



2023 TOP 100 GOOD PRACTICE STORY

Title: *Connected in Short Supply Chains: Local Food and Waste Reduction*

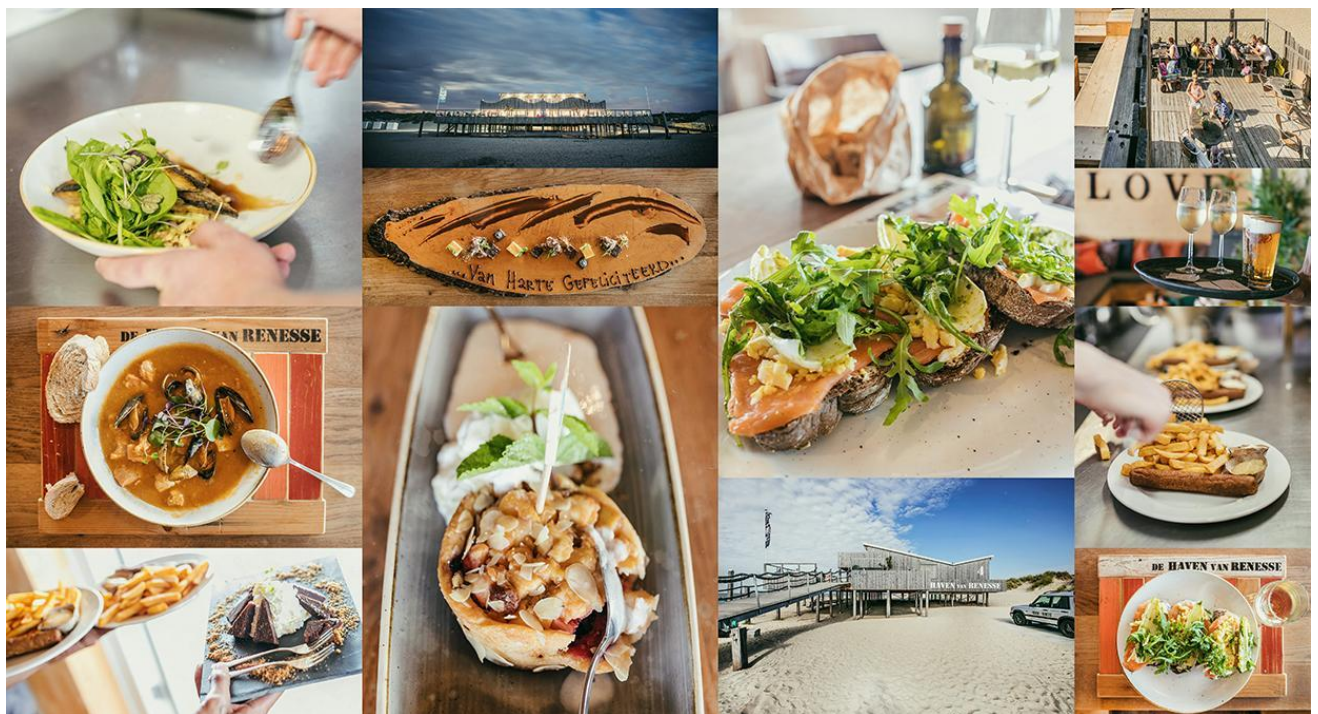
Destination, Country: The Dutch Quality Coast Delta (Voorne aan Zee, Goeree-Overflakkee, Schouwen-Duiveland), The Netherlands

Submitted by: August Eggebeen august.eggebeen@schouwen-duiveland.nl (policy assistant), Lisa Wijsman lisa.wijsman@schouwen-duiveland.nl (policy assistant), Erika Troost E.Troost@goeree-overflakkee.nl (policy maker), Serine Groeneveld s.groeneveld@voorneaanzee.nl (policy maker)

In the category: ☐ Destination Management ☐ Environment & Climate ☒ Thriving Communities
☐ Nature & Scenery ☐ Culture & Tradition ☐ Business & Marketing

The Story in a picture:

Click or tap here to enter a brief explanation of your picture.



Summary:

The municipalities of Schouwen-Duiveland, Goeree-Overflakkee, and Voorne aan Zee form the Dutch Quality Coast Delta, a sustainable tourist destination. They work with the government and local entrepreneurs to shorten food chains and recycle waste.





2023 TOP 100

GOOD PRACTICE STORY

Attention is given to CO2 emissions and waste reduction. Initiatives promote direct contact between producers and consumers.

Circular waste management systems transform residual streams into new products.

Collaboration between residents, tourists, and entrepreneurs stimulates agritourism. Focus is on local products and short chains, meeting consumer demand for transparency. The government provides support through incentive programs and sustainability scans for businesses.



Good Practice Story:

Destination description

Brief background of the destination.

The Dutch Quality Coast Delta is formed by the municipalities of Schouwen-Duiveland, Goeree-Overflakkee, and Voorne aan Zee. The Dutch Quality Coast Delta consists of approximately 613 km² of land and 488 km² of water. The municipalities strive to make tourism more sustainable wherever possible and to allow tourists to enjoy the beautiful coast in a responsible manner. The government and various local entrepreneurs work together on sustainability, including by shortening the food supply chain and promoting waste recycling. These sustainable tourist destinations all possess a Platinum Quality Coast Award and are committed to maintaining the Blue Flag and Green Beach Pennant along the coast.

Issues faced

Problems/issues solved with the Good Practice Story.

CO₂ emissions

Greenhouse gases trap heat, leading to an increase in Earth's temperature. In our region, the rise in CO₂ is primarily attributed to the combustion of fossil fuels. The transportation of goods necessary for food supply and waste processing in the agricultural and recreational sectors results in CO₂ emissions.

Waste production

Often, waste such as packaging, food leftovers, and other materials from the tourism sector is disposed of in traditional ways, such as landfills or incinerators. This results in various issues, including burdening waste disposal systems, causing environmental pollution through the release of greenhouse gases during incineration, and wasting valuable resources.

Small profit margin for farmers

In Europe, there is an issue of food overproduction. On one hand, this creates downward pressure on prices as the supply of products exceeds the demand. On the other hand, farmers face rising costs due to investments in sustainable production methods and increasing prices of raw materials (such as fertilizers). As a result, the profit margin for farmers is under pressure.

Methods, steps, and tools applied

Solutions implemented to address the sustainability problems or issues.

Entrepreneurs in our region have focused on short supply chains.

The characteristic of a short supply chain is that there is a direct connection between the producer and the consumer when selling agricultural products. The farmer sets their own price, production method, and offering. Examples of these initiatives in our destination are:

1. Lekkerder bij de boer; In 2020, Lekkerder bij de boer was launched. It is an initiative aimed at establishing direct contact between farmers and local customers so that they receive a fair price for their products. It is a platform where farmers can offer their products, and consumers can easily see where and what is available. The locations include farm shops, roadside stands, fresh vending machines, milk taps, apiaries, nurseries, and mills throughout the Netherlands. This information is conveniently presented on a map through an app, allowing consumers to plan a cycling route to visit different farmers for their shopping. Several dozens of farms in The Dutch Quality Coast Delta are part of this initiative.
2. De Mèkkerstee; De Mèkkerstee in Goeree-Overflakkee is an organic goat farm, **launched in 2021**. It was established in 2001 as a care farm with 75 goats, a small barn, and a simple cheese factory, and has grown into a modern facility with 650 contented goats. The goats are fed with their own grass clover and herbal hay, resulting in the finest milk. De Mèkkerstee also serves as a care farm, where individuals with mental, psycho-social problems, or intellectual disabilities actively participate. They assist with animal care or work in the Farm Shop, cheese storage, or restaurant. Delicious ice cream is made from their own fresh and creamy goat's milk. The ice cream is crafted using natural ingredients in a traditional manner and is sold in the restaurant.
3. **Since 2017**, the experience garden of Huyskweker Vers van **Voorne** exist. You can witness the combination of cultivation and socially responsible entrepreneurship. The aim is to educate consumers about the practices of vegetable and ornamental growers. Additionally, Vers van Voorne sells their own cultivated vegetables, plants and products sources from other growers, such as Westvoorn's pasture-raised meat (Oostvoorne), eggs from Eibaar (Den Bommel), Hoeksche chips from Hoeksche Waard, and cheese from Mulder Farm in Melissant. The company also offers guided tours. In 2022, they started selling a range of products for hobby gardeners. For cyclists and hikers, Vers van Voorne serves a wonderful rest stop in the polder. Lastly, Vers van Voorne is also an official Rest point.

The tourism sector minimizes waste streams and promotes waste recycling. Active efforts are made to reduce waste, conserve resources, and promote sustainability and innovation. This is evident through various initiatives:

1. Schouwen-Duiveland Beach Pavilions; The implementation of circular waste management systems by the six beach pavilions in Schouwen-Duiveland is an innovative and sustainable solution to address the issue of waste disposal. Instead of discarding coffee grounds and orange peels, they have chosen to utilize these valuable residual streams and transform them into new products.

By using coffee grounds for the production of croquettes, the beach pavilions demonstrate creativity and efficiency in waste reuse. This offers several benefits:

- a) **Waste reduction:** By diverting coffee grounds and orange peels away from incineration, the amount of waste ending up in the waste-to-energy facility is reduced. This contributes to alleviating the strain on waste disposal systems and minimizing environmental impact.
 - b) **Resource conservation:** Rather than wasting valuable resources like coffee grounds and orange peels, they are now being reused. This contributes to the preservation of natural resources and reduces the need for new raw materials.
 - c) **Sustainability:** Implementing circular waste management systems promotes sustainability in the hospitality sector. It shows that it is possible to convert waste into valuable products and presents alternatives to traditional waste management practices.
 - d) **Innovation:** Utilizing coffee grounds for croquette production is a creative and innovative solution. This can inspire both customers and entrepreneurs to look at waste in new ways and discover new applications.
2. **Aan Zee;** Restaurant Aan Zee in Oostvoorne is constructed using natural and sustainable materials. The required energy is generated from solar and wind sources, and cooking is done using wood. Solar panels and solar water heaters are installed on the roof, and wind turbines are situated next to the restaurant. Wastewater is treated in a constructed wetland system, and rainwater is filtered through the dunes, eliminating the need for a sewage connection. All food is homemade with fresh produce, such as pies and ice cream. Additionally, Aan Zee employs local suppliers to support short supply chains, including cheese from De Mèkkerstee, Westvoorns pasture-raised meat, and products from Huyskweker Vers van Voorne.

3.

The 3 different initiatives are interconnected because they complement each other. Vers van Voorne and Aan Zee sell the cheese from Mekkerstee or incorporate it into their products. Additionally, Lekkerder bij de Boer has also included Mekkerstee and Vers van Voorne as sales points. The various cycling routes also allow for the inclusion of all the businesses, enhancing their connection. Foodelta Zeeland organizes meetings where regional food chains come together to share information.

The initiatives started only a few years ago, as mentioned earlier. Due to the outbreak of COVID-19 and the closure of shops and restaurants, Lekkerder Bij de Boer achieved success faster than anticipated. This is evident from the number of registrations from sales points. Between 2021 and 2023, at least 1000 farmers have joined.

Key success factors

Critical elements that led to successfully solving the issues.

Collaboration between residents, tourists, and entrepreneurs

Direct contact between farmers and consumers, combined with the use of local products, creates a Unique Selling Point, such as local regional products. Consumers appreciate the trust in local products and have a better understanding of local costs, resulting in fresh products at more attractive prices.

Increasing interest in locally grown products

Consumers' preference for knowing the origin of their food has fueled the adoption of short supply chains. The COVID-19 pandemic has further accelerated this trend towards local and sustainable food sources. Local products are often more affordable, fresher, and more attractive to consumers.

Agreements on the logistics process in waste collection

Collaborative logistics agreements in waste collection lead to cost savings and boost the local economy. Sharing knowledge and promoting reusable materials helps and keep money circulating within the community.

Proactive provision of incentive schemes by the government

The government in the Dutch Quality Coast Delta actively supports sustainable practices among entrepreneurs. In Schouwen-Duiveland, a sustainability scan is offered to identify savings opportunities, along with clear incentives such as vouchers, subsidies, and loans. In Voorne aan Zee, a sustainability coach provides free advice on building sustainability, business operations, and energy conservation.

Lessons learned

Challenges faced while implementing the Good Practice and their solutions.

The consumer needs to be encouraged to buy local products

It took time to convince consumers of the benefits of buying local products. Marketing campaigns targeting residents and tourists have effectively highlighted the advantages: clarity regarding the product's origin, freshness, and support for local businesses. Take, for example, the 'koop lokaal' campaign.

There needs to be a focus on profitability

Many entrepreneurs were focused on minimizing costs. A shift was needed to also consider higher earnings through high-quality products and appropriate services. The price-quality ratio is a point of attention. It is necessary to make a thorough calculation of costs for selling products from the farm shop. It takes courage to pass on cost increases to the customers. With personal contact and attention to the story behind the product, a suitable price can be calculated for high-quality products.

Implementing short supply chains requires a continuous process of optimization and collaboration

The implementation of short supply chains presents challenges in terms of cultivation and logistics. Collaboration is crucial for making the right choices in this regard. Entrepreneurs have responded by sharing knowledge and experiences. Concrete successful agreements have been made, such as suppliers delivering ordered products and taking away residual waste.

There haven't been large-scale evaluation moments, but other methods have been used to learn lessons and gather feedback. Various meetings with stakeholders have been held, and informal conversations with customers have taken place to share their experiences. Additionally, knowledge has been exchanged among entrepreneurs in the industry.

Achievements and Results

Direct and indirect results of the Good Practice.

The CO2 emissions are limited.

By implementing short supply chains in food provision and waste management, there is a significant reduction in the number of kilometers driven by vehicles using fossil fuels. This effectively limits the emission of CO2.

The waste mountain has been reduced.

For the beach pavilions in Schouwen-Duiveland, an inventory of waste streams was conducted. It was found that significant progress can be made by utilizing coffee grounds, orange peels, and shells from oysters and mussels. Approximately 3,000 kilograms of coffee grounds from the beach pavilions are now being repurposed by a company as a nutrient source for cultivating oyster mushrooms. These oyster mushrooms are then used to make bitterballen, croquettes, and oyster mushroom burgers that are sold at the beach pavilions. Suppliers make use of existing logistics, requiring no additional transportation. A concept for processing oyster and mussel shells won the EnergyBattleZeeland

competition. A pilot project is being launched to transform these shells into usable products, such as in concrete or terrace furniture. With the implementation of a biogas digester, the waste stream is further reduced, and the released gas can be used for cooking. These developments have garnered significant publicity, allowing both residents and tourists to witness tangible results of collaboration within the food chain.

The exemplary role of sustainable restaurants.

The sustainable practices of Restaurant Aan Zee have not gone unnoticed. They are part of the beach community for the Green Beach Pennant. To qualify for the Green Beach Pennant, at least one beach pavilion must have a plastic-free terrace. In addition, Restaurant Aan Zee won an award in 2022 for being the most sustainable beach pavilion in the Netherlands, as well as the public choice award. Aan Zee serves as an inspiring example for other restaurants to adopt a high-quality hospitality concept while being mindful of the environment.

The tourist notices that The Dutch Quality Coast Delta is a sustainable destination.

The approach of entrepreneurs in terms of sustainability and the establishment of short supply chains in food provision and waste collection have a positive impact on the tourist experience. Attention is generated for the story behind the local products being sold. For instance, one can witness firsthand how cheese is made at the Mèkkerstee or take a look inside the greenhouse at Vers van Voorne to see the flowers and plants being cultivated. This creates a wonderful day out for the tourist.

After the launch of "Lekkerder bij de Boer" in Walcheren, immediate media attention was garnered, resulting in recognition throughout Zeeland and eventually across the Netherlands within a week. In August 2021, the first version of the app was introduced. The guiding principle is to empower farmers autonomously while also engaging customers. Since then, a large database of participating farmers has been established, along with a database of thousands of customers who have created accounts. This provides farmers with the opportunity to promote and sell their products at a fair price. It is also possible to plan a cycling route that passes by product providers. Collaborations are formed with other activities such as tourism, cultural events, and educational activities. Currently, there are 2,000 providers of local products involved, and this number continues to grow. Research from Wageningen University shows that approximately 16% of agricultural businesses in Zeeland are involved in short supply chains, involving direct sales to consumers. Arable farming and permanent cultivation are the main types of businesses. The revenue generated from agricultural products through short supply chains is estimated to be around 38 million euros per year. Logistics and activating the demand side pose challenges for further growth.

De Mèkkerstee has won several national and international awards for their cheese. The cheese-making process is transparent, as consumers can watch behind glass. They also have sales points throughout the country.

Vers van Voorne is proud of their dedicated team of employees who are able to assist an ever-growing group of consumers with a beautiful range of products. By sharing the story behind the product, consumers appreciate the products and their quality even more.

Realising Sustainable Development Goal 12 'Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns'

Sustainable production and consumption, with more efficient use of resources, reduces environmental pressure and decreases dependence on those resources. All these initiatives have an impact on the ecological, socio-cultural, and economic aspects of the destination. They create more employment opportunities, enable farmers to generate higher direct income and revenue due to better profit margins than supplying to large-scale buyers. The money remains within the local economy, and consumers become more conscious, rediscovering the countryside, particularly through tourism. Short supply chains foster a direct connection between farmers and consumers. Furthermore, consumers, especially children, can learn a great deal from farmers and their products. It also contributes to the distribution of tourism throughout the destination. The westcoast of Schouwen-Duiveland is a popular location. With these initiatives in place, tourists are more likely to explore lesser-known areas in rural regions and visit the island's farmers. Similarly, tourism distribution is a focal point for Voorne aan Zee. Encouraging walking and cycling through the polder, including promoting cycling routes that pass by local farmers to showcase regional products.

Tips for other destinations

Your suggestions or recommendations for other destinations facing the same issues or implementing similar solutions

Take on a facilitating and stimulating role as a government.

A win-win situation arises when entrepreneurs are challenged, facilitated, and encouraged by the government. The way in which the government organizes this within the Dutch Quality Coast Delta has a positive effect on entrepreneurs. By providing a sustainability coach, the barrier to seeking free sustainable advice is lowered. By making sustainability subsidies available, entrepreneurs are encouraged to make sustainable investments. **It is essential that the municipality is willing to support and promote sustainable initiatives. This includes creating a favorable policy environment and**

allocating resources and support for sustainable projects. Furthermore, it is also important that as a municipality you have a connecting factor between the different initiatives and can connect entrepreneurs with each other.

Communicate with tourists about the transition to sustainable destinations.

Within The Dutch Quality Coast Delta, there are numerous initiatives, and this story only mentions a few. Together with the initiators, efforts are made to raise awareness among tourists about the benefits of short supply chains.

Recognitions and Additional references

Recognitions and awards the Good Practice received and supporting evidence.

<https://www.demekkerstee.nl/nl/>

<https://www.versvanvoorne.nl/>

<https://lekkerder.nl/>

<https://www.demekkerstee.nl/nl/de-mekkerstee/>

<https://www.omroepzeeland.nl/nieuws/14789198/bitterballen-maken-met-koffiedrab-om-z-o-min-mogelijk-afval-weg-te-gooien>

<https://taskforcekorteketen.nl/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Adviesrapport-Nationale-Samenwerking-Korte-Keten-1.pdf>

<https://www.rabobank.com/nl/about-rabobank/foodforward/een-kortere-keten-is-een-kwestie-van-goed-ondernemerschap.html>

<https://www.foodagribusiness.nl/het-succes-en-de-uitdagingen-van-korte-ketens/#:~:text=Direct%20overleg%20kan%20probleem%20van,succesvol%2C%20zegt%20Van%20der%20Schans.&text=Direct%20overleg%20tussen%20producent%20en,profijt%20op%20voor%20beide%20partijen.%E2%80%9D>

<https://www.entreemagazine.nl/ondernemen/dit-zijn-de-winnaars-van-de-gaia-green-awards-2022>

<https://igo.nl/nieuws/actueel/artikel/32599/Weekend-van-de-Korte-Keten-Flakkeelokaal-met-Ben-Schipper>

<https://www.goodfoodclub.nu/weekend/>



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KIOgN6Rx4q4>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P57wSdHQP78&t=31s>

<https://www.milieubarometer.nl/nl/home/>



greendestinations.org



green-destinations