



The EFCF is a member of the
European Environmental Bureau

European Federation of City Farms

Working together for a Sustainable Future

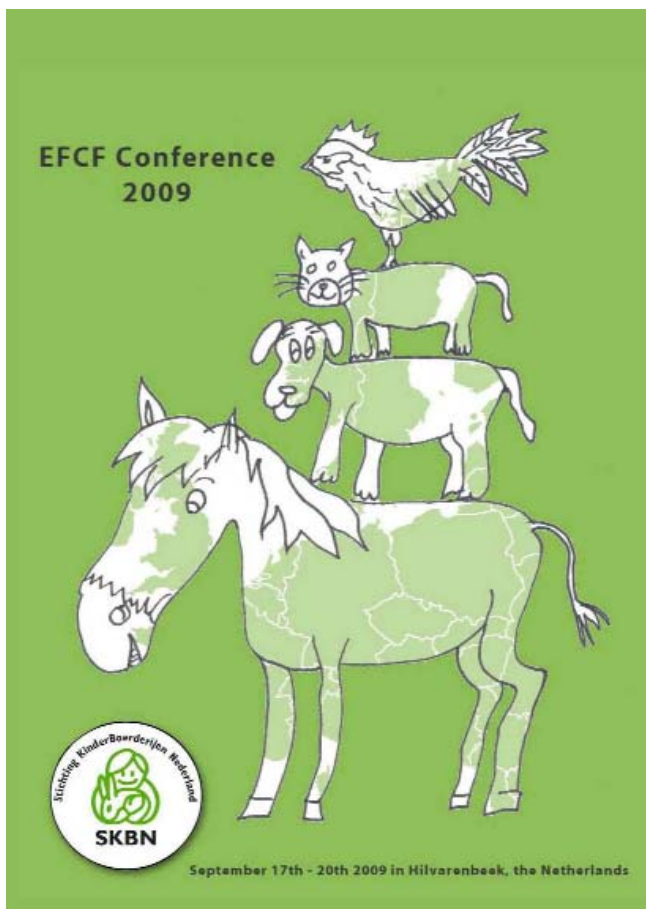


Newsletter
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EFCF Conference 2009



The annual EFCF conference was held in Hilvarenbeek, the Netherlands from 17 – 20 September 2009. The 60 participants came from 8 European countries. The conference was organized with a well mixed schedule of lectures, workshops, visits, enough time to meet and to exchange information. Very special was the housing of the participants: in African jungles!



Jungalow

The conference was held in Safari Park Beekse Bergen in Hilvarenbeek, the largest wildlife park of the Benelux. The theme was 'The place of animals in our

modern society'. The conference focussed on the place of animals in zoos and city farms and on the role that city farms and zoos play in conservation, breeding, education and animal welfare.

Paul van der Valk, director of the SKBN spoke about the quality process of Dutch city farms, to show the public that a farm has met required standards. City farms have already more than demonstrated their social relevance. Society uses the city farm in many ways and the city farm wishes to accommodate these different roles through education, recreation, social integration and care. Everyone who visits city farms expects to find a safe, clean, educational, recreational, animal-friendly, natural and professional environment. They expect a certain standard and quality.

Dr. E. Dinand Ekkel of the Agricultural University Dronen talked about 'City farms – Past, Present and Future'. He also referred to the 5 Freedoms according to the Brambell Report in 1965. A recent survey of 17 city farms across Europe revealed that in general, the health and welfare of animals on city farms is acceptable to good. Problems were social housing (rabbits in particular), feeding from visitors and interactions with animals (no possibility for the animals to escape). The hand-out of his PowerPoint and his talk can be found on www.cityfarms.org under Events & Conferences.

Hans Orbons of the Beekse Bergen was unable to come and therefore **Gaby Hendriks**, member of the educational staff of the Beekse Bergen explained the work of the park in the field of education and conservation.

Safari Park Beekse Bergen

Halfway last century a big sand pit between Tilburg and Hilvarenbeek had filled with water and had gradually become a popular recreation area. Both cities started to develop plans to turn the area into a recreation park. In 1964 'Play Land' Beekse Bergen opened its doors and in 1968 Safari park Beekse Bergen started with 40 lions and as from 1972 more animal were introduced into the park. Today 1,500 animals (among which the biggest African elephant in Europe) and more than 150 different species live in the park. The park wants to contribute to nature conservation in the broadest sense of the word by participating in worldwide nature conservation programmes and scientific research and education. A special association of Friends of Safari Park Beekse Bergen was set up to take part in nature protection programmes for African wild dogs in Zimbabwe, the Sloth Bear project in India and the Siberian tiger project in Siberia. Educational activities of the park are school trips, programmes for primary and secondary schools, raptor shows, guided and self guided tours (also one with the use of a navigation system), feeding presentations, picnics and events with a special theme.

Study visits to three city farms

Hagerhof City Farm in Venlo



The 2 ½ hectares of Hagerhof City Farm (Centre for environmental education) includes the main building, 6 classrooms, many different 'landscape' elements: an aviary with Dutch birds, a herb garden, chicken run, nature pond, dunghill, drinking pool, marshy area, bee shed, pasture, duck pond, stream and a wooded area. All these different elements are used for education and tell the public something about Holland's traditional cultural landscape. The farm started about 30 years ago by a group of enthusiastic people and has developed into a multi-functional centre for environmental education. It is now part of the regional welfare organisation 'Wel.kom'. There are 5 classrooms and a log

cabin, which also host the regional natural history society. The farm organises school activities, birthday parties, annual events and Wednesday afternoon activities. In total the farm attracts about 60,000 visitors per year, among which about 10,000 children from primary schools in Venlo who follow a teaching project at the city farm. The school programme also includes fieldwork, excursions in nature areas and adoption programmes in nature areas which are close to schools. Farm staff consists of 2 full-time and 10 part-time, 40 volunteers (lessons, animal care) and 2 or 3 trainees. The city farm and educational centre come under a foundation for social work and the city buys services off the Centre.

For a city farm heavily involved in education, concentrating on tradition Dutch farm animals is a win-win situation. Firstly, the message about the environment and Dutch farm animals fit together seamlessly and secondly, onsite education gives the public more opportunities to learn about animals and the environment and the landscape where the animals belong. The farm takes part in a breeding programme for old breeds of farm animals. There is a Groningen White-headed cow, a Colour sided White Back and a traditional Dutch pig (who has a real curly tail) as well as a variety of breeds of sheep, goats and chickens. The farm thinks that especially now in this Darwin Year it's more important than ever to continue to strive to save these rare breeds of farm animals. The farm works together with the Dutch Rare Breed Survival Trust, Livestock Foundation, Lakenvelder (Dutch Belted) Cattle Association and the Dutch Beekeepers Association.



Rabbit housing at Hagerhof City Farm in Venlo

At Hagerhof large farm animals and the children walk around together. This makes certain demands on the animals: they must have a very gentle nature, they mustn't fight with one another, they mustn't be anxious or be too bold or jump up at the children, etc.

Since 1998, the farm participates in the European Voluntary Service (EVS), volunteers from other European countries have been doing great work in



Alderman Peter Lamers welcomed the participants at Hagerhof City Farm

Hagerhof City Farm in Venlo. They stay for 12 months and are quickly able to help with the lessons that are given every day at the city farm.

Over the last three years there were three volunteers from Germany, France and Norway in Venlo. The volunteers were encouraged to start learning the basics of the language before their stay in the Netherlands. Dutch is not an easy language to learn for all the volunteers. It's much harder to learn for people from Spain or the Czech Republic for example

than those from Scandinavia or Germany. Each week the volunteers are given 1.5 hours of private tuition in the Dutch language. During their work they are spoken to in Dutch using short sentences and no dialect. English is used as a backup. During their work placement the volunteers do part animal keeping and part education. From day one they are involved in teaching. The daily programme is filled with visits from schools, every day, five days a week, mornings and afternoons. And not just for an hour, but a whole morning or afternoon. The volunteers usually work a 32-hour week at the city farm. With the exception of self-guided school activities, the EVS'ers in Venlo are no longer permitted to teach on their own because of language problems in the past. Their role is to support the guided activities, this means helping to prepare lessons, showing the children a rabbit if required and welcoming the children etc. At the end of each day the volunteers go home to their room in the student house. Most of them look upon their year at the city farm as a tremendous experience.

**Hagerhof City Farm
Hagerlei 1,
5912PP Venlo
Tel. + 31 77 326 65 40
cnme@welko.nu**

De Hanekam Care Farm in Tilburg



The farm

De Hanekam is a care farm built in the grounds of the Amarant institution west of Tilburg. This farm dates from the early 60s when it was built as a teaching farm for St. Josef's school. It was a place where children with serious learning difficulties were taught animal care, worked in the vegetable garden and learned to relate to nature. The animal stock comprised sheep, goats, horses and poultry. The teaching staff were supported by a manager who also looked after the horses. The farm was run by the former Piuoord Foundation led by the late Brother Alphonsus. A barn was built in the middle of the 70s to store hay, straw and materials and create a work space for students. In 1989 the whole organisation was completely changed, the school was privatised and the teaching farm became a day-care centre for six adults with special needs. The building was extended, creating a visitors centre and a café. The barn was made bigger to create a work space, changing room and stabling for three horses. The whole complex was renamed Hanekam City Farm and for the past fifteen years it has offered day-care to people who are not judged by what they cannot do but what they can do. The animal stock was expanded to include pigs, calves and a donkey as well as a number of rare breeds. Everyone is welcome to visit during opening hours. The farm has a regular programme of activities for its target group and for people outside the foundation.



Jan, one of the clients, gave an excellent tour of the farm in perfect English



The new building was opened this year. Larchwood was used so that the animals (especially the goats) will not eat through it

The complex is currently part of the Amarant Foundation Tilburg Region and the number of those using the facilities has doubled. We hope to gain our 'Prima voor elkaar' [Superbly Done] certificate – one step further than our present certification. The farm comprises 2 ha., has 2,5 staff, 1 volunteer and 1 trainee and is paid for by the Amarant Foundation. About 2,000 playgroup children visit the farm per year.

**Bredaseweg 570
5036 NB Tilburg?
Tel.: + 31 1346 45370
dehanekam@amarant.nl**

Wolfslaar Visitors Centre and City Farm in Breda



Breda is an historic city. The municipal city farm reflects this by keeping old Dutch breeds, namely from Breda and Brabant. The city farm is also very close to the "Ecologische Hoofdstructuur" (EHS) [Ecological Main Structure] and a Natura 2000 area, where biodiversity is the main theme. The city farm supports biodiversity through agro-biodiversity. Wolfslaar visitors centre is part of the former Wolfslaar estate and gives information about nature and the environment.

Wolfslaar Visitors Centre in Breda is the first recognised educational centre for rare domestic breeds in the Netherlands. Wolfslaar City Farm has 15 rare breeds, all from Brabant and also old forgotten varieties of vegetables and fruit trees. The city farm gives a representative picture of the different farm animals kept on a farm: horses and ponies, cattle, sheep, goats, fowl, pigeons, ducks and geese.

The main aim of Wolfslaar city farm is education. The animals, therefore, have an educational role in the areas of the environment and cultural history. In addition the animals must be easy to handle for the farm's workers, trainees and volunteers. The animals must also be approachable for visitors. The animal stock must be relatively easy to care for by the present staff, this means that there must not be too many animals that require specific attention (animals must be healthy, thrive on a city farm and not be subject to stress). In the interests of visitors to the city farm they must also be easy to handle and safe to be around.



Rabbit housing at Wolfslaar City Farm

Natural Garden Wolfslaar which dates from 1998, is a stream valley area with a large variety of pools, a field, hayfields and wood edges. In the garden there is a bats stay and a nature theatre, which is used for groups and small open air theatre productions. The natural garden is being kept by volunteers and Wolfslaar Visitors Centre staff. The garden is also used for school activities and extra curricular activities.



Sustainable classroom at Wolfslaar City Farm was opened in 2009

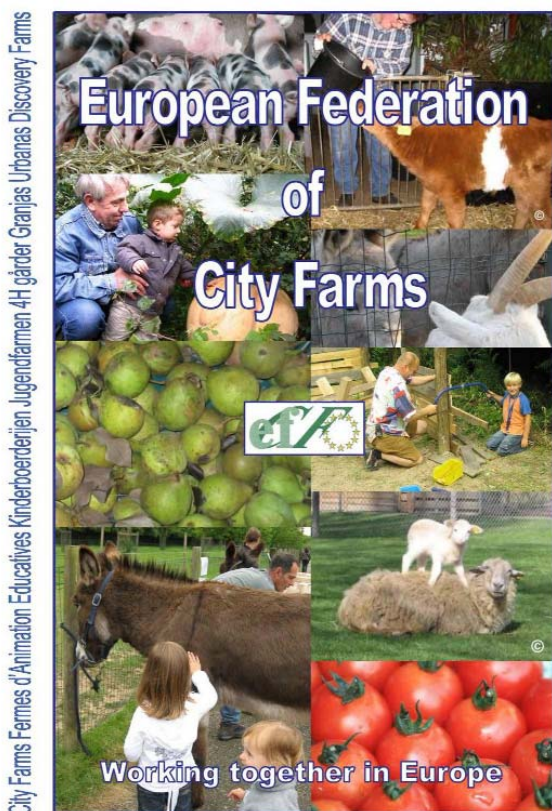
The area comprises 14 ha.(incl. 3 ha. nature and 2,5 ha wood). There is 9 staff (full-time and part-time), 50 volunteers and 10 mentally handicapped workers with a supervisor. The farm attracts between 150,000 – 200,000 visitors. One third are school children.

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4834 SN Breda
Tel.: 00 31 76 529 44 59
Fax: 00 31 76 560 07 52
<http://www.mecbreda.nl/>
bezoekerscentrumwolfslaar@breda.nl

A thank-you

A big thank-you from the EFCF Board for a very interesting conference! A pity Angelique Driessen, member of the 2009 EFCF conference working group, could not be present because she had only just recovered from the Mexican Flu. The Board wishes her well and hopes to see her soon again. Information about the conference (programme, lectures etc.) can be found on www.cityfarms.org under 'Events & Conferences'.

EFCF Information Booklet 2009



New Information Booklet EFCF is out and can be downloaded from www.cityfarms.org, homepage.

EFCF PowerPoint

A hand-out of the PowerPoint presentation about the EFCF can be found on www.cityfarms.org under 'How the EFCF works'.

EFCF Green Paper 'Soil, Water, Air and Biodiversity' (SWAB)

The draft Green Paper is a 'work in progress' to further engage city farmers in practical action, good practice and feedback to the EFCF. The EFCF intends to finalise the Green Paper by December 2009 and be proposed to the member federations at the AGM in March 2010, Bristol, England.

Annual General Meeting (AGM) 2010

The EFCF AGM will be held in Bristol, UK from 19 – 21 March 2010

EFCF conference 2010

The EFCF conference 2010 will be held in Kortrijk, Belgium Flanders from 15 – 19 September 2010

23rd Benelux conference on Environmental Education 24 - 26 November 2009

The Environment, Nature and Energy Department of the Flemish Government organises the 23rd Benelux Conference in Oostende, Belgium.

Theme is: Education for sustainable Development in the practice of teaching: a challenge for Head, Heart and Hands.

More info: <http://www.lne.be/themas/natuur-en-milieueducatie/nme-evenementen/nme-beneluxwerk-conferentie> (in French and Dutch)

Donkey Therapy

Job opportunity Therapist (m/f)

Task:
Helping the mentally and
physically disabled

Requirements:
Professional donkey



Could you imagine an add like this in your daily newspaper? Would you laugh? Would you be surprised? Would you believe it to be serious? Well, the parents of Tom would definitely believe it to be true. They know now what a professional (or any) donkey can do for their mentally and/or physically disabled child. Ever heard of Asino therapy? Maybe Donkey Assisted Therapy? Let's give some clarification. Asinotherapy is nothing more than using donkeys for the young and older children (without an age limit) to feel happy. As simple as that. Simple? Maybe not. Maybe claiming it being simple is too simple. I will give you one case study.

Tom is a young adult of 22 years old. He is mentally disabled, autistic and has a basic vocabulary. He can speak, but uses single words instead of sentences. When Tom was a young child he – and his parents – suffered from his furious rages, which seem to happen without reason. Tom's mother invested years in teaching Tom how to just undergo seemingly normal situations like drinking coffee or tea in a tea room, saying hello to visitors, or taking a train or bus. She used pictograms to reinforce her training and she succeeded step by step. By the time Tom was 20 years old, he was a happy adult who could go everywhere with his parents without 'flipping'. Tom was growing up to live by himself, and moved into a small community for mentally disabled people. Successfully. During daytime he was placed in a day activity centre, and in weekends he stayed with his parents. But then... Suddenly the mentors of his home and his parents noticed that Tom was getting more and more unhappy. Tom stopped talking, so it was difficult to get information about his sudden stress. He started vomiting as soon as Mondays were insight, and his parents supposed his stress was coming from his day activities. It was clear Tom was unhappy with his daily routine. Desperately they decided to look for another day activity. The mentors of Tom's home heard about donkey assisted therapy and advised Tom's parents to give it a try. And so Tom met Hansel....



Donkey therapy - a wheelchair is not an impediment for donkey therapy

Hansel is a donkey of 8 years old, and trained to work with the mentally and physically disabled. He 'works' at Donkey Farm Hansel and Gretel in Maastricht, the Netherlands (www.ezelstalhansengrietje.nl). The owner, Brigitte Wijnen, uses her donkeys to relax and distress her clients, who she enables to interact with the donkeys. The donkey's natural behaviour is to be curious, they come up to visitors, sniff at them and demonstrate they want to be hugged, cuddled or scratched. They ask for response. Donkeys are tranquil animals, a little bit slow, who love interaction with human beings. Taking their size into consideration, they are huggable for small and larger children. They look like a big teddy bear, and feel like one as well. At first sight Tom was at distance. This situation was new, and autistic people need time to adapt. But he loves animals, and he was curious of what Brigitte was doing with Hansel. Brigitte was demonstrating Tom how he could make contact with the donkey by brushing, stroking and hugging it. Hansel responded immediately by turning his head to Tom, standing next to him, 'asking' to go on brushing. And Tom understood the unpronounced question. And as weeks went on, Tom and Hansel became friends. After 6 weeks Tom restarted talking, and after 8 weeks Tom was singing during his weekly walking trip with Hansel. After 3 months he hugged his mother, calling her Hansel. She didn't mind. She was happy to see Tom happy again.

**Donkey Farm Hansel and Gretel (Ezelstal Hans en
Grietje at Wieringenberg City Farm)
Maastrichterweg 2b,
6228 XT Maastricht
The Netherlands
www.ezelstalhansengrietje.nl
Tel: 00 31 6 17 42 48 37**

Milk: Via Campesina proposes ways out of the global crisis - Press release

Around the world the price of milk at the farm gate has dropped dramatically¹, threatening to put millions of producers out of business. As a result, milk producers have been protesting in many parts of the world. Since the beginning of the year, thousand from Via Campesina member organisations have joined protests in Brussels and Strasburg (EU), Madrid, Berlin, Galicia, France, Belgium, Germany, Portugal, Switzerland, Indonesia, Dominican Republic, and all across the United States. To urgently solve the crisis, Via Campesina asks governments to act:

- To maintain and develop in all dairy regions a sustainable farmers based milk production, which is based on local fodder
- To (re)introduce public supply management policies to keep the production in balance with the demand, so that producers and consumers can get fair prices
- Farm gate dairy prices have to cover the costs of production, including the remuneration of work
- To ban any export subsidy and to allow all countries or unions to introduce tariffs to protect their own milk production
- To maintain high standards of identity for dairy products to insure the integrity of the definition of milk and prevent the dumping of inferior milk substitute products

¹ In Europe the milk price dropped with 30% since the end of 2007, going below the very low prices of 2006
More information: www.viacampesina.org

Interesting websites

www.egs-project.eu

Schools and energy. Are European schools aware or conscious of their practices in energy usage i.e. energy efficiency? Is this visible in their activities? How much energy do schools consume? Which habits do they practise daily to reduce their energy consumption, and (how) do they involve the local authorities? Is energy education a part of the curricula? And do teachers think, that they are trained enough to provide lessons on energy-usage?

www.sharingnature.com

Sharing Nature Worldwide uses creative activities to give people joyful and inspiring experiences of nature. Experiential nature activities to uplift and inspire.

Clever ideas

Remember the newspaper bags in Newsletter 1.2009?
Also on www.cityfarms.org
(Kids Stuff)



We received the following e-mail and picture:

“Every Wednesday Lynette and I go to Karl Bremer hospital in Bellville, Western Cape, South Africa and do craft with the Kangaroo mums. They really enjoyed the project and did we.



The Kangaroo mums are those with premature babies. It has been proven that the prem babies who are in the bosom of their mums grow faster than those in the incubators. The bonding takes place between mums and babies as well. Sometimes they are in hospital for 1 - 2 months, depending on the growth and health of babies.

So what we do is we go to hospital to stimulate their hands and minds. It's not nice to stay away from your family for a month or so. Some of the ladies come from other towns, so family cannot visit them regularly. Instead of newspaper, we used gift wrapping, to celebrate woman's day. The staff were so impressed, they also wanted to make the bags”



If you come across a clever idea or if you had a brilliant idea yourself, take a photograph and e-mail it to Pauline Wolters pwolters@planet.nl

Chicken puzzle



Paving stone table and chairs