

# Case care farm “Erve Knippert”

## The farm

“Erve Knippert” is situated in the municipality of Haaksbergen, in Twente (Overijssel). Wim and Marga Waanders live on “Erve Knippert”, together with their four children. It is a private family business. The farm used to belong to the grandparents of Wim and he took over the farm of his uncle and aunt. Marga worked for 26 years in a care institution for the elderly. During her work she heard several times that the elderly feel that what they do is not very useful. One of the main motivations of starting the care farm was this demand of the elderly to be engaged in some useful work.



Young cattle is being bred for the sale and there are fattening pigs. Also, rare poultry and pigeons are being bred and horses are kept. There are both a kitchen garden and an ornamental garden, in which various vegetables and flowers are growing. The ‘fruit wall’ contains red currant, black currant, grapes, blackberry and blue berry. In the orchard apples, pears, plumbs, walnuts, medlar and rare local trees are growing.

The grass land at the farm is managed organic. In addition, grass land birds are protected and nesting boxes for bats have been placed. These are also placed at individuals and foundations. The elderly at ‘Erve Knippert’ can participate in the work; no hindrance in doing the nature- and landscape management is being experienced.

## Care activities

### Start of the care

The motivation to start offering care was to give the elderly the opportunity to be as independent as possible, in order to care for their needs. It is especially important to make sure that the seniors do as much as possible independently, and are only being helped when necessary. For certain volunteers this is a problem, because they want to help them, for example with pouring coffee.



The farm has been set up in accordance with the wishes of the seniors as much as possible. In one of the stables, a separate living room with kitchen has been made. The division between the living room and the animals is a wall with windows in it, so that one can look at the animals from the living room. Upstairs of the living room there are two rest areas where the elderly can rest whenever they want. The stables and the sheds of the animals have been adjusted to the use of wheelchairs. If the seniors would like to see a specific animal or plant at the farm, an effort is made to take care of this. The

carrier pigeons are an example, but this is also possible with regards to the production of vegetables. Implementing the requests of the elderly at the farm is the starting point of 'Erve Knippert'.

#### Number, diversity and demands of elderly clients

Four days a week daily activities are being offered to a number of twelve to fourteen elderly. In total there is a group of fifty seniors who come to the farm for a certain number of days a week. Six of those elderly live in a care institution. Those people are provided care as a subcontractor of a care institution. In addition, 31 people live alone, and a few places are being paid for through PGBs (Personal Budgets). Most of the elderly live independently and they are being paid for through the care office, through the own AWBZ recognition of 'Erve Knippert'. It is striking that approximately 65% of the group is male, and that on Wednesdays no women come to the farm at all.

At 'Erve Knippert' the elderly can find a useful way to spend their time. It doesn't matter if the seniors have a light mental or physical disability. Also older people who have social limitations and elderly who want to do useful tasks are welcome. The seniors are seen as people who need guidance, thus they are not employed by the care farm. In order to give the elderly the chance to live alone for a longer time into the future, they receive support.



The elderly experience the ways in which they spend their days at the care farm as pleasant. They receive appreciation and there is a variety of activities at the farm, which are not artificial. Because of this, the seniors feel responsible to do the work. However, for some of the elderly it is already very valuable to just look and experience the life on the farm.

The elderly can get involved in all the activities of the agricultural production and the care for the animals. In addition, they can work in the workshop which is situated on the farm property and help with domestic chores like ironing, cooking and baking. At 'Erve Knippert' the demand of the elderly is central. For example carrier pigeons are back at the farm because the elderly requested it. This is not only true with regards to the animals and plants on the farm, but also with regards to, for example, the warm lunch. Thus, to a certain extent active participation is being requested.



#### Financial constructions for the care activities

At 'Erve Knippert' there have been various ways of payment for the care given. At the start of the farm, care was mainly being offered by taking over care of various care institutions in the area. These kinds of contracts were mainly dependent on the (care) managers in the respective care institutions. This means that one manager may stimulate care on farms, whereas another manager prefers to offer care within the institution.

In order not to be dependent on the buying behaviour of managers and because of the future introduction of WMO (Law on Social Support) 'Erve Knippert' chose to request its own AWBZ-recognition. This AWBZ-recognition has been received, which means that the care office buys care at 'Erve Knippert' and pays for it directly. Here lies one of the main bottlenecks of the farm. Since the care farm is a small organisation, compared to a regular care institution, the care farm can not meet all the demands of AWBZ.

The care farm doesn't yet employ half an employee; therefore it doesn't have a board, nor a supervisory body or an employees council. As a result, the care farm is being cut back on its income as a fine for not meeting all the requirements.





Receiving and keeping the AWBZ-recognition needs a lot of administration. Keeping up with the administration is not being compensated for, which means that these hours are not paid for by the care office. Other costs, like housing, maintenance and food have not been calculated separately. In practice this means that the elderly who come through the care office cost more time due to administration than the other seniors, and so they give the lowest compensation. At this moment this is not yet a problem for the farm, but it may be in the future.

### Finances

In order to adjust the farm for the elderly many investments have been made. These investments have been partly possible through funds of the local community, the church, the ministry of LNV (Agriculture, Nature and Fisheries) the province, the municipality and the business community. In total, all investments for the care come down to approximately € 275.000, -. These investments could not have been made on the basis of the daily compensations for the care of the seniors.

'Erve Knippert' receives for most elderly € 46,- a day. For a few people the farm receives € 75,-. The structure of these compensations varies strongly between the ways in which is being paid. For all the seniors a warm meal and supervision is paid for by the care farm. Also the costs of transportation to and from the farm vary per way of paying. Because of all the additional administration costs, the AWBZ payments are least beneficial for the care farm.

In total, the distribution of all activities at the farm comes down to 60% for agriculture and 40% for care. This difference cannot be detected in the distribution of the family income, because only 10% comes from agriculture, 70% from care, 10% from outside of the farm, 5% from nature management and 5% from other ways. The contribution which care makes to the income has risen a great deal over the last five years, whereas the contribution of agriculture has fallen. Income is now more concentrated around care.



### Labour: division of tasks

At 'Erve Knippert' the care and agriculture tasks have been divided between Wim and Marga. Wim only does agricultural work, with which the elderly can help him. He takes the wishes of the elderly into account, and adjusts his working speed. For instance, if it is raining, the elderly can choose to work inside in the stables. Most agricultural activities are being done together with the participants. Sometimes activities are being done for which nobody is interested that day. There are also activities which can't be

done in cooperation with the participants, for example work with heavy machinery or with slurry pits. Such jobs are often being done before or after the group of elderly has been around.

Marga mainly does care activities. She also supervises seniors who are doing domestic chores or who are working in the vegetable or ornamental garden. In addition, she takes care of the hot meal, administration of the care and the supervision of volunteers and employees. One employee is hired for six hours a week, to do the administrative tasks, which are mainly related to AWBZ. One employee works six and a half hours a week to supervise the care and domestic activities. In addition, several volunteers work at the farm. The aim is to have one volunteer per daily period, for supervision.



## Networks

Over the years, many different study groups and organisations have been active in Twente. There was a study group for care farmers, for example, which has become a group within LTO (Agricultural and Horticultural Organisation). Stimuland, a network organisation which gives farmers information about starting a care farm, is not very active in the region of Twente. The Landelijk steunpunt (National support centre) does do a lot of good work. What is difficult about the study group, for Wim and Marga, is that more and more starting care farmers become involved. They have significantly different problems, which they encounter in the starting phase. Marga doesn't mind sharing information with them, since she is a care farmer with several years of experience, but she would also like to learn and develop new things. This system should change in the future, in order to make sure that the care farmers in the area are not stagnating in their development, and continue to participate in the study groups with interest. Marga is also actively giving lectures, she is involved in an Alzheimer project, speaks to care institutions and lobbies for policy support in order to bring about agriculture and care.



## Bottle necks

One very important bottle neck for the care farm is the fact that the care office doesn't recognise the Kwaliteitssysteem Zorgboerderijen (Quality System Care Farms). In the Netherlands, a quality system for care farms has been established by the National support point. This quality system is recognised nationally, but the care office of which 'Erve Knippert' is part doesn't recognise it.



'Erve Knippert' has its own AWBZ-recognition, but it is a very small institution compared to almost every other care institution. Thus, there is no board, no employees council and no supervisory board. Therefore the farm is being cut back in the payments. Marga and Wim are trying to solve these problems as good as possible by speaking to the care office. During these meetings it seems that the office wants to take small institutions into account. But with the

definite contracting-out of care, the understanding for small institutions doesn't return. Care farms have to meet the demands mentioned before: having a board, an employees council and an advisory board. This is frustrating for Wim and Marga.

Besides the compensation for care, the transport of the elderly is a constant problem as well. The taxis which are supposed to bring and pick up the seniors don't show up or arrive at the wrong time. This problem happens at least once a day to one of the seniors. In order to solve this problem, Marga and Wim have had several conversations with the taxi company. The problem is consistent, however, so Marga and Wim try to help the elderly as much if possible in such cases.



## Future

The selling point of 'Erve Knippert' is the ability to adjust; the fact that Marga and Wim work with the wishes of the elderly in mind. The young cattle are central at the farm, but around these animals, crops, tools and more can be adjusted to the elderly. Wim and Marga expect that the farm would not exist in five years if it wasn't for the care branch.

The developments in the Dutch care system will also influence the future. Wim and Marga try to prepare themselves as much as possible by having the elderly come from different municipalities and in that way spreading the risks for when the WMO is being implemented. The aim is to keep the agricultural branch going as well.