just spent time together with the board and interested students who felt part of Boerengroep or wanted to get to know us.

3.3. Food Film Fest

Film title	Location	Date	Participants
Outgrow the System	MovieW	November 19	70
The Last Seed	Superette	November 26	25
Six Inches of Soil	Clockhouse	December 4	10

Outgrow the System (Cecilia Paulsson and Anders Nilsson 2023). What would our world look like if the economy was there to serve us, instead of the other way around? Outgrow the System is an exploration of the need for fundamental, social and economical change. Instead of fighting the symptoms, the movie digs towards the roots of the crisis: a system that makes people, nature and future subordinate to endless growth. While agriculture isn't centered, agroecology is part of a broad system change: agroecological practices are a living example of an economy that serves what is really important.

The Last Seed (Andréa Gema 2022) shows the impressive fight of African farmers for the maintenance of their food sovereignty and local biodiversity. The documentary shows how the industrialisation of agriculture and the privatisation of seeds threaten traditional knowledge, ecological equilibrium and the autonomy of farmers. African farmers and experts are rising up and committing to agroecological practices to guarantee the future of their (and our) food. Because who controls the seeds, controls how agriculture can be done.

The Last Seed asks discomforting questions about what is at stake and it shows us a better, more just path. A must see for everyone that is concerned with the future of agriculture and food worldwide. A visual gem in which important questions are being asked and hopeful answers are being given.

Six Inches of Soil (Colin Ramsay 2024). What does it mean to choose regenerative agriculture as a young farmer today? Six Inches of Soil follows three British farmers who are starting out and resisting the industrial food system. From small-scale vegetable farmer to cattle farmer and arable farmer, Adrienne, Ben and Anna show the challenges and rewards of farming that restores the soil and our health. A change is needed – depleted soil, climate change and underpaid farmers – but a growing movement is working on agriculture that not only causes less damage, but actively restores what has been lost.

An ideal introduction to agroecology and soil restoration, interesting for (starting) farmers, CSA participants and anyone who wants to buy more consciously from local farmers. A discussion after the film can help to make links with our Flemish reality and shows how we as citizens and policymakers can make a difference.

To organise the Food.Film.Fest series, we collaborated with MovieW and the Superette.

3.4. Farm Experience Internship (FEI)

The Farm Experience Internship is a 3 ECTS international summer course on agroecology at Wageningen University (Netherlands), which intends to bring together theoretical knowledge from students with practical skills and knowledge from farmers/peasants in an integrated learning experience that connects the head, heart and hands. It's a growing movement, co-created by peasants, farmers, gardeners, scientists, students, activists, NGOs and agroecological companies – working together towards a sustainable, healthy, viable food system that is fair for the earth, the consumer and the producer. Boerengroep has been organising the FEI as a Capita Selecta at WUR every year since 2013 and is open to anyone who is interested in the practice and politics of growing their own food, discovering local knowledge, and having a whole rounded global perspective on topics such as food sovereignty, land access, among others. It is organised as a four-week summer course, broken down into: the first week of lectures, excursions and workshops; the second and third week where each participant does an internship at a farm in the Netherlands for practical learning and understanding the challenges and struggles of farm work. Some of the participants live at the farm for these two weeks for a holistic experience. In the fourth week, the participants return to Wageningen for a week of reflection and linking the theory and practice of agroecology.

Farm Experience Internship in 2025

During week 1 and 4, the group was based in the Creative Garden, Wageningen, and engaged in a variety of activities: workshops with internal and external speakers, farm and field visits, games, theater, potlucks, movie screenings, etc. Topics as the correlation between the use of pesticides and the insurgence of human diseases, intergenerational farming, solidarity payments (CSAs), the Autonomous Kitchen Council, bioregional and indigenous knowledge, Streekwaar, soil and humanure, La Via Campesina, international solidarity, conventional and organic farming, and feminism were covered during these two weeks. Moreover, time for bonding and getting to know each other better through games and potlucks was incorporated in the program to create a "gezellig" atmosphere. All participants had to write a reflection report about their learning about agroecology, knowledge and skills acquired mostly on the farms. During week 2 and 3, the participants worked on their chosen farms, spread across the Netherlands, and one in Germany. Some farms were vegetable gardens (including CSAs), others were sheep and bull farms. Some participants had included accommodation and meals and stayed on the farm for two whole weeks. Participants were expected to end week 1 with a list of questions to ask their farmers and to include in the report.

Time	Main Activities

14/07 - 18/07 (1 st week)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction: games, food, tour through creative garden, formal intro by Klarien Klingen, principles of agroecology Conventional agricultural practices and their consequences: workshop on impact of pesticide use; time walk through the historical agricultural landscape Intergenerational farming: theatre show and workshop, workshop farm handovers, workshop scything Agroecology: solidarity payment, local initiatives, history and community Streekwaar: bike tour, visit local farms and initiatives
21/07 - 01/08 (2 nd - 3 rd week)	<p>Hands-on farm practice in different types of farms across the Netherlands:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schapenstreek: dairy sheep farm De Ommuurde Tuin: organic farm for vegetables, fruits and herbs using vegan farming and supported by CSA Tuinderij het Lichtveen: small-scale market garden Eet Meerbosch: self-harvest vegetable farm, food forest, chicken farm Boerderij Eyckenstein: bull farm and shop De Nieuwe Ronde: CSA in Wageningen Vlierhof: community farm and centre, right over the border of Germany
04/08 -08/08 (4 th week)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to land: lecture and theatre workshop. Lecture on Beekeeping Human nature relationships: Visit Droevedaal Food Forest, Living Soil Workshop, Humanure workshop Peasant struggle and solidarity: La Via Campesina movie screening and talk, workshop on food cooperations with Columbian peasants Dairy farming: Visits to an organic and non-organic dairy farm Reflection, workshop on indigenous and feminist knowledge



3.5. Other co-organized activities

Otherwise & RUW

Critical Perspectives at WUR (September 10)

In the beginning of the new year, together with RUW and Otherwise, we organized an event for (new) students who want to find their ways toward critical organisations. We invited several organisations and initiatives from, by or for students (and others).

During the first event, we organised a working session during which we worked the land at WSF and then sat around a campfire. It was the start of autumn, and we reflected on how we experience the change of seasons within ourselves (energy levels, desires, activities for instance), within the foods we crave and eat, and what is happening on the land and 'in nature'.

Agroecologie Netwerk

Resisting Big Oil (September 4)

Together with the Dutch Agroecology Network, we organized an event with four indigenous leaders from Peru who came to the Netherlands to speak out for a clean living environment in their home country.

Oil extraction by Pluspetrol has led to large-scale pollution in the territories of the indigenous Achuar, Kichwa, Kukama, and Quechua communities in northern Peru. The oil company discharged huge amounts of toxic wastewater for years and failed to maintain its outdated installations and pipelines, leading to frequent oil spills. As a result, toxic substances such as cadmium, barium, and lead have contaminated the soil, rivers and groundwater. Over a period of fifteen years, the company contaminated nearly two thousand different locations across the Amazon region.

This contamination has had devastating consequences on the local ecosystem, poisoning fish and game stock, degrading drinking water, and threatening biodiversity. It directly undermines the food security and health of the indigenous population, who depend on the land and waterways for their livelihoods. Although Pluspetrol ended its operations in the area in 2015, it has refused to clean up the environmental damage and compensate the affected communities.

Indigenous groups have submitted a complaint against oil company Pluspetrol NL at the OECD (the club of 'rich' countries). More information here: <https://lnkd.in/eih48NpA>. The Dutch OECD contact point will publish its Final Statement on the complaint on September 3.

Three representatives of these groups will share this journey with us through images and words and we will talk about their demands to the Dutch government and what's next. We brought 36 people together to listen, talk and act up on the situation. Some of them even went to Amsterdam to join a demonstration against Pluspetrol the day after the event.



Mycelia of Hope

Mycelia van Hoop, an initiative of the Agroecology Network, aims to bring agroecological farmers, activists and asylum seekers closer together by organizing workdays on different agroecological farms throughout the Netherlands.

The activities are designed based on the needs of the farmers, to actively support them during busy periods and/or to work together on projects that are put on the back burner due to lack of time. For activists, contact with the land and agroecological farming can be an experience of regeneration, positive activism or active hope.

Based on a culture of mutual aid, Mycelia van Hoop works on learning together about agroecology and strengthening the agroecological movement that bridges citizens and farmers, city and countryside, and human and non-human life.

We actively organise community days and internships together with this working group.

3.6. Networking Activities

Boerengroep maintains close ties with several European Dutch Farmer's Platforms, and tries to regularly attend events, conferences and festivals to use this opportunity for networking. At several festivals in the past such as the Food Autonomy Festival and Reclaim the Seeds festival, Boerengroep usually co-organises a part of the event or has a stand, where we are able to let people outside Wageningen know about our organisation and the work we are doing.

- *Boerenlandbouw Conferentie*
- *Reclaim the Seeds Amsterdam*
- *Food Autonomy Festival*
- *Annual Introduction Days (August 19)*

In August, Boerengroep represented itself on the AID Information Market. This market functions to introduce the new students at Wageningen University to the wide variety of organisations present. We occupied a market stand and collected information details of interested students. To cover the costs of the stand and promotional material, a total of 40 euros were spent.

- *Agroecology network days*
- *Agroecology Europe Forum (Malmö)*

Platform Aarde Boer Consument (ABC)

Boerengroep coordinator and members regularly attend the meetings of the Platform ABC (Aarde Boer Consument) - a platform consisting of the NAV (Nederlandse Akkerbouw Vakbond - Dutch Arable Farming Union), the NMV (Nederlandse Melkveehouders Vakbond - Dutch Dairy Farming Union), the Association for Biological Dynamic Farming and Food, the WILPF (Women's International League for Peace and Freedom), Future Farmers, the VBBM (Vereniging tot Behoud van Boer en Milieu, Association for the Conservation of Farmer and Environment) and Stichting Boerengroep. We attend these meetings to keep up to date with everything that is going on in the world of farmers, and discuss topics such as farmers' protests, long term developments which affect farmers such as trade agreements and the vision of the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture concerning circular farming.

3.7. Publications

Boerengroep launched a podcast called “Digging Deeper” in 2023 which can be found on Spotify, Apple Podcasts, and Youtube. The podcast released 4 episodes during the year 2025, with topics surrounding agricultural production in the Netherlands and Portugal. There was a live recording during the panel session on Feminism & Agroecology on April 24th. The list of the episodes released is as follows:

- *Marginalized communities: The History of women in Dutch agriculture, part 1 (March 8)*
- *Marginalized communities: The History of women in Dutch agriculture, part 2 (April 26)*
- *Marginalized communities: Vrouwelijke ondernemer in de landbouw - met boerin merel Gerritse (May 21)*
- *Marginalized communities: Migrant Justice - organising for workers' rights in Dutch Agriculture (June 3)*

3.8 Community Kitchen

The Student Community Kitchen aims at providing students with plant-based, healthy, balanced lunches that are zero-waste. Meals are offered at little to no charge. By encouraging students to cook voluntarily, we can significantly reduce costs associated with kitchen rentals and labour. Our food is sourced from local (organic if possible) farmers, and we operate as a social solidarity restaurant with a pay-what-you-can dynamic to ensure accessibility for all. This initiative presents an opportunity to adopt a political approach by collaborating with food-related organisations within the university for joint action (GAN).

Part II - Inspiringtheater

1. Introduction Inspiringtheater

Inspiringtheater traces its roots back to 1972 when it was founded by Boerengroep as 'Het Boerentoneel' (Farmer's theatre). The initial days of Het Boerentoneel were dedicated to making and performing theatre plays to raise awareness on agricultural issues at the time. However, as the wheel of time turned, the insight came that it might be preferable to make theatre *with* instead of *about* the people whose problems you want to address. The theatre group incorporated a participation-based applied drama technique called Theatre of the Oppressed and with this change in method, also changed the name to *Inspiringtheater*. With incorporating this method, aimed to address any type of oppression, it was a logical consequence that Inspiringtheater started to address a wider variety of topics. To illustrate this, plays have been made about scientific integrity, burn-out, peer pressure etc. But due to the context in Wageningen and the close link to Boerengroep, the agricultural issues are still a recurring theme.

Theatre of the Oppressed is a dramatic style pioneered in the 1970s by Augusto Boal, a peasant rights activist from Brazil. This groundbreaking style of theatre proved to be a powerful tool for social change, empowering farmers and marginalized groups by giving them a voice and a platform to explore solutions to their challenges. By participating in forum theatre, audiences are enabled to make decisions, critically address the issues presented to them, and reflect on the social life within a safe environment offered by the theatrical design. This is where Inspiringtheater derives its name from. Since the participants can "Jump-In" (Inspringen = to jump in) and be involved in the play and replace the actors.

In Forum Theatre (one of the techniques of Theatre of the Oppressed) the actors perform a play/story/situation that highlights a problem (oppression). After watching the play, the audience gets a chance to 'jump in' and try other ways to deal with the situation. In this way, funny and critical plays are made. By participating, audiences are enabled to make decisions, to address critically the issues presented to them, and to reflect on social life within a safe environment offered by the theatrical design.

2025 in General

In the beginning of 2025 there was no coordinator and nothing was happening with Inspiringtheater for a while already. In fact, the board was discussing if it was still desirable to put effort in it and to try to find a new coordinator. When some former coordinators heard about this, they contacted the board and insisted that Inspiringtheater shouldn't disappear. A lot of people offered help. Thus the board did a job posting and from June they hired a new coordinator.

In June the academic year was almost over, so the first months, most of the effort of the coordinator went into helping with organising the FEI, talking with former coordinators, studying on the way of working of Inspiringtheater in the past and studying the methods of Theatre of the Oppressed.

At the start of the new academic year, in September, we started with monthly jump in sessions. At

the end of September we tried to organise a forum theatre course, but that was too early. Not enough people showed up, so we had to cancel it. But we felt that the enthusiasm and attention was increasing so in November we tried again and this time we had a perfectly nice group of people.

Via Boerengroep we facilitated a few Inspiringtheater workshops on Boerengroep events and this worked out really well. Besides that participants enjoyed it a lot, it resulted in requests for new workshops and cooperations with other groups and organisations.

It is clear that Inspiringtheater has a long and significant history and still a strong potential. This is evident from the way that former coordinators and people involved with Inspiringtheater talk about it, highlight its importance and are enthusiastic and willing to help. And also from the positive reactions on the activities so far and the fact that in a relatively short time, it feels like Inspiringtheater is re-established and the network is growing.

2. Inspiringtheater organization

The organization of events/workshops/promotions for Inspiringtheater is managed by the Inspiringtheater coordinator. The coordinator works closely with different stakeholders, namely WUR staff, other student organizations, theatre experts, and students to organize courses, workshops, and theatre performances.

At the heart of Inspiringtheater are the actors, scriptwriters, and jokers. Any student and employee of WUR can always join the Inspiringtheater at any time of the year. To promote the active participation of people Inspiringtheater aims at making theatre-based activities fun and relaxing, ideal for international students (most plays are in English), students with low money (participation is free or as cheap as possible), and students with a busy life (one project requires only 4-5 rehearsals).

Inspiringtheater people can be as active as they want, with active people participating regularly in all activities, courses, events, meetings, and workshops, and contributing to the organization, whereas passive members attend just a few events each year.

Forum theatre plays are facilitated by a joker, a specialized person that bridges the gap between actors and spectators, encouraging active interaction and engagement. Becoming a joker requires specific training to function successfully in a dynamic theatre style like forum theatre. Therefore, Inspiringtheater also collaborates with directors and trainers of forum theatre to ensure knowledge transfer and availability of trained actors and jokers.

3. Specification Inspiringtheater Activities 2025

3.1. Jump in sessions

The jump in sessions are a monthly, low key opportunity to get to know the Inspiringtheater community, to get a bit familiar with the techniques of Theater of the Oppressed and also to release some stress and have a proper energizing break in the middle of the work / study day. From September onwards, there has been a jump in session every month. The first two were facilitated by an external trainer (and former Inspiringtheater coordinator) Johanna Schröder

since the coordinator was not experienced enough yet. In the meantime the coordinator did a training at Formaat and the sessions of november and december were facilitated by the coordinator.

We have a small but steady group coming to the jump-in-sessions. I think the jump in sessions are an important tool to keep the enthusiastic people onboard and have at least one low key steady activity with Inspiringtheater, while the other activities are more random and unpredictable qua timing, commitment and effort. Also, by doing the jump in sessions, I feel we're creating a bit of an Inspiringtheater community which is a good thing I think. The people that come are generally enthusiastic about the jump in sessions. One participant after doing a scene about an awkward Christmas dinner with family: "I feel more prepared now!"

3.2. Forum Theatre Course (2x: September & November)

The Forum Theatre Course is a course consisting of three evenings. In this course we dive deeper into the basics of forum theater. After finishing this course, participants know some games of Theatre of the Oppressed, they know how to create a forum theatre scene and they are able to perform as an actor in a forum theatre scene.

This course is not only suited for people that like theater, it is just as much suited for people that are interested in improving their facilitation skills and/or want to learn about an effective way of addressing difficult topics.

Sadly, when we first tried, directly in September, we had too few participants to make the course a success. 8 people registered, but in the end, 3 people canceled. Due to this, a lot of exercises could not be done and it was inconvenient for the course. We decided to keep it with two of the three evenings and try to organise another course soon when hopefully more people could participate.

I think, in a lot of other ways, the course was a success and it might even have been a good thing that this happened. The people that joined were very enthusiastic about the course and I think because of this experience, more people found Inspiringtheater. When we tried again two months later, we had a nice group of 15 enthusiastic people and the course was very successful. Sometimes you have to start somewhere.

3.3. Inspiringtheater Workshops

In 2025 Inspiringtheater has facilitated 5 workshops: at the FEI, at the Boerengroep weekend, at the Brandneteltuin, at the Agro-ecology weekend of Toekomstboeren and at the Food.Film.Fest.

During a workshop the coordinator and/or an external trainer is doing a couple of games and exercises from Theatre of the Oppressed with the participants. Usually the goal is a short introduction of the method, usually we try to make it complementary to the theme of the event. Sometimes there is another goal with the workshop such as diving deeper in a specific topic. The workshops are usually also meant as an energizer and a more active way of engaging. We try to discuss beforehand which approach would make most sense for the context of the

workshop and what goals there can be. In this way we try to increase the value of the workshop besides it being “a fun activity”.

The workshops were mostly a big success with participants being very enthusiastic. The workshops also turned out to be a great way of networking. A workshop often resulted in a request for a new workshop. To illustrate this: The workshop at the FEI resulted in the workshop at the Brandneteltuin, resulted in the workshop with Toekomstboeren and this resulted in a request for next year at Reclaim the seeds Nijmegen.

3.4. Performance: An uncomfortable Christmas

Inspringtheater made a forum theatre scene of about 5-10 minutes about a Christmas dinner with multiple uncomfortable moments. It is made for the Anarchristmas event at the Voortuin, the field squat at the Veerweg in Wageningen. The actors and the joker made the scene together, based on a mix of their own experiences with family gatherings. After the scene of 5 minutes, the joker asked the audience to reflect on what they'd seen and to jump in the scene to try to change the situation. The whole event took about one hour.

Both for the joker and the actors it was the first forum theater performance with an audience in this role. I think it went great. The audience was engaged and many people jumped in on different parts of the scene. People could relate to what happened and it was fitting for the event. These kinds of events are a perfect application of forum theatre.