



Doing Business with Respect

Sustainability Magazine

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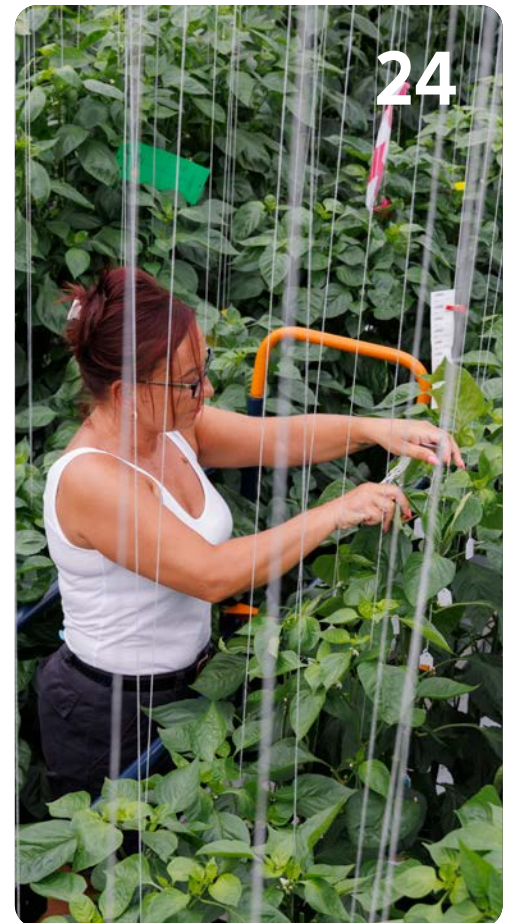
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Message from the board

As a fruit and vegetable breeding company, corporate social responsibility is part of daily life for us. After all, our seeds put Rijk Zwaan at the very start of the food supply chain. We contribute to people worldwide having access to sufficient healthy food.

We feel a responsibility towards the people we feed, and towards the people who enable us to develop and produce the seeds. Those people, our employees, have been our most important priority for many decades.

With that priority in mind, we are committed to creating a clean environment – in which our people live and work, in which we produce seeds, and in which growers can cultivate fruit and vegetables. By investing in research and breeding, we develop new fruit and vegetable varieties. Our seeds produce resilient crops that require less energy, less water, less fertiliser and less use of crop protection agents – plants that deliver high yields even in challenging conditions, enabling growers to generate a good income and to produce healthy food for their community.

We go the extra mile to offer employees an enjoyable job for life – a job within which they can take responsibility and have scope for personal development, with a fair salary and a safe and pleasant work environment. We do this not only for our own employees, but also for others in the production chain, and on a worldwide level through more than 30 subsidiaries.

Our management approach is characterised by doing business respectfully, acting with integrity and working together. Our ethical values have permeated every fibre of the organisation.

This 'Doing Business with Respect' magazine is a stepping stone to reporting in accordance with the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD) guidelines. Being transparent about our approach to corporate social responsibility is consistent with the way we operate.

We don't claim to provide a complete overview here. The CSRD will require us to report on hundreds of criteria. But we do want to paint a clear picture of Rijk Zwaan's extra steps and investments to make the world more liveable – both now and for future generations.

Board of Directors,

Ben Tax
Marco van Leeuwen
Martijn Eggink

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As a fruit and vegetable breeding company, corporate social responsibility is part of daily life for us.

Our company culture

Primarily, it is the policy of Rijk Zwaan to offer its employees a lasting and pleasant position with good working conditions.

This aim can only be achieved if Rijk Zwaan is sufficiently profitable to ensure its continuity. Profits may be used to finance investments and provide a satisfactory level of working capital. In view of this main aim and to increase

the chance of achieving sufficiently high profits, we have set out our company policy in more detail. Our company policy embraces all fundamental rules and important traditions of a company.

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Rijk Zwaan's primary goal is to offer its employees a long-term and enjoyable job with a good salary and benefits package.



In brief

Our company policy can be condensed into the following points:

- 1** High motivation and close involvement of the employee.
- 2** Strong team spirit amongst employees, in the interest of Rijk Zwaan.
- 3** Commitment to supply top quality products and service to our customers, whom we regard as partners.
- 4** Excellent business ethics.
- 5** Within Rijk Zwaan, personal relations are based on the following starting points:
 - All communications, whether verbal or written, will always be based on the truth so that decisions can be made on this basis.
 - Friendly, open and clear communication.
 - Respect for each other's opinions and ideas.
 - Adherence to high moral values and norms.
- 6** **Decentralisation and decision making**
Within Rijk Zwaan, authorities and responsibilities are delegated as much as possible under decentralised management. It is expected from employees that they act independently but always maintain a large measure of solidarity towards their colleagues. Ours is a 'flat' organisation. Decision making is done on the basis of discussion and argument. Blindly following orders without a critical mind is not our style. If, occasionally, a difference of opinion remains after discussion, the decision of the ultimately responsible person is followed loyally.
- 7** **Innovation and creativeness**
Our business is based on continual development and putting into effect new ideas, always geared to market demands. Dynamic market conditions demand a creative attitude and working method for the development of our products.
- 8** **Careful use of resources**
To carry out our work we use appropriate, well made and durable equipment. Facilities must be such, that they induce excellent results under favourable working conditions. Employees are expected to treat equipment with care to lengthen its economic lifespan. We need to possess the material goods required to supply high quality products. Extravagance is not our style.



- 9** **Consideration for the environment**
In every department of our company each employee will continually be alert to any contribution we may be able to make to improve the environment. Besides economic interests, the environmental aspect will be an important factor during the decision making processes.

It is of great importance that all employees adhere to these ground rules and encourage their colleagues to do the same. The intention is to remind the employees within the various companies and departments of Rijk Zwaan regularly of the above aims and policies of the company. During job interviews it should be ascertained whether a candidate would be able and willing to stick to our company policy.



The environment

Our choice to respect the environment

Whoever puts people first, as Rijk Zwaan does, is automatically considerate of the environment in which people live. We have a long-term view. That's why we take care of nature and our planet, which we want to preserve for future generations. That manifests itself in the responsible use of natural resources, and in doing business in a way that is not only efficient and economically viable, but also sustainable and environmentally friendly.



Our environmental policy

At Rijk Zwaan, we take a long-term view. We feel a responsibility to not exploit the planet, and we are aware that the planet gives us the resources we need to live together harmoniously.

We want to be independent. That's precisely why it makes sense to invest in choices that are focused on sustainable energy.

We're actively innovating, including in the area of our business processes. Rijk Zwaan is breeding for tomorrow's

growers. This means that our company must also evolve in a future-focused way. Rijk Zwaan gives employees the freedom and responsibility to implement futureproof solutions. We work together with partners to conduct research into sustainability in new and ever-changing forms. Each year, with our sector partners – who face the same challenges – and researchers, we make progress towards further reducing the use of chemical agents and resources.

Our environmental code of conduct

- At Rijk Zwaan, we use our resources carefully and we take care of the environment. We do so at board level, in our subsidiary companies, at departmental level and at the level of each individual employee. This means that we choose solid, comfortable and sustainable equipment over unnecessary luxury.
- We avoid polluting the environment. If any pollution should occur, we minimise the impact and ensure that it is remedied.
- We separate and minimise our waste, use sustainable materials as much as possible and try to extend the life of materials, appliances and machines.
- We minimise the consumption of water and energy and use renewable energy sources wherever possible.
- We prevent food waste, both in our company canteens and through our improved vegetable varieties.
- We encourage the use of sustainable cultivation methods and train employees in the responsible use of crop protection agents.
- We share our knowledge of sustainability and the professionalisation of vegetable cultivation with growers, usually within the context of specific projects.
- We respect – and help to protect – nature and biodiversity.
- We develop new varieties that provide answers to societal challenges like food security and climate change.

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From 2040 onwards, we will no longer use gas to heat our greenhouses and buildings in the Netherlands.

Actions and results

Climate

To grow, plants need sunlight and CO₂. Both are available to everyone for free. But to help plants grow even better, we provide them with heat and sometimes extra light. In our processes, we need energy primarily for heating our greenhouses and in the form of electricity to power our activities and buildings.

Heat

From 2040, we will no longer use gas to heat our greenhouses and buildings in the Netherlands. In De Lier, we are switching to geothermal heat. This energy source will meet 100% of our energy needs in the summer and 25% in the winter. Among other things, we will use heat pumps to meet our remaining energy needs in the winter. We have interconnected our greenhouses in De Lier in order to share the heat between them effectively. Geothermal heat is sustainable because there is an infinite supply and using it does not emit CO₂. Additionally, in contrast to sun or wind, it is always available. Air treatment systems play a big role in saving energy in greenhouses. By dehumidifying the air, for example, we can keep a dual screen closed, improving the insulation.

At Prinsenland, we – along with other companies – will in the future be able to use residual heat from a local waste incineration plant. Residual heat is a more sustainable approach than using gas, because the heat is a by-product of burning waste. At Prinsenland and in Fijnaart, we will be able to make use of aquathermal energy in the future. Other important ways of saving energy include storing heat and cold in buffers and underground (earth-air heat exchangers). We are investing in new buffers and in expanding our heat exchangers. We are also investing in interconnecting the heat exchangers underground so that they can take over from each other if necessary.

Electricity

In De Lier we are switching to solar panels to meet our electricity need. Many of these solar panels are installed on the roof of our new Seed Connect Centre. By 2030, our goal is for all the artificial lighting in our greenhouses to be provided by LED lamps. Most of our greenhouses do not have artificial lighting, and LED lamps currently account for 20% of the lighting in those that do. In Fijnaart and at Prinsenland, the goal is to generate as much of the required electricity as possible using solar panels. We are designing our new facility De Driehoek to support entirely fossil-fuel free cultivation.

CO₂-emissions

In the 2023/2024 period

48,410

Rijk Zwaan as a whole:

48,410 tonnes of CO₂ equivalents

33,194

Rijk Zwaan in the Netherlands:

33,194 tonnes of CO₂ equivalents

The three biggest contributors

to Rijk Zwaan's CO₂ emissions in the Netherlands (both own activities and chain-related emissions) are:

55%

combined heat and power plants (CHPs)

32%

the electricity we purchase

10%

technical equipment such as boilers

(Data source: Research by Blonk)



Energy- saving pepper variety

Rijk Zwaan develops futureproof varieties, such as varieties that can cope well with less energy or water. For example, a couple of years ago we introduced Alzamora RZ, a pepper variety that growers can cultivate at a lower temperature than normal.

Pepper is fundamentally a tropical crop that doesn't like cold conditions. A low temperature soon leads to production losses and quality issues.

At Rijk Zwaan, we are heavily involved in innovation and research to understand how the plant functions, and we work closely with growers and their customers so that we know what the market needs.

That resulted in a pepper that actually does perform well in a cooler greenhouse. Alzamora can cope with up to 50% less gas input per square metre, without losing production or fruit quality. During the recent energy crisis, countless Dutch pepper growers switched to this variety.





The first to launch aphid-resistant varieties

The black currant-lettuce aphid, *Nasonovia ribisnigri*, is a troublesome pest for growers of iceberg lettuce. It settles deep inside the head, making an infestation hard to eradicate. Affected lettuces are virtually unsaleable.

In 1996, Rijk Zwaan became the first to launch two varieties with resistance against this aphid. That had a large-scale impact, reducing crop spraying and production losses. The aphid eventually managed to overcome the resistances, leaving growers once again frantic with worry – especially because a number of chemical crop protection agents that are effective in tackling the aphid are no longer permitted in Europe.

In 2025, Rijk Zwaan repeated its achievement. We were once again the first to present two high-resistance varieties: Happinas RZ and Friendlinas RZ. The new resistance gives growers an important option in the battle against *Nasonovia ribisnigri* and prevents failed harvests.

Preventing environmental harm

Putting people first automatically means taking care of people's health. As part of contributing to a healthy future for people and the environment, we want to prevent environmental harm.

Resistant varieties

Rijk Zwaan is right at the start of the food chain. Thanks to our seeds, growers can cultivate vegetables, the food industry can put new ideas into practice, retailers can sell vegetables, and we can inspire consumers to lead a healthier lifestyle. In other words, the development of futureproof varieties that are resistant against pests and diseases is very important for the food we eat every day. They reduce the need for growers to use chemicals on their crops.

Crop protection

At Rijk Zwaan, the health of employees and of the environment is very important to us. Therefore, we strive to make maximum use of alternatives to chemical crop protection agents, such as biologicals. We use the most biologicals – particularly natural predators – in covered and indoor crops. We only utilise chemicals if there is no other alternative. Our goal is to not use any chemical crop protection agents containing ingredients on the EU's list of candidate for substitution (CFS). Moreover, for crops outside of Europe, we aim to not use any crop protection agents containing ingredients that do not have EU approval. Wageningen University is developing a standardised method to determine the environmental impact of chemical crop protection agents. This will enable us to know our environmental impact in the future.

Integrated Crop Management (ICM) is an important part of our cultivation activities around the world. We are training our employees to put this into practice so that it will increasingly become our standard way of working worldwide. We are rolling ICM out worldwide by taking a critical look at the agents used and by phasing out the higher-risk agents in favour of alternatives. This approach to crop protection involves a wide variety of measures: from installing insect netting over the vents to deploying natural predators, and from covering or constantly wetting the substrate to placing African violets in between the plants to protect against root aphids.

In the long term, ICM helps to make our crops more resilient and better able to cope with pests and diseases. Additionally, this approach to crop protection is necessary because of ever-tighter restrictions on the use of chemicals. In collaboration with industry organisation Plantum and other companies, Rijk Zwaan is member of a project group called *Weerbare Groentezaadteelt* ('Producing Resilient Vegetable Seeds') aimed at exchanging knowledge and further developing integrated crop management in the breeding sector.

The seeds we sell are sometimes coated to protect them against soilborne pathogens or other external influences. From 1 January 2027 onwards, we will supply non-chemically treated seeds as standard. We are already working towards this. The only possible exceptions are when it would be irresponsible to supply the seeds without chemically treating them first. We want to actively reduce the number of exceptions in the coming years based on targeted action plans. By doing so, we are going above and beyond the regulatory requirements – not only because we want to actively contribute to reducing the amount of chemicals in the environment due to seed treatments, but also because we want to lead by example in demonstrating the opportunities for sustainable crop production. The development of biological agents that we can use in a protective coating plays a key role in shifting away from chemical coatings. Therefore, Rijk Zwaan is involved in research projects to achieve this.

Additionally, we work on coatings that contain no microplastics. Some of our coatings are already microplastics-free, and by 2026 this will be the case for all coatings we use in De Lier. Not all the coatings that are applied to our seeds outside of the EU are currently microplastics-free. However, these represent only a very small percentage of the total, since virtually all our seeds are processed and packaged in De Lier.

Varieties suitable for sustainable cultivation methods

Not only the varieties are relevant for sustainable crops, but also the cultivation methods. All over the world, new, better and cleaner techniques are continuously being developed. Rijk Zwaan develops varieties especially designed for new crop production methods such as hydroponics, and for automated techniques such as robotised pest management.

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From 2027 onwards, we will sell non-chemically treated seeds as standard.

Water

Water is essential for plants to grow. We want to minimise the environmental burden resulting from our water consumption. We also want to end our dependency on drinking water. Therefore, our goal is to use rainwater to irrigate all our crops in the Netherlands by 2030. There is sufficient rainfall to meet our needs. However, storage is an issue, because we want to be able to use the water when we need it. Another factor is water quality. From now until 2050, salination will become an ever-bigger problem, so we must turn our attention to other sources besides groundwater and surface water. Capturing and storing rainfall will give us access to enough good-quality fresh water, which has also been obtained in a circular manner.

Water in the open field

The average annual rainfall in the Netherlands is 800-900 mm. Roughly 50% of this is needed to water the soil and crops to compensate for evaporation. In the open field, we use drainage systems to deal with excess rainfall. We are currently working to realise an underground storage system so that we can retain the water for later use. Most of the rain falls in a period when we don't need it: autumn and winter. Once in place, we will be able to draw the water from the underground storage system in the growth season (spring and summer).

Water in greenhouses

In De Lier, Rijk Zwaan has a large underground water reservoir where we can store 40,000m³ of water. In addition, we have a large total capacity – more than legally required – of water basins. Here, we capture rainfall – including from greenhouse roofs – and store the water. Rijk Zwaan has plans to construct a second water reservoir to create sufficient rainfall storage capacity to meet our irrigation needs in De Lier.

Green Impact

The Green Impact committee is focused on reducing the environmental burden within Rijk Zwaan. The team coordinates initiatives for environmental improvements and helps colleagues to develop their ideas and get them heard in the right places within the organisation so that they can actually have an impact. Examples include reducing packaging materials, the handling of company waste, the generation of renewable energy, reducing fuel consumption, and so on.

Irrigation approach

Besides fully transitioning to using rainwater, Rijk Zwaan is also changing its irrigation approach in order to save water. Surface irrigation is inefficient because only 60% of the water actually benefits the crop. In contrast, drip irrigation is 90-95% efficient. That's why we have installed drip irrigation systems in all our greenhouses and are now also doing this for all our open-field crops. Additionally, we use data from sensors and satellites to monitor and measure a crop's water requirement, rather than irrigating based on instinct. This saves water because we only irrigate when it really is necessary. That is both good for the environment and good for business. As an added advantage, thanks to ever-better monitoring, our breeders can develop varieties that can cope with less water, and we can back this up with data. This is an example of how we're developing varieties for the future.

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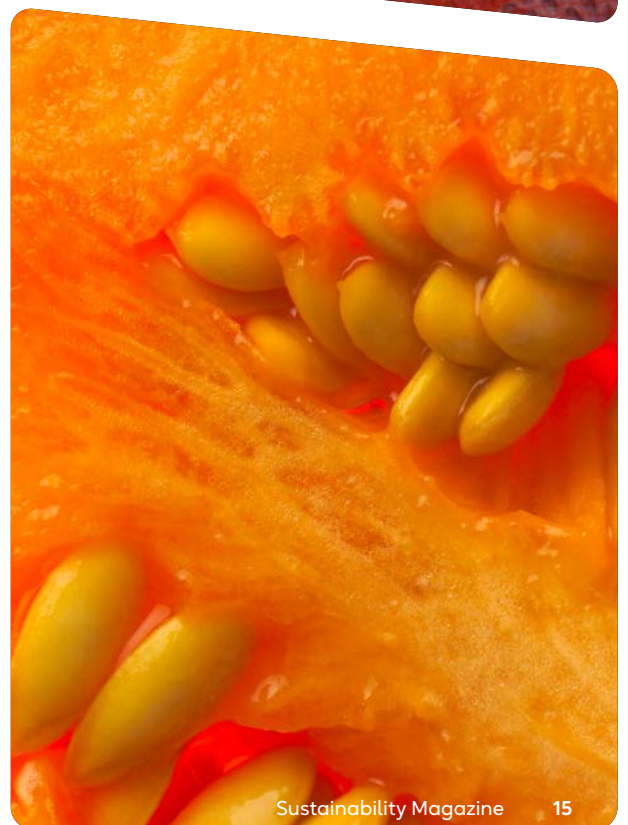
By 2030, all our crops in the greenhouses in the Netherlands will be irrigated using rainwater.



Operational innovation to save water

We remove the seeds from the fruits in what is called the extraction process. This traditionally required a lot of water. To reduce our water consumption, we have developed a new machine. It only needs to be filled with water once before each harvesting process. After that, the water is constantly reused. Besides saving water, this new technique also improves the working conditions for our operators, plus it simplifies the overall process because the machine is connected to the upstream equipment.

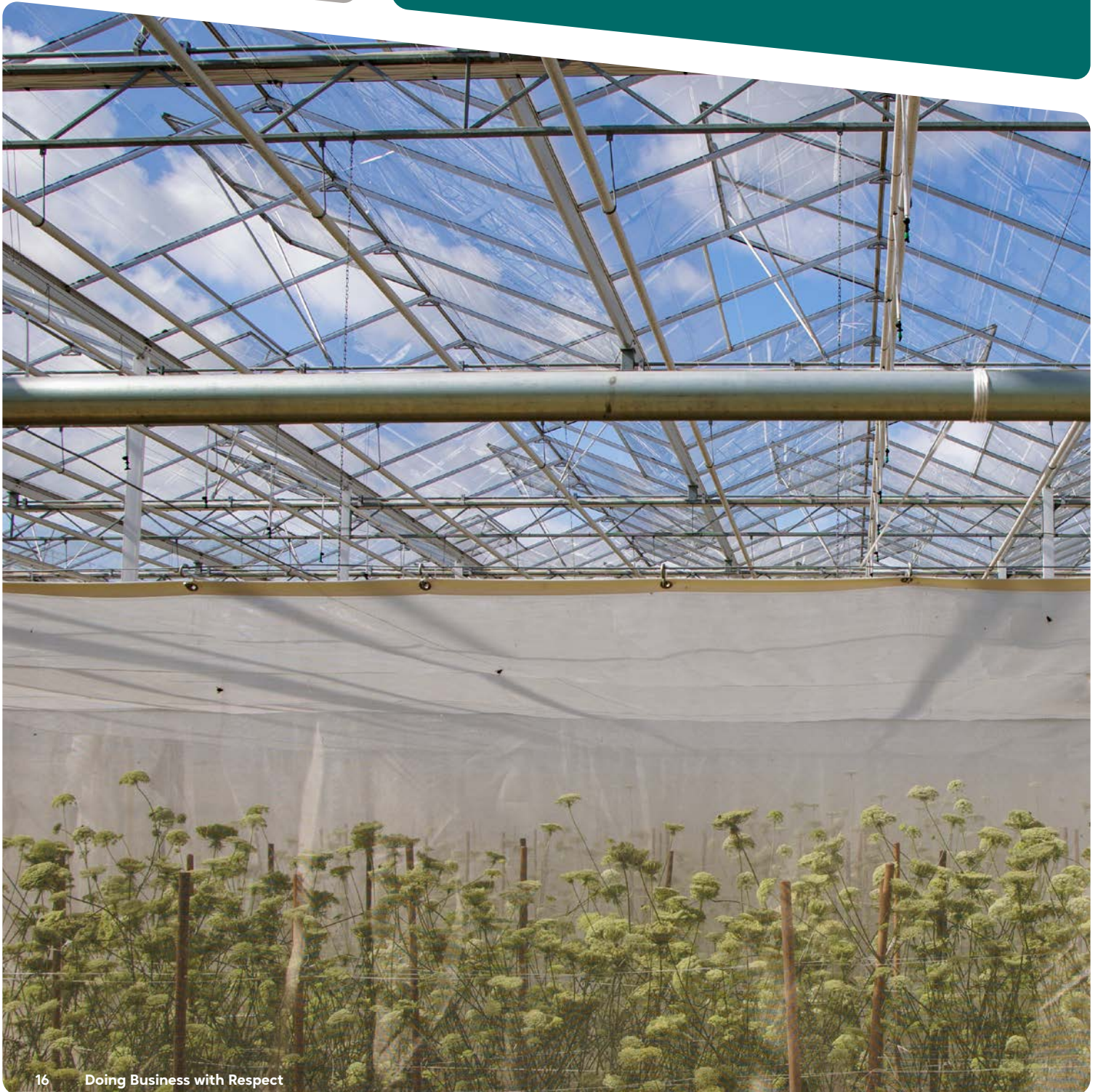
Rijk Zwaan gives employees room to take responsibility. Colleagues had free rein to design and realise this machine themselves to make it as practical and environmentally friendly as possible. Over the coming months, they have the chance to further improve it. Once they are entirely satisfied, we will make and add a second machine, and we will also explore how we can implement it for the extraction process at our subsidiaries.





Pollinators for producing fruits and seeds

Pollination by insects or other creatures is necessary to produce fruits and seeds in more than three quarters of our crops, including to produce seeds of the most common agricultural crops such as carrots, brassicas, onions, leeks and leafy greens. Rijk Zwaan is working with the Naturalis Biodiversity Center in Leiden on a project aimed at finding new pollinators for crops for which the current pollinators – such as honey bees, bumblebees and mason bees – are less ideal. Using the right pollinators to pollinate crops results in better seed production and therefore a better food supply.



Biodiversity

Biodiversity is essential for us all. A biodiverse environment is better protected against unfavourable influences that could affect crop production, thus reducing the risks to farming. The world's richness of plant species is a source of all food. Therefore, high biodiversity is important for breeding, and for the fruits and vegetables for future generations.

Biodiversity on our campuses

In Fijnaart, our location for open-field crops, Rijk Zwaan has a 'Gold' rating: the highest level within the eco-scheme of the common agricultural policy (CAP). This means that we take the maximum possible ecological measures – from maintaining a high frequency of crop rotation, to allowing the land to lie fallow. When planning new buildings, we include areas of green space at the design stage. We then create biodiversity in these green spaces. That means planting native species of plants that reinforce the natural environment. This focus on green spaces stems also from our commitment to providing a pleasant work environment for our employees.

Genetic variation as a source of futureproof varieties

Biodiversity is of crucial importance for worldwide food security. It is the source of new, innovative traits that we use to tackle societal challenges such as food security and climate adaptation.

Biodiversity is at the heart of plant breeding. For a healthy future, it is crucial that breeders have access to as much genetic variation as possible. Our industry association Plantum is an advocate of the exchange of genetic material under reasonable conditions. Insufficient access to such material limits innovation and therefore presents a threat to food security and biodiversity. Plant breeders have long been aware of the importance of biodiversity. Together with gene banks, Rijk Zwaan helps to expand collections and safeguard genetic sources for the future. In this way, we make a direct contribution to preserving biodiversity and to food security.

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Our aim is to
recycle 85% of
our total plastics
waste in our
R&D labs.

Circular economy

In the Rijk Zwaan processes, there are multiple ways that we make sustainable use of materials. We consider it important to use things sparingly and not to utilise more than necessary. In addition, thanks to our long-term vision, we anticipate developments that could restrict our business processes and respond to them well in advance. That is almost always the sustainable choice. By opting for sustainable materials, we help to grow the offering of such materials. After all, if more companies demand them, manufacturers and suppliers will adapt and expand their range, making it easier for others to make sustainable choices.

Circular choices

Our circular choices range from washable equipment, to vehicles that run on hydrotreated vegetable oil (HVO) biofuel instead of diesel.

Here are three examples:

All workwear is made from sustainable and resilient material. Rather than throwing away the workwear when it reaches the end of its useful life, we return the textiles to the supplier for recycling. Additionally, for visitors, we have developed more sustainable protective clothing. At our Trial Centre High Tech demo centre, we receive thousands of visitors each year. Strict hygiene protocols apply at this demo location. For example, overalls are mandatory. Up until last year, we provided disposable overalls to our visitors. Now, however, they are washable – up to 500 times, using a special cleaning programme that eliminates viruses.

Around 40% of Rijk Zwaan's employees work in R&D. In other words, we have lots of laboratories, and the equipment used there must always be clean. We can't entirely avoid utilising disposable items, but we want as much of our equipment as possible to be cleanable and reusable. Therefore, we are exploring how we can give most plastic items a second life. In collaboration with a specialised partner, we have mapped the quantities and composition of the plastic items we use. This is important, because not all types of plastics can be recycled together. The study revealed that the ten plastics we use the most can be recycled without needing to be separated first. This project is aimed at recycling 85% of our total plastics waste flow.

Rijk Zwaan is growing, which is why we regularly have to construct new buildings. We pay attention to sustainability in various ways during the construction process. For example, we opt for a modular design so that it is always possible to expand the building or use it for other purposes in the future. We opt for sustainable and durable materials, such as wood. Our primary goal with our buildings is to create a pleasant environment for our employees. Therefore, we prioritise lots of natural light (including in the processing hall/factory), lots of greenery and good acoustics.



People and work

Our choice to respect people

Rijk Zwaan's primary goal is to offer our employees worldwide a long-term and enjoyable job with attractive pay and conditions. This goal is at the core of the organisation, and forms the starting point for our company culture.

Rijk Zwaan strives to ensure good and honest working conditions, including at our subsidiaries (and external producers). The principles of our company culture and our principles of fair labour are leading in this, and foster diversity and inclusion. All of this has a positive impact on our employees, and ensures that Rijk Zwaan remains competitive, attracts employees and retains them for a long time.



Our social policy

Rijk Zwaan is focused on employee wellbeing, attractive pay and conditions, and the integration of corporate social responsibility into our business operations.

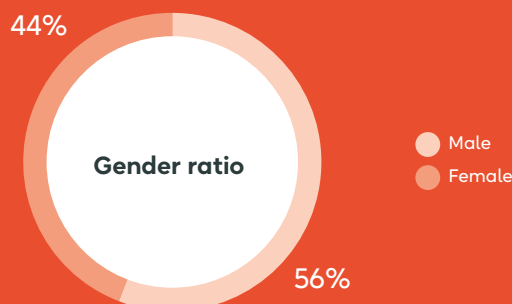
Our code of conduct for partnership

- At Rijk Zwaan we communicate in a clear, open and friendly way.
- We respect each other's opinions and are always open to new ideas as these form the basis for our creative solutions and innovative products.
- We are well aware that our knowledge, techniques and skills are unique and valuable. We use them responsibly, keeping in mind both the company's interests and the broader interests of society.
- We share our knowledge and expertise with partners wherever this is possible and useful because we believe in open innovation. We can achieve more together than on our own.
- We aim for long-term partnerships that can withstand setbacks and which offer added value to all parties.

Our code of conduct for people

- At Rijk Zwaan we work together. We motivate, help, respect and show interest in each other.
- We respect internationally recognised human rights.
- We do everything within our power to protect the rights of people if they are in jeopardy within our company.
- We do everything within our power and what can reasonably be expected of us to protect the rights of people when we identify situations, outside our company but within the scope of our influence, which pose a threat to human rights.
- We do not discriminate against anyone, either within or outside Rijk Zwaan, on any grounds whatsoever. Our selection policy for new employees focuses on the candidate's suitability for the job in question, their intrinsic motivation and their full endorsement of our corporate culture.
- Our employees must be able to do their work safely.
- We provide fair primary and secondary terms of employment and ensure good working conditions.
- After an intensive application procedure, new employees will receive a permanent contract unless they have specifically been engaged for work of a seasonal or temporary nature.
- We make sure that vulnerable people feel at home at Rijk Zwaan and that they can fully participate in the labour process.
- Our employees are given sufficient scope and opportunity to develop themselves.
- We pay attention to the interests and wellbeing of people in the immediate vicinity of our sites.
- Our whistle-blowing policy is accessible to all employees.
- Whenever necessary and where possible, we ask our cooperation partners to pay attention to good working conditions and fair treatment for employees.

Number of employees



40-hour working week in Tanzania

A 45-hour working week is the norm in Tanzania, meaning that all employees also came into work at Rijk Zwaan on Saturdays. At Rijk Zwaan, we regard a good work-life balance as important, and we believe a 45-hour working week does not support that. It meant that colleagues had less time to spend with family members, to go to church or to pursue their hobbies. Moreover, they had little time to take care of practical issues or household chores, leading to a high rate of absence during the week. Therefore, in 2022, we transitioned to a 40-hour working week for our employees in Arusha, without loss of salary. Everyone is very satisfied with the results. The work still gets done, absenteeism has fallen significantly, and colleagues are happier and more relaxed.



Actions and results

Good and fair labour

Rijk Zwaan is committed to good and fair labour. Among other things, this means regular and decent work, free choice of work, respect, fair treatment, zero child labour, safe working conditions based on prevention, working conditions focused on health and wellbeing, and freedom of association. Our HR policy is applicable for all Rijk Zwaan employees worldwide.

Employees' opinions

Rijk Zwaan strives to conduct an employee satisfaction survey at all subsidiaries with more than 50 employees every three years. We implement the changes based on the feedback received before it is time for the next survey. Rijk Zwaan maintains dialogue with employees via a Works Council in all countries in which this is legally required.

Whistleblower policy

Rijk Zwaan has an extensive whistleblower policy. There are seven ways of reporting undesirable or illegal behaviour, including anonymously and to independent third parties. Intranet articles and posters in canteens and in coffee corners make it easy for employees to find out how they can report unethical behaviour – from fraud to discrimination.

Low employee turnover

Once employees join Rijk Zwaan, they tend to stay. The turnover rate up until retirement age is just 3%.

Training

Rijk Zwaan offers a wide choice of education and training through the RZ Academy. The majority of this offering is accessible to employees internationally. At Rijk Zwaan, we have our own studios where we organise international masterclasses and webinars both for employees and for customers. In addition, the international business school IESE has developed a number of training programmes especially for Rijk Zwaan.

Absenteeism

In 2024, Rijk Zwaan's absenteeism due to illness percentage was 3.9%. For comparison, the Dutch average in the same year was 5.2%.

Employee health

Rijk Zwaan offers employees various extras to support their physical and mental health. Permanent employees in the Netherlands can go for a complete health scan every three years. For this purpose, Rijk Zwaan has set up a health centre: VitaSana. 90% of colleagues make use of this opportunity. The medical data is strictly confidential and VitaSana only shares it with the employee in question. Employees in the Netherlands who are struggling with their mental health can turn to OpenUp. This platform provides support in multiple ways, ranging from workshops to 1-to-1 sessions with a psychologist. Besides OpenUp, we also offer access to more extensive psychological help. In the Netherlands, Rijk Zwaan has its own company doctors and business social workers. Rijk Zwaan offers employees in the Netherlands the opportunity to join Bedrijfsfitness NL, a network of 4,500 sport facilities. Additionally, free weekly bootcamp sessions are organised on the Rijk Zwaan premises, making it easy for everyone to participate. Outside of the Netherlands, Rijk Zwaan acts to improve employee health in various ways. The exact details vary per country and depend on local laws.

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Employees in the Netherlands can go for a complete health scan every three years.



Ethics and management

Our choice to respect ethics

A fair and ethical approach to doing business is anchored in our company culture worldwide. We have structured our company around those norms and values to ensure that we adhere to them.



Our management policy

Rijk Zwaan complies with the local laws in each country. Additionally, our behaviour is based on the pillars of our company culture, which have guided our way of working since 1989, and on the ensuing codes of conduct.

Our ethical governance code of conduct

- At Rijk Zwaan, honesty, integrity and fairness come first – all over the world. We make no concessions on these values.
- We have a flat decision-making structure, meaning that responsibilities are allocated to the employees directly involved and their managers as far as possible.
- We take decisions on the basis of consensus whenever possible. If we cannot agree among ourselves, we do not hesitate to call on the responsible manager.
- We focus on the long term and do not believe in hasty changes of direction or reorganisations. This translates into loyalty to our employees, customers and partners.
- We refrain from unethical practices such as corruption, fraud and tax evasion.
- It goes without saying that we respect and abide by national and international standards and the laws and regulations that apply in the countries in which we operate.
- We respect competition law and do not enter into any agreements that conflict with it.
- We account for our results annually in the annual accounts, which are made publicly available through the Netherlands Chamber of Commerce.
- Non-financial information, about our social impact for example, is shared through our website, social media channels and brochures.

Our code of conduct for social responsibility

- At Rijk Zwaan we pay attention to the interests of our company, our surroundings and society as a whole.
- We are aware of the interests and wellbeing of people living in the immediate vicinity of our facilities; in other words, we are good neighbours.
- We are approachable and willing to answer questions from local residents, the media or politicians. We keep in touch with what is going on in society.
- By showing exemplary behaviour, we exert a positive influence on the living conditions of, and opportunities for, the people with whom we come into contact. We do so both directly, through our own actions, and indirectly.
- As a vegetable breeding company, we actively contribute to making available new varieties which provide answers to societal challenges such as food security and climate change. What we want is healthy, affordable food for everyone.
- We not only feel a responsibility to supply the professional market with high-quality seeds, but also to share knowledge and expertise with small farmers in less developed markets.

“

Our principles of fair labour are based on United Nations guidelines.

Actions and results

Checks and balances

At Rijk Zwaan, the decision-making responsibility rarely rests on just one person's shoulders. For example, the Rijk Zwaan board is made up of three directors who share the aim of reaching unanimity. As a rule, each subsidiary is led by two managing directors. The board is overseen by the Supervisory Board. Rijk Zwaan has a Works Council in the Netherlands and other countries where this is required by law. This system for participation in discussion and decision-making at the various levels creates guarantees for working with more integrity.

IESE training

At Rijk Zwaan, we feel responsible for ensuring that managers receive high-quality training on the values that form an essential part of all activities and decision-making. Therefore, the Business Ethics and Company Culture training at IESE (the Business School of Barcelona) is mandatory for all colleagues who lead large departments or a subsidiary. IESE is one of the best business schools in the world. In close collaboration with Rijk Zwaan, IESE has specially developed this five-day training programme for us. Our directors and managers learn about Rijk Zwaan's business ethics, company culture and codes of conduct. We have been running this programme every two years since 2014, with the exception of during the COVID-19 pandemic. To date, 173 colleagues have completed this course, including 95% of the managing directors. In 2025, we also introduced a mandatory refresher course.

Ethical approach from the start

Ensuring that our employees know and embody our ethical values starts with the way in which we recruit new colleagues. We hold multiple interviews and usually also an assessment to check whether the person fits with our company culture. Successful candidates immediately receive a permanent contract. The managers are responsible for informing employees about our company culture (the 'triptych') and helping them to put our ethical values into practice.

Illegal and undesirable behaviour

We tackle any behaviour that is against the law or does not adhere to our behavioural code of conduct. Rijk Zwaan has a zero-tolerance policy. We arrange for all reports to be investigated, either by an external auditor or by our objective internal auditor. The four international confidential counsellors and the board members are notified of any illegal or undesirable behaviour.

Durable relationships

Durable relationships based on shared values form the basis of our collaboration with others. We always strive for a win-win situation for everyone involved because we believe that this is the way to make long-term impact.

Fair procurement procedures

Our procurement procedures must be open and honest. We do not accept bribes or any other forms of influence or manipulation. Our strategy is outlined in our Procurement Policy. This is based on our moral standards, which revolve around integrity, equality, trust, high quality and sustainability. Each payment made by Rijk Zwaan is accompanied by proof such as an invoice or salary slip. Payments above a certain sum require two management-level signatures as standard.

Preventing corruption and fraud

Unethical practices such as corruption, deception, fraud or tax evasion are unacceptable to Rijk Zwaan. We take an active approach to prevention. In the recruitment process, we closely examine whether the candidate is a good fit with the Rijk Zwaan culture. We comprehensively inform all employees how they can report corrupt and undesirable behaviour. In the case of a fraudulent or corrupt incident, the internal auditor starts an investigation, bringing in an external auditor if necessary. In addition to signing their employment contract, all managing directors also sign a terms of reference document acknowledging the importance of upholding the company culture and codes of conduct. They attend a mandatory training session on business ethics. We uphold a strict policy of not accepting gifts.

Regular training on malpractices

A standard component of the internal auditor's role is giving anti-corruption and anti-fraud training at the subsidiaries, once every five years. The four-part training course covers the Rijk Zwaan culture, the theoretical background to fraud, bribery and blackmail, the risks of fraud and corruption at Rijk Zwaan, and the internal procedures when malpractice is suspected.

Good working conditions at partners

Besides having its own seed-production locations, Rijk Zwaan also works with external seed producers. To clarify our expectations in terms of good working conditions and remuneration, we have drawn up the RZ Principles of Fair Labour. Among other things, these include equal treatment of all employees, zero tolerance for child labour and forced labour, and ensuring a safe and clean work environment. The Rijk Zwaan Principles of Fair Labour are based on the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. It is important to us that our activities do not involve any child labour or forced labour, including through our external suppliers. We ask partners to agree to the Rijk Zwaan principles. In the case of some producers, we conduct annual Fair Labour audits to ensure that these companies adhere to the same standards that Rijk Zwaan upholds for its own employees. These audits are based around the Principles of Fair Labour. So far, Rijk Zwaan has mainly audited seed producers in Thailand and India, where the risk is highest, but this approach will be extended to other countries in the future.



Giving back: investing in the community

We feel a responsibility to contribute to the availability of healthy and affordable food, even in countries beyond our regular scope. Through our Committee for Development Cooperation (COS), we share our experience, technical knowledge, and vegetable seeds. We help families to learn how to grow crops so they gain better access to healthy vegetables for themselves and as a source of income. We do this in various countries, including Guatemala, Peru and Haiti.

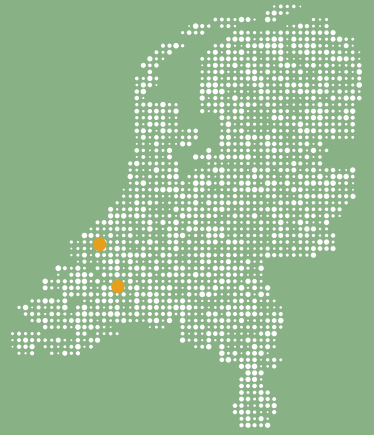
Rijk Zwaan pays a lot of attention to employee health and wellbeing. With the Committee for Sharing Health & Wellbeing, we take things a step further. We want to contribute to the wellbeing of people who are ill or have a limitation, in order to help them, support them and improve their quality of life. Each financial year, we allocate a percentage of our profit to projects by organisations that are aligned with this goal.



Rijk Zwaan at a glance



A Dutch fruit and vegetable breeding company.
We develop new varieties and sell the seeds worldwide.



- Headquarters
- Subsidiaries
- Breeding station
- Production station
- Research and service station
- Distributor

Staff

4,200
employees
worldwide

1,800
in the Netherlands

2,400
in 30+ other countries



Product offer

30+
crops

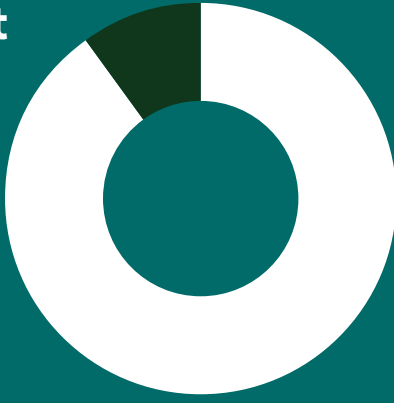
2,000+
commercial varieties



Independent family business

Ownership
90%
three families

10%
1,500 employees



30%

of turnover is spent annually on Research & Development



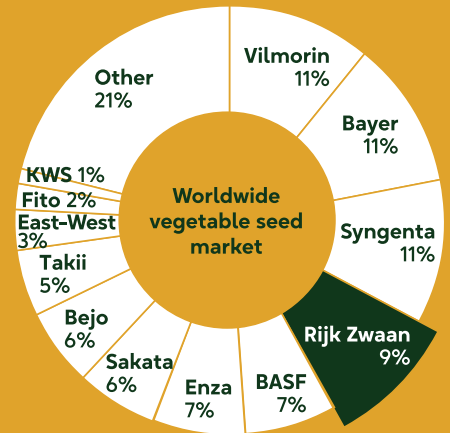
Worldwide

30+
countries with subsidiaries

100+
countries with distributors

Turnover

±700
million euros
(2024/2025)



Research & Development

40%
employed in Research & Development



Breeding Operations

Biotechnology Research

Breeding Process & Organisation

Phytopathology Research

Applied Labs

Seed Technology Research



