

## Speech Wout Dekker

### Opening Academic Year

#### Programme

#### Speeches

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#### Symposium (in Dutch)

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### Information about the content of the Speech of Wout Dekker CEO Nutreco Holding Opening Academic Year Wageningen UR, 1 September 2008

#### The role of animal protein in feeding the world

Advancing technology and sharing knowledge can make a substantial contribution to feeding the expected population of tomorrow, according to Wout Dekker, CEO of Nutreco, a leading animal nutrition company. He was speaking at the opening of the academic year of Wageningen University and Research centre (Wageningen UR).

The world population is expected to grow to about 9 billion in 2050. Incomes are increasing, especially in Asia, as is urbanisation. With rising incomes, people tend to eat more meat, fish and dairy products, notably when income goes above \$2 a day. "That means, says Dekker, "animal protein consumption will double in the next half century. We face the challenge of getting more production from limited resources and expect that the 'agflation' will continue, with agricultural commodities commanding high and volatile prices

We have reached a point where we have to make important choices regarding the structure of global food production and, perhaps even more important, global food consumption. By 'we', I mean everyone: farmers, processors, retailers, consumers, governments, institutions such as Wageningen UR and animal nutrition companies like Nutreco.

#### Animal nutrition at the critical junction

"As an animal nutrition company, Nutreco is at a critical junction in the modern food supply value chain, between plant growers and meat and fish producers. The increasing demand for meat and fish brings a stronger demand for animal feeds. Know-how of nutritional needs, raw material availability, alternative ingredients and sustainable feed manufacturing has become crucial. Our specialisation and approach to feed ingredients, animal nutrition and fish feed have taken Nutreco to the no 5 position globally in volume and into the top 3 in terms of revenues.

We need to invest time and effort in improving the agri- and food-business performance and prosperity on a global scale, in a sustainable way, today and tomorrow. With scarce raw materials and high prices, it is crucial to make lower value products and by-products available for efficient and sustainable animal production. The Nutreco fish feed company Skretting provides an example. Over the past three years, in its fish feed products Skretting has managed to replace more than 25% of the fish oil, which is limited in supply and expensive, with vegetable oils, without impairing the quality or functionality of its feeds or the quality and taste of the fish produced.

Knowledge and technology are of crucial importance for the future

"Improving feed efficiencies and feed products to deliver sustainable high quality and safe food products, is at the heart of animal nutrition activities and research activities of organisations such as Nutreco and Wageningen UR, with proven progress.

Although much has been achieved, there is room for improvement. There are significant differences in technical performance between the best and lowest performing farms, within and between countries. Transfer and adoption of existing and new technology and know-how to narrow these gaps could reveal huge potential gains. Biotechnology can contribute to enhancing the efficiency of agriculture in general and crop and food production in particular while saving the use of raw materials and energy during production. It can increase yields, add or increase resistance to diseases, drought, salt or cold, and more. Next to land, labour and capital, knowledge is becoming the fourth production factor. We need to promote the renaissance of agriculture, and the potential of aquaculture, to attract the best brains into our exciting industry. Knowledge and technology will be key to sustainable food security in tomorrow's world. The limit of the carrying capacity of planet earth with current methods is being reached. To guarantee food security and improved sustainability major changes are required.

#### Wageningen UR has a lot to offer

"Wageningen UR can offer a solution-driven environment for its students in which they learn to think about future scenarios and to take appropriate action to help shape that future. In a world full of uncertainties, imperfections and doubts Wageningen UR should have the ambition to be the global objective authority to point the way towards supplying sustainable healthy food for 9 billion people."

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