

'You have to find your own recipe': Dutch suburb where residents must grow food on at least half of their property

Level 1: Elementary

1 Warmer

a. Discuss the following questions in pairs.

- Imagine that you had to grow your own food. What would you grow? Why?
- How could growing food make your town or city better?

2 Key words

a. Find the words from the wordpool in the article. Read the definitions and match them to the words from the wordpool.

advice	decisions	fail	grow	possible
community	design	farming	land	rules

1. when something can happen, or when people can do it _____
2. to not manage to do something _____
3. a group of people who live in the same place _____
4. to make plants bigger by caring for them and giving them water _____
5. choices that people make after thinking about something _____
6. ideas that someone gives to help another person decide what to do _____
7. a plan of something (e.g. a house, building, etc.) _____
8. the activity of growing food or looking after animals such as cows and sheep _____
9. instructions that tell people what they can or can't do _____
10. an area that people use for farming, building or other activities _____

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b. Complete the sentences with words from the previous activity.

1. _____ is very important because farmers grow the food we eat.
2. My school has _____ about wearing a uniform.
3. Do you want my _____ about clothes to wear for your job interview?
4. The city council used the _____ next to the bank to build a new car park.
5. Sometimes in life you need to make difficult _____ about your future.
6. The architect showed us the _____ he had made for the new house.
7. It's _____ to travel to the city by train in 40 minutes now because of the new tracks.
8. We _____ tomatoes in our garden every summer.
9. Our _____ organises a food and drink festival every summer.
10. I don't want to _____ my exams, so I'm going to study hard this year.

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- 1 When Marco de Kat makes dinner, it's easy for him to find fresh food. Outside his house is a big garden with apples, pears, peppers and cauliflowers. In winter, Marco and his wife eat frozen food from the garden. "Yesterday, I forgot to think about what to eat," he says. "You walk through your garden and you find something and that's what you eat."
- 2 Marco lives in Oosterwold, a special area in the city of Almere near Amsterdam. It is new kind of community that started about 10 years ago. People who live in Oosterwold can design their houses and make important decisions about their neighbourhood. They have to choose street names and build roads and schools. They must also grow food on 50 per cent of their land.
- 3 "This rule is very unique thinking in the world," says Jan Eelco Jansma, a researcher. Rositsa T Ilieva, another researcher, agrees. "There aren't many cities where farming is one of the rules," she says.
- 4 People in Oosterwold grow food in different ways. Some grow a lot of food for their families, while others only have one or two trees. Some people ask farmers to do the work for them because they don't know how to do it.
- 5 For Jalil Bekkour, Oosterwold is special because it gave him a new idea. He learned how to grow food and started a restaurant. Now, 80 per cent of the food in his restaurant comes from his garden.
- 6 The weather is changing in Oosterwold. Jalil says it is now like France's weather from 40 years ago. This means that plants like avocados and lemons can grow outside. But gardening can be difficult. "You fail, and you try again," he says.
- 7 There are some problems in Oosterwold. At first, people didn't get much help, and some found it difficult to grow food. "Some people do it very well but others don't. We decided we have to stimulate more," says Yolanda Sikking, the manager.
- 8 Oosterwold's big plan is to grow 10 per cent of the food for the city of Almere. Many people think this is possible if everyone works together. Jalil has simple advice for people interested in farming: "Start small. Start with the things you love to eat and the easy stuff."

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3 Comprehension check

a. Choose the correct option (a, b or c) to complete the sentences.

- The text is about a community called _____ in the Netherlands.
a. Amsterdam b. Almere c. Oosterwold
- In the community, people have to grow food on _____ of their land.
a. 80 per cent b. 50 per cent c. 10 per cent
- Marco de Kat grows _____ on his land.
a. fruit only b. fruit and vegetables c. plants and flowers
- The weather in the Netherlands is _____ the weather in France 40 years ago.
a. colder than b. the same as c. hotter than
- Oosterwold gave Jalil Bekkour a new idea, and he _____.
a. opened a restaurant b. built a new house c. started a farming business
- Oosterwold is different from other places because it _____.
a. has farming schools b. mixes houses with farming c. is only for farmers

4 Key language

a. Choose the correct purpose from the wordpool to complete each sentence.

to do

to grow

to do

to find

to grow

- When Marco de Kat makes dinner, it's easy for him _____ fresh food.
- Some people ask farmers _____ the work for them because they don't know how _____ it.
- He learned how _____ food and started a restaurant.
- Oosterwold's big plan is _____ 10 per cent of the food for the city of Almere.

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b. Write the three personalised sentences with the infinitive of purpose.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

5 Discussion

a. Discuss these questions.

- Do you think it would be easy or hard to grow your own food? Why?
- How can people in your town or city help each other grow food?
- Do you think having a garden at home is important? Why or why not?

6 In Your Own Words

- a. Research online to find three different fruits or vegetables you can easily grow in your garden in the climate you live in. If you don't have a garden, you can research vegetables or greens you can grow at home in a pot.
- b. Share any relevant or interesting information you find with your class.