

A report presenting best practise  
"Regional organization in a cooperative  
structure"

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## Regional Cooperative of Zuidwest Drenthe

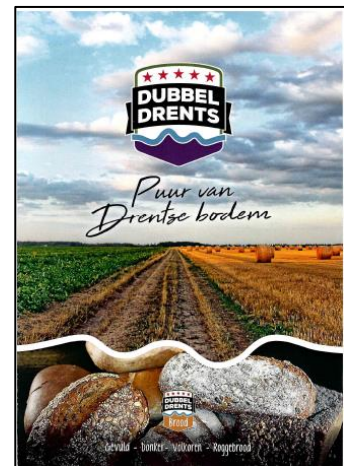
*The Regional Cooperative of Zuidwest Drenthe (GCZWD) is based in the province of Drenthe, in the northern region of the Netherlands. Our aim is to further develop the area we live and work in and make use of new opportunities by bringing local entrepreneurs, education and authorities together. Cooperation leads to a greater understanding of each other and our motivations.*

Currently, we have several projects going built around the idea of a more sustainable food chain.

### Dubbel Drents

A small range of products fully grown and made in our region is sold under the brand name Dubbel Drents. In the future, more products of a sustainable and healthy quality will be added to the brand. At the moment we offer:

- *Bread* - Loafs baked from locally milled flour grown in Drenthe. There are four varieties available: whole grain, dark multigrain, rye&buttermilk and raisin&honey.
- *Asparagus* - The soil in our area is very rich and fertile and makes excellent land for growing asparagus. Instead of transporting them to other parts of the country and then back to our local shops, we keep them in the area, where they are sold directly from farmer to plate. The asparagus are also processed by foods supplier Distrivers and delivered to care facilities in the area → B2B.



### Field bean project

Recently, farmers in the region of Zuidwest Drenthe have started growing field beans. These beans are ground into field bean flour at a local mill and put towards several uses.

Since field bean flour is basically tasteless, naturally gluten free and very rich in protein, it is exceptionally usable in all sorts of products that support the protein transition.

- *Vegetarian* - Field bean flour is an excellent substitute for soy in vegetarian products.
- *Bread, cookies and snacks* - When people get older, they often lose their appetite and start skipping meals, which can lead to a protein deficiency. This causes muscle and bone loss, poor wound healing, infections and weight gain. In cooperation with foods supplier Distrivers, an array of bread, cookies and snacks supplemented with field bean flour has been developed. Care facility organisation Interzorg provides their elderly clients with these products, in order to ensure an adequate protein intake.

Another way of contributing to a protein rich diet is by

- *Hybrid products* - Meat supplier Van der Zee produces hybrid products, such as meat balls, with added field bean flour. Together with Distrivers, these products are provided to UMCG, the University Medical Centre Groningen, where they are on the menu for their clients. The hybrid products also provide a way of reducing meat consumption, since they only consist of 65% real meat.

### **Next step**

- Continuing to draw attention to locally produced foods.

Establishing cooperation between producers and the local food service industry builds a stronger brand and enhances the image of the region. Thereby, it attracts new tourism, which will also help small local businesses.

- Implementing a supply system

For many small businesses getting their products to their customers is an issue; the cost of transport leads to having to sell at high prices. We are therefore working on a distribution and ordering system that will make it easier for businesses to organize their logistics in a more effective way.

- Getting certified

An inspection mark on products guarantees consumers that they are buying a product of a certain quality, which they are willing to pay a little extra for. We are working on getting our Dubbel Drents products approved with a sustainability label by the SPN.

### **Do you want to learn more?**

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