



## PRACTICE ABSTRACT

### Digitalisation: Needs and Impacts

May, 2022

# OOSTERWORLD, THE NETHERLANDS

Jan Eelco Jansma, Wageningen University and Research

Oosterwold is a new and unique peri-urban area (of 45,000 future residents) situated at the fringe of the city of Almere (215,000 residents). 50% of Oosterwold spatial room is earmarked to urban agriculture. Oosterwold should provide 10% of the food basket of the Almere city region in the near future. However, due to an unbalanced future vision of urban agriculture in the area, the lack of a critical mass of experienced practitioners as well as the lack of an appealing focal route, the current vibrancy around urban agriculture in Oosterwold could easily fade.

Establishing short food supply chains in Oosterwold is considered a means to organise and unite the food production in Oosterwold, and is concomitantly supportive in strengthening the ties between peri-urban Oosterwold and the Almere city region. Hence the focal question of the Desira Living Lab Oosterwold is: could digital systems be supportive in establishing vibrant social communities around short food supply chains that unite Oosterwold and the Almere city-region?

Central to the Socio-Cyber-Physical System of Oosterwold are the urban agriculture initiatives in the area that, in various ways, produce (surplus) food and try to develop food communities. The environmental and social impact of short food supply chains (communities) in Oosterwold is most likely positively affected by the use of digital technologies. Digital technologies optimise logistics, share knowledge, and create a social exchange between producers and consumers, and most likely will support the inclusion of more local and regional residents in supply chains that deliver healthy and affordable local food. However, these are all anticipated effects as the different food initiatives in Oosterwold are still developing, and so are their digital means.

#### Living Lab

Oosterwold (NL)

#### Key Digital Technologies

Apps

#### Keywords

Urban Agriculture, Short Food Supply Chains, Community Building

#### More info:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bEn6-82ZMX4>



In 2021 Living Lab Oosterwold organised 5 workshops with local stakeholders/residents in which it co-explored the needs, possible directions, and future visions of urban agriculture in the area. Two lessons can be obtained from these workshops. Firstly, that the area -its residents as well as the authorities- (still) lacks a shared future vision and agenda on urban agriculture and food communities. A next step is to co-organise incentives which elicits local debate and community building on urban agriculture. Secondly, that the focus of Living lab Oosterwold should be on digital technologies that support the creation of a vibrant and committed community around short food supply chains. The essential need is to build communities around the digital systems. In the sphere of living lab Oosterwold, three potential communities emerge, i.e. a consumers cooperative -VoKo Oosterwold- (<https://www.voko-oosterwold.nl/>), a local CSA-like farm -Burgerboerderij Oosterwold- and a cooperative of local producers -Cooperatie Stadslandbouw Oosterwold- (<https://www.coopoosterwold.nl/>). A next step is to explore with these initiatives potential (digital) systems that facilitate their needs.

