

# Detecting drugs with a mobile phone

The police in the Zuidas neighbourhood of Amsterdam may soon be walking around with a scanner in their mobile phones to help them detect cocaine.

The scanner owes its existence in part to researchers Yannick Weesepeel and Martin Alewijn at Wageningen Food Safety Research. They worked with the Amsterdam Police, the Netherlands Forensic Institute

and other parties to develop a cheap scanning application for detecting drugs, in this case, cocaine, on the street.

The app not only reveals the presence of cocaine but also measures the concentration. 'The advantage of that is that you can detect a lot of different substances. Our colleagues use it, for instance, to measure sugar levels in fruit to see how sweet it is. And it could be used for other drugs as well.' Weesepeel does not know yet whether the app will go into production. TL

