

The Dutch potato covenant



A successful model for transition of the organic potato sector into a more sustainable system

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Organic potatoes in the Netherlands

- Around 2000 hectares
- Many breeding companies; conventional and organic
- 100% organic seed potatoes used since 2004
- Breeding program for organic potatoes <http://louisbolk.org/bioimpuls/en/>
- Copper not allowed as pesticide, only as a leaf fertilizer



Necessity

- Large-scale outbreak of Phytophthora in 2016
- Discussion about (improper) use of copper in the media
- Not enough resistant varieties available
- Hesitance from the retail to use new varieties



Preconditions

- Agreement about the problem:
 - Organic potato growing is not sustainable enough
 - Image of the organic sector is at stake
- Common interest to solve the problem
- Agreement about the solution
 - More robust varieties!



Versnelde transitie naar robuuste aardappelrassen



Aim of the covenant

- 100% robust organic potato varieties in the Netherlands in 2020 in in seed potatoes, in production and in sales
- After 2020 only robust varieties to be sold to Dutch consumers
- Stop al use of copper in organic potato growing, also as fertilizer



Main activities

- Define robust varieties
- Upscaling the production of robust varieties
- Demonstration fields
- Upscaling the sales of robust varieties
- Annual meeting of all partners
- Communication and promotion



Resistance management

- Factsheet for the farmers
- Monitoring of phytophthora in the farmers fields
- Sampling in demonstration fields
- Practical videos for farmers
- Instruction for the breeders
- Breeding: varieties with more than one resistance gene



Results

- 2020:
 - 25 robust varieties
 - ~ 80% of organic potatoes grown from robust varieties
 - ~ 90% of Dutch organic potatoes sold are from robust varieties

- Challenges:
 - Import
 - Processed potatoes (chips, fries)

- Covenant a great example of cooperation in the supply chain -> Positive media attention



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|----------------------------|------------|
| Agrico | Alouette |
| Meijer Potato | Acoustic |
| Interseed | Alanis |
| Europlant | Allians |
| Familie Vos | Bionica |
| Geersing Potato Specialist | Cammeo |
| Agrico | Carolus |
| Plantera | Cephora |
| Den Hartigh | Connect |
| Europlant | Glorietta |
| Agrico | Levante |
| Europlant | Marabel |
| HZPC | Muse |
| Europlant | Otolia |
| Geersing Potato Specialist | Passion |
| Danespo | Sarpo Mira |
| Familie Vos | Sevilla |
| Geersing Potato Specialist | Tentation |
| Danespo | Tinca |
| HZPC | Triplo |
| Agrico | Twiner |
| Agrico | Twister |
| Plantera | Vitabella |



Thank you for your attention!

Questions?

