

# “FROM PRODUCTIVE FARM TO RURAL AMENITY”



\*Regional level between municipalities and provinces. In 1970, designed by the Regional Research Coordination Committee, to which the format is given its name. The Netherlands has 40 COROP areas.

## Shift in farm economics provides opportunity for diversification

Agriculture comprises the greatest part of land use in the Netherlands by far, taking in nearly 70% of the total land area. Buildings, semi-built areas, and areas for transport occupy only 10%. Over the past 50 years, a steady decline in the number of farms has occurred in the Netherlands, as the urban areas continue to expand and the amount of rural area declines. According to Statistics Netherlands (CBS), nearly five businesses are discontinued every day as the agricultural sector moves towards large-scale farm operations. **Despite the declining number of businesses, total output has remained at the same level, due to the strength of large-scale farms, which use less land for the same amount of production than their hobby farm counterparts.**

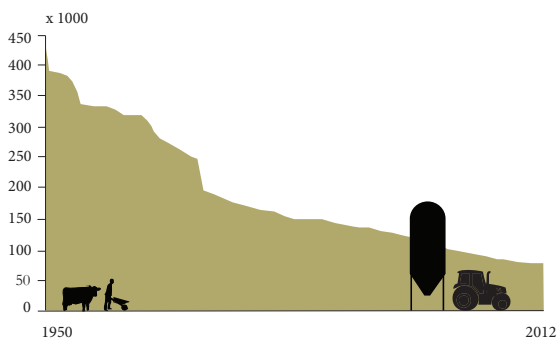
In recent years, farmers have been forced to turn

to multi-functional agricultural operations in order to receive additional income. This diversification, known as “social farming”, has resulted in a myriad of services, from the farmer becoming a landscape manager or nature conservationist, to their farm becoming a destination for personal reflection, a weekend vacation, or an educational trip for children. According to a recent report by the Netherlands Social and Cultural Planning Office, the countryside offers a healthy living environment, low levels of concern for crime, less work-related stress than in urban areas, and a strong social participation within the area. Still, their poor connection to urban areas and limited services continue to keep people at bay, and employment opportunities continue to decrease as higher-educated people move to the city.

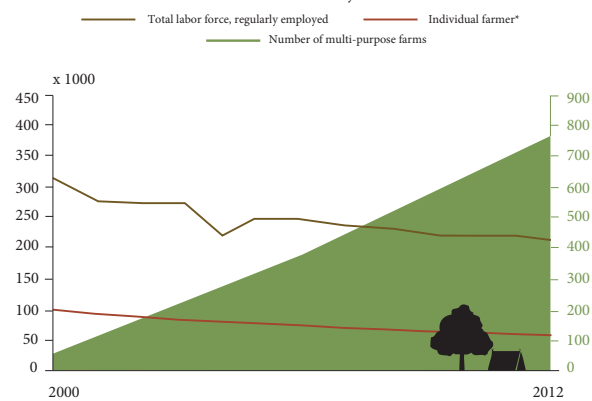
Although the number of multi-functional farms has increased rapidly over the last decade, **the greatest challenge will come from connecting the rural and**

### FARM FACTS

Number of farms, Netherlands total



Decrease in number of farm-related jobs, Netherlands total



\*Refers to a natural person, sole proprietorship or partnership (general partnership or limited)

### FARM DIVERSIFICATION

**urban landscapes, as well as developing a new agriculture system that compliments and expands upon the existing value in these areas.**

The opportunity to bridge the gap between the rural and urban spaces is growing. **Social farming is stimulated by societal demands to renew the countryside and keep cities healthy.** The combination of the production of regional goods, green care services, recreation facilities and education will lead to a sustainable future for agriculture and create high quality urban areas as a result.

#### SOURCES

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