

Nitrogen 2000 – The Dutch Farmer Struggle

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January 26, 2024

STORY AT-A-GLANCE

- › Dutch cattle farmers own 70% of Holland, but the government is pushing for a forced buy out of 50% of their land, claiming it's necessary to reduce pollution
- › Experts say the move to get rid of farmers isn't about the environment but, rather, taking control of valuable land
- › The government's computer models, which are used to support its plan to reduce nitrogen by buying up farmland, are based on a flawed assumption that nitrogen migrates from one field to the next
- › The push to remove farmers from their land is being driven by NGOs, which are primarily funded by the government, making them government extensions
- › A \$25 billion government fund, created using taxpayers' money, has been established to buy farmers' land; once a farmer sells their land, they'll be legally prohibited from establishing a farm anywhere else in Europe

Nitrogen 2000 is an important 45-minute documentary on the Dutch farmer struggle of 2019-23. Dutch cattle farmers own 70% of Holland, but in 2019, the government began pushing for a forced buy out of 50% of their land,¹ claiming it's necessary to reduce pollution. But for the approximately 60,000 farmers in the Netherlands,² agriculture is a way of life, often passed down through the generations – one that's necessary to supply food for the population.

According to a press release for the film, “Dutch farmers produce the most food per hectare of farmers anywhere, and the Netherlands is the world’s second largest exporter of agricultural products.”³

Farms are interwoven into the fabric of their communities, such that “everyone, even if you live in the city like in Amsterdam or in Rotterdam, in a five-minute drive you will see cows, you will see farmland ... it's so ingrained in our society, in our way of life, that farmers are part of our culture. Everyone has someone in their family who was once a farmer,” says political commentator Sietske Bergsma.⁴

But as professor Han Lindeboom, a marine ecologist at Wageningen University & Research, explains in the film, “The government has taken the stance that we have a huge problem with nature and that due to EU regulations we should save nature. And nowadays we want to solve that problem by simply eliminating a large amount of farms.”⁵

The Dutch government claims it needs to nationalize half of cattle farmers’ land – an amount equal to about one-third of Holland – in order to reduce nitrogen, but experts say this plan is seriously flawed.

Is Nitrogen Really the Problem?

Carbon and nitrogen have been declared environmental enemies by officials worldwide, prompting an array of restrictions. The UN has stated that nitrogen must be managed in order to save the planet, and nitrogen is described as “one of the most important pollution issues facing humanity.”⁶ Nitrogen not only is found in fertilizers, but it also makes up about 70% of air⁷ and is essential for plant growth.

“The nitrogen is only a problem for a few plants,” Lindeboom explains. “There are certain plants that don't like it and they disappear. Other plants like it and they appear. So, basically what you're doing is changing nature.”⁸

“They have declared that nitrogen is the major problem,” Lindeboom, an adviser to NIOZ, the Royal Netherlands Institute for Sea Research, continues in the press release. “Well, I

am an expert in nitrogen and I dare to say it is not.”⁹ According to Lindeboom, the government’s computer models, which are used to support its plan to buy up farmland, are based on a flawed assumption that nitrogen migrates from one field to the next.¹⁰

The EU is also the site of the largest network of protected areas globally, an area known as Natura 2000, which covers 18% of EU land. In Holland alone, there are 162 Natura 2000 areas.¹¹ In 118 of them, it’s said there are organisms living that don’t like too much nitrogen.¹²

“In 2021, the European Union’s Natura 2000 network released a map of areas in the Netherlands that are now protected against nitrogen emissions. Any Dutch farmer who operates their farm within 5 kilometers of a Natura 2000 protected area would now need to severely curtail their nitrogen output, which in turn would limit their production,” Roman Balmakov, Epoch Times reporter and host of “Facts Matter,” says.¹³

Government Forcing Out Farmers

Many Dutch farmers are now facing the loss of their farms over the controversial nitrogen rules. Farmer Jos Block says:¹⁴

“We have a lot of problems with the nitrogen rules because our farm is near to and in Natura 2000. And that is really a problem for us. This is my land. I’m the owner. But this is also a nature land, the Natura 2000. In this area, the government says we need to reduce 95% of the nitrogen that’s coming out of the stables.”

But experts, including Lindeboom, say this is “absolutely not necessary to save nature” and the government is “picking on farmers much too much.”¹⁵ Dutch dairy farmer Nynke Koopmans with the Forum for Democracy is among those who believe the nitrogen problem is made up.

“It’s one big lie,” she says. “The nitrogen has nothing to do with environment. It’s just getting rid of farmers.” Another farmer said if new nitrogen rules go into effect, he’d have to reduce his herd of 58 milking cows down to six. Nitrogen scientist Jaap C. Hanekamp,

Ph.D., was working for a government committee to study nitrogen, tasked with analyzing the government's nitrogen model. He told Balmakov:¹⁶

"The whole policy is based on the deposition model about how to deal with nitrogen emissions on nature areas. And I looked at the validation studies and show that the model is actually crap. It doesn't work. And doesn't matter. They still continue using it. Which is, in a sense, unsettling. I mean, really, can we do such a thing in terms of policy? Use a model which doesn't work? It's never about innovation, it's always about getting rid of farmers."

The Dutch government has been gradually tightening its grasp on farmers for some time. Every year, farmers must report details about the number of cows they farm and how many they plan to have in the future. The government also dictates what types of crops farmers grow and requires complicated and expensive manure testing for phosphates and ammonia, driving up farmers' costs and reducing their income.¹⁷

Government-Funded NGOs Are Lobbying to Get Rid of Farmers

The push to remove farmers from their land is being driven by NGOs, which are primarily funded by the government, making them government extensions. A \$25 billion government fund, created using taxpayers' money, has also been established to buy farmers' land.¹⁸

Once a farmer sells their land, they'll be legally prohibited from establishing a farm anywhere else in Europe. Meanwhile, the NGOs may even end up farming the land once they've pushed the farmer out of the picture. According to the film's press release:¹⁹

"NGOs – namely Dierenbescherming, Varkens in Nood, Greenpeace, Vogelbescherming, Natuurmonumenten – are the primary organizations lobbying for the nitrogen policy. Their budget is funded by the Dutch government. Once a farmer is bought out, the NGOs become custodians of the land and, in some cases, put cows back on the land to manage it."

Commenting on this policy, farmer Bolk said, 'I do the same as the nature organizations in Holland ... I think it's very strange that a farmer is not allowed to do it but a nature organization can do the same as I do and then there is no nitrogen problem.'"

The real agenda, however, may be traced back to the Club of Rome, a think tank that aligned with neo-malthusianism – the idea that an overly large population would decimate resources – and was intending to implement a global depopulation agenda.

"They came up with this incredible document where they actually said, 'We need a new justification for this all-powerful state,'" international journalist Alex Newman says. "So, the new excuse is going to be because the environment is going to be harmed and because climate is going to hurt us."²⁰ Balmakov continues:²¹

"I could not believe what I just heard, that world leaders really laid out this globalist plan in plain English in a physical book, way back in 1991. I went on Amazon. And there it was.

'The First Global Revolution,' which states, and I quote, 'In searching for a common enemy to unite us, we came up with the idea that pollution, the threat of global warming, water shortages, famine, and the like, would fit the bill. And therefore, the real enemy is humanity itself.'"

In its quest to reduce nitrogen, the Dutch government is targeting farmers, not industry, such as brick factories, which also produce nitrogen to build new houses. The reason, many believe, lies in the land itself.

Is the Nitrogen Crisis a Cover for Land Control?

Innovative farming methods and changes in food can reduce livestock emissions. But even when farmers have told the government they'd get rid of their cows – just not their land – the government refused.

“Under the guise of democracy and liberalism, they are taking away rights,” political commentator Sietske Bergsma says. “And most people are fine with it because they feel this sort of responsibility – maybe because it's so ‘progressive’ to care about the climate – so they're willing to actually sacrifice their own well-being.”²²

The narrative is based on fear and telling people what they must do in order to be safe. “We've paid a really high price for this because we gave up all our freedoms to feel safe,” Bergsma adds. “And obviously this safety is also very fake because you can't be safe without being free. It's not about saving the planet. It's about government control because that's in effect what is happening.”²³

Once the farmers are pushed out, globalists suggest eating bugs will protect the planet by eliminating the need for livestock, cutting down on agricultural land use and protecting the environment.²⁴ The UN's Food and Agriculture Organization also encourages the consumption of insects and insect-based foods,²⁵ and the momentum to get farmers off their land is continuing to gain steam.

In 2023, the European Commission approved two Dutch schemes to buy out farmers' land.²⁶ While some farmers staged protests against the plans to reduce nitrogen emissions, more than 750 Dutch farmers had signed up for the buy-out scheme as of November 2023, with about 3,000 expected to be eligible for the program.²⁷ Similar programs are also being discussed in Canada, Ireland²⁸ and the U.S.²⁹ But ultimately, as environmental journalist Rypke Zeilmaker explains:³⁰

“It's not about nature protection. Only the ones who, in this process, have acquired the most money will have the ruling power. It comes down to control of resources in the hands of the few. Look at the power of the NGOs. Who do they really support? Who's pumping money into them? It's always governments and billionaires doing it ...

So, this is the relation between government and NGOs. To an extent you can sell the public. You can buy the public opinion ... It's all about fear. It's about making people fear for the future so that they would agree with policies that, if they are sober, they would never agree with.”

Sources and References

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