

MANY DUTCH PEOPLE CARE ABOUT THE AVAILABILITY AND AFFORDABILITY OF MEAT



Dutch peoples' views differ from those of the politicians in The Hague on **the future of livestock farming** and meat consumption. Results from the latest **National Meat Survey** conducted (since 2021) by **Zest Marketing** among 2,500 respondents showed that **the gap between the Dutch people and The Hague has widened over the past two years.**

The Dutch House of Representatives wants to phase out "intensive farming" as soon as

possible. A motion by MP **Tjeerd de Groot** from the social-liberal political party D66 calling on the government to do so has now been adopted. Tjeerd de Groot says that "**Intensive Farming** aims for maximum production and pays little attention to **animal welfare.**" But what do the Dutch really think about meat production?

While The Hague, led by the **Party for the Animals and D66** in particular, is **strongly committed to restricting livestock farming** and moderating meat consumption, many of the people surveyed are actually increasingly **concerned about the availability and affordability of meat, and food security.**

The Dutch: meat is on the menu

In the 2024 survey, **95% of those surveyed say they eat meat.** This is **an increase of 1% compared to the 2021 survey.** The percentage of people speaking out for meat has increased significantly in recent years, and **most believe that politicians should not restrict meat consumption.** They do not see this as a task for the government, and the survey results confirm this.

One of the survey questions asked **whether meat will continue to be part of the Dutch diet. 74% said yes, and 5% said no.** In 2021, it was 60% vs. 10% respectively. When asked **if politicians should restrict meat consumption** in the Netherlands, **11% said yes, and 67% said no.** And only 13% said they believe it is the government's job to convince people to follow **a diet based on political or personal beliefs** without generally accepted **scientific evidence.** In comparison, 57% disagreed with this statement.

Affordability of meat

According to the research agency, **a large group of people is concerned about the availability and affordability of meat for lower-income groups.** The Dutch see a role for politicians here. When asked: Is meat still affordable for everyone? 23% answered yes, and 45% answered no. When asked: **Do you think politicians should ensure that meat remains affordable for lower-income groups? 70% agree, and 8% disagree.** The research also shows big differences between supporters of political parties. Only half of D66 and Volt (social-liberal political parties) supporters think it is important for meat to be affordable for lower-income groups. SP (social democrats) and PVV (nationalist) supporters, on the other hand, consider it very **important that meat remains affordable for lower-income groups.**

Health concerns also weigh heavily for respondents, with only 14% saying not eating meat does not affect their health.

Global food security

Most agree with the urgency of the three major global food issues: **ending hunger, food security and sustainable agriculture.** The big question is how to provide people with healthy and affordable food soon. **57% of respondents agree with this urgency,** while only 4% do not share this sense of urgency.

A strong livestock sector with a level playing field

When asked whether **the Netherlands should keep its strong meat sector in the future, 69% answered positively,** and **only 8% said no.** Many people also think it is important that comparable standards apply for both Dutch and imported meat.

51% think that the Dutch meat sector should be able to produce for the demand for meat on the EU internal market, while 9% disagree. Many **Dutch farmers** produce for the EU market in Western Europe (sales market within a radius of 800 km), and **54% think these farmers should retain their right to exist.** 79% think meat from abroad should meet the **same standards** as Dutch farmers, and **only 3% responded negatively.**

Powerful impulse

In an article for [Pluimveeweb](#), **Linda Verriet**, chair of the **Pig Farming Producers' Organisation (POV)**, is quoted as saying **the Dutch meat sector deserves praise** for these research results. *"They deserve active recognition, acknowledgement and support from our government. It is **time to boost innovation and entrepreneurship** in our animal agriculture value chain. **Stop discouraging livestock and meat production** because our success contributes to **affordable, accessible, healthy, safe and sustainable food** in the Netherlands and beyond. **Our responsibility for food security does not stop at our borders.** We also make an important contribution to the **economy**, to the innovation capacity of the Netherlands and our globally recognised **knowledge** position."*

The research is a joint initiative of the Central Organisation for the Meat Sector (COV), Sheep Farming Chain Organisation (KOS), Royal Dutch Butchers (KNS), LTO Calf Farming Department, LTO Sheep Farming Department, Pig Farming Producers

Organisation (POV), Livestock & Logistics Netherlands and the Association of Calf Farmers (VVK). The full research report will be published soon.

