WANTED
FOOD
FOR THE
FUTURE

CONTENTS

P4
Project

P6
Collaboration

P8
Wanted: Foor for the future at a glance

P10
Products
* Criteria
* Quinoa
* Pulses
* Seaweed

P18
Young people

P20
Seven lessons learned

P24
To sum up...

Wanted: food for the future

Tackling the issues that our complex society faces is not something you do on your own. Awareness is growing that companies, knowledge institutions, public authorities and NGOs will need to work together, but cooperation is by no means easy because different sectors each have their own rationale and way of working. Consequently, there are few examples of successful collaborations that could be mentioned, certainly not on a large scale.

This brochure describes the learning process involved in the unique, three-year project called Wanted: Food for the Future (2015-2018). Representatives from the Province of Flemish Brabant, Rikolto, the Colruyt Group, KU Leuven and University College Leuven-Limburg (UCLL) put their heads together to explore the future of food supply from a North-South perspective. The goal was to work with young people in the global North and the global South in a quest to find food for the future, and to stock Flemish supermarket shelves with at least one new product that symbolises what the initiative is all about.

Why did the partners embark on this project? What lessons were learned while they were working together? What insights did the participants gain? This brochure provides answers to these questions from the point of view of the partners and the researchers that took part in the project. The information is intended to inspire companies, public authorities, knowledge institutions, NGOs and other organisations to face the complex challenges of our society together.

Project Introducing the partners

ORGANISATION	WHY THIS PROJECT FOR YOUR ORGANISATION?	YOUR ROLE IN THE PROJECT?	WHAT DO YOU TAKE AWAY FROM THE PROJECT?
VLAAMS-BRABANT	**The Province of Flemish Brabant** has access to a dense network of important national and international contacts in the field of food. In an attempt to go beyond traditional ways of thinking about development cooperation, the Province brought together all these partners in seeking ways to feed the growing world population in a sustainable way.	› Initiator. › Project management funder. › Broad network of regional stakeholders.	Outside our comfort zone, we took the helm, set up a partnership and initiated the project. We're very happy about that.
rikolto VREDESEILANDEN	Over the past few years, the NGO **Rikolto** has worked with the Colruyt Group on developing projects in several supply chains, including rice, bananas, coffee, cacao and passion fruit. This particular project matched with existing partnership, but here the focus was on products that symbolise our 'food for the future'. What's more, the project was an excellent opportunity to experiment with new forms of collaboration between the different partners.	› Project coordinator. › Expertise in sustainable agriculture and food chains. › Offices, connections and expertise in food and agriculture across the globe.	We were given scope within this project to experiment and be flexible, which is unique but also necessary.
KU LEUVEN	This project was a unique opportunity for the University to document the development of a food chain from scratch, study the way in which we worked together and also get actively involved ourselves and make a difference.	› Expertise in European food system, agricultural and food policy, and the transition to a more sustainable food system. › Documentation of the co-creation process. › Development of think-tank workshops about the future.	Within this project we were able to conduct action research. For us, this project showcases an innovative collaborative partnership in which we, as researchers, play an active part in society.
COLRUYT GROUP	As a retailer, the **Colruyt Group** buys products from all over the world, including regions undergoing economic development. By setting up sustainable production chains, the Group makes its portfolio more sustainable. Being involved in a creative collaborative venture with various partners is a very important part of this. In addition, the Colruyt Group, through the Collibri Foundation, invests in small-scale training programmes for young people in these regions to enable them to build a sustainable future.	› Conducting feasibility study and setting up sustainable product chains. › Together with young people, actively working on identifying new sustainable products. › Implementing the findings of the project in practice and in the product chain.	This project was a great opportunity to sit down with partners that all had different perspectives and work in an innovative way, to engage in activities that we would not otherwise consider. We were also able to make a useful contribution to the Collibri Foundation's project for young people in Peru.
UC Leuven Limburg MOVING MINDS	As a university college, we seek ways of helping our students contribute to real societal challenges. With its message about sustainable, healthy food, this project delivers in this respect and therefore dovetails perfectly with our expertise and ambitions.	› Developing and elaborating ideas on how to market sustainable, healthy food to young people, based on opinions of nutrition & diet experts and marketing specialists. › Experimenting with innovative forms of education in which students take a multidisciplinary approach to this sustainability issue.	We were able to pool the expertise and enthusiasm of lecturers and students from various courses to achieve tangible results. Our close cooperation with the other partners not only increased the societal impact but also gave the students more learning opportunities.

Collaboration

The initiative came from the North-South unit of the Province of Flemish Brabant in September 2015. The project's aim was to stock the shelves of a supermarket chain with at least one new product as a symbol of the food for the future: nutritious and sustainably produced, benefiting producers and consumers in both the global North and the global South, and with a product chain in which all stakeholders work together constructively. From the start, the idea was also to get young people in the North and South actively involved.

Efforts the first year concentrated on setting out the criteria that products and chains would have to meet. Three product groups were identified, all high-protein meat substitutes: quinoa from Peru, pulses from Africa and seaweed from Indonesia. KU Leuven also created a teaching pack for primary and secondary school pupils, based on an educational module on 'scenario thinking' it had previously developed as part of the EU project Transmango. Meanwhile, the Colruyt Group started setting up a new supply chain for Peruvian quinoa.

The first year ended with an important decision: the word 'Wanted' was added to the project title 'Food for the Future'. This emphasises that the search is still on, that many solutions have not yet been found, and that engaging in dialogue with all those involved is therefore essential.

During the second project year, young people became increasingly involved. For example, members of the youth movement set to work to develop new products. University college UCLL became the fifth partner and brought students from different courses on board (marketing, nutrition & dietary science, event management). This resulted in initiatives such as a mobile Food Lab and new seaweed-based recipes.

Tricolour quinoa from Ayacucho in Peru reached the supermarket shelves of the Colruyt Group by the third and final year of the project. And young entrepreneurs in the North and the South took part in brainstorming sessions about how they could further develop the food for the future.

WANTED: FOOD FOR THE FUTURE AT A GLANCE

01.09.2015
First steering group

12.09.2016
Food for the Future becomes Wanted: Food for the Future

24.10.2016
First test of 'scenario thinking' module

22.11.2016
Public launch of project

29.04.2017
Co-creation of product with young people at Colruyt Group Academy

01.06.2017
Launch of mobile Food Lab

29.06.2017
UCLL becomes official partner

13.11.2017
Future thinking @School project starts

15.11.2017
Trip to Tanzania for entrepreneurs' workshops

06.12.2017
Wanted: Food for the Future wins Sustainable Partnership Award

12.12.2017
UCLL students propose seaweed tapenade

21.03.2018
Trip to Peru for entrepreneurs' workshops

07.04.2018
Quinoa study trip to Peru

02.05.2018
Trip to Indonesia for entrepreneurs' workshops

16.05.2018
Quinoa experts' workshop

04.06.2018
Launch of quinoa product

15-18.08.2018
Food Lab at Pukkelpop music festival

20.09.2018
Final conference

Products

* CRITERIA

Wanted: Food for the Future explores the role that the South can play in global food supply. Looking at the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, we can see that the challenges the world is facingare immense. Clear criteria were therefore needed to be able to select the right products.

Added value for Belgian consumers:

caters to demand (allergies, health, trends, protein transition, etc.).

The product has added social, economic and/or environmental value for local producers

Economically viable:

a sound economic model and competitive prices for producers, retailers and consumers.

Relevant to the development of the local market in the South:

the products are consumed locally and are an important part of the local diet or have great potential on the local market.

Complements products from the North:

the choice to produce the product in the South is environmentally, economically and/or socially responsible.

The project partners identified the following CRITERIA

Tropical:

the product comes from the South.

Environmentally sustainable and climate-proof:

production with low CO_2 emissions, crop rotation, respect for and commitment to enhancing biodiversity, efforts to counter/minimise negative impact of climate change (agro-ecology), transportation by boat, future-oriented.

Visibility:

the product chain includes the requisite challenges, questions certain issues, requires innovative solutions and new partnerships. The chain helps tell the fullest possible story of the food of the future.

Nutritious and healthy:

high-protein products with high nutritional value (vitamins, minerals, etc.).

Environmental, economic and/or social innovation:

not only the end product is innovative, but the product chain too. This innovation can occur at different stages of the chain (production, post-harvest, transportation, energy consumption, processing, waste management, etc.).

* QUINOA

Quinoa is a crop that grows at temperatures between -4 and 35°C. It can survive at altitudes up to 4000 metres and needs little water. Its ability to withstand different climatic conditions means that it is resistant to climate change.

Production cost of quinoa is low, making it a suitable crop for organic family-based agriculture (most farmers in the Andean region). Rising demand has boosted the income of these poor small-scale farmers; as a result, quinoa makes an important contribution to local food security.

Quinoa has a high nutritional value: high protein content, amino acids, dietary fibre and minerals. Due to its high protein content, quinoa can be an important part of a low-meat diet, which is a key benefit in both the North and the South.

* PULSES

Many pulses are drought-resistant, which makes them very well-suited for dry areas where poorer population groups have to cope with food insecurity. The low production costs give farmers a healthy profit margin and keep the price of pulses affordable. As a result, they are an important staple food for poorer consumers in developing countries. What's more, dried pulses retain their nutritional value and therefore have a long shelf life. This means there is considerable flexibility between harvest and consumption, which can contribute to food security in poor regions.

Cultivation is also environmentally and climate friendly. Pulses are part of the legume family (any plants that grow in pods). Bacteria in the roots fix atmospheric nitrogen into the soil so that other plants can absorb it. This makes pulses very suitable for crop rotation systems because they nourish the soil, reducing the need for artificial fertilisers.

Pulses have excellent nutritional value. They are high in protein, dietary fibre, vitamins, minerals and amino acids, but low in saturated fat and trans fat. Their high protein content makes them a good, affordable substitute for meat. According to recent research, daily consumption of pulses can help prevent typical Western lifestyle diseases, such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease and bowel cancer.

* SEAWEED

Seaweed is enormously versatile. It can be used for everything from food to fertilisers and fuel, as a raw material for synthetics, cosmetics and textiles, and even as a substitute for salt and gelatine. As a foodstuff, seaweed is high in protein, vitamins, minerals, trace elements, fibre and iron. It can contain up to 25 times more iron than meat.

The seaweed product chain is currently not very transparent, with many questions still unanswered. What are the advantages of globally versus locally grown seaweed? What is the environmental impact and the nutritional value? What applications are still possible in terms of nutrition and protein extraction? All these are questions that must be addressed.

Young people: consumers of the future

The involvement of consumers – basically each and every one of us – was central to the Wanted: Food for the Future project. As consumers of the future, young people were the main target group. The idea was not only to make them more aware of the issues, but also to use them as an important source of information and inspiration. In fact, it was their taste preferences, perception, purchasing behaviour, etc. that helped steer the project in the right direction.

The focus was on two groups of young people:

* SCHOOLCHILDREN (10 TO 18 YEARS OLD):

› Scenario thinking

An original new educational module on 'scenario-thinking' allows teachers to work on topics such as 'What will we be eating in the future?'. This module perfectly complemented the existing teaching material on sustainable food and was tested in a few schools before being fine-tuned by the non-profit organisation GoodPlanet Belgium. It was then rolled out in other schools as part of the GoodFood@School project.

› Product innovation

The Colruyt Group organised a workshop for young people in April 2017 on the topic of product innovation. What products would they like to see in the shops in 2018? In what form should pulses, seaweed and quinoa appear on the shelves? Of the suggestions put forward by the young people, a panel chose two products for further development.

* YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS (18+)

› Mobile Food Lab

How do you convey the story of the search for the food for the future to the general public in an appealing, easily accessible way? What insights can be used to steer product development in the right direction? How do you get sustainable products onto consumers' plates? These were the questions tackled by students at University College Leuven-Limburg (UCLL). They developed a mobile Food Lab, a food trailer that could be seen in the street and at festivals and other events, where passers-by could get a taste of and talk about the food for the future.

› North-South cooperation

Beyond Belgian borders, young people (18+) in Tanzania, Peru and Indonesia were also involved. Within various co-creation programmes, they set about working out their dream scenarios and identifying one specific product or campaign in collaboration with stakeholders in the community.

› Product innovation

Nutrition and dietary science students joined forces with a small business in Flemish Brabant to develop a new seaweed-based product: seaweed tapenade. The end result was presented to the public in the mobile Food Lab at public events and festivals.

› Social media

Consumers of the future could keep up with the project on Facebook. The partners involved posted updates on the various programmes and what was happening in different parts of the world.

Seven lessons learned

Wanted: Food for the Future yielded seven key lessons that can provide inspiration or guidance for other projects.

1

DIVERSITY

Bear in mind the autonomy, values and preferred pace of the various partners when determining your common goal, the limits of the partnership, the results and the activities you organise.

The partners in a collaborative venture are of equal standing, but may differ greatly from one another. Each of them plays to their own strengths in working towards a shared dream. But each partner has their own vision, values and preferred pace. They have to support and respect one another. This applies from the moment they sit down together to determine their common goal.

Sometimes one of the parties in a flexible partnership is stepping outside its traditional role. So take into account the mandate that each partner has received from home base, so that they can continue to be answerable for their actions within their own organisation.

2

RELATIONSHIPS

In a collaborative partnership, you first build relationships between people, which can then develop into a relationship between the organisations they represent. Constant and transparent communication is needed to develop mutual understanding and trust.

Collaboration between several partners primarily involves people getting together around the table. People who forge personal ties and have been given a mandate to make decisions by their own organisation. In time this may develop into a relationship between the different organisations. Trust and mutual respect, with regular face-to-face contact, are therefore crucial. Only then can you create an environment in which the partners communicate transparently and reach clear agreements.

It is important to realise that a consensus is not always possible. Sometimes the differences between the partners are simply too great. Accept that, but keep talking and recognise one another's legitimacy, using your shared dream of the future as a catalyst.

3

FLEXIBILITY (WITH LIMITS)

There is constant tension between the need for flexibility and the need to set limits to make the project concrete and feasible.

To work on a 'wicked problem' – one with no well-defined solutions – you must build in a certain amount of flexibility in order to be able to grasp unexpected opportunities. A partnership can therefore serve as a safe training ground to test a new, less linear way of working. The lessons learned from this can be a source of inspiration for the partner organisations.

However, being overly flexible entails the risk of opening up the project too much. Clear limits therefore need to be set so that the project becomes concrete and feasible.

4

DYNAMICS

The role, dynamics and needs of the partners change at every phase of the project. To accommodate this, reciprocal agreements, a good separation of roles and constant feedback are required.

At the start of a collaborative venture, it is relatively easy to reach agreement, as the whole process is still at an early stage and no-one is thinking about each participating organisation's own limits.

But the more concrete a project becomes, the more clearly the differences between the partners emerge. Each has their own values, limits, rationale, system and preferred pace. To deal with this, it is important to monitor, evaluate and – where necessary – gradually adapt the collaborative process.

5

ROLES

Partners are all equal but each fulfil their own role. To ensure that everything goes smoothly, the role of each partner must be discussed beforehand, and if necessary reviewed during the project.

Clear agreements are needed about who will do what and how each partner will be involved in the decision-making process. However, since this project is so flexible and the dynamics are constantly changing, it is difficult to explicitly clarify each role in advance. The partners must therefore have the opportunity to discuss agreements again and there should be regular feedback sessions to determine whether the communication process and role distribution are still up to date.

6

LEGITIMACY

A small group makes interaction easier, but automatically excludes other parties. Ensure that there is a legitimate procedure in place for determining who sits around the table and how each partner is chosen.

The partners of Wanted: Food for the Future were each hand-picked. This made interaction easy but it did exclude other potential partners.

External communication can enhance the visibility, credibility and legitimacy of the project, but is not equally important to all of the partners. It also makes the partners more vulnerable. So strike the right balance between the different needs of the partners and making information public.

7

ORGANISATION

By arranging for someone to coordinate organisational matters for the duration of the project, with all the necessary resources and responsibility for the day-to-day management of the partnership, you create equality between the partners.

Choose an initiator and instruct them to organise and monitor daily business. This ensures that the project will remain dynamic. This coordinator should preferably be neutral and serves as a mediator.

To sum up...

Five partners came together in their quest to find the food for the future: Rikolto, Colruyt Group, KU Leuven, the Province of Flemish Brabant and later also UCLL. Working with people in both the North and the South, they joined forces to talk about the issue but also to take action.

But there was no easy-to-use roadmap available, as there was too much uncertainty about the best direction for the project and what could and could not be done. It was important to share and build knowledge together. Not only because this is a more effective way to achieve results, but also in order to reach a wider audience – and to be able to share that knowledge with other companies, knowledge institutions, NGOs and public authorities at a later date. Openness and flexibility were also essential if we were to make progress. However, this openness often fell foul of the cultural differences and different approaches of the participating organisations.

Striking a balance

So no rigid roadmap, but not complete flexibility either. The right approach was striking the right balance between order and chaos, between structure and freedom, and between execution and creativity, armed with a good compass to help us navigate our way through the complexity. Our compass was built on trust, shared values and a willingness to learn, incorporating enough flexibility to deal with uncertainties.

Has this brochure piqued your interest?
Then download the full report from the website www.voedselvoordetoekomst.be/en.

CREDITS
Published by: Wanted: Food for the Future. September 2018
Text: Tjitske Anna Zwart, Erik Mathijs | Layout: Communications Department, Province of Flemish Brabant

MORE INFO

Wanted: Food for the Future
info@voedselvoordetoekomst.be

› Rikolto: caroline.huyghe@rikolto.org

› Flemish Brabant: noord-zuid@vlaamsbrabant.be

› Colruyt Group: mieke.vercaeren@colruytgroup.com

› KU Leuven: erik.mathijs@kuleuven.be

› UCLL: sebastiaan.boussauw@ucll.be

VLAAMS-BRABANT

rikolto VECO

KU LEUVEN

COLRUYT GROUP

UC Leuven Limburg MOVING MINDS