

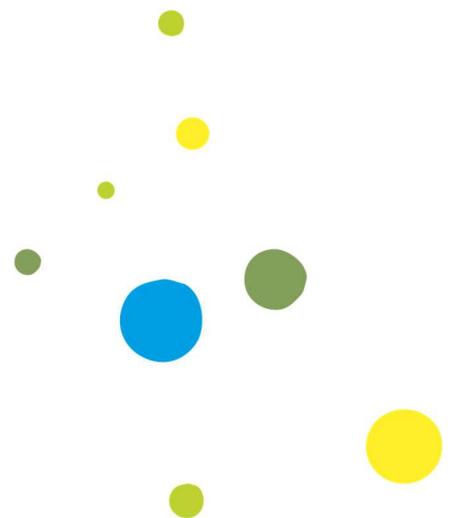


CONCEPT

# STRATEGIC AGENDA 2020 - 2025

1st of June, 2020





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# 1. INTRODUCTION

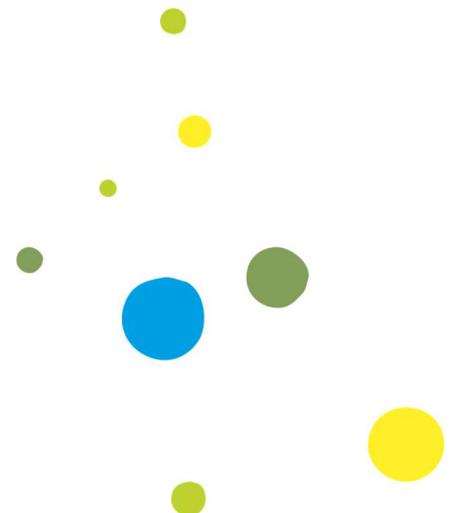
Regio Foodvalley is dynamic! The region is buzzing with activities and initiatives across the full spectrum of our economy. We are renowned worldwide for our knowledge in the field of AgriFood.

The key to maintaining and strengthening our leading position and to secure prosperity for the region is to act thoughtfully in the here and now. The challenge is to keep focus and achieve coherence. Huge transitions are coming our way and in addition, urgent social issues demand our attention, such as the nitrogen problem. In Regio Foodvalley we work closely together with government, entrepreneurs and educational and knowledge institutions to contribute to solutions for social issues.

The way we are dealing with our food and food production today is taking its toll on the environment, soil and our health. As a region, we want to contribute to solving issues around food production and consumption worldwide, but also at a regional level. Our ambition is to be a top region in the field of agriculture and food by 2030, a region where people are significantly healthier, enjoy living, grow businesses and innovate and where circular working is the norm. We have what it takes to fulfil these highly ambitious goals.

These ambitions are further elaborated on in this new Strategic Agenda. The Triple Helix Regio Foodvalley and the Regional Board of Regio Foodvalley entrusted the Strategic Agenda Committee to develop a new Strategic Agenda at the end of 2018. In this Strategic Agenda, the committee shaped the insights and ideas of entrepreneurs, education and knowledge institutions and governments that operate equally within the region to achieve broad prosperity and contribute to solve the global food problem.

What is new about this Strategic Agenda is that it is not only economically charged but also considers ecological and social effects in the pursuit of economic impact. The starting point is that one does not come at the expense of the other. We have and will be dealing with a wide range of programmes in the coming years. The Strategic Agenda is intended to organise activities in such a way that they contribute to our shared ambition. Determining tangible objectives is crucial to work programmatically and to monitor whether we are on track.



## 2. AIM AND COMMON THREAD

### 2.1.1. Aim

The ambition we express in the Strategic Agenda can only be achieved with the Triple Helix partners. This requires all Triple Helix partners to commit to the ambition of the Strategic Agenda and show dedication to the jointly formulated tasks within it.

The Strategic Agenda is the framework for the programmes and projects that we work on within Regio Foodvalley. We (the Triple Helix parties within the region) agree upon what we want to achieve together in the region and how we will work towards this. We commit to achieving these common goals. On these topics, our strategic ambitions and efforts will be aligned as much as possible and propagated under the name and flag of Regio Foodvalley. For the municipalities within Regio Foodvalley this means that the Strategic Agenda is directional for the work programmes.

The Strategic Agenda arose from the intermunicipal cooperation (GR) in Regio Foodvalley. The regional management is responsible for preparing the Strategic Agenda in collaboration with entrepreneurs and education/research and submitting it to the councils for approval, as it includes tasks and responsibilities of the municipalities. This is set out within this agenda.

### 2.1.2. Common thread

This Strategic Agenda, like the previous one, has an economic ambition at its core. The Strategic Agenda is based on the ambition of broad prosperity, a more integrative approach compared to the previous Agenda. Within this concept, economic capital is not separated from ecological and social capital. This means that when striving for economic impact, the effects on the other two aspects of broad prosperity are always taken into account. Starting point is that one is not at the expense of the other. In other words, everyone should be able to participate and there are limits to growth. The Strategic Agenda is not the framework for social or ecological policy.

Correspondingly, the Strategic Agenda is not a spatial vision either. This does not take away the fact that many themes within this agenda have spatial consequences. In fact, given the trends and urgencies that are coming to the region, there will be increasing pressure on our space. This requires a spatial translation of the ambitions within this Agenda.

## 3. THIS IS US - THE DNA OF THE REGION

### Centrally located and high spatial quality

Regio Foodvalley is a vibrant, compact region with an attractive environment, characterised by a rich diversity of small and medium-sized towns and cities. The region is at the heart of the Netherlands and is part of the scenic Veluwe, the Gelderse Vallei and the Utrechtse Heuvelrug. This strategic location provided its residents both the proximity of the Randstad and the peace and space of the rural environment with attractive nature reserves and landscapes including the Hoge Veluwe National Park. Our front door leads to the city and the back door leads to the countryside. On top of this, the region profits from an extremely dense network of infrastructure (data, transport, water). The region is distinguished by a variety of medium-sized towns and villages,

interspersed with diverse landscape types, a high degree of self-sufficiency and great spatial quality. The region is an attractive area to live and work in. The population, 352 thousand and counting, is characterised by a relatively high social cohesion and a high work ethic<sup>1</sup>.



### 3.1.1. Broad and strong economic base

More than 30,000 companies are located in Regio Foodvalley, varying from small SMEs to trusted family businesses and trade and production companies of international groups. Employment in Regio Foodvalley developed more favourably compared to the Netherlands in the period 2010 - 2018. The job growth of 2.6% realised in 2018 in the region is in line with this and is 0.4 percentage points above the national growth. Business services (including ICT), Healthcare, Trade and (manufacturing) Industry are the largest sectors in terms of employment (absolute number of jobs). Food in particular, but also Metal, ICT and Construction are strong sectors in the region and grow faster here than nationally. The food cluster is the main specialisation of the region and, in addition to knowledge and educational institutions, consists of the food industry, food wholesale and various business services.

Business in the Foodvalley is eminently innovative. The most common types of innovation in the region relate to product, process and organisation. Innovation plays a key role in the further development of the region and regional growth.

### 3.1.2. Unique positions on AgriFood and Nutrition and Health

The region gets its name and distinctive character from the AgriFood sector. AgriFood is seen as a distinguishing feature by residents, companies and knowledge and educational institutions in the region and increasingly shapes the identity of the region.

Fundamental research, applied research, practical knowledge and entrepreneurship in the AgriFood sector as well as sustainable food and health flourish and complement each other in the region.

- The primary sector in the region is important. Five percent of all Dutch livestock farms are located here, the majority being poultry (especially laying poultry) and veal farming. The region plays a leading role in these sectors.
- A strong and regionally anchored and internationally leading business community, with names such as De Heus, Denkavit, Moba, HatchTech, NIZO, Bieze and Struik and many others, lies at the heart of the region in the field of AgriFood.

<sup>1</sup> Bureau Stedelijke Planning bv. (2013). *MIRT Study FoodValley: Dutch Food to the European Top*. Gouda: author  
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- Gelderse Vallei Hospital is nationally renowned as the leading food hospital in the Netherlands. Innovative care is being set up together with the regional network, with an effective focus on nutrition and exercise.
- Fundamental research is combined with applied research, as is done on the Aeres Campus (people, animals and the environment) and in the Poultry Expertise Centre in Barneveld. In addition, an educational "animal discovery park" is created to make the relationship between humans and animals accessible to a wider audience; Animalis Futurum.
- WUR has been a global leader for 100 years when it comes to knowledge in the fields of agriculture and food.

This makes the region, specifically Wageningen-Ede with the Wageningen Campus and the Food Innovation District /World Food Center, an attractive place for R&D locations of multinationals, such as FrieslandCampina, Unilever and Imec. This position is also confirmed internationally. By the European Commission (as evidenced by statements by European Commissioner Carlos Moedas) and through cooperation with other European food regions such as Östergötland in Sweden and the Business Region Aarhus in Denmark.

*"We have the potential to take agricultural innovation to a completely new level. Places such as Foodvalley in the Netherlands have already begun. There you can find agri-tech start-ups and experimental farms everywhere. And even though the Netherlands lacks almost every resource necessary for large-scale agriculture, it is the number two exporter of food as measured by value globally. Second only to the United States, a country 270 times the size of the Netherlands. Why? Because it has mastered the combination of research, innovation and agriculture." Carlos Moedas, European Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation<sup>2</sup>.*

The connection with health makes the region a unique place for companies and care organisations that want to gain knowledge at the cutting edge of nutrition and health, and that want to substantiate research and innovative concepts. The presence of high-quality expertise in nutrition, lifestyle, behaviour and living environment contributes to this. In addition, the key players in "care" and "cure" have already found each other. Moreover, the region lends itself as an experimental area due to the urgency of the problem and the diverse range of inhabitants.

### 3.1.3. Partnership at the heart of it

Characteristic for the region is the extent to which government, entrepreneurs and education manage to find each other and enter into partnerships. More and more initiatives are developed by individual companies, (knowledge) institutions, governments and residents around social issues. These issues, for example concerning nutrition, health, energy, consumption or the labour market, challenge us to experiment and innovate. Solutions are no longer invented exclusively by experts in a closed lab, but in combination with other parties and possible end users in a "Living Lab" or "testing ground". These Living Labs do not only look at initiatives within the region, but also look for cooperation outside the region and take full advantage of existing networks and connections.

Actual examples of such forms of cooperation are:

- Nutrition in Healthcare Alliance – Founded in 2007 by Gelderse Vallei Hospital and Wageningen University. The aim is to make scientific knowledge applicable in healthcare, gain new insights and realise the Nutrition Hospital. With the participation of Opella and the Municipality of Ede and projects with many parties, it grew into a national centre of expertise. It attracts companies (from local to international) that want to conduct pilots in the region and participate in research. The Gelderse Vallei Hospital's focus on nutrition and exercise has an inspiring effect and projects are also being set up with GPs Gelderse Vallei, CHE, Charim, Norschoten and the Municipality of Wageningen. At the end of 2018, the

<sup>2</sup> Speech Agri-Research Conference: Innovating for the Future of Farming and Rural Communities, 3 May 2018  
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Nutrition in Healthcare Alliance signed the National Prevention Agreement with State Secretary Blokhuis. The parties work together on the roll-out of good nutrition in hospitals and on the role of hospitals and GPs in prevention. The Alliance for Nutrition in Healthcare for VWS is also executing a national programme to increase the focus on lifestyle in the curriculum of healthcare courses.

- **Healthy Livestock Living Environment Manifesto** – In 2017, the Practice Centre for emission reduction in livestock farming was established as part of the Poultry Expertise Centre (PEC). Pilots to test, measure and accelerate the availability of innovative, feasible and affordable particulate matter reduction techniques in poultry houses are now in full swing. The Practice Centre plays an important connecting role between innovators, the sector, knowledge holders (WUR) and education (Aeres group). The working method with the pilots is unique and is followed at national level. After the focus on particulate matter in poultry and the positive experiences with this collaboration, work is now being done to broaden the reduction target of other emissions and other animal sectors. These developments are also examined at an international level. Poultry Dust Reduction has been put on the agenda by the region within the European partnership "High Tech Farming".
- **Network Salentein** – Network Salentein is a collaboration between governments, educational institutions, agricultural entrepreneurs, suppliers, processors and sales organisations, financial institutions and advocates and advisers in the agricultural sector in Regio Foodvalley. These parties jointly agree on how they will work together on a vital, future-proof agricultural sector. The foundations for this were laid down in the Salentein Manifesto in 2017.
- **ICT Campus Regio Foodvalley** – ICT Campus Regio Foodvalley and ICT Valley facilitate regional partnerships between business, government and education. In Regio Foodvalley, these parties work together on innovations, particularly in crossovers between Food, Health and Tech.
- **Coalition Prevention in the Foodvalley** – In 2018, regional parties joined forces in this Coalition to promote healthy weight in the region. It is the first regional prevention coalition that has started to realise the national ambitions for prevention. The coalition partners are Gelderse Vallei Hospital, GPs Gelderse Vallei, Menzis, Regio Foodvalley, CHE, Nutrition in Healthcare Alliance, Wageningen University and Rabobank.
- **Living Lab Regio Foodvalley Circulair!** – The Cooperation Programme Regio Foodvalley Circulair is one of the projects that arose from our Strategic Agenda 2015-2019. In this programme, entrepreneurs, educational and knowledge institutions and governments work together towards a more circular economy. Areas of focus include construction, industry, food waste and circular procurement. The programme is supported and funded by over 30 founders and partners and this number keeps on growing.

In recent years, the provinces of Gelderland and Utrecht have proven to be a fixed value and partner in many of these and other regional initiatives. For the future, partnership with both provinces is essential to realise our joint ambitions, whereby cooperation with the two regional development companies Oost NL (Gelderland and Overijssel) and the Regional Development Company Utrecht + (Utrecht, in formation) is also vital. The government is also increasingly involved as a partner, which will receive a further boost in the coming years with the signing of the Regio Deal.

## 4. WHERE WE WANT TO BE IN 2030 - VISION AND AMBITION

Region Foodvalley wants to use its DNA to contribute to the well-being and health of all its residents and companies. In Regio Foodvalley we work together to be a circular, healthy region where people like to live, work and do business.

Regio Foodvalley distinguishes itself through its unique positions in AgriFood and Nutrition and Health. Expanding and strengthening these positions in balance with the environment is what we will focus on in the coming period. Our goal is a region that flourishes economically, ecologically and socially. This presents us with a challenge in view of the nitrogen crisis as not everything is possible everywhere. In the densely stock populated Foodvalley, next to the largest Natura 2000 area in the Netherlands, with many economic activities and high housing pressure, we are therefore facing a major challenge. But we accept that challenge. "Never waste a good crisis" is a winged statement. We believe that by working together, we can take advantage of this crisis to emerge stronger and realise our ambition. That we can jointly realise a healthy agricultural sector that works in a circular manner and is connected to chain partners and society and in conjunction with the realisation of other regional tasks such as housing, energy transition and climate adaptation.

Regio Foodvalley therefore wants to be the national testing ground for the transition to a circular food supply for a healthy life. For this reason, Regio Foodvalley is a co-initiator and partner in the Regio Deal Foodvalley, which aims to "accelerate the transition to a sustainable and healthy food system" (see explanation in Box 1 in Chapter 5). Regio Foodvalley can provide answers to developments that are mainly seen as a threat elsewhere. From the DNA of the region, in particular the intensive relationship between city and countryside, the presence of farmers, global players in the primary sector, supply and processing industry, an innovative business and health sector, and the knowledge and educational institutions located in Regio Foodvalley (MBO, HBO and WO), ensure a climate where sustainable and technological solutions are created that add value to the economy, ecology and society.

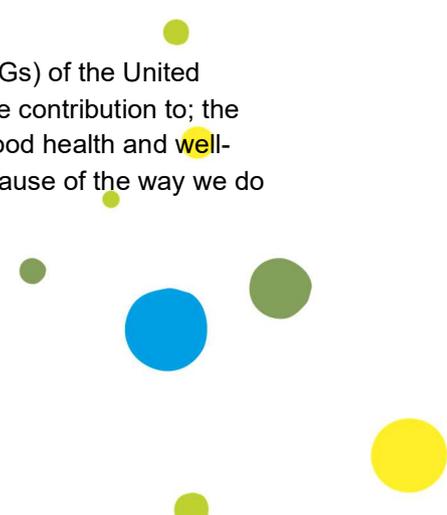
This requires that all preconditions are in order. Only then can we create an environment that facilitates our ambition and preserves and attracts the human capital needed to shape it; then we are a top region! This includes our physical and digital connections, our labour market, the quality of our living environment, our innovation climate and the availability of homes.

These ambitions require that decision-makers in the region can find each other quickly and take decisions in dialogue with their supporters. The eight municipalities and two provinces, the knowledge institutions and the companies and their organisations are close enough and sufficiently familiar with each other in this compact region to be able to do so.

Our vision can be summarised as follows:

*Regio Foodvalley is a top region in the field of agriculture and food, embedded in an environment where it is good to live, work and do business. Based on experience and knowledge, innovative strength, commitment and mutual connection, we focus on the sustainable realisation of broad prosperity. We are proud of our region and we are an example in combining and connecting economic prosperity, pleasant living conditions, health and natural values and contributing to global food solutions.*

This vision enables us to align with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations (UN). Of the 17 SDGs, there are three that we can make a distinctive contribution to; the global food issue ("No hunger", SDG 2), health through healthy nutrition ("Good health and well-being", SDG 3) and responsible consumption and production (SDG 12). Because of the way we do that, we comply with SDG 17; "Partnership to achieve goals".



# 5. WHAT WE WILL BE FACED WITH - TRENDS AND URGENCIES

## The global food issue and protein transition

Due to the growth of the world population and increasing prosperity, the global demand for food is increasing substantially, especially the demand for meat. The demand for chicken will more than double in 2050! At the same time, food production is under global pressure due to declining agricultural lands as a result of climate change and population growth. As the world's leading exporter of agricultural products (after the US), this is highly relevant for the Netherlands.

The growth in global demand for meat results in an increase in the demand for raw materials for animal feed. Its production and transport (including soy, lupins) have a major negative impact on the earth. The global food system will have to change. This can be done by making the existing system more sustainable and by implementing major system changes - transitions. Protein transition is one of them; we will have to use very different, more regional, protein sources for animal nutrition and for our own food. Regional in this context can also be within Northwestern Europe.

## Agricultural sector under pressure and transition to circular agriculture

Despite this pressing issue, our food is still relatively cheap. The agricultural sector has a strong emphasis on increasing efficiency through cost reduction and production improvement. This leads to small, sometimes negative margins for farmers and a vulnerable economic position. The size and intensity of agricultural production also has consequences for the living environment; in the Netherlands this has been at the expense of biodiversity, the quality of drinking water and the appeal of the landscape. These developments and the increased attention to aspects like animal welfare have resulted in a decline in public support and appreciation for farmers.

These consequences are also noticeable in Regio Foodvalley. The size of intensive livestock farming in a relatively densely populated area with protected nature reserves and a lot of tourist activity, makes it important, especially for Regio Foodvalley, to achieve a healthy balance between our primary sector and the environment, energy transition and nature and landscape. If we, as a region, want to maintain and expand our leading knowledge position, this will challenge us to revise business models and tap into new potential. Examples are; higher value through circular agriculture, organising the process from farm to fork differently and through a relationship with energy transition. This is also necessary to keep the primary sector viable and attractive to successors and start-ups. If this does not work, we foresee a decrease of possibly more than 50% of the number of farmers, which will put pressure on the social and economic vitality of the rural area and the maintenance of our landscape.

## Elaboration on the climate/energy agreement and energy transition

A third transition we are dealing with is the transition to sustainable energy. The national Climate Agreement concluded that the Netherlands should have achieved a 49% CO<sub>2</sub> reduction by 2030 compared to 1990. This means a renewable energy generation of 35 TWh. In the Gelders Energy Agreement, to which the Regio Foodvalley municipalities have committed themselves, the target for 2030 is even higher; 55% CO<sub>2</sub> reduction. This ambition, and within the framework of the Climate Agreement and the Gelders Energy Agreement, has led to the mutual design of a Regional Energy Strategy. The climate and energy agreements put pressure on the existing spatial task within which wind turbines and solar panels and other smart forms of energy generation must be given a place. In addition, all homes in the region will have to stop using gas within the next 30 years (in the region this will include approximately 145,000 homes). The realisation of these objectives will also greatly

appeal to the (tight) labour market. At the same time, it can be considered an opportunity to help solve issues on other themes, such as nature and landscape.

## Transition to a circular economy

What applies to food and energy also applies, de facto, to the entire economy. In the current economy, we are confronted with growing waste mountains and scarce raw materials and fossil fuels. A fundamentally different approach to raw materials is also needed here. With their “Living Lab Regio Foodvalley Circulair!”, Regio Foodvalley has joined the national circular economy objectives of the Government-wide Programme for a Circular Economy with the following objectives; a fully circular economy by 2050 and 50% less use of primary raw materials (metals, fossil, minerals) by 2030.

## Health as a social issue offers the region opportunities

The aforementioned transitions present challenges for us, but also bring great opportunities for the region. This also applies to the effects of increasing prosperity on our health. Every year, 35,000 Dutch people die from smoking, obesity or problem drinking. This is also a serious issue in Regio Foodvalley. Currently, 47.4% of the residents of Regio Foodvalley are overweight and 14.3% are extremely overweight. This hardly deviates from the national average. The proportion of older people in our population is increasing. Partly due to the aging population, the number of people with one or several chronic diseases will rise to 54% by 2040. Healthcare costs will increase, as will socio-economic health differences. Research is increasingly clear that nutrition deserves a prominent place in prevention, maintaining vitality and treating (chronic) diseases. Thanks to its excellent knowledge position regarding food and nutrition, the region can make a unique contribution to reducing public health problems and thereby healthcare costs. With the experience and knowledge in the region, we can focus on a healthy food environment and health promotion.

## Network and cluster formation in response to globalisation

The business community in the region is faced with a rapidly changing environment, due to technological developments (including digitisation, robotisation, servitisation) and globalisation. As a result, the supply of products and services is increasingly taking place in (international) chains and networks. To be able to participate in these developments, an entrepreneur must be able to continuously adjust his or her products and services. In the first place, this requires professional entrepreneurship at company level. At a regional level, cooperation between companies in clusters makes it easier for entrepreneurs to adapt to the environment and to respond to these developments. Although various potential mini clusters are already present within Regio Foodvalley, this way of working (apart from AgriFood) is not yet a strength. Clustering and the connection of the clusters to the international AgriFood cluster, however, offer the region unique opportunities, particularly at the intersection of Food, Health and ICT. Regional businesses can benefit more from the presence and the “global pipelines” of this cluster. The preconditions are that knowledge is made available properly for regional businesses and that education and research are involved in the innovation issues of these regional businesses.

## The struggle for talent

Regio Foodvalley is a knowledge-driven economy - the ambitions we have with this Agenda and with our participation in the AgriFood 2030 programme (see box 2 for explanation) only confirm this. Human capital is vital to such an economy. Maintaining and attracting this capital is needed but will be a major challenge, as the economy increasingly follows talent and not the other way around.

Employers in Regio Foodvalley are increasingly struggling to find staff. There are staff shortages not only in technology, care and ICT, but also in an increasing number of other sectors. Economic growth

is not the only factor driving demand for personnel. Due to technological and social developments, functions evolve, (industrial) processes change and devices become more advanced. Many of these changes place different or higher demands on employees, increasing the mismatch between supply and demand. Several initiatives are now being taken in the region, such as the Food Academy Nijkerk and the Barneveldse Techniek Opleiding (BTO).

## Landscape and living environment of increasing importance as a condition of establishment

A top region in the area of AgriFood requires a top landscape. An attractive living environment is one of the most important factors in retaining and attracting human capital. After all, the (new) economy follows talent. Talent follows quality of life, which is provided by a high-quality living environment. The quality of nature, biodiversity and our landscape as a location condition will thus increase in importance. This means we will have to interlace all the various developments that have a spatial impact. For example, the energy transition when it takes place in the landscape (windmills and solar parks) cannot be seen in isolation from the effects it has on the landscape. This provides an opportunity to link the improvement of nature and landscape to the improvement of the farmer's economic position.

*'The landscape provides a major contribution to the quality of life, making it an absolute precondition for a successful knowledge economy. After all, this revolves around human capital. And talented people are very picky about where they be located. The following already applies in knowledge-intensive sectors; jobs follow talent. In addition, employees who move and have greenery in the vicinity are more productive and less often ill.'*<sup>3'</sup>

## Ongoing scarcity of rental and owner-occupied homes

When it comes to the housing market, we see a continuing scarcity of high-quality rental and owner-occupied homes, in all price segments. The region is attractively located in relation to the Randstad and is expected to grow by at least 30,000 inhabitants between now and 2030. This requires at least 15,000 new homes. This is beyond the current trend of an increasing inflow of households from the Randstad and the expected impact of the AgriFood 2030 programme. However, if the current population growth continues, the housing production of 15,000 will certainly be exceeded. The growth in the number of households will continue unabated until 2030, only then will it level off gradually. Inflows of households from the overstrained housing market in the Randstad will continue, at least if economic growth continues. Establishment of new companies leads to an increasing need for almost all types of housing, such as flexible housing types (migrant workers), medium rent (starters and knowledge workers), cheap buy (starters), middle segment sale (transfer students and families), the expensive segment (higher staff) and perhaps even the top segment (owners, directors).

## Mobility and accessibility

Mobility and accessibility by bicycle, car and public transport in the region requires continuous attention, especially in view of the current growth in the housing stock and business activity as accessibility is an important condition for an attractive living and working climate. (Physical) accessibility and mobility facilitate contacts and provide access, both within the region and towards other (surrounding) regions. The main connections A1 and A12 (east - west) and A30 (north - south) are of great importance for external accessibility. The parallel railways must help to avoid congestion. Sufficient embarking options on all corridors are crucial for the accessibility of the region. The goods-vehicle toll is expected to take effect on motorways and part of the provincial roads in 2023. This development may affect surrounding roads.

Growth in jobs, businesses and residents by definition leads to more mobility. In the context of the growing housing stock and business activity, Regio Foodvalley will have to ensure that the region

remains easily accessible through all means of transport, despite the increase in the number of trips. This means not only ensuring excellent connections with the Randstad and urban regions in the east of the country, but also ensuring good connections between key economic areas within the region. Since public transport is more often focused on large transport flows, it is increasingly challenging to offer sufficient public transport for smaller centres and rural areas. Other forms of collective transport will have to be explored, where regular public transport is insufficiently profitable and will disappear. Efforts are increasingly being made to offer mobility as a service, regardless of the combination of modalities. This so-called "Mobility as a Service" (MaaS) is in full development and is expected to play an ever more important role.

In line with the advice of the Council for the Environment and Infrastructure and the Climate Agreement<sup>3</sup>, national and regional attention for innovation and more sustainable mobility increase compared to the past. This means, among other things, better and different use of the existing infrastructure (smarter) and giving direction to the mobility transition (more sustainable and healthier). More attention will be given to the Ladder by Verdaas<sup>4</sup> when tackling accessibility problems. Mobility management will play a greater role in the coming years, as will alternatives to fossil fuels (including hydrogen and electric transport). In addition to this, a considerable part of the future living and working challenge for the region will preferably be realised near existing and new mobility hubs. In this way, the "first and last mile" is made as short as possible and extra traffic movements are limited. In line with the climate agreement and the goals set therein to reduce the CO2 footprint, (fast) cycling connections will play a greater role in journeys of up to 15 km. In addition to attention to accessibility via roads, water, rail and bicycle, good walking routes are needed that connect residential areas, outdoor space and business parks and encourage healthy exercise.

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<sup>3</sup> Raad voor de Leefomgeving en Infrastructuur (2018), *Van B naar anders, investeren in mobiliteit voor de toekomst*.  
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## Pressure on space is increasing

Many developments that are coming to the region create consequences for the region with regard to the use of space. We are looking for new residential locations to meet the growing housing demand. Areas will also have to be found for sustainable energy generation. Available work locations in the region are running out, while demand remains. A vibrant countryside and a healthy future for farmers are crucial for our position as an AgriFood region. Preserving and strengthening the natural and landscape qualities is important to continue to offer an attractive living environment. Carefully weighing and linking these, sometimes conflicting, interests to a win-win situation will become an important task. Regional coordination and for some parts supra-regional coordination is essential. Because of this task, chapter 2 indicates that a spatial translation of the ambitions is necessary. This requires a quantification of the space requirements and then a thorough consideration for the choices that have to be made about our available space. In tackling the nitrogen crisis, we see an opportunity for this issue of integrated coordination. After all, we aim to solve this issue with an area-oriented approach for our region. A process with all relevant partners to establish a good and appropriate mix of the reduction of nitrogen deposition and the creation of space for the development of living, working, mobility, recreation and circular agriculture.

## Internationalisation and cooperation with other food regions in Europe

The Strategic Agenda 2015 - 2019 focuses on internationalisation (global pipelines). Hence, a qualitative European network has been built up with European food regions, such as South Ostrobothnia (Finland), Brittany (France) and Estremadura (Spain). Particularly with Region Östergötland (Sweden) and Business Region Aarhus (Denmark), there have been long-standing relationships that result in strategic cooperation. The ambitions expressed in the new Strategic Agenda have a strong international reputation and are largely reflected in the European Commission's vision on food: Food 2030. As a result, the EU will significantly increase the budget in the new funding period (from 2021) for food-related projects and innovations. Precisely because of the ambitions of Regio Foodvalley, the strong relationship with the other main food regions and the overlap in ambitions with Food 2030 of the European Union, there are many opportunities to strengthen the realisation of the regional ambitions with European co-financing. This gives our innovations and projects the potential to have a greater impact in Europe and the world. That is why Regio Foodvalley remains committed to a good relationship with the European Commission and fellow food regions. And sometimes to join forces and exert influence on European agricultural and food policy. With this in mind, Regio Foodvalley chooses to collaborate intensively with other leading Dutch AgriFood regions under the banner of Food NL. We are the founder of this initiative together

### Box 1 Regio Deal Foodvalley

The State and the Region are entering into a sustainable partnership with the Regional Deal to accelerate the transition to a sustainable and healthy food system. Foodvalley here includes Regio Foodvalley, and adjacent and/or complementary areas of the provinces of Utrecht and Gelderland. The task is to fast-track the transition to an improved food system, to utilise the associated economic opportunities and thereby secure a broad prosperity for residents and companies in the future. The Regio Deal Foodvalley gives this an impulse via three tracks:

1. Accelerated transition of the primary sector.
2. Healthy food; from early start to old age.
3. Strengthening knowledge and innovation cluster.

The central government, Regio Foodvalley, the provinces of Gelderland and Utrecht, LTO Noord, the Vallei en Rijn Water Board, and Wageningen University & Research, Utrecht University and VNO-NCW are joint partners in this.

with AgriFood Capital and Greenport Venlo. From within Food NL Regio Foodvalley will continue to focus on a strong primary sector, in which a lot of innovation is taking place to enable the transition to sustainable agriculture. The entire AgriFood chain is included; from the supplying companies to the agricultural sector to the food processing industry and the knowledge and innovation cluster.

### **Box 2 AgriFood 2030**

AgriFood 2030 focuses on strengthening the knowledge-intensive ecosystem around AgriFood, in this region and beyond. The province of Gelderland has taken the initiative and sought collaboration with Wageningen University & Research, the Ministry of Agriculture, the top sector Agri & Food, Unilever, Friesland Campina and Regio FoodValley. AgriFood2030 is a long-term, integrated development and financing programme with the ambition to join forces on the most groundbreaking innovations in agriculture and food for a sustainable and healthy future, with Foodvalley as a knowledge hub for the Netherlands and the world. The objectives of the programme are aimed at:

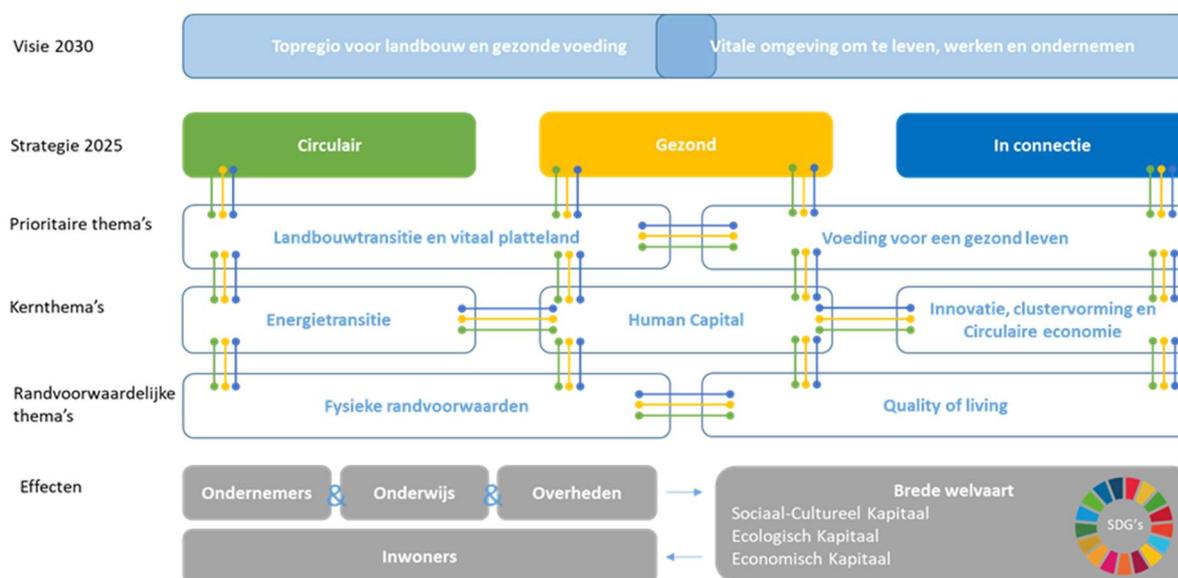
1. Increased valorisation/activity - Entrepreneurship and innovation (support for start-ups, scale-ups and SMEs; large-scale valorisation/activity of proven scientific results).
2. Growth in research on the themes in which we are globally distinctive; Protein transition, Circular agriculture, Healthy food and Smart technology.
3. Business climate - Top work locations (Wageningen Campus, BSP Wageningen, Food Innovation District/World Food Center), accessibility (high-quality emission-free public transport, smart mobility and cycle routes, campus route), housing (student housing, short stay, higher segment housing for knowledge workers) and culture improvement and facilities (strengthening cultural profile, sports climate, landscape as a business condition, lively city centres).
4. Implementation and cooperation - effective programme agency with strengthened implementation power (Foodvalley NL); bundled organisation for events, facilities and marketing and communication and international positioning.



# 5. OUR FOCUS - FROM VISION TO STRATEGY FOR 2020 - 2025

## From vision to results and effects

In recent years, much has already taken place to realise our ambitions, and a lot is going on in the region today. In order to achieve tangible results in the coming years, it is important to translate our vision into an action plan for all partners involved. This requires focus and direction for the coming period on what we are going to do. We want to apply this focus and direction in various ways. So that we achieve our main purpose; broad prosperity for the regions and getting closer to those SDGs where we can make a distinctive contribution.



## Strategy 2025

We will start by using three strategic key concepts. These concepts are not necessarily distinctive, but rather the linking pin between the themes. It is precisely through the connection between the themes that we create the platform on a regional basis to jointly find solutions to issues that arise here and elsewhere, for example when it comes to reducing the nitrogen emissions and deposition of agriculture and other sectors.

**Circular** Regio Foodvalley wants to be a circular region with a balance between its ecological, economic and social capital. The aim; a region with a future-proof structure in which circular working and thinking is the standard in all our working methods and programmes. Regio Foodvalley is the national testing ground for circular agriculture.

**Healthy** Regio Foodvalley wants to be the national testing ground for food for a healthy life and for producing food in ways that serve the well-being of people and nature. The aim; a sustainably healthy Regio Foodvalley with a healthy and vigorous living environment in which food is recognised to play an essential role for strengthening the health of its inhabitants.

**Connected** Regio Foodvalley forms connections; between entrepreneurs, government, education and residents; between the provinces of Utrecht and Gelderland; between urban area and rural area; between the regional economy and the

international knowledge-intensive top clusters AgriFood and Life Sciences & Health (mainly via AF2030 and Regio Deal). We want to further deepen this connection in the coming years. In the first place by jointly and equally tackling as many programmes as possible as Triple Helix parties; to achieve joint goals through partnership. Secondly, by strengthening the connection and thus the cohesion between the various programmes.

We want to repeat these strategic concepts in everything we do and use them as touchstones (criteria) when making choices. Choices about what we do and don't do and how themes are interpreted.

## Themes we prioritise

Secondly, we are explicitly focusing on the areas in which Regio Foodvalley can make a difference nationally and even globally through its unique starting point (the regional DNA); agricultural transition and food for a healthy life. These themes have also been named in the Regio Deal Foodvalley (see box 1 for more information). We want to be a testing ground for the world on these themes; a place where fundamental knowledge is connected with practical knowledge and science in order to address social challenges. A place where solutions become available for the rest of the Netherlands and the world.

### 1. Agricultural transition and vital countryside

Regio Foodvalley aims at a future-proof AgriFood chain and a vital countryside.

Regio Foodvalley distinguishes itself through an AgriFood cluster that is in balance with its environment. To this end, the region is working on the development of an AgriFood sector that is large enough to keep farmers and chain parties vigorous, wants to be a frontrunner in innovation, research, education and sustainability, is organised in such a way that it provides a good revenue model for the primary sector. This way, the sector will provide guarantees for food security, food quality and public health and an improvement of nature, biodiversity, soil and landscape. The region wants to be the national testing ground for the transition to a circular and healthy food supply. Protein transition is an essential part of this. The Foodvalley region thus provides means to the Agricultural Vision of Minister Schouten and to the agriculture and land use part of the climate agreement. The energy transition can contribute to farmers' business models and to the improvement of nature and landscape. We are working on an area-oriented approach to nitrogen management in which nature restoration, optimal use of space and a healthy agricultural sector go hand in hand.

Building upon the strength of the existing cooperation between entrepreneurs, education and governments within the Poultry Expertise Centre, the Healthy Living Environment Manifesto and the Salentein Agricultural Network, we are working on solutions for issues that put pressure on the primary sector and the entire chain; social pressure, high costs for environmental burden such as manure disposal and emission reduction, soil degradation and loss of biodiversity, nitrogen emissions and deposition, ageing, large agricultural land releases and increasing spatial pressure in the context of the energy transition. In the vision of Regio Foodvalley, land-based companies manage their part of the landscape and thus contribute to environmental quality and biodiversity; natural capital. Food production goes hand in hand with nature, clean water, healthy soil, biodiversity, vital landscapes and climate resilience. Companies work circularly as much as possible, establishing crossovers with other production branches and forming new connections with other players in the various chains, such as start-ups at the cutting edge of Food and ICT. The transition to this sustainable agricultural practice is partly possible thanks to an optimal commitment to ICT (sensing, big data, blockchain).

## 2. Nutrition for a healthy life

Regio Foodvalley wants to create an environment in which healthy and sustainable food contributes to a healthy life for its inhabitants.

The region wants to achieve this by making healthy and sustainable food accessible to everyone and encouraging healthier choices. The living lab concept is also leading within this theme; connecting and increasing available knowledge from science and practice and adding skills (such as e-health, gamification, food score/nutrient profiling, food preparation skills) to develop new interventions and thus to strengthen innovation. Increasing participation, awareness and education of residents, professionals and students supports and perpetuates this. The result is an integrated and broad approach which achieves the greatest possible impact for residents. The theme Nutrition for a healthy life is elaborated upon in 5 programmes:

- Nutrition and health: Reducing obesity and related conditions such as diabetes (type 2) and cardiovascular disease. And providing good nutrition and exercise for youth and for older, vulnerable residents to promote vitality.
- Protein transition: Shifting the ratio of animal and vegetable protein in “food” and “feed”.
- Food waste: Achieving 50% less food waste by 2050.
- Short chains: Closing cycles and increasing supply and demand for local produce, which is essential for healthy landscapes and sustainable revenue models for the agricultural transition.
- Awareness and food education: Involving, inspiring, activating and increasing nutritional knowledge for healthcare professionals and residents.

This theme is in line with existing initiatives, programmes and partnerships. Nutrition and health is closely aligned with the Alliance in Nutrition in Healthcare and the Coalition Prevention Foodvalley. Protein transition, especially when it comes to feed, is in line with the theme Agricultural transition, as are short chains and closing cycles. For food waste, a link is made with "Living Lab Regio Foodvalley Circulair!". The connection with the theme Human Capital and the World Food Center when it comes to food education and awareness is also obvious. The Regio Deal Foodvalley is an important means of achieving acceleration, profundity and application, especially within Nutrition and Health.

### Key themes

In addition to priority themes, we distinguish key themes; these are essential to realise our ambition, but we do not aspire to be a frontrunner in this. Focus is created by targeting and evaluating the interpretation of these themes against the ambition and goals of the Strategic Agenda. On these themes we link up with national and provincial policy and we work together as Triple Helix partners.

### 1. Energy transition

Regio Foodvalley is working on the energy transition from the regional DNA in a way that reinforces our strength.

Regio Foodvalley has a major social challenge in the field of energy transition. The municipalities in the region have expressed the ambition to be an energy-neutral region by 2050 and to have achieved a CO<sub>2</sub> reduction of 55% by 2030 compared to 1990. This means we have an enormous task at hand, with a major social and spatial impact, but also opportunities. Besides energy savings and solar panels on roofs, large-scale forms of renewable energy generation will also be required. The region is working on careful spatial integration with social acceptance while utilising every opportunity to connect. To this end, the region is working in alliance with a wide group of stakeholders on a Regional Energy Strategy (RES), which must provide clarity about the amount of sustainable energy that can be generated by 2030. In addition, the regionally available heat (residual) sources and the need for infrastructure will be coordinated in the RES.

## 2. Human Capital

Regio Foodvalley works on an optimally functioning labour market with attention to the full width; for each employer, for each talent and in each phase of life.

Together with employers and education, we are committed to implementing an integrated Strategic Agenda, in which economic goals lead to strategic issues around Human Capital policy in the region. Human Capital issues influence decisions in other parts of the Strategic Agenda, in particular mobility and housing. We are intensifying the translation of strategic insights into labour market developments to projects, which are largely carried out by the problem owner (education, employers and/or government). In a regional Human Capital Agenda to be developed, we will implement this and guarantee the coherence and embedment of initiatives such as Barneveldse Techniek Opleiding and Food Academy Nijkerk. This will take place in coordination with Human Capital agendas of (neighbouring regions within) the provinces of Utrecht and Gelderland.

## 3. Innovation, cluster formation and circular economy

Building a future-proof regional economy by stimulating innovation, cluster formation and circular entrepreneurship.

Responding to the opportunities that new technologies (such as robotisation) and social developments bring is a precondition for future-proofing our regional economy and for sustainable use of raw materials. The focus here is on strengthening local buzz; the regional structure for stimulating innovation and knowledge exchange (across the board, so not focused on specific sectors or clusters) and cluster formation.

We pay extra attention to the most vital sectors for the regional economy. But also to sectors that are, or have the potential to become, distinctive nationally. Stimulating strong regional clusters can make an important contribution to this, ICT Valley and the Poultry Expertise Centre being appealing examples. A Protein Expertise Centre, which builds on gained experiences, fits in with this. By stimulating the connection with AgriFood 2030, Regio Foodvalley offers regional businesses numerous opportunities.

Instruments that are currently underutilised are marketing and acquisition. These are mainly local but could have added value if we join forces regionally. The economic promotion and acquisition of the region promotes job growth and economic vitality. In addition, we strengthen the knowledge position and reputation of the region at home and abroad.

With their "Living Lab Regio Foodvalley Circulair!", Regio Foodvalley encourages circular working to limit the burden on the climate, but in such a way that companies earn more by decreasing waste and increasing value creation. A head start in circular working can strengthen the competitive position of our companies and generate new economic activities and employment. Development projects are deployed in workshops (practice-oriented networks around specific themes or chains), for example regarding food waste, protein transition and construction, industry and circular procurement.

## Preconditional themes

For a future-proof region, to address our challenges, to safeguard our broad prosperity and to make a difference on the priority and core themes, several preconditions must be in place. Here, too, a lot is happening regionally. We bundle these activities into two themes:

### 1. Physical preconditions

This is about ensuring a balance between economic activities and living environment. A thriving



economy requires good physical accessibility of the region and within the region (via public transport, bicycle and car), as well as digital access to the region. To remain accessible in a smart, sustainable and healthy manner, we will have to respond to the trends and developments in the field of mobility, as described in chapter 5. The regional task is also to make agreements about a diverse range of circular and future-proof work locations that match the environment.

## **2. Quality of living**

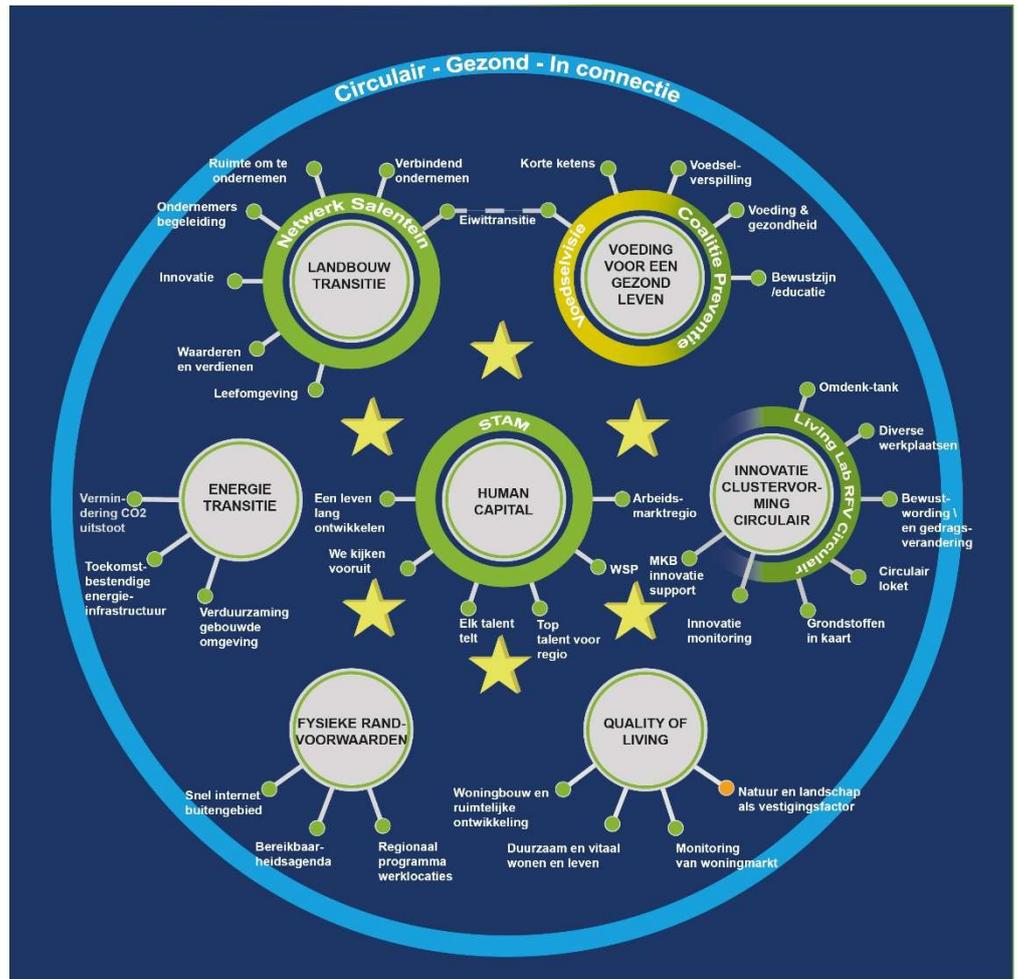
This theme focuses on the question of how we as a region can offer a more attractive living environment, as an important condition for attracting and retaining talent to this area. This includes the accommodation of flex workers (including expats, knowledge workers, students), and the accommodation of distinctive living environments, while also paying attention to accommodating the organic growth of (small) centres. Preserving and strengthening landscape and natural assets and cultural history is part of quality of living. We see developments in the housing market as an opportunity to strengthen our living environment, including natural assets, provided conditions are set correctly.

As a region, we are distinctive in the first two of these seven themes, nationally and internationally. The other themes are preconditions. On each of these themes, the Triple Helix partners agree to align their strategic ambitions and efforts under the name and flag of Regio Foodvalley. This also means that partners want to cooperate on these themes and hold each other accountable for the efforts and results delivered. All to build a future-proof region together.

The “Elaboration” document is part of this Strategic Agenda. This includes the operational goals and a global approach for the coming years for each of the seven themes (description of the what) as the first step towards a programmatic elaboration (description of the how and the basis for monitoring progress). The figure below shows the seven themes and relates them to existing networks and (new) sub-programmes. The regional clusters and icons are explained in the accompanying box.



- Programma
- Deelprogramma- bestaand
- Deelprogramma- nieuw
- Netwerk
- Salentein
- Voedselvisie
- Coalitie Preventie
- STAM
- Living Lab RFV Circulair!
- ★ Regionale clusters en iconen
- ICT Campus
- Food Production Cluster >Food Academy
- Alliantie voeding
- World Food Center
- Wageningen Campus / KennisAs
- Poultry Expertise Centre



### Box 3 Regional clusters and icons

In the figure above, the seven programmes are placed in context of the existing networks and (new) sub-programmes. In addition, the following regional clusters and icons are appointed:

- ICT Campus – Facilitates regional Triple Helix cooperation by connecting parties and thus gives an extra boost to knowledge exchange and development in the field of ICT. ICT Campus makes it attractive for ICT entrepreneurs to locate in the region.
- Food Production Cluster and Food Academy – The region contains a successful cluster of (SME) companies in food production, food logistics and food technology. Companies that develop new products (healthier and more sustainable), research and apply new production methods (automation and robotisation) and implement smart logistics. The Food Academy offers Secondary Vocational Training where graduates and starters put the latest innovations into practice together with the business world.
- Nutrition Alliance – The aim is to make scientific knowledge applicable in healthcare, to gain new insights and to realise the Nutrition Hospital. The Nutrition Alliance has grown into a national centre of expertise. It attracts companies (from local to international) that want to do pilots in the region and participate in research.
- World Food Center – Food is at the heart of this place. Visitors learn everything about food in a playful way. Here producers, companies and organisations show their food innovations and new collaborative relationships are created.
- Wageningen Campus and KennisAs – Wageningen Campus is the meeting place for researchers, (starting) entrepreneurs and students in the fields of nutrition and food production, living environment and health. Wageningen Campus consists of two locations; in close proximity to the buildings of Wageningen University & Research (WUR) and the Business & Science Park Wageningen (BSPW). The KennisAs area connects Wageningen University & Research with the Wageningen Business and Science Park, the Ede Knowledge Campus and the World Food Center.
- Poultry Expertise Centre – Is a Triple Helix partnership of parties working in or involved in the poultry sector. Expertise is bundled and used to train entrepreneurs and employees who work in the poultry sector (national and international), but also forms a centre for further training and retraining. From a joint perspective we respond to questions from the business community.

### Effects in the context of broad prosperity

The region wants to be a vital environment for living and doing business. A balance between ecological, economic and social aspects is crucial in this. Improvement on one should not be at the expense of the other. These aspects together form the concept of broad prosperity. We see a balanced development of this as the path to sustainable growth. Using the concept of broad prosperity makes it possible to aspire for growth while guaranteeing the balance between these three dimensions.

There are several methods to visualise the progress and balance of these aspects. The Telos system measures on three dimensions, namely economic, ecological and social capital, and does so for all municipalities in the Netherlands. The table below shows (a) what the region now scores on the Telos dimensions and (b) how this score compares to scores elsewhere in the country. This shows that Regio Foodvalley scores higher on social and economic capital than the average in the Netherlands. The scores on ecological capital are comparable.

Capitals	<i>Current score Region Foodvalley 2018<sup>4</sup></i>	<i>Average NL (and lowest and highest) 2018</i>
<b>Social capital</b>	<b>55</b>	51 (36 Lelystad - 67 Rozendaal)
<b>Ecological capital</b>	<b>51</b>	51 (34 Rotterdam -65 Rozendaal)
<b>Economic capital</b>	<b>51</b>	46 (32 Simpelveld-62 Amsterdam)

Telos monitors municipalities on a large number of indicators, which together show progress on broad prosperity. This method is already being used in various regions. Telos indices enable us to annually report the progress of the municipalities in Regio Foodvalley – and thus of the region – on these indicators. In this way, the region can report annually to its participants, residents and stakeholders on the goals mentioned in this agenda.

The strategic goals Healthy, Circular and Connect cannot be linked one-on-one to the Telos capitals. It is good to mention the assumption that steering on these three strategic goals can make a positive contribution to all three capitals.

### Relationship with SDGs

With the concept of broad prosperity, a Dutch translation has been made of the 17 SDGs that the UN has formulated. SDG goals such as "Quality education", "Affordable and sustainable energy", "Responsible consumption and production", "Industry, innovation and infrastructure" and "Partnership to achieve goals" can be recognised in this agenda. In fact, all SDGs are reflected in this agenda. For three SDGs, we as a region want to make a distinctive contribution with the priority themes Agricultural transition and Vital countryside and food and for a healthy life. These are SDGs 2, 3 and 12, respectively "No hunger", "Good health and well-being" and "Responsible consumption and production". In our approach to these SDGs, we comply with SDG 17; "Partnership to achieve goals".

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<sup>4</sup> These numbers were calculated by weighting the scores of the eight Regio Foodvalley municipalities by number of inhabitants. Source: Telos, (2018). *Nationale Monitor Duurzame Gemeenten 2018*. Tilburg: author.

