

Welcome to Voom - Vokomokum's newsletter!

Joint management of local food production: a new strategy for the Lutkemeerpolder

On the western edge of Amsterdam lies the Lutkemeerpolder, the last stretch of fertile agricultural land in Amsterdam that was until recently used for largely organic farming. The Lutkemeerpolder was reclaimed around 1865 and the old sea clay that remained after reclamation forms a very fertile soil. Ever since, the land has been farmed. The panoramic view, the ecology with various endangered species and the location in the densely populated district of Amsterdam-Nieuw West make the Lutkemeerpolder a unique piece of land.



Since 2003, the area has been designated as a business park and work started at the end of 2021 to start the transformation into a distribution center. This process was not without struggle: since 2018, there have been various campaigns to preserve the Lutkemeerpolder, and Ahold, the parent company of Albert Heijn, has now withdrawn as a buyer.

Nevertheless, the preparations for construction work in the polder are currently being continued. In the meantime, a new initiative has been launched to secure the future of the polder as an agro-ecological landscape park: Food Park Amsterdam. The idea is that through crowdfunding, the polder comes into common hands and becomes a place where organic farming is not only practiced once more to feed 20,000 city dwellers, but where there is also room for education and recreation. Of the intended €1,000,000, more than €350,000 had been raised by the beginning of April; the initiators hope to collect the other €3,000,000 through land funds and loans.

When the finances are in place and the municipality is prepared to sell, the land will be placed with Stichting Grond van Bestaan (Foundation of Existence).

Contents

- Voedselpark Amsterdam
- 'Once Upon a Time We Ate Animals' book review
- Summary of ALV
- Watercress couscous salad with fried radish recipe
- Upcoming events

This foundation requires that the 43 hectares of park become and remain available to the local community and that it is no longer possible to trade it. The aim is then to manage the park as a community land trust in which three parties are represented: the users or entrepreneurs, the local community and someone from a broader social position and without direct interest. The foundation looks after the long term, namely the interests of future generations and nature.

So-called Community Land Trusts (CLT) offer a new ownership model that ensures fair, voluntary, and democratically managed land allocation. It is a radically different system of land tenure where land is taken off the market and placed in a commons. CLTs thus return soil from the transactional sphere – where it is a commodity – to the community.

Although only Bij1 (a progressive party on the far left), Partij voor de Dieren (animal party) and ChristenUnie (christian party) have shown themselves prominently in favor of preserving the Lutkemeerpolder during the recent municipal elections, the initiators of Food Park Amsterdam see a willingness to enter into dialogue from the current coalition parties. In the coming months, they will therefore strive towards including a change of the polder zoning plan in the Amsterdam coalition agreement. To achieve this, the city council has been invited for a working visit in April. If you want to help in the meantime, you can do so with [time](#) or [money](#).

Summary of ALV March 25th, 2022

The first in-person ALV (General members' meeting) in over 2 years took place after last month's pick-up day.

22 members were in attendance, from 11 different working groups. Guided by Flip and Jens' friendly moderation, members introduced themselves and everyone told about their involvement in Vokomokum and what their role in the working group entailed, while also summarizing how the working group operated in general, and in which areas they would like help with solutions, decisions, or more volunteers.

The meeting ended with more in-depth discussions on three points:

1. The direction and goals of the Communications group and the newsletter
2. The Purchasing group's wish to engage in discussion to expand the criteria of Vokomokum beyond "organic and vegetarian", and include other areas pertaining to the circular economy, like preventing waste and embracing Amsterdam's climate neutral policy.

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3. If time slots should be kept for pick-up day or whether we should revert back to how it was before COVID restrictions. It was agreed pick-up day time slots would remain.

The minutes of the ALV 2022 will be available on the website.

For working groups looking for more volunteers, email us at info@vokomokum.nl to be included in our next newsletter.

Watercress couscous salad with fried radish



Ingredients (for 2 persons)

1 full cup of couscous
3 small bunches of watercress
8 small or 4 large radishes
1 apple
1 spring onion
1 slice of preserved lemon
3 handfuls of almonds
6 tablespoons (vegetable) yogurt
Half a bunch of dill
2 tablespoons rapeseed oil
1 tablespoon white wine vinegar
1 clove of garlic
Pepper and salt



Chop the almonds and roast them in a pan. Meanwhile, prepare the couscous by first pouring a dash of extra virgin olive oil over it and then hot water. After five minutes, stir with a fork. Wash the radishes and cut them into quarters. When the almonds start to turn golden brown, transfer them to a bowl and heat some (sunflower) oil in the same pan. Fry the radishes with salt and pepper for about five minutes, until they have turned pink. Meanwhile, cut the apple, spring onion and preserved lemon into small pieces. Mix everything, including the watercress, with the couscous.

Then make the sauce by mixing the (vegetable) yoghurt with the rapeseed oil, white wine vinegar, some pepper and salt. Press the garlic clove on top and cut the dill into fine pieces too. Mix again and voilà, you have a wonderful couscous salad with a garlic-dill sauce.

Book review: Roanne van Voorst 'Once Upon a Time We Ate Animals'

Anthropologist Roanne van Voorst, self-proclaimed 'futures-anthropologist', wrote the book 'Once Upon a Time We Ate Animals' in 2019.

In the book, she shows that we live in a time in which we hold the belief that it is good, healthy and normal to eat animals and animal products. At the same time, she shows that it is exactly this: a belief, which we have held for over generations. Through several examples, fictive as well as interview- and research-based, she confronts this dominant belief by painting an alternative future, in which a plant-based diet is the norm, and eating animals is a relic of the past.

She makes readers think in a playful and imaginative way. At the same time, the book also startles, for instance when Van Voorst shows through a variety of data what happens when we continue in our current, 'old' direction, or when she describes how many animals are killed on a daily base to feed us humans (150 million). The book leaves the reader a bit panicky – 'I MUST do something right now!', but it also sparks hope, concrete hope: Van Voorst shows that we have the ability to shape our future, day in day out, by choosing what we serve on our plates. And it only takes a small group to create a ripple effect.

Upcoming Events



Sister True Dedication, a Buddhist nun and teacher who is practicing mindfulness in the tradition of Zen master Thich Nhat Hanh, is attending the Netherlands for a short tour around the newly published book 'Zen and the art of Saving the Planet'. On the 5th of May 2022, she and a small group of monastics will offer a lecture and some concrete practices at the Tolhuistuin in Amsterdam that help you deal with feelings of powerlessness and despair in the face of problems such as climate change, racism, war, and the pandemic. [More info & tickets.](#)

Vokomokum:

- Apr 22, 2022 17:30 - Pick-up day
- May 27, 2022 17:00 - Pick-up day
- Jun 24, 2022 17:00 - Pick-up day

All newsletters are now available on the website!

Visit <http://www.vokomokum.nl/category/zine-en> to read past issues.

If anyone is interested in joining the Communications workgroup and/or contributing to the newsletter, email info@vokomokum.nl