



PRODUCT BOARD ARABLE PRODUCTS



PRODUCT BOARD ANIMAL FEED



PRODUCT BOARD WINE

THE PRODUCT BOARDS
ARABLE PRODUCTS, ANIMAL FEED AND WINE



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THE PRODUCT BOARDS ARABLE PRODUCTS, ANIMAL FEED AND WINE STAND FOR HEALTHY AND STRONG CHAINS.

The activities of the product boards are aimed at maintaining the health of all the chains, from soil to mouth. The strength of the boards consists of operating quickly and efficiently as an independent and energetic co-operation scheme between employers and employees with the purpose of assuring strong and sustainable links within a people-friendly working environment.

The product boards belong to and serve the companies and employees for whom they were created. Companies and employees determine themselves which activities the boards carry out and which financial resources are deployed. If necessary, they establish rules with which all companies must comply. So there are no 'free riders' and the involvement of the industry in the drafting of the rules guarantees a strong platform of support and a connection with reality. The same goes for all kinds of self-regulation in which the sector makes arrangements on a voluntary basis in order to achieve its own objectives for the sector. In the event of violations, independent disciplinary proceedings are held. This is more effective, quicker and less expensive than the application of criminal law. The costs are covered as much as possible from the fines imposed. The boards operate as a meeting platform between employers and employees in all links of the production column. They work jointly at the development of policy and knowledge and at the distribution of knowledge. In this way the boards also function as a good centre of knowledge for the sector.



Efficient financing by the links themselves

The sectors pay themselves for the tasks of the product boards. They do that by means of levies. The sectors have their own funds, sometimes on the product level, which they fill themselves. The boards of the product boards, on which representatives of the companies and the organisations of employees sit, see to it that the business operation is effective, efficient and transparent. The application of the Good Administration Code assures that decisions are taken in a transparent and democratic way. Through their joint service organisation, HPA, the product boards also carry out activities on instructions from the national government. It goes without saying that these activities are financed by the government. Without the product boards the government would have to carry out these so-called co-policy tasks itself and that would require a greater deployment of civil servants. This would also increase the burden of administrative tasks for the government.

Social interest

In order to cope with the increasingly strong international competition, the sector must continuously strengthen its creative and innovative capacity. The companies are then confronted with complex social problems which often last for a long period of time. Companies cannot solve these problems on their own. The product boards therefore work jointly on, for example, food safety regulations and on avoidance of plant and animal diseases.

Socially responsible and sustainable initiatives are organised by the boards and are financed collectively through chain-wide innovation and co-operation. The boards also pay a great deal of structural attention to the position of the employees in the companies, such as in the field of working in a healthy and safe working environment.

The boards also invest in the creation of (future) jobs in the sector and in the training of employees. The boards therefore undertake activities which often exceed the capacity and the range of branch organisations or individual companies. In this way they play the part of initiator, booster, coordinator, service provider or information source.

Democratic and transparent

The Branch Organisation Act (Wbo) guarantees the working method of the product boards and their boards. The Social and Economic Council (SER), the Cabinet and the Lower House of Parliament supervise the work of the boards. Important parts of the Branch Organisation Act (Wbo) were amended in 2009. As of 2011, the companies will be given an opportunity every four years to express themselves with respect to the activities of the boards. Companies will be able to state in a so-called support test whether or not they feel that a product board must continue to exist. The Good Administration Code of the product boards is anchored in the Branch Organisation Act (Wbo). The Code improves the quality of the administration and provides more public accountability, openness of policy and finance, and verifiability. Via the Code the companies are involved even more in the activities of the boards. Their participation has been improved as well.

Sharing knowledge

All links in the chain sit around the table together in the product boards. In this way they function as a centre of knowledge which acts properly and takes widely supported decisions for the membership. The various product boards organise a wide range of activities to inform the industry concerned about these decisions and all sorts of other items. Information is widely distributed by means of, for example, theme days, (digital) newsletters, websites, symposia, the media and the publication of magazines.



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The Dutch agriculture column consists of about 25,000 companies which are involved in growing, trading or processing agricultural products. Companies which, for example, grow, trade or process grains, potatoes and sugar beets into food products such as bread, French fries and confectionery. Companies which, for example, grow, trade or process grains, potatoes and sugar beets into food products such as bread, French fries and confectionery. The sector provides starting materials in the form of seedlings and seeds. The sector also supplies raw materials to the food industry, the feed industry and numerous other industries which process them into medicaments, paper or textile. The major chains are those of grains (from the field to the baker), potatoes and sugar (from the field to the mouth). These are long chains and there are many links between the grower and the consumer.

Leading in research

The Product Board Arable Products provides programming, coordination, financing and guidance of research aimed at the profitable, sustainable and safe production of agricultural crops and products. The Product Board Arable Products carries out research in the field of fighting diseases and plagues such as wart disease and scab. It also relates to research for new and better varieties. On an annual basis this involves more than 150 requests for research from growers, trade and industry. From these requests for research a final research programme is established by means of an interaction between regional and national research customers and research providers. The research results are made available directly via the website www.kennisakker.nl.

Neutral emission agriculture thanks to minerals management

The Product Board Arable Products, the Netherlands Agricultural Trade Union and LTO Nederland closely cooperate in their pursuit of neutral emission agriculture by 2030. This, obviously, while maintaining profitability and biodiversity. The parties involved do this on the basis of the Minerals Management Master Plan. The objective of this initiative is to create management tools which enable agricultural companies to add the right amount of minerals to the soil at the right time and in the right place. Also in this way the sector contributes to sustainable agriculture while preserving profitability, biodiversity and working at the objectives of Schoon & Zuinig and the Water Framework Guideline. Sustainable innovations in agriculture The InnovatieNetwerk, which is associated with the Ministry of Economic Affairs, Agriculture & Innovation and with the Product Board Agriculture, has created the innovation organisation Kiemkracht. Kiemkracht has the task of boosting ground-breaking innovation in agriculture, and especially in arable farming. New concepts are developed, which are then worked out into tangible action or innovation programmes which are applied directly in reality. These are innovations aimed at sustainable development and with a focus on the longer term. The use of Biochar, for example, is stimulated. By introducing Biochar into the soil, the soil quality and soil fertility are improved so that the crop yield increases and energy consumption decreases. At the same time, Biochar permanently extracts CO₂ from the atmosphere and fixates it in the soil.

Regulations ensure product quality

Through a product board the industry can make binding arrangements for itself without having to knock on the government's door. Thus the Product Board Arable Products establishes growing regulations at the request of growers, with which regulations all growers must comply. This means that the spreading of diseases in our plants, such as potatoes and beets, can be opposed effectively. Regulation therefore which without intervention from the national government ensures healthy cultivation and thus sustainable agriculture. The national government saves a lot of money in this way.

Certification in agriculture

The Product Board Agriculture provides facilities for the 'Agriculture Certification Committee' between growers, customers, cultivators and contract workers in agriculture. The participating customers are the managers of the so-called crop certificates. This makes it a unique platform for practical certification. The certification committee itself is the manager of the Food and Feed Safety Agriculture (VVAK), in which the crop certificates have been merged into one single company certificate. The VVAK was the first standard to be recognised in agriculture as a hygiene code for food and feed, with which Dutch agriculture demonstrates that it complies with the hygiene requirements from Brussels in the growing of food and feed products.

Food safety and consumer information

The digital projects SpecsPlaza and RiskPlaza have been developed for the bakery chain. SpecsPlaza is an ingredients database which enables an information exchange about the composition of raw and auxiliary materials. In this way it becomes easier to compose a label which is correct from the viewpoint of the Commodities Act. RiskPlaza is a database containing information about the potential hazards of bakery ingredients, the control measures which are available here, and an audit aimed at assurance against these hazards. The VWA (Food and Consumer Product Safety Authority) has accepted RiskPlaza as a chain guarantee system with which the legal obligation of purchase verification can be met in a company-friendly way. With this approach the bakery sector has taken a lead in comparison to other branches.

EU agricultural policy

The EU agricultural policy is of vital importance for the members of the Product Board Arable Products. Together with the industry, intensive consultations about current topics are conducted with the Ministry concerned. As a platform for the agroindustry the Product Board Arable Products plays an important part in this. In order to play this role in an optimal way, employees of the Product Board are part of the delegations which represent the Netherlands in the various management committees in Brussels.

Working together on employment conditions

In the bakery sector persons who come into contact with meal and other raw materials may develop an allergy to raw materials. Through the Product Board Arable Products, the organisations of companies and employees in this sector have made arrangements with the government to arrive at the prevention and reduction of raw materials allergy. These arrangements have now found their way into the Collective Employment Agreement for the bakery industry. The Product Board Arable Products assists with the realisation of these arrangements.

Market and Price Information

Due to the increasingly strong fluctuations in the price level of agricultural products, the membership of the Product Board Arable Products has developed an even greater need for information about markets and prices. Money and energy are therefore invested in gathering and distributing market information about potatoes, onions and grains via, for example, the websites www.aardappelinfo.nl and www.ui-info.nl. Information about the developments in the grain market is circulated to thousands of readers via the weekly digital newsletter on grains.



PRODUCT BOARD ANIMAL FEED



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THE PRODUCT BOARD ANIMAL FEED

More than 500 companies work daily at high quality feed for our animals. In this way the feed industry performs an important task in the food chain. By working constantly and in a sustainable way to produce well-balanced feed, the sector contributes to safe food of good quality in the Netherlands and far beyond.

The Product Board Animal Feed was created at the request of the Dutch feed industry. Not only feed companies, but also cattle breeding farms are members of this product board. The board of the Product Board Animal Feed consists of representatives of organisations of employers and employees in the feed column. Together they determine the tasks of the Product Board Animal Feed and the way in which these tasks must be carried out.

The feed industry finances the product board by means of levies. In a nutshell, the main themes for the Product Board Animal Feed are:

Quality and product safety

The Product Board Animal Feed has a special quality programme for the feed column in the Netherlands. Feed safety as part of food safety holds a central position in this. The motto of the programme is: 'Feed for Food'. This makes it clear that feed for animals and food for humans can never be considered as separate things. In addition to safety, also nutritional quality is an important aspect of the common quality policy.



Feed evaluation

Good nutrition is indispensable for healthy productive livestock which function and produce optimally. After all, the supply of energy and nutritional substances must be in balance with the nutrition requirements of the animal. This balance is achieved by means of feed evaluation systems. As the (Dutch) Product Board Animal Feed considers an optimal nutrition of farm animals to be one its tasks, the Product Board Animal Feed invests in the development of knowledge in the field. The products are issued under the brand name 'CVB'.

Labour

Another objective of the Product Board Animal Feed is to make a contribution to the realisation of a better anchoring and positioning of the labour factor in the work and organisation of the product boards. To this end tangible social-economic projects are set up in which companies and employees have a common (sectoral) interest. Important examples are the "Dust? Do something about it!" project and the introduction of Certification of Acquired Competencies (EVC) in the sector. In the first project employers and employees are called upon to improve employment conditions by means of dust control. With the introduction of EVC, employees are offered an opportunity to show their qualities. Employees can cash in on the experience acquired in the form of certificates and diplomas.

Research

Thorough research is an investment in the future of the feed sector. The Product Board Animal Feed initiates and finances research which cannot be done by individual companies because of the scope and the costs or which is less expensive when carried out jointly. Animal health and animal well-being are important themes in this respect. Thus research has gone on for some years now into the effects of nutrition on feather pecking in laying hens and the Product Board Animal Feed finances part of a large-scale European research project called Welfare Monitor for Veal Calves. The results of this research must be that the cattle farmers can see by the behaviour and the appearance of their animals whether the animal is healthy and feels fine.

Sustainability

The Product Board Animal Feed invests in the theme of sustainability. The development of a dynamic calculation model for the calculation of the carbon footprint of feed is part of this. This calculation model serves two goals. First of all the model identifies the various emission sources in the chain and provides information about the size of the carbon footprint of feed. In the second place the results allow the determination of where things can be improved in the chain. In order to achieve this model, the Product Board Animal Feed works with a multi-phase and interactive development trajectory in co-operation with other parties from the entire chain.



PRODUCT BOARD WINE



THE PRODUCT BOARD WINE / WINE INFORMATION CENTRE

The Product Board Wine was created at the request of the Dutch wine sector and has the statutory task of defending the joint interests of the entire wine branch and the interests of the Dutch community. The Product Board Wine is the communication channel to the national and international government on behalf of the wine sector. In addition, the Product Board Wine acts as a platform for the entrepreneurs in the sector and it promotes a collective approach to issues. The Wine Information Centre (WIC) is part of the Product Board Wine. Both professionals and consumers are welcome with their questions about the product wine and all related subjects. The WIC has a vast library of reference books and (inter)national trade journals.

Internet

The website www.wijn.nl of the Product Board Wine contains detailed information for anyone who is involved in wine commercially or as a private person. For example, the Wine Import database on the website contained, in 2009, details of 37,515 imported wines with the addresses of 565 importers.

Market research

In order to keep up with current developments in the wine market, the Product Board Wine continuously conducts research in the field of the purchase and consumption of wine at the request of the wine branch. On average the Dutch drank 21.7 litres of wine per capita in 2009. Of the total consumption of wine in the Netherlands, France still had the largest market share in 2009, followed by South Africa and Germany.



Education

In order to stimulate professional wine education in the Netherlands as well as the inflow of properly qualified employees into the companies, the Product Board Wine involves itself in educational activities such as the Nationale Wijndocentendag (National Wine Teachers Day) and the ScriptiePrijs Wijn (Wine Thesis Award). The Product Board Wine makes available each year a 1500 euro award for the best thesis on the subject of wine. The conditions for participating in the ScriptiePrijs Wijn can be found at www.wijn.nl.

Environment

Wine importers are obliged under the national legislation to pay taxes for the packaging of their products. The Product Board Wine has committed itself to reducing as much as possible the costs as well as the administrative charges which the record keeping of packaging materials implies. The product board issues all wine importers with a statement, on the basis of their imports, of the number of litres brought into circulation and the corresponding amount of packaging materials. The importers can use this statement for their packaging materials tax return.

Alcohol and Community

The Product Board Wine wants consumers to enjoy wine responsibly. In the Stichting Verantwoord Alcoholgebruik (STIVA) (Responsible Alcohol Use Foundation) producers and importers of alcoholic beverages in the Netherlands work together at fighting alcohol abuse and promoting the responsible consumption of alcohol. The Product Board Wine is represented on the board of STIVA. In 2009 the new logo "Under 16 Not a drop" was launched in co-operation with the government and numerous stakeholders.

Employment

In 2009, a new digital Arbo (occupational health and safety) catalogue was developed for the trade in wine and drinks. In the development of this occupational health and safety catalogue the Product Board Wine co-operated with the Product Board Beverages. The risks of physical load and transport have been elaborated in this digital occupational health and safety catalogue.

Dutch wine producers

The Netherlands has about 170 commercial vineyards of which half have an area of more than 1 hectare. The total area is about 220 hectares. It is a relatively young business sector. The distribution of knowledge and expertise is an activity which the Product Board Wine has particularly taken on. This may include applications for the use of new crop protection agents and education about correct labelling.



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