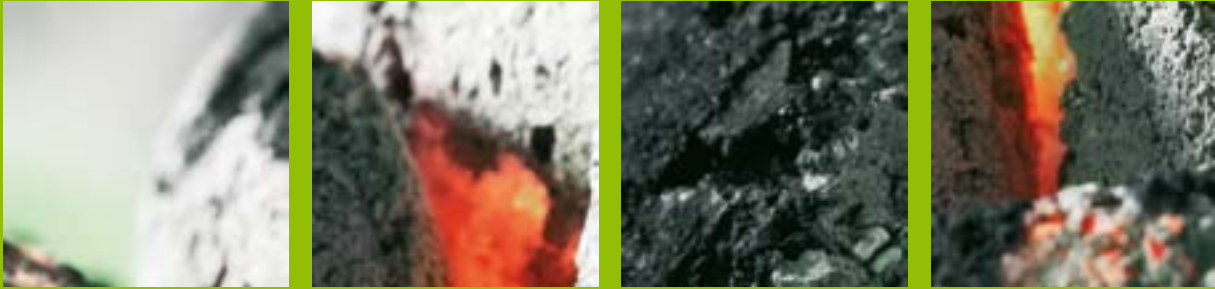




# Time for the Future

Food Valley Vision 2007 – 2011



# Innovation requires new business

Anyone in touch with the spirit of the times, in fact anyone who keeps their eyes open, realizes that we are witnessing a revolution. This all-encompassing upheaval is radically changing the very core of our society, economy, industry, businesses, jobs and even our personal lives. Traditional roles, jobs, skills, methods, insights, strategies, ambitions, fears and expectations are steadily becoming obsolete.

A new world is dawning in which we will no longer be able to rely on familiar patterns of doing business and exchanging knowledge. Companies wishing to position themselves strategically will have to focus on innovation rather than competition.

The Netherlands is a trend-setter in the agri-food business. Our knowledge infrastructure is one of the very best in the world. And our research is tailored to current market conditions and new market developments.

The Food Valley organization was established in 2004. Food Valley creates time for innovative developments and initiates activities on a scale far beyond the Dutch borders. We do this because innovation is a joint effort. Innovation requires a different way of doing business. Unusual business. Unexpected business. Surprising business. Innovative business.

Roger van Hoesel  
Managing Director of the Food Valley organization

# Trends and the Future

It is important to spot trends early. This is because trends invariably lead to fixed social, cultural and economic patterns. The key is to react quickly and innovatively to the many new consumer trends.

## Different strokes for different folks

Consumer emancipation is snowballing. In Western society food is no longer perceived as a primary necessity but rather as a source of pleasure and social interaction. Homogenous market segments have made way for individual consumer needs that may differ considerably and can change overnight. Senior citizens are showing an interest in health-promoting products and are increasingly opting for single-serve packaging. Supermarket shelves reflect the multi-ethnicity of our society. We can now buy halal food and a multitude of exotic vegetables. Another striking trend that cuts across all segments of the population is wellness: food that combines health and a sense of well-being.

## Rapid response to trends

The food industry has great difficulty responding quickly enough to ever more rapidly changing consumer trends. This is because structures in the industry have changed. The scale on which companies operate has increased tremendously. At the same time, business has gone global. The industry has recently faced the expansion of the European Union and the emergence of new exporting countries in Asia and Latin America. Increased competition, changing markets and new generations of technology have led to ever shorter product life cycles. As a result, the development, application and conversion of knowledge has had to accelerate in order to be effective.





# Ambitions

The Food Valley organization aims to put The Netherlands on the map as the world's number one center of expertise in agri-food and innovation. We are working towards this goal by combining creative talent and promoting innovative, experimental and alternative working methods.

## Global leadership position

The Netherlands is number one when it comes to expertise in the global agri-food business. Worldwide we are second only to the US as an exporter of agri-food products. The Dutch food industry's R&D productivity also scores high internationally. This is partly thanks to renowned research institutes such as Wageningen University, NIZO food research and TNO. The Dutch government has declared the food industry a key sector of the Dutch economy. This means that on a national level, more money has been made available for innovation in that sector. Attracting new businesses and making sure existing companies want to stay is one of Food Valley's top priorities.

## Innovation brokers

The Food Valley organization facilitates the development of new, innovative projects in the agri-food sector. Our motto is collaboration: we act as an innovation broker between individual companies, research institutes and various levels of government. We operate like a network organization because we know that bringing together the right mix of people, companies, knowledge and skills results in the best initiatives. Food Valley also aims to engender and promote new business, such as research contracts and other types of cooperation between companies and research centers here and abroad. The companies that belong to the Food Valley Society are an important source of inspiration and a sounding board for Food Valley.

# Activities

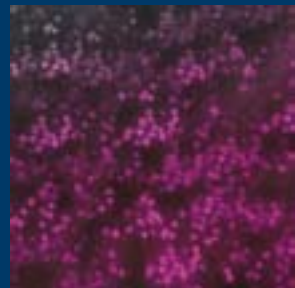
From 2007 to 2011, Food Valley will take a two-pronged approach. Naturally, we will continue to promote and support initiatives from the field. But we will also work on a number of specific goals. To achieve these, we are planning various activities.

## Promoting Innovation Projects

**Innovation Conferences:** Food Valley regularly organizes innovation conferences on a specific theme, subject or possible innovation. These gatherings are the first step towards possible innovation projects. The broader, annual Food Valley conference is a special event where many companies and research experts mingle. Over the next few years we will work on enhancing the international aspect of our innovation conferences.

**New Working Methods:** Innovation requires plenty of room to experiment. The Food Valley organization conceives of, and enables, new ways of working in which ideas can be tested and are allowed to mature. This is usually done in response to a concrete challenge a company is facing.

**Small to Medium-sized Companies:** Small to medium-sized companies have always had trouble gaining access to research experts. This is why we have come up with Innovation Link, a free matching service between companies and research institutes. In the next few years, we will focus on making this service better known.





**Project Development:** The Food Valley organization sees the initiation and development of projects as one of its main tasks. This can vary from matching possible project partners (from The Netherlands and abroad) to writing project plans to bid for European or other subsidies.

### **Promoting new economic activity**

The Netherlands, and particularly the Food Valley area, are an attractive location for food industry companies. There has always been a concentration of agri-food companies and research institutes in the area. The Food Valley organization sees it as one of its primary tasks to explain why agri-food companies and institutes would benefit from doing business in the Netherlands, and in the Food Valley area in particular.

### **Reinforcing the image of the Food Valley area**

It is of great importance to let the world know that the Food Valley area in the Netherlands is the dynamic heart of the agri-food business. Reinforcing the image of this cluster of expert institutes and companies attracts interesting partners with whom successful, new innovation projects can be launched. More than ever before, the Food Valley organization will make use of ambassadors in companies and institutes with international networks.

### **Strengthening the back office**

The Food Valley organization has expanded rapidly since its inception. It is now time to strengthen the back office. In the next few years, Food Valley will invest in the digitization of its customer relations system and the systematic construction of a digital library containing images, text, publications and presentations. At present, members of the Food Valley Society already have access to the Innova Database, a state-of-the-art tool that can trace product innovations in fifty countries.

# Performance

Food Valley wants to achieve clear results and be accountable for them. Therefore, the foundation has set itself quantifiable targets. All of these targets apply to the period from 2007 through 2011.

## Promoting innovation projects

- Research & development expenditures resulting from projects to which Food Valley has demonstrably contributed: € 60 million.
- Number of product and process innovations to which Food Valley has made a concrete contribution: 90.
- Number of new technology-based businesses launched: 15.

## Promoting new economic activity

- Number of new jobs to which Food Valley has clearly contributed: 600.
- New investments to which Food Valley has made a concrete contribution: € 12 million.
- Value of the research contracts to which Food Valley has made a concrete contribution: € 6 million.

## Reinforcing the image of the Food Valley area

- Increase in name recognition among food companies in the Netherlands: 50% (from baseline measurement, to be determined).
- Number of times that foreign parties (companies, go-betweens, government institutions, the media) contact Food Valley concerning the services offered by the organization (including information, participation in conferences, reception of delegations, etc.): 175.



## Evaluation and Control

In 2011, the performance of the Food Valley organization will be evaluated by an independent party. Meanwhile, the Food Valley board of directors will remain closely involved in the organization's activities and performance. The board of directors consists largely of representatives of Food Valley's founding members. It includes various companies (Campina, Friesland Foods, BFactory), Wageningen University and Research Centre, NIZO food research, municipalities (mayors in their private capacity), Syntens, Oost NV and Gelderland province (the latter two formally sit on the board as consultants). The board has an independent chairperson.



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