

“In insect breeding, you run into all sorts!”

Willem de Jong from Enspijk has a beef cattle company together with his father. He was looking for a second industry to expand his business activities that offered potential to grow. 'So that's how I came across insects', says De Jong. The entrepreneur went on to complete a course in insect breeding at HAS University of Applied Sciences, in collaboration with New Generation Nutrition (NGN) in 's-Hertogenbosch.

Is it difficult to start breeding insects?

'A little, yes, because there is not much knowledge available on the market. Companies that are active in insect breeding prefer to keep their knowledge to themselves. When I was first exploring the options, I called several companies, but was not able to take a look at what they were doing, however, Mark van de Ven and Marian Peters from NGN were happy to help me further. '

What did you learn during the insect rearing course at HAS University of Applied Sciences?

'Because I had already immersed myself in it, I already knew a number of things. But for someone who has no knowledge of growing insects, it is definitely an interesting course to take. '

How did you start?

'I converted a small 12m² cubicle into a nursery. then I bought young worms so that I could experience the entire process of insect growth. That also gave me the time to get used to it myself. I have already grown about 33 kilos of mealworms and I want to build a space of 32m² to be able to do even more. '

What do you think of the breeding process so far?

'A course is good to learn the basics, but when you start to put it into practice you really learn it. Especially in the beginning you run into all sorts, which is why I am glad that I started so small!'

'I also received an offer to take over an existing insect nursery, but I thought that was too risky. Now I can experience for myself if I find it fun and lucrative enough to continue with the rearing of insects. If that is not the case, then I can always continue with our sheep farming. I like that. "

Do you have tips or advice for entrepreneurs who want to start growing insects?

"Try to contact people who can help you further, because you will probably find it much more difficult on your own.

'I am happy with the support I received from NGN and I have also asked them to visit my nursery every now and then in the coming months. They have the knowledge to help me to further develop my company. '

Translated from Nieuwe Oogst publication 26/07/2018. Original article:

<https://www.nieuweoogst.nu/nieuws/2018/07/26/bij-insectenweek-loop-je-tegen-van-alles-aan>