Livestock and grassland
Manure
Cropland
Animal feed
Animal products
Vegetable products
Emissions to air
Air pollution
Nitrogen reaches nature areas and changes the composition of plant species
Greenhouse gases
Conversion into harmless nitrogen gas
Supply of nitrogen
Nitrogen in products
Nitrogen cycle
Nitrogen loss
Nitrogen losses in the Dutch economy
1 square represents 1 kg nitrogen per inhabitant
Traffic and energy
Food production
Inorganic fertiliser
Industry
Animal feed
1990
2010
Conversion into harmless nitrogen gas
Losses to water
Nitrogen causes excessive growth in green algae and blue-green algae and makes groundwater unsuitable for drinking
Losses from the soil
Food production:
Over the past 25 years, the Netherlands have had a fertiliser policy in place to reduce the environmental burden. Since then, levels have been cut in half.

The Netherlands contains so much livestock that it cannot be fed only on nationally grown feed. A substantial amount of animal feed has to be imported.

A big share of Dutch meat products is then exported, mostly within Europe.

The manure that was produced in the process, however, remains in the Netherlands. Over the years, this has led to the accumulation of nitrogen and phosphorus in the agricultural soil and this has caused the eutrophication of nature areas, ditches, lakes, rivers and the North Sea.

In 2010, Dutch livestock produced 72 billion kilograms of manure, most of which ended up as fertiliser.

This fertiliser adds minerals to the soil. Some of these are taken up by plants and crops, the rest drains away into the groundwater or surface water, or evaporates as ammonia into the air.

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All that is left is manure