



ANNUAL REPORT 2022

 **Soil
Heroes**
Foundation

WELCOME

Farming today is at a crossroads. Many of the principles of the 'green revolution' that famously led to a surge in production and productivity after the world wars, is now leading to its demise. The much advocated system of efficiency and simplification – monocultures, the removal of landscape structures, heavy machinery and an overreliance on synthetic pesticides and fertilisers has, over time, had an overwhelming negative effect on our soil health, polluted our waters and resulted in biodiversity decline.

This not only has consequences for the natural world, but has enormous importance for humankind. Deteriorated soils are far less resilient to our changing climate – inefficient at holding water in droughts or draining water in periods of heavy rainfall – two climate change related aspects of unpredictable weather patterns that are predicted to worsen. They produce crops that are less resilient to pests and diseases, and rely heavily on synthetic inputs derived from finite resources.

And whilst regenerative agriculture is now overwhelmingly being shown as the win-win solution for nature, for the climate, for farmers, and society, change on the ground remains frustratingly slow, especially against a backdrop of such urgency.

The reason for this is complex, but one key aspect stands out: convincing farmers that taking on the risk is beneficial and sustainable not only for nature, but also for their business. Much of the rhetoric around changing our farming systems is framed in a narrative of blame, whereby farmers need to change their harming systems to save nature. Agriculture has always been an inherently risky business, subject to a multitude of factors for which we have no control – changing weather patterns, diseases and pests to name a few. And climate change and global world order are increasing these uncertainties and costs. The majority of farmers are highly leveraged in debt, and running businesses on extremely small margins, leaving very little flexibility to contemplate the risk of systems change on their own farms. They are in effect 'locked in' to a predominant system of conventional agriculture – producing high volume, low nutritional value goods to sell to large food companies who hold the bargaining power and sell food at a price that does not take into account the external effects of its production. Creating greater uncertainty on their farms to support a public good which is not recompensated on the markets is therefore a far reach for many.

We can reduce some of that risk for farmers, by showing them what is possible on a regenerative farm, how it works, and how it can benefit their own farms. If farmers can see how a financially viable commercial farm is more resilient against the wildly fluctuating synthetic input prices, is able to reduce its irrigation, has stabilised many of its yields whilst developing new business models, then farmers can re-evaluate how they conceive the risks of 'going regenerative'.

As we go into 2023, we are more motivated than ever. As a Foundation, as farmers, as citizens we feel strongly that we have a responsibility to support farmers, and the whole food system, to transition to regenerative agriculture and we look forward to building upon the important headway made into 2022, to grow and share our work as widely as possible.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Annabelle Williams". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping tail on the final letter.

Annabelle Williams
Executive Director
The Soil Heroes Foundation

GOVERNANCE

Stichting Soil Heroes Foundation is a non-profit Foundation, solely focused on serving the common good of the transition to regenerative agriculture.

MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission: To enable the long-term viability of people in harmony with the planet.

Our goal: To stimulate and establish a regenerative society where the restoration of soil health, soil biodiversity and the production of food with a higher nutrient density is central.

Overall objective: To catalyse the transition to regenerative agriculture globally.

Our approach: To support and stimulate regenerative initiatives globally and initiate and innovate ourselves.

EVENTUALLY LEADING TO:

Restored soil health, biodiversity, water and air quality, new and fair business models for farmers, improved nutrient quality of our food and a more stable climate and healthy planet.

WHO WE ARE, AND HOW WE ARE GOVERNED:

Supervisory Board

The Supervisory Board oversees the broad mission of the Foundation. The Management Board is supervised by the Supervisory Board. In fulfilling this task, the members of the Supervisory Board are guided by the interests of the Foundation. The composition of the Supervisory Board is the following:

Ms. Riella Hollander	Director Food and Agriculture, Triodos
Mr. Ryan Gellert	CEO, Patagonia
Mr. Henri van Eeghen	CEO, Synergos

Management Board

The composition of the Management Board is the following:

Ms. Annelies van der Vorm (Chairwoman)	Impact investor
Ms. Alexandra Korijn (Secretary)	Co-founder at New AJE Capital, Board member at Toniic
Mr. Frederic Hoffmann (Treasurer)	Food & agriculture deal sourcing for GO!, board member of the MAVA Foundation
Mr. Fernando Russo	Impact investor

THE SOIL HEROES FAMILY

The Soil Heroes Foundation is part of the Soil Heroes Family. The Foundation is the independent, non-profit wing of the family, generating open access knowledge through proof of practice, to support farmers globally to transition their farming practices. The Soil Heroes company (www.soilheroes.com) strives to improve soil health and increase the impact of ecosystem services through enabling companies to invest in environmental impact by working with regenerative farmers in Europe, providing real soil data to quantify and verify the positive change. This enables farmers to gain directly from their transition and so secure long-term revenues. The Soil Heroes Company and the Soil Heroes Foundation are separate legal entities.

Stichting Soil Heroes Foundation holds a Golden Share of the Soil Heroes Operations to protect the purpose of the business, restoring soils for people and planet.



MEET THE TEAM

As we grow, so does our team. In 2022 we welcomed two new team members, Annabelle and Yasmine. Today our Soil Heroes Foundation team is:

Jeroen Klompe – Founder & director of the experience farm

Convinced, through experience, that nature holds the answers, Jeroen, along with his wife Mellany, has built up and transformed their family farm, Klompe Landbouw. Situated just south of Rotterdam in The Hoeksche Waard, it is now a highly successful arable regenerative farm with a combination of sustainable, cutting-edge technology and natural solutions. Jeroen studied farm management at Delft and real estate management in Utrecht. Jeroen is passionate about food quality and taste and is one of the role model regenerative farmers of the Netherlands who strives to “make soil better”.

Mellany Klompe – Founder & voluntary consultant on regenerative agriculture

Mellany is a co-founder of the Soil Heroes Foundation. She has a background in environmental science and previously worked for the Dutch Waterboard as well as a number of local government agencies. She is also on the Board of the Collective Cooperative for Hoeksche Waard. In this role she has been a driver in creating more than 800km of field margins and biodiversity lanes on the island to promote natural pest control, pollination, and biodiversity.

Annabelle Williams – Executive Director

Having grown up on a working farm in the UK, Annabelle has never swayed far from her agricultural roots for long. After a spell working for humanitarian organisations, she moved back to the world of agriculture, spending over 10 years working for, and managing, sustainable agriculture think tanks, advocating to transition our farming systems to models that are sustainable for the climate, for the environment, and for the farmers. During a deep dive project on soil in her last position, she was particularly stuck by the innovative, ground up proof of practice approach taken by the Soil Heroes Foundation, and joined the team in September 2022. Annabelle holds an MBA in Food and Agriculture Businesses.

Yasmine Cathell – Nutrition Project Manager

Yasmine has experience in the areas of education, soil health, nutrition, agroforestry and sustainable business. She is a ‘soil sommelier’ and believes that soil and food are just as connected as terroir and wine. She is passionate about connecting soil health to human health and creating a future of food production that leverages natural systems and empowers farmers to improve their livelihoods while protecting ecosystems both above and below ground.

OUR MISSION

Why are we striving to support a shift to a regenerative agriculture system?

Life on earth is entirely dependent on healthy functioning soils. They are the very foundation of the ecosystems upon which we rely, and we count on their functioning to **produce our food, cycle our nutrients, sequester carbon, manage waterflows**, and be the bedrock of the planet's **biodiversity**. They have a crucial role to play in **climate mitigation and resilience** and determine our **future food security**.

And yet it is estimated that 60 to 70% of all soils in the EU alone are in an unhealthy state, leading many scientists to equate the worsening state of soils with the same level of concern as the climate crisis.

THE SOLUTION: REGENERATIVE AGRICULTURE

Regenerative agriculture is a set of farming practices that works with nature, rather than against it, putting soil health and function at its heart.

Core practices include minimising tillage, reducing, or eliminating synthetic inputs, increasing crop diversity (through extended rotations and in crop diversity), expanding crop rotation, implementing landscape elements such as flower field margins, keeping the soil covered all year long by growing cover crops in-between cash crops, and integrating grazing animals. These practices, among other benefits, rebuild soil organic matter and restore biodiversity. This in turn results in reduced or a complete reversal of soil erosion, improved aggregate stability, water infiltration, water retention, nutrient cycling, plant health, crop yields, crop resilience, above and below ground biodiversity and crop nutrient quality. These are all effects that we are seeing on our own test farm as we trial and collect data on these methods.

But regenerative agriculture goes far beyond the farm gate, sequestering carbon and reducing GHG emissions thereby making an important contribution to our efforts to slow climate heating; provide clean water, and create resilience in our food system.

These are all benefits that are crucial to society and our quality of life on this earth, they provide a win-win for farmers, providing the opportunity to strengthen their farm's resilience to the growing climate change effects: stabilising yields and reducing crop losses and reducing input costs for pesticides, fertilisers and irrigation.

Most of the practices applied in regenerative agriculture are not new, indeed they have been practiced for 1000s of years. The difference now is that we know why they work and how they work. The greatest challenge for today's farmers is to learn how to integrate the ancient concepts of regenerative agriculture, and translate them into modern farms whilst building new sustainable regenerative business models.

At the Soil Heroes Foundation, we are working with the Klompe Farm to trial regenerative agriculture on a large scale commercial farm. We are testing the integration of regenerative farming practices to see what works, and what doesn't work, and to find real time farming solutions to overcome the challenges that the application of new regenerative farming practices might present to a modern commercial farm. This creates a visual, and data driven evidence of what other farmers can do, and shows politicians and food producers the potential for a new horizon for farming.

WE EMPOWER FARMERS TO BUILD THE HEALTH OF THEIR SOILS BY:



1 **Providing proof of practice**
Farmers need to see that it works

2 **Sharing knowledge & tools**
Farmers need to know what to do

3 **Building community**
Farmers need to feel part of a bigger whole



OUR EXPERIENCE FARM

All our regenerative agriculture trials are carried out on Klompe Landbouw. Klompe Landbouw is a third-generation Dutch family farm located on the island of Hoeksche Waard, 20km south of Rotterdam. Of its 360 hectares, 200 ha are now farmed regeneratively, which makes the Klompe Farm one of the largest experiments for regenerative farming in Europe. The progress of transitioning the remaining hectares will provide an excellent learning opportunity for the Foundation, and for farmers, to see the transition in real time.

The farm is owned and run by Jeroen and Mellany Klompe who have been front-runner regenerative farmers for more than 10 years.

In partnership with the Soil Heroes Foundation, the Klompe Farm trials, and then implements a wide range of experimental regenerative practices, including biofertilisers, compost tea, lane farming, biodiversity margins and strips, no till etc. With part of the farm still being run conventionally, it provides an ideal example for us to test and compare the effects of regenerative versus conventional farming on biodiversity, nutrition, water holding capacity and so on.

We work with universities and researchers to monitor the trials on the farm and generate data on the effects of the practices. These results are complemented by the farm's own farm logs – recording the adaptation of the farming practices, the yields, the effects of the weather on the different plots and so on. In 2023 this will be further complemented by the establishment of an on-farm lab.

Currently the farm grows a wide range of crops including potatoes, onions, brown beans, kidney beans, soybeans, several types of wheat, carrots, naked oats and buckwheat, as well as trialling new regenerative crops, such as land rice.

Carrying out these trials on a commercial farm enables the Foundation to bridge the divide between academic research and a farmers' daily reality, thus shortening the jump from research to practice. It allows us to combine scientific results with solutions for daily farm management challenges and to understand the economic feasibility of such an approach. This is crucial for farmers. In order to facilitate the transition to regenerative farming practices, farmers need to see regenerative agriculture in practice – the machinery used, the man hours, the soil data, the resulting yields, and the market pathways for the products. Thus this approach creates a more relatable and thereby influential demonstration model for other farmers, for buyers, for food processors, and for policy makers.



PROJECT: BIODIVERSITY

Agroecosystems provide an important habitat for a wide range of species, yet the intensification of agriculture, including the loss of natural landscape elements and the use of synthetic pesticides and fertilisers, is one of the main causes of the increasingly documented decline in biodiversity in agricultural areas and beyond. Whilst this is devastating for the survival of many important species, it is also damaging for farming.

Agriculture depends on the ecosystem services provided by species in the system, such as pollination, natural pest control, the suppression of diseases or weeds or facilitating the nutrient cycle and water balance. Relying on the services provided by functional biodiversity is an essential component of regenerative agriculture and therefore if regenerative agriculture is going to be effective, a farmer must apply practices that improve it.

Regenerative agriculture includes a toolbox of practices which have the potential to not only reverse the decline in our biodiversity, but to actively build it. Biodiversity and regenerative agriculture are a perfect example of how working with rather than against nature can bring multiple benefits.

In our proof of practice biodiversity practice we are testing, and monitoring, a range of regenerative practices designed specifically to improve the above and below ground biodiversity on the farm. These consist of the following activities:

1. Biodiversity field margins and lanes

Implementing flower edges around the plots and biodiversity lanes in-between the plots whilst measuring the impact on biodiversity levels and crop resilience.

In 2022 we continued to expand the flower strips and grass field margins in and around the agricultural plots on the Klompe Farm. These have been gradually expanded over the last decade, and now account for up to 10% of the land surface on some areas of the farm.

These field margins and flower strips provide a welcoming habitat for insects, birds and small mammals and the farm continued to be a pilot site for the University of Amsterdam on their project ‘validating the ecological benefits of field margins’ as part of the Interreg NW Europe project „FABulous Farmers“.

In order for farmers to reap the greatest benefits, it is important to tailor, where possible, the needs of the agricultural system to the species groups that support that need, and then tailor the biodiversity elements so that they provide the maximal advantage for the species groups that the farmer wants to encourage. In line with this, the Foundation and Klompe Farm has been working together with the University of Amsterdam, as part of the FABulous Farmers project, to investigate which flower/grass-herb mixes work best for functional biodiversity enhancement.

Preliminary results from the farm have shown that the presence of flower strips ensured a greater density of ‘aphid fighters’ – notably hoverflies and lace wings, and that the effect of these natural predators on the aphid population on the potato crop extended as far as 100 to 150m into the field. The high numbers of natural predators, combined with land farming, thereby rapidly suppressed the aphid population in the crops, as well as the green beetle, and kept the two pest populations well below the threshold where spraying would be required. Research is ongoing vis a vis the Colorado potato beetle, which – originally from the US, has no specialised natural enemies in the Netherlands.

Butterflies also benefitted greatly from the high densities and species range of flowers. During the year the butterfly and moth populations were monitored on the farm and 25 diurnal species were identified. The flower strips provide both a nectar source for the butterflies and moths, and host plants for the caterpillar, and therefore care was taken when choosing the species mix not to introduce plants favourable to certain pest caterpillars.

To learn more about our butterfly monitoring on the farm visit <https://www.vlinderstichting.nl/bimag/>

In order to better monitor larger mammals and birds, the Foundation successfully applied for, and received a grant from the Dr Bronner Foundation for sensor detection wildlife cameras which will be installed on the farm in early 2023.

2. Lane farming and extended rotations

Diversity in cropping systems is equally important and the Foundation has been trialling lane farming and increasing the variety of crops grown on the farm. The farm already grows a wide variety of crops: potatoes, onions, brown beans, kidney beans, soybeans, several types of wheat, carrots, naked oats and buckwheat. However, growing a wide range of crops, and finding suitable business models for these crops is an important part of the regenerative agriculture journey.

In this vein, the Klompe Farm, with the Foundation, continues to test new crops. In 2022 we looked into land rice and sorghum. For land rice, wanted to see if it could be a perennial crop. Was it a good ‘resting crop’ with a good root system? And could we identify a niche added value market for it. Unfortunately, the tests this year failed as the cornels of rice did not fill with starch. In 2023 we will review our growing strategy and in 2024 plant a smaller test area. However, this is an important example of why such regenerative tests on the farm are crucial because we aim to see what works, and what doesn’t work, to reduce the risk for others farmers looking to scale their own regenerative activities.

For sorghum: whilst more often thought as a crop grown in the Americas and Africa, sorghum has the potential to be an important contributor to regenerative sugar production in Europe, especially considering the issues of growing sugar beet organically. Once harvested, the stems can be crushed to extract the juice, which is then boiled down to form a molasses. Little is known about sorghum production in northern European and so in 2022 the tests focused on trailing a wide variety of Sorghum to identify those which are best suited to our climate and conditions and were best for sugar production.

3. Trialling Biofertilisers and Compost teas

Biofertilisers are made through a process of fermentation whereby a liquid of metabolites (organic products produced by bacteria and fungi) is brewed from a variety of organic products. The resulting liquid is then sprayed onto the fields every two weeks during the growing season. They can improve plant growth and productivity through supporting the delivery of plant available and usable nutrients and increase plant resilience.

The Foundation, along with Klompe Farm, has been experimenting with different recipes since 2020 and continued to do so in 2022, in an effort to identify the biofertiliser mix that best suits the farms conditions and crops.

In 2022 we also started using a compost extractor from the United States. Compost teas are liquid versions of the solid compost material. They contain soluble plant nutrients and a complex community of beneficial microorganisms which are applied to crops in a spray form. Compost 'tea' is made by mixing compost in water and heating the water, whilst mixing the mixture. Compost tea usually only has a shelf life of 8 hours, however preparing the compost tea in the compost extractor extends its shelf life to 24 hrs. This has enormous advantages in that if the weather is not compatible for spraying the tea, tea can be left in the extractor overnight and not be lost. In 2023 we will be experimenting with the Johnson Su bioreactor compost to develop our own compost to feed into the compost extractor.

4. Agroforestry

The agroforestry plot, established in 2021, continued to grow but the long hot summer drought led to the loss of a number of the newly planted trees. These will be replaced over the winter of 22/23.



Experimenting for new Biofertilisers



PROJECT: WATER HOLDING CAPACITY

The soil's water holding (or retention) capacity is the amount of water that a given soil can hold for crop use. When there is a deficit in the amount of water in the soil, the soil needs to be replenished by precipitation or irrigation. Equally, the better the water holding capacity of a soil, the better capacity the soil has to drain water (water cycling).

Why is this important? Because crops need the right amount of water to grow. Too little water inhibits growth, as do water logged soils. Improving the water holding capacity of the soil means that soils have more moisture available for plants during times of droughts and allow for effective drainage during periods of heavy and or continuous rainfall. The key is for farmers to understand the nuances of soil water holding capacity and how to manage it so that the land does not require so much irrigation or suffer from a drought. The higher the water holding capacity, the more resilient the crop is because the soil is able to resist extreme weather events which are increasing with climate change.

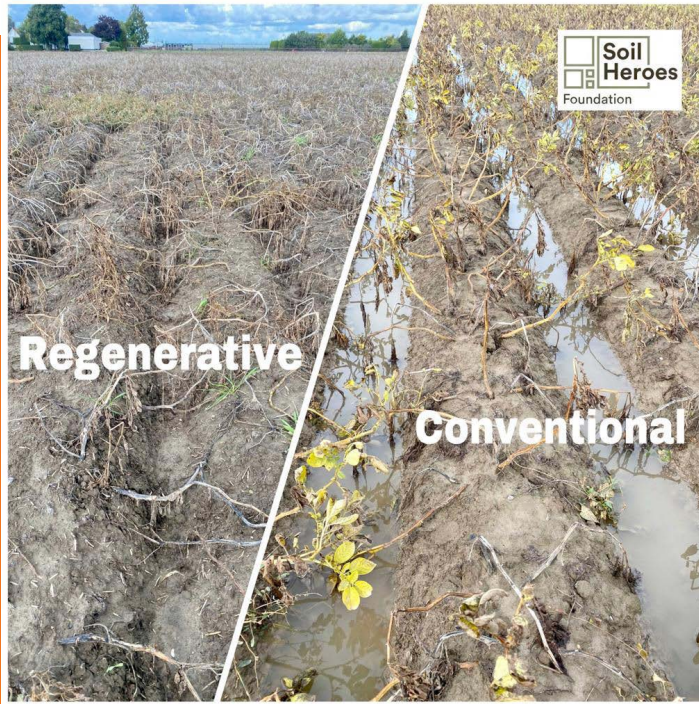
Regenerative agriculture has a key role to play here. By applying regenerative practices, farmers can improve their soil structure, carbon content and so improve their soils' water holding capacity.

For the water holding capacity project we are running on the Klompe Farm, we are combining a number of regenerative agricultural practices to improve soil health- multi species cover crops, lane farming, biofertilisers, no till etc. and, with the University of Wageningen, comparing and contrasting the water holding capacity of the regeneratively farmed plots versus the conventionally farmed plots.

The final results of the study will be due in 2023, but early indications this year show that root depth, fungi, the number of worms and the organic matter content of the soils is important for water holding capacity – all aspects that are improved by the regenerative agriculture practices.

But data doesn't tell the whole story and there were interesting comparisons between the crops this year. Potatoes were grown on both the conventional, and the regenerative plots during a particularly difficult growing season.

An early spring drought affected germination, and the long hot summer drought dried out the soils. This was followed by heavy rainfall at harvest time, waterlogging the top layers of the soil. These extreme growing conditions created stress on both systems, which reacted differently.



Comparing potato crop in conventional and regenerative fields

Above is simple sample of potatoes taken from both plots, on the left, potatoes taken from the regenerative plot show far greater uniformity in the crop than the conventional harvest on the right. The photo to the right shows the two plots just prior to harvest after the heavy autumn rainfall. Note the stagnating water in the conventional plots, which has drained away in the regenerative plot. Potatoes, if left for 24hrs in water logged soils, will start to rot. And although this is purely based on observation during a particularly difficult growing season, it gives the farmer clear visual indication in our changing climate of how regenerative agriculture, and investing in improving in soil health, can grow not only crop resilience, but also farm business resilience in the long term.

A close-up photograph of a person's hands holding a bunch of freshly harvested onions. The onions are still attached to their green stalks and have some soil on their roots. The person is wearing a dark blue shirt, a silver watch on their left wrist, and a red string bracelet on their right wrist. The background is a blurred green field.

PROJECT: NUTRITION

In 2022 the Soil Heroes Foundation launched a new project: nutrient density proof of practice. The Nutrition density proof of practice project is a side-by-side comparison of regenerative and conventional farming practices on a commercial scale to study the influence of regenerative farm management practices on the nutrient density and variety in soil, plants, and crops.

Numerous studies since the 1940s have shown that the nutrient density of our food crops has been reducing over time and with science making significant advances into soil biodiversity, we now know that soil organic matter, and soil biodiversity can have a direct effect on the nutrients that plants can access and utilise.

Through this evidence-based proof of practice project we want to see if farming regeneratively, and the range of practices that this entails, has a direct effect on the nutrient variety and density of the plant and final crop. In this study we will not only compare regenerative and conventional agriculture, but look at the different effects of a range of regenerative practices, such as the application of biostimulants, compost, biofertilisers, cover crops etc.

In November we measured out the test demonstration plots, and planted the cover crops and winter wheat, our first crop to test.

To enable us to continually test the soil, plants and final food crops throughout the 3 year trial, we will be establishing a bespoke farm-lab. The lab will be equipped with a range of handheld and lab based instruments, specifically calibrated to monitor the biology and micronutrients of samples collected from both the conventional and regenerative plots. This will enable us to better understand the cycling of micronutrients and other compounds from soil to plant and final crop.

In 2022 we established a new site for the farm lab on the farm, completed the building works and started equipping the lab, including trialling a range of hand held instruments. The purchase of and training for a Bruker tracer was completed and will be used to test for a set range of minerals.

Our second focus in 2022 was working with our academic partner, Edacious, to determine the elements that will be tested throughout the project, the establishment of protocols for sampling and the best suited equipment to include in the lab.

Learnings will be shared throughout the study with regular updates and farm tours. The final results are expected in early 2026.

SHARING KNOWLEDGE

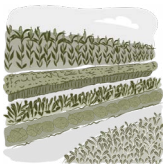
It is crucial that what we learn on the farm doesn't stay on the farm. The motivation behind our proof of practice projects is to share with farmers what is possible – what worked, what didn't work. We want to show how we have overcome challenges – of adapting machinery, making biofertilisers on a large scale, weed control and so on.

In 2022 we shared our learning in three ways:

Farmer Guidelines

In 2022 we consolidated 10 years of learning from the Klompe Farm transition to regenerative agriculture into a simple guidebook for farmers. The guidebook outlines the 20 key practices of regenerative agriculture, and their benefits. It is free to download from the [website](#) and in 2022 was handed out at the Groundswell regenerative agriculture festival in the UK and forwarded throughout the Foundation's extensive network.

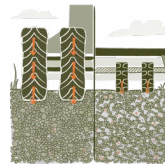
We share knowledge about the following core practices of regenerative farming:



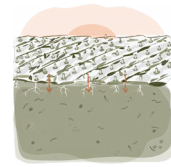
Crop diversity



Shallow tillage / no till



Use of lighter machinery



Mulching straws and crop residues



Geographic optimization



Crop rotation plan



Use of several types of biofertilizers and inoculants
(made with good quality water)



Strip cultivation / lane farming



Flower field margins and biodiversity lanes



Use of solid manure as green compost



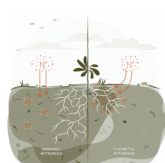
No bare soil



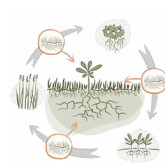
Leguminous crops



Rugged vegetation/ landscape elements



Reducing the use of artificial fertilizer and nitrogen (N)



Cover crops



Farm visits

Farm visits are central to our knowledge sharing work. In 2022 we showed over 430 visitors around the farm. This number only represented a fraction of those who were keen to come and see what we are doing.

Farm visits allow farmers to walk around with us and ask the practical questions on the spot, either as a regenerative farmer already on the journey for transition, or as a conventional farmer looking to change. They are able to see the plot trials, see the lane farming, feel the soil, observe the differences in the crops and watch the biofertiliser fermenting. And they can see how the Klompe Farm is finding added value channels to gain premium prices for its produce. Decades of research has shown that farm visits and peer to peer learning remain one of the most influential ways to pass on information to farmers and motivate change. 2022 was our busiest year ever for farm visits but the demand is clearly surpassing our capacity for farm tours. We will therefore be looking for support in 2023 to boost our capacity in order to spread the learning further.

Webinars and podcasts

We joined webinars and spoke on podcasts to spread our learning further. This included, among others, the Regenagri podcast for short deep dive into 'building financial and natural capital with regenerative agriculture', and the Investing in Regenerative agriculture podcast (episode 129) on nutrient density <https://investinginregenerativeagriculture.com/>



Training on soil testing with Dr Jill Clapperton

We were again, very active in being involved in discussions, networks, and making contact with wide range of people – both active in the regenerative agriculture ‘community’ and outside it. We showed politicians around the farm, joined meetings on the development of the Common Agricultural Policy, briefed investors, went to conferences, and visited many other farms, exchanging ideas.

THE JOURNEY AHEAD

2023 is set to be an exciting year as the Foundation grows and deepens its impact.

Proof of practice

By the end of 2023 we will have completed the first of three years of the proof of practice nutrition project. Whilst year 1 results will not be conclusive, they will give us an exciting insight into the potential patterns we may be able to see between soil health and nutrient density on the regenerative and conventional plots.

We will have also completed a full testing cycle with our new farm-lab – working with innovative hand held instruments in the field, and carrying out analysis in our lab and so we'll be able to start sharing our experiences of the farm-lab with others who are considering installing such a testing facility on their own farms.

2023 will see the end of the three year water holding capacity project. Whilst the impacts of regenerative practices have been very evident to us, especially in 2022 with the droughts and late heavy rainfall, we will be able to share the full scientific data picture of the comparisons.

We'll continue to be inspired to test more innovative crops and look forward to sharing the first results of some very interesting varieties we planted on the regenerative strips in 2022.

Our trials on biofertilisers and compost teas will continue, with the added dimension of the first results of the new Johnson-Su bioreactors – an innovative form of composting that focuses on producing fungally dominated compost with greater biological diversity.

And we'll be spending an awful lot of time watching the wonderful world of soil biology through a microscope!

Sharing knowledge

We can't emphasise enough the importance of the farm tours as a form of inspiring farmers and informing policy makers and players in the food system. We'd love to be able to show even more people around the farm this year, and tailor the tours to the specific interest of the group. So in 2023 we'll be looking for ways to grow our capacity and facilities to enable this.

Building community

And we will continue to get out there – at conferences, webinars, workshops, and online, to build networks to grow the community of those of us who are committed to a regenerative future.

Changing our governance structure

2023 will also see a change to our governance structure, as we turn to simplify the governance of the Foundation, consolidating the supervisory and management Board into one dynamic Board.

OUR PARTNERS

We couldn't achieve all that we do at the Foundation without the exceptional support of our partners who share our motivation for a regenerative future.

Our Funders:



And our collaborating knowledge partners:



UNIVERSITY OF AMSTERDAM



If you too would like to support us, please contact annabelle@soilheroesfoundation.com or donate directly through our [donation page](#).



Foundation

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