

10  
jaar

*Teelt  
de  
grond  
uit*



***10 years  
soilless  
cultivation of  
outdoor crops***

*ERIAFF conference  
30 June 2017*

*Workshop 4.1 -  
Sustainable water  
use in soilless  
cultivation*

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# Origin of program with entrepreneurs



# Outdoor Horticulture in the Netherlands



## Vegetables and herbs



## Fruits



## Flower bulbs



## Tree nursery crops and flowers





Demands from the market



Labour



Soil quality and availability of land



Regulations

# Public Private Partnership soilless cultivation of outdoor crops



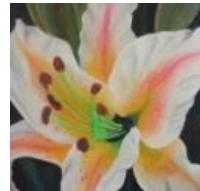
## ■ Objective

*Develop and implement profitable new cropping systems in outdoor horticulture which can comply with EU guidelines on water quality (ND, WFD)*

- Since 2007/2009
- Research, growers, advisors, suppliers, government
  - More than 70 companies involved
- Financed by government, growers and others



# Cropping systems

Deep flow system				
Substrate based systems	Containers or crates on the ground			
	Gullies above the ground			
	Substrate beds or gullies in the soil			

# Apple Junami® in gullies



	#fruits ton/ha	/meter	size (mm)
2011	3	9	59.3
2012	10	15	78.2
2013	52	86	76.8
2014	53	86	77.3
2015	61	115	74.3
2016	62	116	74.1
Average practice	57	100	75

# Apple growing in gullies

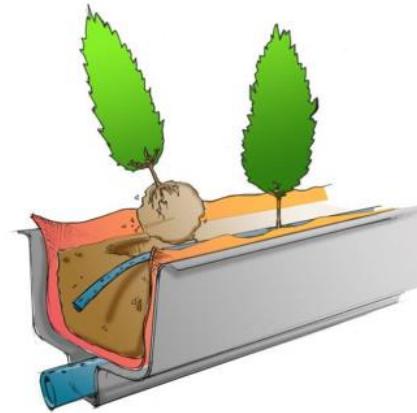
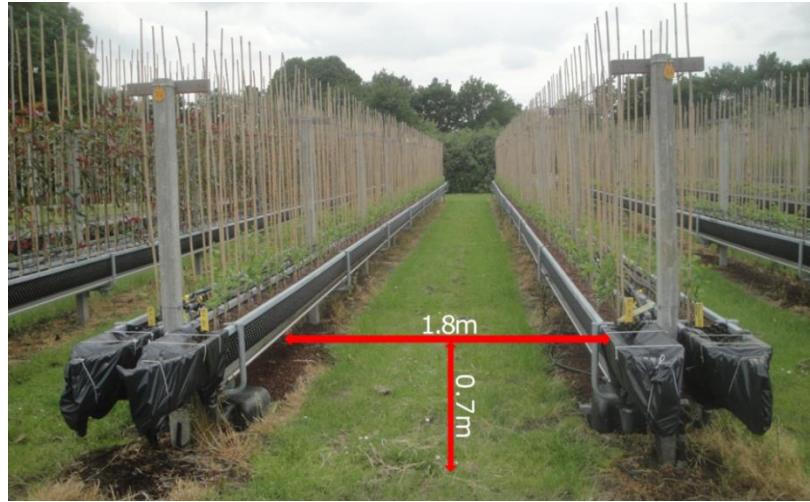
- Nitrogen emissions: <25 kg N/ha/yr
- Prevention build up nematode *Pratylenchus penetrans*:

number/100ml	Start			
	april11	aug12	nov14	dec16
Standard	0	7	6	1
PHC-strategy	0	0	0	0

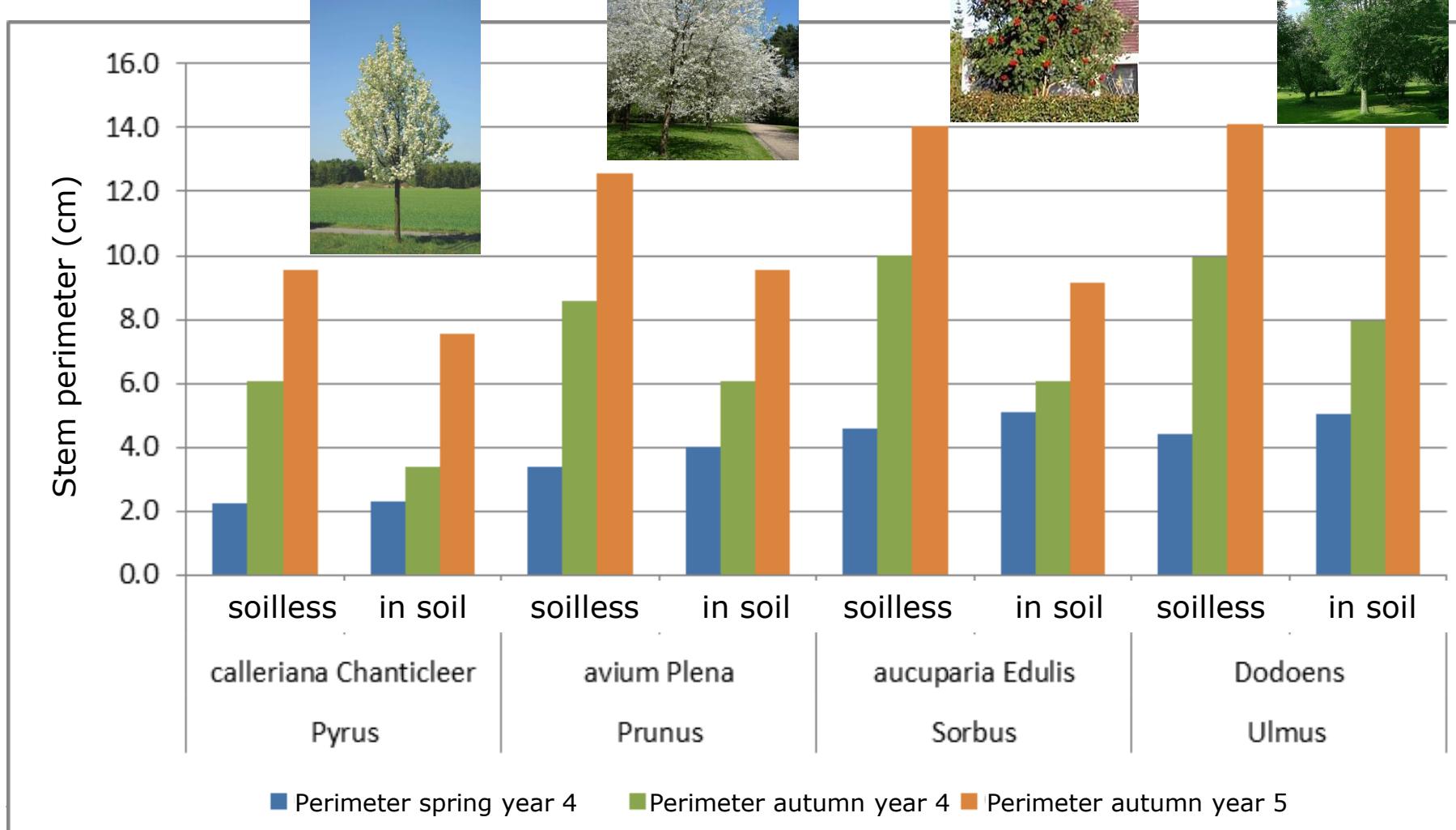
- *Pratylenchus penetrans* control by inundating gullies:

number/100ml	start	5 weeks	8 weeks
		may/june	okt/nov
Pilot Heijnen '14	36	19	1

# Tree nursery crops in gullies and containers



# Comparison growth soilless cropping with cropping in the soil



# Leafy vegetables and herbs on deep flow systems (1)

- Start with NFT systems
  - Interruptions in water supply, sensitive to hard wind
- Continuing with DFT
  - Robust
  - Automatization and mechanization
- In two years
  - Systems at growers farms
  - Floater Cultivation Systems



# Leafy vegetables and herbs on deep flow systems (2)

- Microdochium in lettuce
  - Crop cover best management practice
- Aeration and water circulation important
  - Development of Airlift (Botman)
- >10 growers with a cropping system
  - 100 tot 30.000 m<sup>2</sup>
  - Development of specific varieties, techniques and marketing channels
  - Increase growers interest (Fusarium)



# Leafy vegetables on DFT: “convertible greenhouse”

- No problems with Microdochium (no rain)
- Fast growing crop in winter (heating, light)
- Better quality in summer (opening greenhouse)
- Optimization cropping:
  - Balance temperature and light intensity in greenhouse
  - No cooling of the water
  - Inoculation with useful micro-organisms gives yield increase
- Not yet profitable

# Intensive winter cropping with SON-T and LED light



- SON-T: 210  $\mu\text{mol}/\text{m}^2/\text{s}$
- LED: 140  $\mu\text{mol}/\text{m}^2/\text{s}$
- Good yield level
- Cost price estimation 250 g
  - LED: 30-47 cents
  - Reference: 28-52 cents



# Leek on DFT-system

- Clean product
- Sufficient length white stem
- 3 croppings a year
- Yield up to 300 ton/ha/year





Prei zandvrij

www.prei.nl

Gere  
Partners

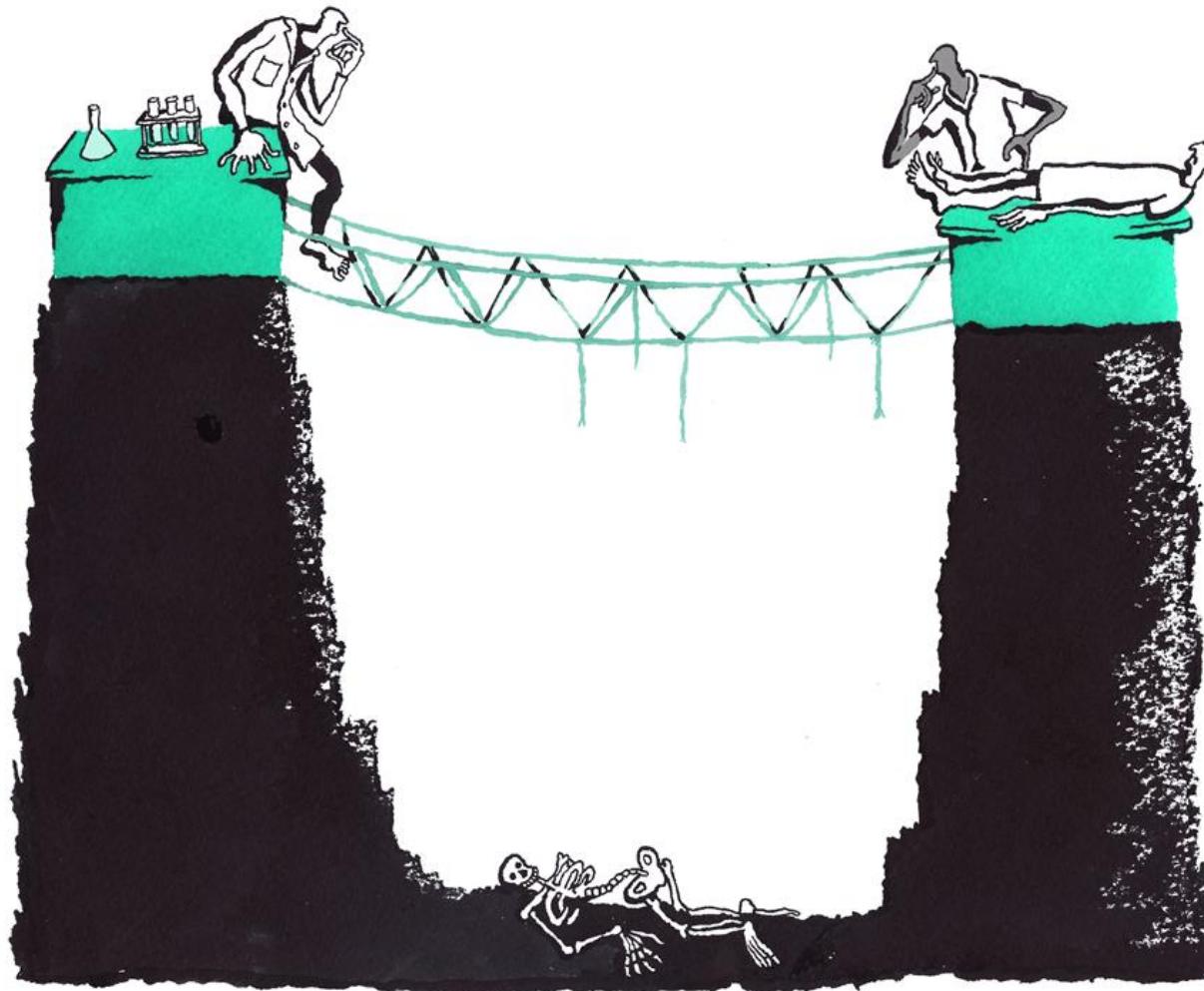
Nieuwe preiteelt-  
methode, uniek  
in Nederland!

Deze malse prei is duurzaam en schoon  
op water geteeld, voor een gezond  
product en een schone bodem.

Artikelnummer 4691236. Inhoud: zandvrije prei,  
3 stuks. Klasse 1, herkomst: Nederland,  
verspartners.nl



# Innovation gap



Illustratie  
B. Mellor

# The innovation task: Further system development



- Apple and blue berry: half way first cropping period
  - Vitality after 10-12 year
  - Development same system for pear
  - Effect “dry cropping” blue berries on production and emission
- Flower bulbs
  - Soilless bulb production
  - Steamable substrate
- Production chain DFT systems
  - Plant nursery – cropping logistics – marketing



# The innovation task: Further development and optimization

- Robustness of system
  - Continuous production of high quality
  - Prevention of pests and diseases
- Profitability and sustainability
  - Reduction of costs – creation of added value
  - Closing systems
  - Reduction of energy use
- Upscaling: automatization and mechanization
  - Planting – cropping – harvest - processing



# The gap must be bridged after 2017



- Social importance soilless cropping
  - Sustainability
  - Economic development
- Several enthusiastic growers have similar questions
  - Facilitate growers in development of their own systems needed
  - Financially and with knowledge



→ ***Continuation of support of innovation is needed!***



*Thank you for  
your attention!*

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