



Universiteit
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The Netherlands

Cultivating trust : how do public policies become trusted

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Citation

Breeman, G. E. (2006, March 2). *Cultivating trust : how do public policies become trusted*. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/4321>

Version: Not Applicable (or Unknown)

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CHAPTER 6

The Manure Policy

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Besides the milk quota system, the minister of agriculture in 1984, Braks, also introduced another important restrictive regulation: the so called interim regulation for the control of pigs and poultry. It was meant to put a halt to the growing number of pigs and poultry in the Netherlands, which were producing massive amounts of manure posing a serious environmental problem.

Just as in the previous chapter, this switch towards a restrictive policy resulted in many uncertainties among civil servants and farmers. Unlike with the milk quota system case, however, I will focus on the long term consequences of these uncertainties. Specifically, I discuss how the farmer organisations failed to solve these environmental problems despite the restrictive regulations, how the government failed to establish trust among farmers for other more specific solutions to this problem, and how, as a consequence, the relations between the government and the pig and poultry sector deteriorated. Finally, I examine how Minister Van Aartsen tried to solve this long lasting “manure problem” in the late 1990s through even more restrictive policies.

This chapter mainly contains an analysis in which the coupling mechanism is used to illustrate how collective intentional states disappeared (*Section 6.5*). Before looking at this, however, I discuss two individuals who tried to establish trust for their stances on the manure policy. The first was the Catholic chairman of the farmer associations, J. Wellen, who became excited over the idea of large pig-farms and tried to promote this idea among the members of the associations in the late 1960s. These big farmers were later assumed to contribute most to the manure-problem (*Section 6.2.1*). The second was a civil servant, Ch.C. Henkens, who failed to win trust for far-reaching, manure controlling regulations in the 1970s (*Section 6.2.2*). *Section 6.3* continues with an analysis of various policy plans aimed at restricting the amount of manure in the Netherlands. The reactions to these policies and their uncertainties are analyzed in *Section 6.4*. The introduction of a set of restrictive policies, and its consequences on collective trust is discussed in *Section 6.5*. A discussion of the findings concludes this chapter. Every analysis has been summarized per section and is presented in *Appendix A*, tables A22 – A32.

6.2 PIG BREEDING POLICIES

6.2.1 Pigs for small Catholic farmers (A)

The increasing size of farms

After the Second World War, the number of pigs steadily continued to increase for a long time as seen in *Figure 6.1*. The region with the highest pig density is located in the Southeast of the Netherlands. This is because the soil in this area is poor and sandy and almost no other agricultural activities can be employed.

In the 50s and 60s, the area was mainly marked by small-sized mixed farms with large families. Most of these families were members of the Catholic Church. The Church as well as the Catholic farmer association promoted these family farms. They believed this type of farming 'promoted thrift, decent private property, and family and religious values' (Smits 1996, 177). Family farms were considered to be the strongest pillars for both society and the Church (Duffhues 1996, 207).

In *Section 4.4.2*, I already mentioned that these small farms had to improve their productivity and enlarge to survive international competition. The first minister of agriculture after the war, Mansholt, did not want to impose bluntly a restructuring on the small farms, but instead to strengthen the economically viable farmers by supporting them with education and business advise. Inefficient farmers with small farms had to be given the means to increase their size and become economically viable as well. The first so called small farmers regulation aimed at these goals and was accepted by all the associations and actively promoted among its farmers. The Catholic association, for example, saw the regulation as a support for small farmers and bestowed its trust upon it (Duffhues 1996, 194; Smits 1996, 177).

In due time, however, after declining world market prices, the market and price policies holding supportive payments had become too expensive and were frozen.

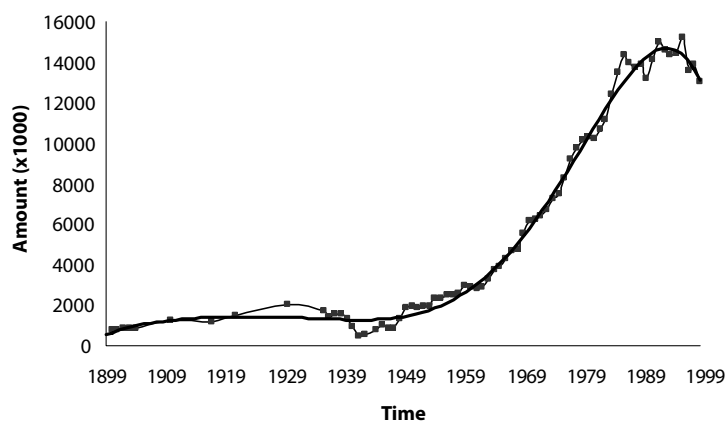


Figure 6.1 The amount of pigs in The Netherlands

For especially the small farmers, this resulted in decreased income. While the Catholic association was still promoting the viability of small farms, the government, as well as other organisations and associations, promoted further specialisation, large scale mechanisation and enlargement. Hence, the Catholic farmer association's pleas to maintain and support small family farms were in vain. The Catholic farmers themselves also started to expect more profit from the modernisation policies and expanded their companies. 'The early nineteen sixties must have been confusing to many farmers: the Catholic representatives of the associations warned against too much specialisation, whereas the government officials and consultants said that a mixed production was no longer economically wise' (Duffhues 1996, 203). In the end, however, many small farmers did not go with the flow and either terminated their activities or sold their small pieces of land.

General chairman Wellen

In the late 1960s the department of agriculture advised small farmers to switch to pig or poultry breeding. This specialization was a strategy to solve the small farmer problem. Pigs and poultry do not require large pieces of land or fertile soil, only a small area upon which to build stables. But before the farmers and the chairmen of, especially the Catholic farmer associations would support these ideas, their trust had to be won. The following paragraphs illustrate how trust was won for specialization policies by the behaviour of the chairman of the Catholic farmer association, Wellen.

Wellen was the general chairman of the largest Catholic farmer association from 1952 until 1961 after which he became director-general (DG) at the department of agriculture. A position he retained until 1973. Wellen was, as chairman of the association, a warm supporter of the small mixed farms. Between 1958 and 1960, several reports were published that said small farms were causing many budgetary problems and that these farms would no longer have a future in the Netherlands. Wellen reacted by publishing a letter of protest, which stated that small farms could still provide farmers and their families with sufficient income if the price support regulations were maintained.¹ Larger farmers would similarly need them to maintain a sufficient income. Therefore, Wellen 'saw no reason to refrain small farmers from price support and regretted that only proposals were made to restructure this type of farm' (Duffhues 1996, 199). The general Catholic farmer association supported his conclusions.

Nonetheless, educated after the Second World War, Wellen became increasingly convinced of the need for modernization in agriculture (*ibid.* 208). Initially he supported small farms, and believed in land consolidation programs and projects to increase their efficiencies. In due time, while thinking and acting with this attitude, Wellen came to believe that specialisation was necessary. He believed specialization

1. This note was called *Is het gemengde bedrijf uit de tijd?* (In Duffhues 1996, 199).

as a logical consequence of the structural developments illustrated in *Section 4.4.2*. In 1963, when he was director-general (DG) of the department of agriculture, Wellen publicly promoted a further increase of farm sizes as well as specialization. At the annual meeting of the Catholic association in 1963, for example, he discussed the issue on capital intense farming in the future. He argued that only large, specialized farms would be able to obtain big loans and pay the interests (*ibid.* 204).

Many farmers reacted with scepticism. In theory they did not agree that farming would become so capital intensive. In practice, however, most small farmers were already specializing, usually switching over onto the breeding of pigs. The trend Wellen was referring to did not come as a surprise: 'Specialization was already going on' (*ibid.* 204). From 1963 onwards, many owners of mixed farms either specialized and enlarged or sold their farms.

The specialization and enlargement policies materialized in a special fund, which provided financial support for both farmers who wanted to have more "economically viable" farms as well as those wanting to sell. Wellen was the creator of this so called development and restructuring fund, and got it implemented in 1963. Initially, many chairmen of the associations did not like the idea that the number of farmers would be reduced by termination. But most of them overcame this reservation because of the fund's positive side: the development of viable farms (Smits 1996, 180; Duffhues 1996, 205). This successful policy of farm enlargement was already illustrated in *Figure 4.2*.

Discussion and notes

The discussion in this section shows how a dominant view about the future of agriculture determined the development of policies. While Wellen was originally against the termination of small mixed farms, he came to have more favourable expectations about modernization and specialisation after enough exposure to this dominant economic interpretation of the future of agriculture. 'Wellen was pre-eminently the representation of the generation that believed in the modernisation of agriculture...!' (Duffhues 1996, 208). His religiously inspired values that at first made him support small mixed farms had been replaced by economic values that necessitated their termination. Initially, Wellen tried to unite the two sets of intentional states by defending the economic viability of small farms. In the end, however, he realized the two were not compatible and he pushed his focus towards a tough reorganisation of the whole agricultural sector. Hence, the consequences of the structural developments, such as the land-consolidation and mechanisation, seemed to have been *good* reasons for him to embrace and trust the tougher reorganisation policies, and to let go of the more religiously inspired views about the farm sizes (*cf. Section 4.4*).

The question of why Wellen changed from opposition towards supporting specialization requires an analysis of the composition of his set of background intentional states. Although I do not have sufficient evidence to support this proposition, I believe

his attitude might be explained by both his Catholic background and his education in modern agricultural economics. He was the son of a chairman of the Catholic farmer association in Nijmegen. Hence, he certainly would have been socialized to belief in the benefits of small mixed family farms. On the other hand, he attended the Dutch university for agriculture in Wageningen right after the war, where he was surely taught the methods of modern, efficient farming, hence, desiring a modern agriculture. The struggle of both these experiences is illustrated above.

Another explanation for Wellen's actions may be his change in jobs. Right in the period that he moved from a position as farmer representative to director-general of the department of agriculture (1961), he also seemed to have changed his view on small mixed farms. Apparently, the job or the position an individual holds partly determines his background intentional states.

Finally, some caution should be taken with these general observations. Although the dominant interpretation of agriculture became the need for modernization and resulted in policies that stimulated capital intensive farming, the rural sociologist Van der Ploeg argues that only a part of the farmers actually adopted this philosophy (Van der Ploeg 1999). His main argument is that many farmers never came to trust the modern style of farming. Instead, they tried to cope with the uncertainties of the government's declining financial support by adopting all kinds of different styles of farming. One saw, for instance thrifty farmers who postponed investments as long as possible, farmers who tried to keep labour costs as low as possible (*trekkerboeren*) and farmers who did not want to specialize and kept on breeding as well as producing milk (*sjluchwei boeren*).

6.2.2 Promoting restrictive regulations (A)

The increasing amount of pigs and poultry turned into large environmental problems for the Netherlands in the 1980s. Although three quarters of the total amount of manure was produced by dairy farmers, the pig breeding and poultry industries have always been considered as the largest contributors to the manure problem for two reasons. First, in contrast to dairy farmers, pig breeders do not have enough fields to spread their manure on. Second, pig and chicken manure contains high levels of environmentally damaging minerals. The level of phosphorus, for example, is much higher than in cattle manure. If too many minerals such as phosphorus are spread on the pastures, the crops will be unable to absorb them; the "left-over" then washes away into the groundwater, polluting water reservoirs. Hence, the manure surplus problem not only refers to the quantity of manure, but to the level of certain minerals within the manure. Before the manure surplus became a large environmental problem in the 1980s only a few individuals asked attention for it.

Warnings about manure surpluses

During the 1970s, only a few civil servants tried to draw attention to the growing amount of manure. Especially Henkens, a public official of the department of agriculture, was a pioneer in pleading for restrictive manure regulations (Frouws 1993, 77-82). He, and his section for the consultancy of soil, water and compost, had started warning against the high amounts of minerals in the groundwater. He claimed that the pig- and poultry farmers were particularly to blame for they lacked pastures and dumped manure in small ditches and creeks. As a result, these waterways overflowed with nutrients suffocating all life in them, a process known as eutrophication.

Other officials as well as the minister of agriculture did not share Henkens' view at the time. He was even blamed for indoctrination, because he was accusing an important economic sector, and he was told he had to trust the technical solutions being developed (*ibid.* 77). When other organisations, such as the foundation for nature and the environment, and some MPs also started asking questions, the minister of agriculture, Lardinois, decided to install a policy committee. In 1970, it concluded that the manure surpluses were to be transported from the dense pig- and poultry breeding areas in the south and middle of the country to the arable pastures in the north. If this was not possible, the manure could also be dried and burned, and subsequently dumped into the North Sea. After this conclusion, a new committee was formed to work out the details and they started by setting up the manure distribution services.

Henkens was, however, not satisfied by this solution. He calculated that all provinces had a mineral surplus not just the southern ones. Hence, the only solution according to him was to reduce the levels of copper in animal feed for pigs and chickens and the number of animals per hectare. Henkens put these findings in a report that was discussed by two expert committees. The first agreed with him. The second, however, only stated that a manure-maximum had to be imposed without translating this suggestion into concrete figures. Only the last advice was accepted, which meant that nothing was done with Henkens' advice.

Neutralizing criticism

In 1974 the minister sent a new letter to parliament about the developments in the bio-intensive agriculture. In it the minister of agriculture, Lardinois, tried to dissolve all criticism on bio-intense agriculture. He first posited that further intensification and specialization was economically necessary to compete on international markets. He also made the traditional argument that small, non-profitable farms had to be reorganized into larger, more efficient units (*Kamerstukken II, 1974-1975, 13227, nrs. 1-2, 9*). The foremost consequence of this specialization would be the horizontal co-operation between different farmers. Pig farmers were to deliver fertilizers to the arable farmers who in turn would deliver animal food to the dairy industry and intensive cattle breeders (*ibid.* 12-14).

Further on in his letter the minister referred to all kinds of regulations and actions that were underway in order to protect the environment as much as possible. He first stated that 'in the last years the comprehension of this issue (protection of the environment, GB) had been growing among the involved private companies' (*ibid.* 21). The minister then proceeded by enumerating all kinds of activities. The corporatist organisation for animal food, for instance, had established a fund with which stench research would be subsidized. It had already developed 'manure ventilation systems, air-washers and manure-injectors' (*ibid.* 22). Furthermore, the minister promised to increase his supervision on the compliance with stench regulations, especially now that the farms were becoming bigger. A new brochure about this issue would be printed and distributed among the farmers. The minister went on to define the manure surplus as a distribution problem (*ibid.* 25). He noted the already founded manure distribution service. With a renewal of regulations, he promised to improve this distribution system. The minister also stated that 50 research projects had been initiated to control the amount of manure and forestall the stench. Some examples were given: a project to develop tools that measure the amount of stench; a study about biologically friendly methods to dispose manure; a project to store and transport manure with less stench; a scientific research project about the long term consequences of high levels of certain minerals in the environment; a study about cutting the amount of copper in animal feed; and finally a study about animal welfare and the risks of spreading diseases due to manure transportation.

Beside these activities, the minister also emphasized the many different groups cooperating with each other. The health-inspectors of the department of health were said to cooperate with business development consultants of the department of agriculture in developing new tools for stench control. 'Through their cooperation, comprehension of these problems is growing' (*ibid.* 22). Additionally, the ministries of agriculture and health as well as the national organisation for local government were said to be cooperating in formulating new construction licenses for farm buildings. Finally, research institutes were collaborating to find out how large the manure surpluses are.

In a study about the history of manure policies, the rural sociologist Frouws concludes that Lardinois' 1974 policy paper about bio-intensive agriculture and the subsequent parliamentary debate neutralised the manure problem very well (Frouws 1993, 79, 82). Many results of the various committees and study groups mentioned in the letter were not used or only published after many years. It even took one committee 14 years to publish its report (*ibid.* 78). In short, Henkens did not succeed in winning support for his manure policy by emphasizing manure's environmental risks.

Discussion and notes

In the first half of the 1970's two different sets of intentional states about the manure surplus were competing. On the one hand, Henkens tried to represent the high

amounts of manure as an emergency situation requiring drastic regulations; on the other hand, minister Lardinois promoted the growth of bio-intense production and did not see any problem. In other words Henkens's view on manure did not fit in the background intentional states of most members of the department. They were not convinced by Henkens' reasons and arguments that manure was some special case. He was, as a journalist wrote, 'a lonely soul calling out in the desert' (Bloemendaal 1995, 13).

Furthermore, this section shows how minister Lardinois tried to reduce the risks and uncertainties that came along with the increasing amount of manure from pigs and poultry, by emphasizing it as a distribution or stench rather than production problem. By doing this, he overshadowed the belief of Henkens that the number of pigs and chickens in the Netherlands was too high (*cf. Section 4.8.1*).

6.3 THE INTERIM EMERGENCY REGULATION

6.3.1 Plans to restrict production (A)

Until 1980, manure was not seen as a problem. At this time, however, this view started changing with the arrival of a new minister of agriculture, Braks (1980-1990). In 1977, he was first confronted with the manure problem in a private matter by his brother, a farmer in the Southeast region of the Netherlands. He told Braks that his sheep were dying because of the high levels of copper in the pig-manure he had spread onto his fields. Braks learned that this was due to the animal feed, which contained high levels of copper. The manure of these animals had consequently poisoned the grazing soil of the sheep. The supplier's only response when confronted with this situation was that the pigs ate and grew very well because of these high levels of copper (Bloemendaal 1995, 17). Braks considered this an unacceptable situation, and was determined to put an end to these practices (Van Dijk *et al.* 1999, 36).

In 1980, Braks became minister of agriculture.² In this year environmental issues were first really put on the political agenda because of a major (although non-agricultural) pollution scandal. Part of the town of Lekkerkerk had to be tear down because it turned out to be built on severely polluted soil. In this spirit, the department of agriculture and the institute for nature conservation published new reports about the manure problem. Furthermore, the CBS, Central bureau of statistics also published alarming reports about the manure distribution services. A closely involved civil servant from the department of environment noted that 'the department of agriculture was able to ignore the problems for a long time, but it could no longer afford to deny

2. Braks was minister from 1980-1981. Then, after a small interlude, he was again minister from November 1982 until 1990.

the signals that were coming from society' (interview in Frouws 1993, 89). Times were changing, however, and the department of agriculture was adapting.

Braks and the new minister of the environment, Winsemius, were firmly intent on controlling the pig population. Although both Braks and Winsemius had already been convinced that the increasing amount of manure had to be stopped, the scandals and new policy-reports were *good* reasons for them to formulate restrictive regulations. The discussions they started about a possible limitation of production, however, resulted in more rather than less pigs (Frouws 1993, 89-90). In response to the new discussions, farmers namely started expanding their herds before the implementation of any restrictions. Partially due to the initiative by Braks and Winsemius, the relative increase in the amount of pigs between 1978 and 1982 was the highest ever (*Figure 6.1*).³

6.3.2 The manure crisis (B)

Cooperation between agriculture and the environment

The emergency situation with Dutch soil-pollution was not only a *good* reason for Braks and Winsemius to change the course of policy; it also stimulated them to work together. That is, they started formulating their policies in a *we-mode*.

Before 1982, the year these two ministers were appointed, the civil servants of the department of agriculture and the department of the environment had continuously battled over the right to formulate regulations about the soil-pollution (*cf.* Drupsteen 1981). In 1971, the department of public health and environment formulated a general law for soil protection. The department of agriculture, however, did not accept it for all potentially soil hazardous activities, and wanted to formulate its own concerning the use of animal and artificial fertilizers themselves. The department believed that they would otherwise lose control over agricultural production. Naturally, the department of the environment disagreed with giving this prerogative to them. Various solutions and package deals were proposed, but none were ever implemented.⁴

After more than twelve years of quibbling, Braks and Winsemius decided on this conflict in the first half of 1983. They agreed that both departments should formulate a separate law, but that both laws would be a joint product of the two departments. These concerned the law for soil-protection and for the use of manure and fertilizer. Hence, the conviction of both ministers that the soil problems drastically required a solution resulted in close co-operation. This went so far that they even agreed not to let their collective intentionality be undermined after the implementation of the new laws (Bloemendaal 1995, 21). The strong sense of cooperation was not only limited

3. The second derivative in *figure 6.1* was the highest in 1978

4. For a complete study concerning these interdepartmental struggles, see Drupsteen 1984 (in Frouws 1993, 84).

to the ministers, but was also found among other high ranking policy officials in the departments (Frouws 1993, 89).

Amount of pigs still rising

Notwithstanding the collective intention of both ministers, the number of pigs and manure still rose in 1984. The Agricultural Economics Research Institute (LEI) calculated that a total of 86 million tons of manure was produced of which 18 million could not be spread on the farmers' own pastures. The sense of crisis continued and was even further exacerbated by two important events. First, two important drinking water wells were reported to be polluted with high levels of nitrate. Second, Braks foresaw an even further increase in the number of pigs and poultry due to the introduction of the milk quota regulation in April 1984. He feared many dairy farmers would now want to try their luck in the pig and poultry rather than the dairy industry. From this situation, Braks concluded that the Netherlands was completely "manured". Even the MPs of the Christian Democratic party, who are traditionally pro-farmer, asked the minister to take drastic action as soon as possible (Van Dijk *et al.* 1999, 36).

Braks and a small group of policy lawyers prepared, in secrecy, an emergency law to restrict the expansion of pig and poultry farms.⁵ It was meant to be in place for only two years when the two official laws, which were still in preparation, would be promulgated. The emergency law prohibited the immediate expansion of pig and poultry farms for more than 10% of the farms in specific densely populated pig areas and for more than 75% of the farms in the rest of the Netherlands. However, despite its severity, the law contained various exceptions. If, for example a farmer already possessed a permit to expand his business prior to the enactment of the law, this was allowed. Such exceptions as well as the lack of control in enforcing the law made it quite ineffective and the total number of pigs and poultry respectively grew by 28% and 16% between 1984 and 1987.

The farmers, their associations and organizations felt betrayed (Bekke *et al.* 1994, 42). As with the milk quota regulation earlier in the year, they could not believe that the minister had formulated and implemented such a radical policy without consulting them (Bekke *et al.* 1994, 42; Frouws 1993, 92). Whereas the collective intentional state of the ministers of agriculture and the environment strengthened, as illustrated by their close cooperation, the increasing number of demonstrations by farmers against the government shows the declining collective intention between them.

Discussion and notes

The run-up to the interim regulation shows two things. First, it reveals that a crisis can be a *good* reason for individuals to put their trust in a policy plan. Second, it illustrates

5. In Dutch: interimwet beperking varkens- en pluimveehouderijen.

that a crisis might be a mechanism for stimulating a collective action to overcome a tough problem. In this case, the high amount of manure was a *good* reason for Braks to put his trust in restrictive regulations. At the same time, it also made him realize that he needed to work together with the department of the environment.

6.4 THE IMPLEMENTATION OF RESTRICTIVE RULES

In contrast to the politicians from the department of agriculture and the environment who had “found” each other, the other actors in the policy sector, the farmers and the representatives of the farmer organizations, were furious about the new regulations. This is because they did not see the manure surplus as a problem or a crisis.

The following sections illustrate how these different groups of individuals with contrasting expectations tried to work out policy regulations. In *Section 6.4.1*, I first discuss how the farmer associations tried to forestall these unfavourable regulations. This is followed with an example of how farmers tried to solve uncertainties by promoting policy alternatives (*Section 6.4.2*). *Section 6.4.3* explores how the conflicting views of the government and the farmers and their organisations deteriorated their relationship (*Section 6.4.3*).

6.4.1 Increasing uncertainties (A)

Just as with the introduction of the milk quota system, the plans for regulating manure production resulted in many uncertainties and obscurities. Although the politicians wanted to control the amount of manure, they did not know: what exactly had to be controlled (the norms); how they had to control it (the instruments); and who was going to pay for it? In other words, the government’s intentions contained many uncertainties. This produced many debates over the implementation that included the farmers and their associations as well as government officials. In the following paragraphs, I show how the farmers and their associations came to dominate these.

The struggle between the departments of agriculture and the environment re-emerged when they had to work out the details of the two new laws. This gave the farmer associations the opportunity to forestall a fast introduction of the restrictive laws. The departments argued, for example, over the question of how exactly the manure was to be measured. Civil servants from the department of agriculture thought measurement norm should be based on the amount of nitrogen, whereas civil servants from the department of the environment insisted on looking at the amount of phosphate. The farmer associations agreed to a system based on phosphate, as long as it would only be introduced over a longer time-span, namely three periods of five years (Frouws 1993, 95; 101-106). Hence, they tried to prolong the implementation. In short the “pain” was dispersed over a longer period and therefore Frouws concluded

that 'the struggle over the norms was thus dominated by the agricultural sector' (*ibid.* 106).

The clout of the farmers and their associations further manifested with the manure accounting system. In order to control the amount of manure, the government needed a system that provided information about the amount of manure produced by individual farmers. Consequently, a new manure accounting system was introduced. Farmers were required to fill in forms that said how much manure they used for their own pastures and how much was sold or transported to other farmers. Although these forms were not very complicated, many farmers simply refused to fill them in and sent them back blank. In response, the government simplified the forms. Yet, this did not help. The Netherlands Court of Audit concluded that the accounting system had not contributed to clarifying the level of manure production or to its control (Algemene Rekenkamer 1990, 138). In 1991, a consultancy, Oranjewoud, also concluded that 'it was impossible to determine objectively, whether a farmer had produced a manure surplus or not' (Oranjewoud 1993, 92).

Farmers deemed the rules that regulated the period in which they were allowed to disperse manure on the fields as the most unacceptable part of all the manure controls. Some spokesmen even threatened to dump manure if the department refused to formulate a more flexible system. Hence, an expert-committee, consisting mainly of representatives from the traditional agricultural sector, was formed. They concluded that the rules had to be tuned down because of the practical implications for farmers. If the rules remained too tight, farmers would not cooperate. The committee especially feared a disturbance in the distribution of manure from pig-breeders to arable farmers. Again, farmers were successfully able to influence decision making, which resulted in less strict regulations (Frouws 1993, 108-110).

The reactions of the farmers and their representatives to the government's manure policy, clearly illustrate that they were not supportive of the regulations. But perhaps more importantly, they were able to thwart their implementation and the number of pigs continued to increase (*cf. Figure 6.1*). Hence, the farmers and their representatives did not share the belief with the departments of agriculture and the environment that the amount of pigs needed to be reduced. Instead, they opted for more pigs.

Discussion and notes

At the end of *Chapter 5*, I concluded that the dominant perspective on agriculture was changing in the 80s due to the planned introduction of production controls. This section has revealed how farmers and their representatives reacted to these developments. Basically, they tried to use the uncertainties of the policy to change it according to their benefit. The chairmen of the associations were quick to participate in solving the uncertainties and, eventually, nearly monopolized the chances to do so, leaving

the civil servants in the dark. Although they could not completely forestall the unfavourable regulations, they twisted many in favour of the farmers.

How were the farmer associations able to nearly monopolize these changes and outdo the civil servants? Most probably, this happened for two reasons. First, the civil servants were rather uncertain about the change in perspectives. One said, for example, that he found it difficult to explain the tough, non-dispersion regulations to the farmers. The agricultural inspection service also had difficulty with fining the farmers for violating the manure regulations (Frouws 1993, 107; Bloemendaal 1995, 69; Bekke *et al.* 1994, 53). Second, the farmer representatives still had very close contacts with the civil servants (*cf. Section 5.6.1*). The combination of these two factors made the latter very influenceable by the former. In order to solve this situation, the department of agriculture started hiring policemen as environmental inspectors rather than men with agricultural backgrounds.

6.4.2 The Manure factories (A/B)

Farmers did not only dwell on the uncertainties of the restrictive regulations, they also presented an alternative solution: the manure factory. As discussed in *Chapters 3 and 4*, traditionally, most actors involved in the farming sector had high expectations about technical solutions. For instance, when the civil servant Henkens expressed his concerns about the large amounts of manure in the 70s, the minister of agriculture, Lardinois, was quick to tell him to trust the technical possibilities (*cf. Section 6.2.2*). In response to the restrictive policy plans introduced in the 80s, the farmer associations and organisations started promoting the idea of manure processing factories. These were to dry and grain the manure, and then sell it at a profit.

This industrialisation of manure was assumed necessary for permanently solving the manure surplus. If, at some point, manure distribution became impossible in the Netherlands or if arable farmers refused to cooperate with its distribution services, then factories would be the only other option. Farmers generally thought these factories would be successful, and only would consider reducing the number of animals after the factory idea had been played out (Bloemendaal 1995, 79; Van Dijk 1999, 39-40).

In the period 1986-1996 both farmer associations and private investors tried to set up large factories, but most stranded on major set-backs during the test period. Let me mention a few of these set-backs. In a test-factory, the graining machines exploded because the manure became too sticky from the heating and cooling process. In another occasion, a ship that transported dried manure grains from the factory to England had made water due which the grains had turned back into wet manure. During a similar transportation, grains caught fire on board of a ship, probably because of particular chemicals within them. And in another incidence, the grains turned out to be mixed with corn, which caused an undesired growth of corn between the crops of the farmer who had bought the manure.

Table 6.1 Examples of Manure Factories in the period between 1986-1996 (Bloemendaal 1993, 81-100)

Promest
Vefinex
Ferm-o-Feed
Memon
Stimt / Comesta
Scarabee
Van Eijnen/Vertech
Volker Stevin/Ecotechniek
Van Aspert
Haf/De Schelde Milieutechnologie
Mestrecycling BV

For over a decade, from 1986 onwards, all major projects failed and after 1996 only some small facilities are still running. In contrast to the farmers, who expected much from the factories, many actors did not trust them for several other reasons. First, during all the experiments, the actual costs turned out to be much higher while the actual benefits were much lower than the originally calculated projections. This made potential industrials and banks suspicious. Second, factory building licenses were more difficult to obtain than initially expected because local governments justifiably feared the stench, and many locals and neighbouring companies protested against the manure factories. Finally, the European Union, which was preparing a nitrate directive (1991), did not expect much of the factories and refused to subsidize them. The EC director general of environment at the time, Brinkhorst, stated in 1993 that 'I saw manure processing as a tactic to forestall the unavoidable reduction of the amount of animals' (Bloemendaal 1995, 105). Between €45 and €70 million has been spent on founding manure factories, but almost all have failed.

The large number of attempts to construct factories and the huge amount of money expended in these efforts illustrate the high expectations farmers had about this alternative solution to the manure surplus. *Table 6.1* provides an overview of some of the initiatives to establish well working manure factories.

Discussion and notes

The manure factories gave farmers a hopeful outlook for the future in the midst of the new regulatory paradigm. One farmer representative even stated that 'when the processing of manure is ready, the livestock can increase again' (Van Dijk 1999, 39). Since the early 80s, various attempts have been made in constructing model factories to establish trust. These initiatives have, however, had the opposite effect. The many setbacks have led to suspicion rather than trust (Van Dijk 1999, 39; Bloemendaal 1995, 113).

The traditional, shared set of background intentional states, or, in other words, the technical paradigm in agriculture slowly lost its dominance in the late 80s, early 90s. After early failures of the manure factories, new actors much more concerned

with the environmental implications of agricultural policies – Brinkhorst for example – came onto the stage. They did not support the manure factories. The point in case is that a new set of intentional states about the environmental sustainability was taking ground as of which different perspectives on policies rose.

6.4.3 More restrictive policies (B)

By the first half of the 1990s, the manure policies had become a dismal failure. The Netherlands had not succeeded in diminishing the amount of manure with the existing regulations – it had actually increased – and therefore needed new approaches.

This section discusses how deliberations about new policy plans in the early 90s resulted in arduous conflicts and contributed to a further fragmentation between civil servants and farmers and their representatives. That is, this section explains how the former we intentionality between these parties eroded further using the social mechanism of diffusion (*cf. Section 5.2.2*).

New plans

In the early 90s, the political pressure on the Dutch government about its manure policies increased. The manure factories had miserably failed and, according to the EC director general Brinkhorst, the experiments with them as well as the culture of constantly acquiescing farmers had resulted in five to six year delay in solving the manure problem (Bloemendaal 1995, 105). In 1990, the National Court of Audit also concluded that between 1974 and 1990 the ministers of agriculture, Van der Stee and Braks, had taken insufficient steps to solve the problem. Braks was accused of breaking his promise that the interim regulation of 1984 would stop the increase in the number of pigs (see *Figure 6.1*). Finally, in 1991 the European Commission introduced a nitrate directive that set ceilings to the level of nitrogen in the groundwater. In the Netherlands, the level under its grasslands was on average three times higher than the norm, and under its cornfields it was as much as six times higher than average.

In response to all of this, the ministers of agriculture and the environment, Bukman and Alders, decided that additional action against the manure problem was imperative. In these plans, formulated in 1991 and 1992, they said that they were studying the option of reducing the number of animals. The associations were shocked and formulated their own policy proposal. It was called “minerals central”, and promoted a system for reducing the amount of phosphates by 25%.

New negotiations

During the negotiations with the farmer representatives, the ministers of agriculture and the environment moderated many of the restrictions in their original plans. Both ministers later stated that the intended reduction in the number of animals was deleted from their plans so that the farmer representatives would remain willing to ne-

gotiate over constraining regulations and cooperate in the implementation of their plans. 'A scenario to reduce the amount of animals was no serious option when the sector proposed their mineral plan. (...). There was an atmosphere to do business with each other' and such a radical proposal would have destroyed this atmosphere (Bloemendaal 1995, 124). In the end, the parties agreed to replace the manure accounting system by a much more detailed mineral accounting system. This was based on the amount of minerals that seeped into the groundwater. The aim was to balance between the inputs of farmers – manure and fertilizers – and the extraction of minerals by plants and farming activities such as mowing and harvesting.

When in May 1993 the ministers finished negotiating with the farmer representatives, many of the tough regulations had been watered down. The norms were generally moderated and some regulations, such as the limitations on dispersing manure, were eliminated. The new mineral accounting system would only be implemented in 1998. The chairmen of the associations were satisfied.

Although the agreement between the representatives and the state officials led to a moderate policy, the farmers were furious. Both the ministers and the farmer representatives were targets of their criticism. The farmers summoned them to re-negotiate the deal. When this did not manifest quickly, the farmers turned to more serious protest. A mass protest-meeting was organised on November 1993. An ad hoc protest group named "for a better manure-policy" threatened to break with the Catholic farmer association. The chairmen had a hard time defending the agreement with the government. The chairman of the liberal association, Varekamp, who had been involved in the policy's formulation, rejected the agreement after being confronted with so many aggressive farmers. He stated: 'The ministers Bukman and Alders are manipulating and deceiving us' (De Volkskrant, 16/11/1993; cf. Trouw, 16/11/1993).

The backlash against the farmer associations illustrates the deteriorating relation between farmers and their representatives. Just as in 1974, new informal leaders, such as Meulenmeesters, mobilized the masses and the formal chairmen of the associations were scorned. Hence, the number of shared collective intentional states within the associations was declining.

Discussion and notes

The case in this section illustrates how trust was established by using the watering-down tactic (cf. Chapter 4). A far-reaching policy plan that wanted to reduce the livestock was publicly presented to the associations. Their protest in turn led to negotiations with the government and much more moderate plans. Both were satisfied with the outcome. Hence, communicating tough plans activates the diffusion networks and gives leeway in negotiations. In this case, the politicians were satisfied with the more nuanced plan of the associations (i.e. the "minerals central" plan).

Although the restrictive policies were supported by the association chairmen, the diffusion of the plan through the networks did not proceed smoothly. In fact, it led to a further erosion of the collective intentionality as shown by two observations (*cf. Section 5.2.2*). First, this is illustrated by the increased number of debates within the associations. Second, this is seen by the increase in the number of specific organisations such as the new union for pig-breeders (Bekke and De Vries 2000, 76). The ministers became frustrated with this erosion and concluded that 'the agricultural sector no longer existed' (Bloemendaal 1995, 173). The minister of the environment, Alders said, for example: 'There are many contradictions between east, south, west and north. I had not realised that the concerns for the environment were not internalized in agriculture.' Similarly, the minister of agriculture, Bukman said: 'I did not realize that the agricultural sector had already fragmented so much. The national organisation for agriculture – the landbouwschap – had less backing than we expected' (*ibid.*)

6.5 THE RESTRUCTURE POLICIES AND CLASSICAL SWINE FEVER

Between 1958 and 1994, all ministers of agriculture had been farmers and were members of the Christian Democratic Party (or its forerunners). After the 1994 elections, however, the non-farmer and liberal Van Aartsen was appointed to the post. When he took office, he stated that he would put an end to culture of deliberating and postponing. 'I will take real actions' (*Agrarisch Dagblad*, 01/11/1994).

This section analyses how Van Aartsen tried to solve the manure surplus. Briefly, he pursued two different stages. Towards the end of his tenure, he used a veterinarian crisis to break the resistance against livestock reduction (*Section 6.5.3*). In his first two years, however, Van Aartsen tried to solve the surplus by imposing, as usual, new policy plans.

Again, new initiatives

In September 1995, the new ministers of agriculture and the environment introduced a plan to reduce the amount of minerals in manure. At the same time, they also established a fund to restructure the pig sector aimed primarily at reducing the number of pigs (Kamerstukken II, 1995-1996, 24445, nr. 1). The presentation of these plans produced a lot of unrest in the beginning. Two hundred farmers of the union of pig-breeders broke in to the department of agriculture's building housing the manure accounting service. They wanted to disrupt the manure regulations as much as possible so that their maintenance was no longer feasible. Another new action committee – "we are fed up!" – advised farmers to refrain from sending their manure accounting forms to the department. They also organised many road-blocks. These actions against the manure policy continued in 1996. One newspaper concluded that farmers

no longer wanted to play by the rules of the “consultation-democracy” (Haagsche Courant, 12/12/1995).

Nevertheless, in February 1997, Van Aartsen tried to renew the deliberations with the pig breeders over restructuring the pig breeding sector. These were, however, spectacularly interrupted by an outbreak of classical swine fever.

6.5.1 Classical swine fever

The first confirmed case of classical swine fever was at a farm in the centre of the most densely populated pig area of the Netherlands. Between its initial outbreak and final containment, the highly contagious virus was responsible for the slaughter of eleven million pigs and cost the Dutch government approximately three billion guilders (1.3 billion Euros) (LNV 1998, 63).

In its acute form, classical swine fever (CSF) is a virulent virus and generally results in high morbidity and mortality. The incubation period varies, but is usually between five and ten days. Pigs develop a high temperature (up to 40.5 degrees C or 105 degrees F), become dull and stop eating. Other symptoms are constipation and diarrhoea, gummed-up eyes, coughing, abortion, and convulsions and tremors in newborn piglets. The disease is commonly spread by the movement of infected pigs. The virus is able to subsist outside pigs for a long time, and therefore the disease is also spread by contaminated vehicles, clothing, footwear and equipment (DEFRA 2004a).

As discussed in previous chapters, a crisis can have two opposite effects (*cf. Section 2.7*). The involved actors can either join hands to overcome it or blame each other for causing or worsening the emergency situation. In the outbreak of CSF, the actors involved blamed each other for worsening the crisis. The farmers criticised the officials of the national inspection service for livestock and meat (RVV) for their supposedly inadequate precautionary measures during the first four days of the epidemic. A farmer representative stated that ‘all measures that were taken by the government were good, but too late. The preventive clearing of healthy animals, for example, came much too late’ (W.van den Brink, interview, 13/09/1999). A few farmers even accused the inspectors of spreading the virus. The department of agriculture in turn blamed the pig breeders of spreading the virus in the first two days. The official evaluation report said that ‘during the first day (3 February 1997), members of the farmer associations and slaughterhouses spread the word that some farmers were suspected of having CSF. This resulted in the movement of a lot of animals, both to slaughterhouses and to other pig holding farmers outside the region. It is plausible that these transportations increased the spread of the disease in the first two days’ (LNV 1997, 37).

During the fight against CSF, the media covered the continuous discussions between farmers, politicians and state officials about the effectiveness of the measures that were taken. Every step seemed to lead to further disagreement and criticism. The farmers accused the department for shortages in transportation and destruction ca-

capacity. They also argued that the so-called “preventive clearings” started too late, as of which the virus was spread further. The department, on the other hand, accused the farmers of refusing to cooperate. Civil servants, when arriving at the farms to execute their tasks, were sometimes met with verbal and physical violence. The chief officer of the National Inspection Service for Livestock and Meat (RVV) stated a year after the crisis that inspectors and veterinary surgeons still had psychological problems from their assignments and the accusations of angry farmers (NRC 07/05/1998).

6.5.2 Increasing crisis (A)

While the public officials, farmers and associations were fighting CSF and blaming each other for the worsening crisis, extensive media coverage triggered other discussions. As the crisis worsened and actions became more abhorrent, politicians, animal welfare organisations and celebrities started questioning the animal-friendliness of pig breeding in the Netherlands. As the problems became bigger, these discussions became louder (Breeman, Op den Kamp, and Zannoni 2000).

The first abhorration occurred right after the crisis organisation was set up. The ban on pig transportation caused overcrowded stables. The media showed pigs that cannibalised their companions. The department tried to end this situation by buying pigs. However, since the European prices for pig meat had sharply increased as a result of CSF, more farmers were interested in the buy-up than calculated. Besides these budgetary problems, the government also faced a shortage in transportation and destruction capacity. Then, a month later, the fear of infection increased when the rumour was spread that the virus could have been spread because of artificial insemination. This would have meant that many more animals were infected, because the organisation for artificial insemination provided its services to a large region. Although the rumours were ungrounded, the fear was intense. Again a month later, the government decided to increase the preventive clearings because the virus was still increasing. This led to more shortages of staff, destruction- and storage capacity. Consequently, the army was asked to provide manpower and trucks for transporting the dead animals to the destruction sites or the storage grounds. In June 1997, six months after the first case, the government decided to instil a ban on breeding. But since the supply of new pigs would only be stopped after six months – pigs carry for this long – this measurement was combined with the destruction of two week old baby piglets.

Initially the media only paid attention to the virus’ financial damage. But when the epidemic increased in April and May, more emotional reports of the clearings appeared on both radio and television. One could watch the sophisticated electrocution of pigs and the dumping of the dead animals by large cranes into big lorries every day of the week. When the government decided to kill baby pigs in June, the attention was solely negative. In the evaluation of the crisis, the department concluded that

especially the deadly injections given to baby pigs had caused emotional turmoil with both the general public as well as the farmers (LNV 1998, 93).

The crisis resulted in strong support for a strict restructuring plan of the pig breeding sector. This is illustrated by various statements. According to one civil servant, the problems during the crisis and the media coverage had triggered a new public awareness about the bio-intensive pig industry: 'Nobody in the Netherlands knew that there were fifteen million pigs and how they were kept. A rather technical veterinary problem, fighting CSF, had become a large societal issue' (interview civil servant 1, 28/12/1999). A MP stated: 'The dragging around with so much animals had to be stopped by a restructuring of the pig breeding industry' (Huys, 29/06/1999). Another MP, Vos, confirmed that 'this CSF crisis painfully showed that our whole pig industry is vulnerable' (*Kamerstukken II*, 1996-1997, 25229, nr.11). The amount of calls in parliament for a restructuring of the pig farming sector reached its zenith in May.

Discussion and notes

The CSF crisis gave rise to a generally accepted view about the bio-intensive pig industry: too many pigs were lumped together. As a consequence, MPs, other public figures and the general public expected the government to pursue restructuring policies that would prevent such crisis situations in the future. The crisis was, thus, a *good* reason for many to formulate a reform of the pig breeding sector. This conviction deepened as the crisis worsened. That is, more and more individuals started thinking: "we should take action against this situation" (*cf.* Breeman *et al.* 2000).

6.5.3 The coupling of the manure policy and CSF (B)

Initially, the outbreak of CSF seemed to push discussions about manure problems to the background. When the crisis meetings started, however, the minister of agriculture, Van Aartsen, also decided to discuss general structural changes within the pig holding industry. 'At those moments we did not talk about the CSF, but about more fundamental issues such as the physical structure of the sector and how we could modify it' (interview civil servant 2, 28/12/1999). In order to tackle both the veterinarian crisis and the structural manure surplus, the minister intentionally chose to break with the standard operating procedures for fighting CSF.

The minister of agriculture, Van Aartsen, decided to shift the formal responsibility for the control of the outbreak to the secretary general of the department. Normally, the chief veterinary officer is in charge with a viral outbreak. However, according to a high placed civil servant, the minister wanted to put a general manager on top of the crisis rather than a technical expert because of the crisis' size and intensity. 'While previous CSF outbreaks were considered to be technical, veterinarian problems, the minister believed that this outbreak would turn into a large societal problem' (interview civil servant 2, 28/12/1999). Another official confirmed that the minister 'expected that

the CSF would turn into a major political scandal with big budgetary consequences (interview civil servant 4, 27/08/1999).

During the CSF crisis, the minister called a group of top-level civil servants together to discuss both the CSF-crisis and their ideas concerning a restructuring policy. This group was called together at the minister's initiative and 'its goal was to force a solution on the manure problem. This would best be done in a small group. Transparency and deliberations were not desired because various parties could otherwise import undesired nuances. The deliberations were not meant to reach consensus, but to establish an effective answer to the manure problems' (interview civil servant 3, 05/08/1999). 'The minister wanted a solid and simple solution. This was to reduce the amount of pigs in the Netherlands. Under the previous minister, the pig breeding farmers had been approached too softly. A lot of rules had been based upon voluntary co-operation, and this did not lead to anything' (*ibid.*).

The initiative to couple the manure problems and the CSF crisis came from the minister himself. He thought that this crisis offered the opportunity to impose an unfavourable policy: 'Every crisis is an opportunity. When, in May the CSF crisis was at its peak, I thought: this is the moment to impose regulations. (...) Of course, it was difficult to do it at that particular moment because the farmers were already hit by the virus. But, on the other hand, I also believed that the environment had already been damaged enough. One could not simply let an unlimited amount of manure flow onto God's pastures. Therefore I took the opportunity, provided by the crisis, to set a new horizon for the whole pig breeding industry. The topics of the environment, animal welfare, and the future of the sector were thus major points of discussion during the fight against CSF' (*De Volkskrant* 16-12-1997). Although the minister gave this statement when the gravity of the crisis was declining, he had disclosed most of his plans during the fight against the CSF step by step in the media and in letters to parliament (see *Table 6.2*).

On 10 July 1997, when the crisis had reached its climax, Van Aartsen sent a letter to parliament proposing a restructuring of the pig breeding industry by cutting the amount of pigs with 25% (later reduced to 20%). This implied a loss of 20,000 jobs. The minister wrote: 'the CSF has shown us how vulnerable the sector is. The virus has not only damaged the sector, but it has also burdened society with large financial consequences. Therefore the government must take its responsibility. (...) The recent crisis is not more than a serious motive for determinate actions. (...) It is now or never. There is no time to loose' (*Kamerstukken II*, 1996-1997, 25448, nr.1).

Many politicians, civil servants and journalists confirmed that the CSF crisis was coupled to the manure problem, which resulted in a high support for reducing the amount of pigs. When the minister's plan was made public, the attention of the media shifted from fight CSF to the restructuring plans. A civil servant stated that 'during the crisis, the minister profited from the public support: it all boiled down to timing

Table 6.2 The coupling of CSF to the manure policies

Date	Statement
4 February 1997	First confirmed case of CSF
7 March 1997	Reaction to questions from parliament: 'Although our priority is now aimed at controlling the CSF crisis, we should also work parallel on a more structural plan'
10 April 1997	Letter to parliament: 'The recent CSF outbreak should cause a process of reflection of the characteristics of the production methods. The crisis has made clear that the structure of the sector should be changed. This crisis provides an opportunity to tackle many connected problems such as environmental and animal health problems.'
10 April 1997	Interview: 'When I drive through the Peel and see all those large farms with their stables almost connected to each other, I think, this has to stop.'
16 April 1997	During a discussion with parliament: 'We also should connect CSF with the manure problems. It would be strange when we do not link these two dossiers to each other.'
10 July 1997	Introduction of the restructuring law

(interview civil servant 4). MPs also confirmed that the minister had used the increased public attention for the sector: 'it was convenient to characterise this as a dramatic moment. As a consequence, the goals of the law were supported. In due time, there would have been something like a reform, but never in such a radical and quick way'. Another MP recognised this interpretation: 'the relation between CSF and the restructuring law is very clear. The minister has cleverly used the huge amount of legitimacy'. In terms of this research, the minister clearly coupled the collective indignation towards the pig-industry, produced by the CSF crisis, to the manure problem. This provided him with the support to impose dramatic reforms. The collective intentionality among the politicians concerning the reorganisation of the pig sector was large.

Discussion and notes

The above analysis illustrates that the solution to one problem can also be a solution to another. In this case, a drastic reduction in the amount of pigs in the Netherlands could prevent a large scale CSF outbreak in the future, and, at the same time, solve the manure problem. It, therefore, shows that trust for Van Aartsen's restructuring plan, built up during the fight against CSF, was used as an instrument to solve the manure problem.

6.5.4 A policy without collective support (B)

Although many politicians and public figures agreed with the new policy, the pig breeders did not. They did not share the favourable expectations about the restructuring of their industry. Whereas the coupling of the two problems resulted in a collective intentionality between MPs, civil servants and the public, it only led to distrust between farmers and public officials. The propositioned reforms resulted in increased militant behaviour, judicial fights and emotional statements in the media. When parlia-

ment accepted the plans in December 1997, the farmers on the public stand cried out in disbelief. They accused the government of property theft. Representatives of the agricultural business sector expected the policy implementation to strand on resistance (Breeman *et al.* 2000, 137).

The chairman of the union for pig breeders, Van den Brink, filed various law suits. He argued that the compulsory cuts for pig breeding were a *de facto* cut of private properties. The judge, after a few trials, concluded that the government had only proven that 10%, of the original 20%, of the cuts actually contributed to a solution of the manure surplus. He therefore decided that the government was not allowed to impose the other 10%. This verdict was approved by the legal department of the European Court of Human Rights.

Meanwhile, after the 1998 elections, the new minister of agriculture, Apotheker, showed much more concern with the fate of the pig breeders. He deliberated with them about some possible exceptions to the general rule and other additional policies. He also softened some of the animal welfare regulations after the new MPs asked him to, despite being advised to the contrary by his civil servants.

The consequence of these new policies was that by June 1999 only 4% of the general reduction had been implemented. The manure surplus was still not solved. In September 1998, the European Committee accused the Netherlands of violating European nitrate regulations. McKenna, the chairman of the European consulting committee that conducted the research into this matter, concluded that, even if the Netherlands cut its number of pigs with 20%, it would still be the greatest polluter until 2008. In October 2003, the Court of Justice of the European Community officially accused the Netherlands of violating Nitrate Directive 91/676/EEG. Six years after the first plans to restructure the pig breeding sector the manure problem still has not disappeared. Hence, new regulations will have to be taken in the future.

Over time, the initially shared view about the need to restructure the pig sector had faded away. One civil servant even stated that 'the lethargic acceptance of the reform by the pig farmers, as fact of life, was destroyed by the verdicts of the judge' (interview civil servant 3). Some quotations illustrate this change of intentional states. The MPs, for example, who initially agreed with Van Aartsen's reform bill, started having second thoughts. Some of them said it was too quickly accepted in an emotionally difficult period and would have undesirable side effects. The senators doubted whether the bill was even legal, according to other laws. In other words, the initial, favourable collective expectations of the MPs and public officials of the department of agriculture about the restructuring had eroded. Civil servants reacted indignantly to the MPs and Senators. 'They were involved when the law was discussed in parliament, and now they are crying big tears!' (Interview civil servant 3).

Discussion and notes

This case shows that coupling one problem to another can result in widely trusted policy plans. The CSF crisis was redefined as a much broader structural crisis that provided the opportunity to formulate a radical reorganisation of the pig breeding sector. However, after the crisis was over, implementing the regulations turned out to be difficult: it stranded in legal fights. As a result, the distrust between farmers and the government increased further. The crisis then, gave the opportunity for the department of agriculture to quickly impose a reform, but it was still difficult to implement. This case shows that tough decisions without the trust of those who the policy concerns, only leads to a *Pyrrhic* victory (cf. Trouw 08/12/1995).

6.6 THEORETICAL REFLECTIONS

In this chapter we encountered two periods in which restrictive regulations were formulated and implemented. The first was the emergency regulation for restricting the number of pigs and poultry in 1984; the second was during the outbreak of CSF in 1997. These regulations led to uncertainties, which asked for a solution. In the following sub-section I will draw conclusions about how these uncertainties were solved and how the outcomes of these cases, has led me to adjust both parts of the theoretical frameworks, the process of trust and the social mechanisms of collective trust

6.6.1 The process of trust

The case in this chapter is important for two observations concerning the understanding of the trust process. First, if many actors involved have learned to think and act in concordance with a specific set of background intentional states, then policy reform is likely to be difficult. In such a case, many actors have learned to interpret situations in a specific way, and have also come to trust the policies that fitted in such background. Changing this is complicated. In this case, the dominant interpretation was that Dutch agriculture needed never ending modernisation with a continuous increase in production.

As indicated in the case analysis above, the dominant view may have damaging side effects such as the manure surplus. More importantly, a dominant interpretation can blind actors to these negative side effects. Competing sets of beliefs are then not taken into consideration like Henkens' warnings. Van der Ploeg even argues that the department of agriculture has been blind to the variety of styles of farming since Second World War, and, thus, to the variety of views about farming. This would imply that the government's view about the preferred style of farming, upon which official policies have been based, has only been partly shared by farmers. The farmers who thought and acted on a different set of intentional states have therefore constantly

been uncertain about the future. Hence, even during the fifties and sixties, a potential trust problem was already present.

Nevertheless, until the 80s, the government, the farmer associations and organisations had made policies that were generally based on the dominant view of Dutch agriculture's future. Having such a dominant set of intentional states has a major advantage for it seems to provide security and trust. Once a specific view has been accepted, a new, competing view will only produce uncertainties. This then brings us to the second set of observations that is concerned with the effects of the absence of a dominant set of intentional states.

In general terms, the above analysis shows that uncertainties arise with the introduction of a new vision on policies. Actors then try to solve these. When the minister of agriculture and other public officials gradually adopted different intentional states about farming – one that might be summarized as going from quantity to quality – these uncertainties manifested. But when they, along with the farmer representatives, tried to discuss these changing views with the farmers, they were confronted with disinterest. Van Dijk *et al.* report, for example, that a farm leader who had held a lecture about “more quality, less quantity”, was told by his chauffeur, who had been sitting in the audience, that ‘they [the farmers] had all been looking rather glassy. They were obviously thinking: he can say what he wants, we will opt for quantity anyway’ (Van Dijk *et al.* 1999, 51). Apparently, one way to deal with the uncertainties of new sets of intentional states is simply to ignore them and continue to act as before. This is the same reaction the minister of agriculture Lardinois had to the warnings of Henkens.

Another way to deal with uncertainties is to eliminate them by improving the status quo. The manure factories are a point in case. When the manure surplus had become a serious problem, the drying and graining factories were assumed to offer salvation in accordance with the traditional view. Finally, uncertainties are dealt with by monopolizing them. The farmer representatives constantly tried to solve the uncertainties themselves while, at the same time, moderating government policies. Hence, controlling uncertainties apparently means controlling policies. Further research is, however, necessary to test this proposition.

6.6.2 The social mechanism

This chapter shows that a variety of sets of background intentional states can fragment a relatively coherent policy network. In the early 1980s, the ministers of agriculture and the environment interpreted the manure surplus as a crisis. Braks in particular acted as such when he introduced an emergency regulation. Following the crisis social mechanism, one could say that the ministers tried to establish a we-mode of thinking with the crisis. Most farmers, however, did not see a crisis. As a consequence, farmers did not arrive at favourable expectations about the plans of the ministers. In contrast, they started distrusting their plans. This led to a “we against them” situation. The cri-

sis mechanism was triggered, but resulted in a broken collective intentionality rather than to renew it.

A similar thing happened with the coupling of CSF to the manure policy. The CSF crisis provided policymakers with an opportunity to impose radical reforms. By coupling the problems of CSF and the manure surplus, the minister only gained trust for his tough reforms from other public officials and the general public, not the farmers. The minister had, however, deliberately not involved farmers or their representatives. Just as in 1984, the department created a “we against them” situation which resulted in legal fights. The coupling social mechanism was triggered, but only led to a decline of we-modes. The fragmentation between the farmers, their representatives, and the government has been labelled as the waterloo of “the green front” (Frouws 1993, 87, 97, 124). At the same time, new groups more concerned with environmental issues were founded.