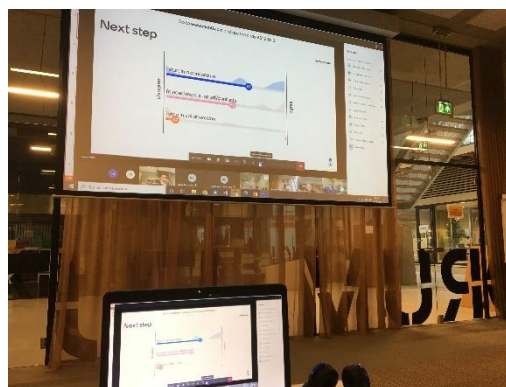


## Report Stakeholders meeting 14 October 2020 Venlo, Province Limburg

PARTICIPANT ORGANISATION Meeting Stakeholders 14 - 10 - 2020	REGIONS 4FOOD Interreg Europe	Names of participants	Role	Online	live
ZLTO		Peter Paree	Program and project leader	X	
ILVO		Jurgen Vangeyte	Scientific Director	X	
BASF Vegetable Seeds		Koos Kleuskens	Industrial Automation Technician	X	
Houbensteyn Groep		Anke Houben	Owner	X	
Province of Limburg		Sharon Lacroix	Project leader Business and Innovation   account Agrofood	X	
Bio Treat Center		Ton Voncken	CEO	X	
Liof		Sjaak Berden	Business Developer Agrofood	X	
Technology Pull Cross-over Innovation Management		Harrij Schmeitz	CEO	X	
Brightlands Campus Greenport Venlo		René Kurvers	Business Developer R&D	X	
Compas Agro		Stan Verwaaij	Intern ship		X
Brightlands Campus Greenport Venlo		Peter Paul Cornelissen	Business Developer		
Fourside		Eric Dortmans	Consultant	X	
Botany		Peter Korsten	CEO		X
AgriSyst		Marc Cox	Managing Partner		X
Valyoumax		Peter van den Bekerom	CEO		X
Connecting Agri & Food		Harm van der Zanden	Advisor and product manager	X	
Connecting Agri & Food		Monique van der Gaag	Project Leader	X	
Hayberries		Wouter Aerts	Managing Partner		X
VAA Data Works		Frank Pisters	Project Leader		X
Yookr B.V.		John van Helden	CEO		X
Yookr B.V.		Marianne Geurts	Policymaker		X
Province of Limburg		Annemiek Canjels	Senior Advisor EU Public Affairs on Food, Agriculture &		X



## The focus of this stakeholders meeting was action point 1 of the Action Plan Province of Limburg: the DIH

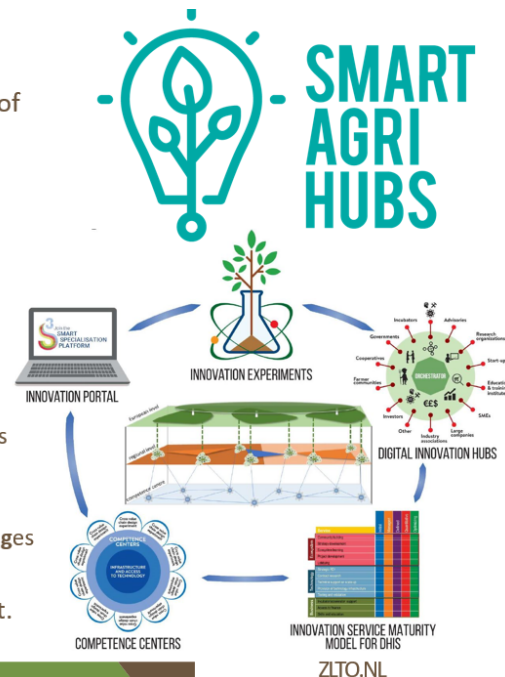
Below you will find the key points that were discussed:

### **Presentation Peter Paree, ZLTO Province Noord-Brabant, The Netherlands**

Peter gave a picture of all relevant parties involved and more information about Digital Innovation Hubs (DIH) and Smart Agri Hubs (SAH). Summarized below in the sheet:

#### CHANCE ON SHORT TERM: SAH OPEN CALL SMART AGRI HUBS

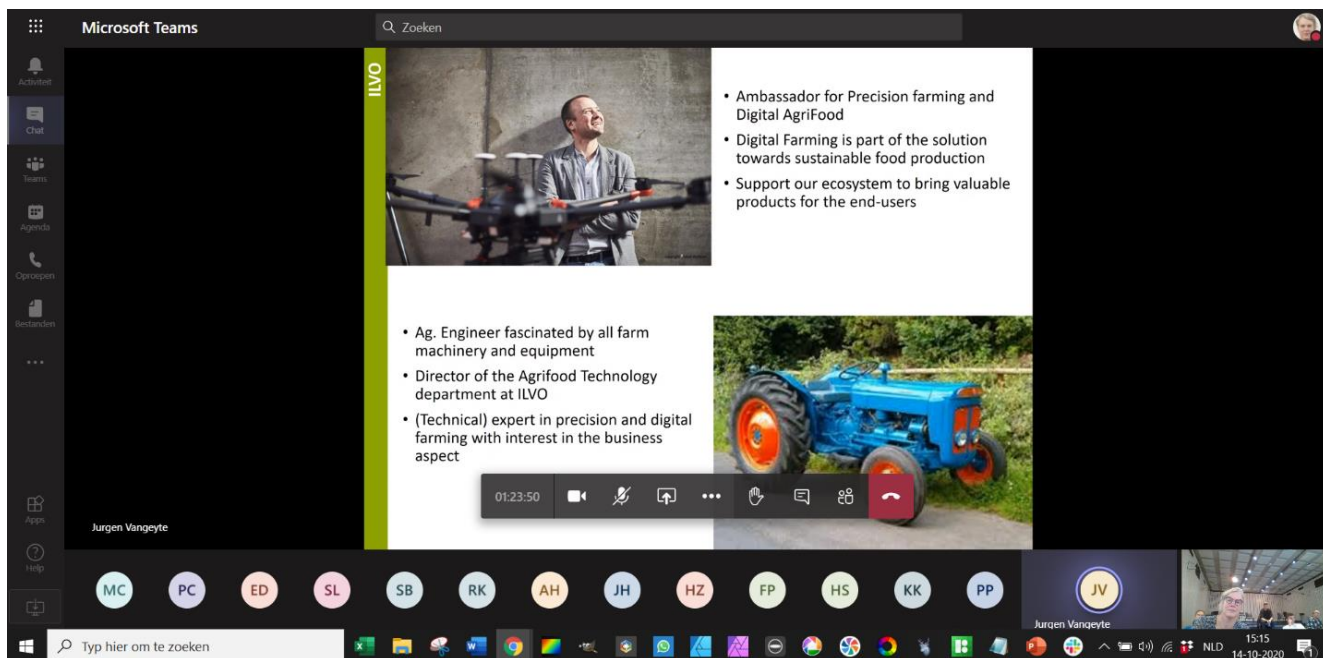
- SmartAgriHubs improves maturity of innovation services of **Digital Innovation Hubs**
    - Boost technology and market readiness levels
    - Replication of digital innovations across Europe
    - Wide adoption by European farmers.
  - By a lean **multi-actor approach** focusing on
    - user acceptability
    - stakeholder engagement and
    - sustainable business models.
  - Synergy between SmartAgriHubs and **RIS3**
    - SmartAgriHubs & European regions: max return on investments
  - **Open Calls with a total budget of ±6 M€**
    - expand the network
    - DIHs support technological developments & emerging challenges
- SmartAgriHubs: connecting the dots  
to ensure global leadership for Europe in the AgTech market.



### **Presentation Jürgen Vangeyte, ILVO, Vlaanderen, Belgium**

Jürgen is Scientific Director of the ILVO institute in Flanders. The Institute for Agricultural, Fisheries and Nutrition Research (ILVO) is an internal independent agency (IVA), established by decision of the Flemish Government of 9 December 2005. As a Scientific Institution, Ilvo belongs to the policy area Agriculture and Fisheries of the Flemish government.

- Ilvo has a DIH and a living lab
- This is basically a One-stop shop where you can go, call, email for help and guidance with digitisation processes and other agro-food related questions
- Example participating parties:
  - Agricultural entrepreneur, farmer with a digitisation demand
  - Company with a good idea for a new sensor and who doesn't know/have a place to develop and test it
  - Company looking for financing or an appropriate business model
  - Investors with the demand for good parties in which they can invest



### ***How did ILVO put this down?***

- Put down by the committee
- Not from a total strategy, but from a simple approach
  - This is mainly due to the culture of ILVO and less to our strategy
- We try to be integrated → one-stop-shop. So as a farmer, you are not immediately referred to another counter. We'll go with him and make sure he ends up okay.
- We are there when farmers need us. And that's what we really do!
  - Farmers call outside normal hours, when it rains, on weekends, so you should also be reachable, or call back
- Anyone can walk into our home at any time. For all farmers, small and large
- We deliberately do not make a choice about the vision for the future, for example "Precision agriculture is the future"
- We have made a choice, to stop using pesticides where possible.
  - By managing weeds as well as possible in mechanical or other ways
- People who work here have an agricultural background or farmers still at home

### ***What does ILVO do?***

- ILVO has a number of apps at its disposal
- Building bridges
- ILVO has its own farm where the reality is approached as well as possible
- We are trying to do more and more 'on-farm experimentation'
  - We go to farmers themselves and give our technology, for example, a first version of an innovation
  - All this to build the farmer's confidence
  - Really listening to the farmer

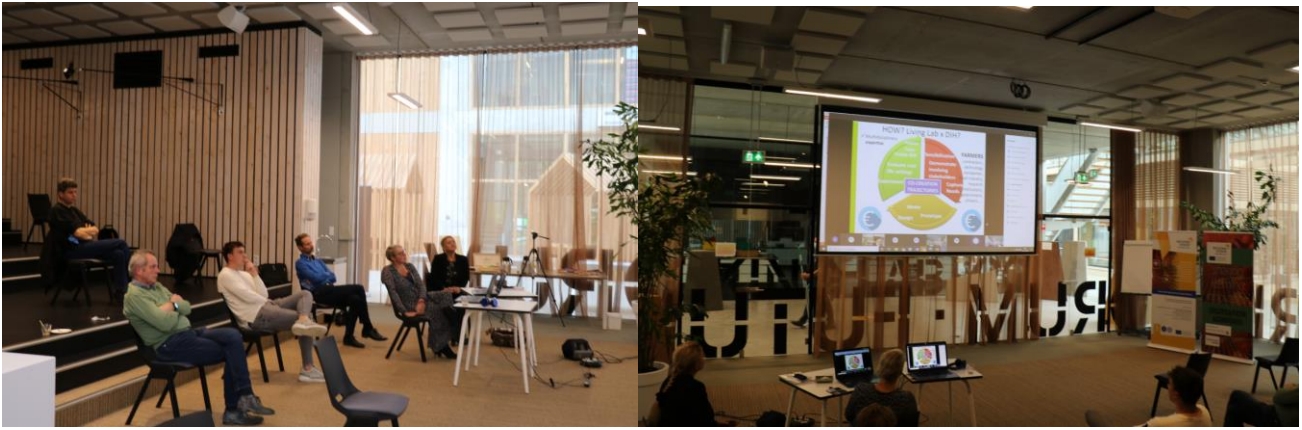
- As:
  1. Machine testing at farmers
  2. We help them set their spreader as well as possible
  3. Mission development (prototypes), also for very small applications (picking specific crops such as marigold)
- Nice example of an application that ILVO has is 'DjustConnect':
  - Is a data sharing platform (with complex technology)
  - Starting point: the farmer has not interested in what we can do with this. He just want to 'see' it.
  - So we started in reverse: we launched a very simple app: IKA- net. This is an auditing system that the farmer can use to provide his 3-year check for milk quality immediately (instead of need: whole stacks of papers)
    1. Green = Auditor may come
    2. Orange = Some more work before the auditor can come
    3. Red = urgent time to get started
  - We install this farmer per farmer. Step by step there are more and more farmers who participate.
    - slow community building
  - Helpdesk
- Fair share: guiding farmers in advisory services
- We work as much as possible with farmers' associations and cooperation's, but the biggest challenge is to work directly with the farmer. In the subsidy world, this is a bit more difficult because funders don't want too much fragmentation.
- The government in Belgium has many financing options for when you solve a farmer problem
- Demonstration projects
- Evening meeting with farmers about eg. which weeds they would like to detect with Artificial Intelligence (AI)
- Jürgen is proud of their community supported agriculture robot: A nice crossroads between two different approaches: The technological of ILVO and the social of Community supported agriculture



#### **DISCUSSION: Further exploring the chances of DIH etc.**

- Good to be alert: Check if the average end-user can handle new developments:
  - Don't assume too quickly that farmers/end-users can easily pick up new developments themselves
  - Often we see that the settings are still on the initial settings that the dealer has set on delivery. So the farmers haven't taken the time to find out what they can do with it.
    1. Example ILVO: Adjusting fertilizer spreader
  - Respect for the end-user
- “It's hard to make it simple”
  - E.g. a sprinkling signal (Bucket in the ground; if too much rain falls, it flows over etc.)
  - If a farmer did that himself: estimate when to start sprinkling
  - A farmer was able to do this even without this tool
    1. Can you look better than the farmer is watching?
  - Take it one step further: add a detailed rain map or technology from Tom-Tom
- Development takes a long time:
  - For example, an application: What growth does a crop need? This hastaken about 8 years..
- Releasing data is also a challenge, in terms of ownership
- There is a focus on scientific research rather than research on behavioral change, like what is stopping farmers from actively changing?

- Chance = Really having discussions with farmers about this doesn't really happen yet. Why are you scared now?
  1. Eye2Connect project (ILVO, WUR, ZLTO, etc). From 2021, advisors in various places in Europe, who normally provide technical information, will be trained to help groups engaged in innovation.
    - One of the basic rules: A pioneer can say goodbye to his own child (innovation), because marketing requires other qualities. Let go so others can pick it up.
- Co-creation: fear of sharing?
  - The farmer gives his experience in exchange for new technology
  - So this feeling doesn't seem to be there.
  - With economic models, this is likely to play a little more role in
  - Experience ILVO is that Dutch people are more open to talking about earning models than people from Flanders
- Who and how does the ILVO finance this? And how is this decorated?
  - Next to European funding, the DIH is self-sustaining.
    1. Advantage for members: they may use Ilvo's buildings and infrastructure.
    2. The companies pay membership fee depending on the size (> 500 Euro).
- How many people are involved?
  - ILVO has about 600 to 700 people at its disposal
  - The first receptions in digital matters are about 50 people
    1. There's a manager DIH. It keeps the hub running. And if he needs help, he'll bring in someone with specific knowledge.
  - There is one Living lab manager
  - Constituencies are all over Flanders
- Competition with fully funded hubs is a challenge speaking about the business model.
  - The starting point is that a DIH/Smart Agri hub is about exchanging knowledge and best practices.
  - But we have to make sure that our customers achieve the best possible successes. They pay for it, after all.
  - Relevant question from Jurgen: if something is offered for free, what is the value?
- Advice Jurgen: How to start a DIH in Limburg?
  - Start with an 'at-your-service-system', practical, small steps
    1. And take the smaller companies by the hand. People don't have time to innovate
    2. Just visit them, with a new small development/idea, like: "Have you ever seen this? "
      - And if time is ready, it can happen very quickly.
      - Trust it'll take time.
- Option: Cooperation with hubs in Germany
  - If we want to know more about this, we can ask Jurgen or Peter (e.g. ATB-Bremen))



### Next steps within the context of R4F:

- Adjusting the content of the AP of the Province Limburg R4F
- Creating a group of enthusiastic people to make a DIH possible in the Province of Limburg.