

PROTEIN TRANSITION & FOOD ENVIRONMENT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



INTRODUCTION

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Protein consumption in the Netherlands is out of balance: we consume too much animal protein and not enough plant-based protein. At the same time, our food environment largely consists of unhealthy and (ultra-)processed foods. As a result of this imbalance in our diet and food environment, an increasing number of Dutch people are developing chronic diseases such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and cancer. In addition, our current dietary pattern significantly increases pressure on several planetary boundaries (such as climate change, land use, and biodiversity loss) and causes substantial animal suffering. In this brochure, we outline how we, as Food Transition Coalition, address these societal challenges and what changes are needed to solve them.

Together with 200 coalition partners, Food Transition Coalition (TcV) works towards a healthy, sustainable, and fair agricultural and food system. This report focuses on TcV's program "Protein Transition and Food Environment." Within this program, we focus on two interconnected transitions:

the protein transition and the shift towards a healthy and sustainable food environment. To accelerate these transitions, we work towards three concrete goals:

1.

BY 2030, AT LEAST 60% OF CONSUMED PROTEINS WILL COME FROM PLANT-BASED SOURCES AND NO MORE THAN 40% FROM ANIMAL SOURCES.



2.

THE DUTCH FOOD ENVIRONMENT IS MORE ALIGNED WITH THE DUTCH DIETARY GUIDELINES (THE WHEEL OF FIVE), COMPLIES WITH THE 60/40 PLANT-TO-ANIMAL PROTEIN RATIO, AND INCLUDES FEWER ULTRA-PROCESSED FOODS.

3.

THE FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRY AND THE DOWNSTREAM FOOD CHAIN ARE ORGANISED AROUND THE 60/40 PLANT-ANIMAL PROTEIN RATIO, AND ANIMAL PROTEIN PRODUCTION HAS BEEN SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCED AND HAPPENS EXCLUSIVELY IN A SUSTAINABLE AND ANIMAL-FRIENDLY MANNER.



To reach these goals, we bring stakeholders together, influence policy, and develop knowledge and tools that help organisations increase their contribution to the transitions. Our activities are grounded in the TransMission framework, developed by NewForesight, Nyenrode Business University, and Utrecht University. This framework is a mission-driven approach to understanding and influencing societal transformation processes.

With this brochure, we provide insight into what we have done within the program "Protein Transition and Food Environment" during the period 2024–2025 (Recap) and what our plans are for 2026 and beyond (Outlook). To make both our approach and impact clear, we specify for all our activities and projects which changes we aim to trigger among system actors.

WHAT DID WE ACHIEVE?

PROTEIN ACTION CONSORTIUM

In 2024, we brought together multiple retailers, producers, processors, farmers' organisations, and caterers from the food sector to accelerate the protein transition. This led to the founding of the Protein Action Consortium (PACT). Within this collaboration, TcV takes on a facilitating and strategic advisory role, guiding businesses in applying transition thinking to develop strategic actions that advance the transition. In 2025, this resulted, for example, in the development of a **guide for retailers and food producers** that includes advice and information on how to increase the consumption of plant-enriched products (available upon request). Plant-enriched products are animal-based products in which some of the animal ingredients have been replaced by plant-based ingredients. In addition, we serve as a bridge, connecting PACT members to knowledge institutions and civil society organisations from our TcV network. In 2025, this led, among other things, to new collaborations between PACT members and organisations working on food education. Within PACT, our efforts in 2025 focused primarily on driving the following changes:

1.

Increasing the share of plant-enriched products in the food environment.

2.

Improving policy related to the protein transition.

3.

Strengthening food literacy through food education.

4.

Reshaping the food environment towards a sustainable and healthy protein balance.



THE HEALTHY FOOD TRANSITION

Since 2023, TcV has been working closely with various health organisations¹ to accelerate the protein transition. This collaboration led to the launch of the **Healthy Food Transition Charter** in the autumn of 2024, which was signed by 30 health organisations. By signing, organisations commit to incorporating the protein transition into their policies and objectives.

In 2025, we worked on expanding the number of health organisations endorsing the Charter – and successfully so. To date, 45 health organisations have signed. This was achieved, among other things, by organising large-scale transition workshops and launching a **frontrunners campaign** on our website and social media. Through this campaign, we highlight forward-thinking health organisations already contributing to the transition, in order to inspire others. In addition, in 2025, we worked

¹By health organisations we mean all organisations, professions, and partnerships that contribute to promoting, protecting, or restoring people's health, such as healthcare institutions, public healthcare agencies, health funds, health insurance companies, dietitians, physiotherapists, healthcare associations, sports clubs, and lifestyle and well-being organisations.

together with health organisations and environmental organisations to explore how the themes of sustainability and health can be more strongly connected, thereby increasing societal support for the protein transition. Through these efforts, we worked on achieving two types of change among system actors in 2025:

1.
More health organisations commit to the protein transition.

2.
Connecting health organisations with environmental organisations.

HEALTHY FOOD COALITION

In 2023, we launched the Healthy Food Coalition (HFC) – a collective consisting largely of food producers and providers (such as supermarkets and caterers) within the food sector, including UDEA, Hutten, and TastyBasics, supported by knowledge institutions such as the Louis Bolk Institute, HAS Green Academy, and Utrecht University. HFC is a frontrunner movement within the food sector, demonstrating both the urgency of creating a healthy and sustainable food environment and that change is possible. In 2025, we worked on developing the “**Guiding Star**” – a compass that provides direction for a healthy food offering. Rather than a strict set of rules, this compass offers companies guidance for product development and food offerings, with health at the core. In addition, together

with HFC members, we organised two **Food Fashion Shows** in 2025 to inspire food producers and providers and encourage action. During these events, we presented tasty, nutrient-rich dishes that participants could try. In short, together with HFC members, we worked on achieving the following change in 2025:

1.
More food companies are able of and motivated to create a healthier food environment.

Watch a video
of a Food
Fashion Show.





Watch a video of the Plant The Future Diner



POLICY ENGAGEMENT

A central component of our programme is supporting policy development, which we pursue in various ways. In 2025, we organised the fifth edition of the successful **Plant The Future Diner** in The Hague – a large-scale political event held at the Nieuwspoord press centre. The event serves both an agenda-setting and networking function and contributes to strengthening and expanding our relationships with Members of Parliament and policymakers. In total, more than **220 stakeholders** attended, including **politicians, policymakers, farmers, civil society organisations, scientists, and businesses**. What made this year’s dinner unique was that the evening concluded with the **National Food Debate**. Members of Parliament Laura Bromet (GroenLinks-PvdA), Anne-Marijke Podt (D66), Joris Lohman (CDA), and Ines Kostić (PvdD) took part in a debate on the opportunities and requirements for a future-proof agriculture and food system.

In addition, TcV established the Kerngroep Eiwittransitie coalition several years ago (now known as Eiwittransitie.nl). This coalition comprises more than ten NGOs and was created to align and strengthen each other’s initiatives and policy activities related to the protein transition. Together with the members of this coalition, we hold regular consultations with the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food Security and Nature (LVVN) and the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport (VWS), and maintain contact with individual politicians and policymakers. Through these efforts, we were directly involved in 2025 in the development and evaluation of the **Supermarket Sustainability Dashboard**. **Two new motions** were also submitted in the House of Representatives: one focused on a consumer campaign for protein crops, and one on the government acting as a launching customer for new protein products. Both motions were adopted – in amended form – marking a new step towards a more plant-based food system.



Furthermore, in 2025, we worked on professionalising the Kerngroep coalition by launching the website Eiwittransitie.nl. Additionally, three new organisations joined the coalition: Friends of the Earth Netherlands, the Dutch Vegetarian Association, and De Week van Ons Eten (national public campaign initiative).

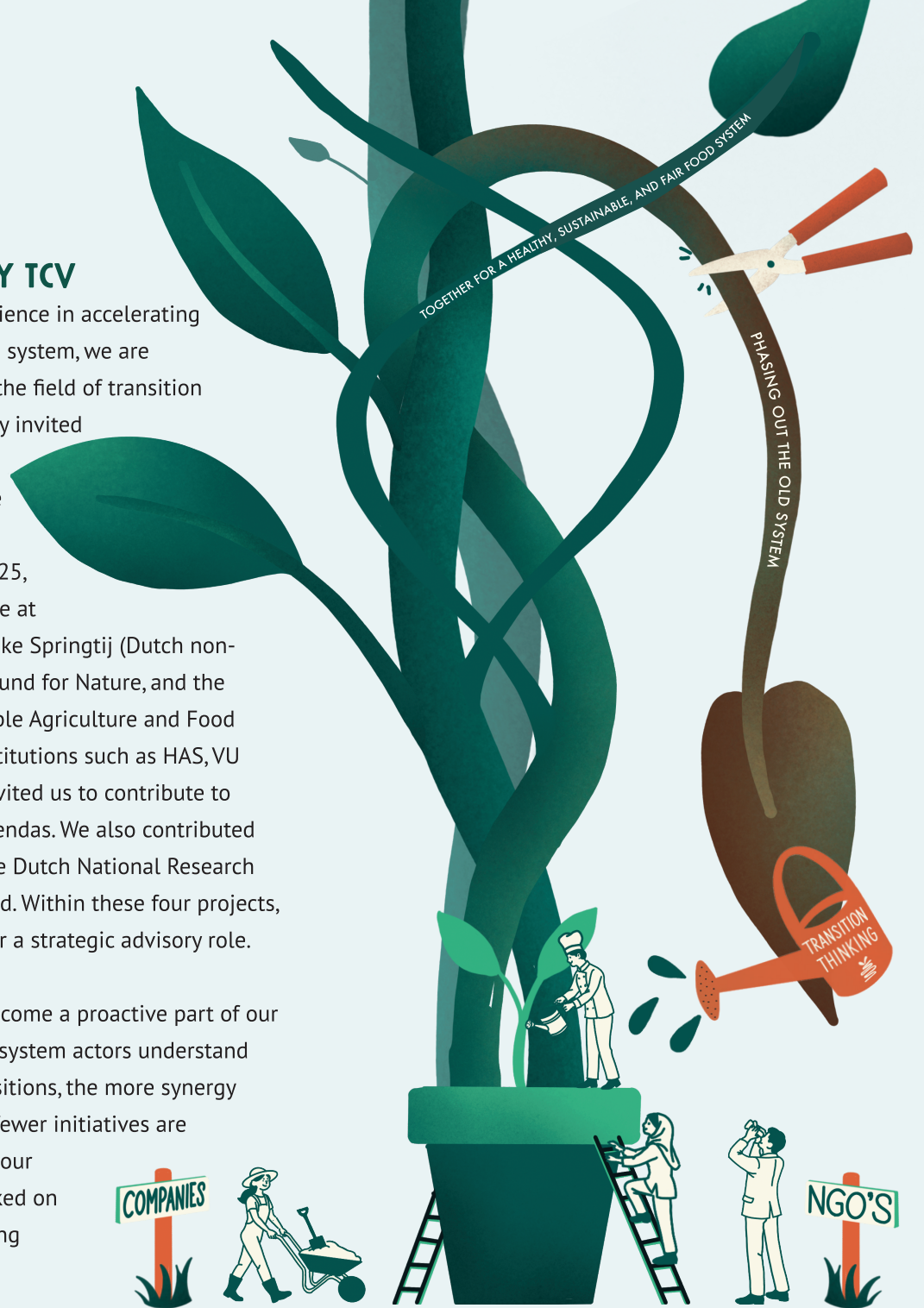
Through these actions, we worked on achieving two types of change in 2025:

- 1. Improving policy related to the protein transition.**
- 2. Professionalising and expanding the Kerngroep coalition.**

KNOWLEDGE SHARING BY TCV

Through our network and our experience in accelerating transition processes within the food system, we are recognised as a “thought leader” in the field of transition thinking. As a result, we are regularly invited by a wide range of stakeholders to share our knowledge and experience on accelerating transitions, both nationally and internationally. In 2025, for example, we shared our expertise at events organized by organisations like Springtij (Dutch non-profit foundation), the World Wide Fund for Nature, and the European Foundations for Sustainable Agriculture and Food network. In addition, knowledge institutions such as HAS, VU Amsterdam, TU Twente, and WUR invited us to contribute to discussions on shaping research agendas. We also contributed to five research proposals within the Dutch National Research Agenda, of which four were approved. Within these four projects, we play either an implementation or a strategic advisory role.

Knowledge sharing has now also become a proactive part of our overall strategy. After all, the better system actors understand how to strategically accelerate transitions, the more synergy emerges within the sector, and the fewer initiatives are unnecessarily lost. Through sharing our knowledge and experience, we worked on achieving two types of change among system actors in 2025:



1.

More companies and civil society organisations embrace transition thinking and commit to the protein transition and creating a better food environment.

2.

Strengthening the research agendas of knowledge institutions to increase their practical relevance.

WHAT ARE WE WORKING TOWARDS?

In the coming years, we will continue and expand our current projects, while also initiating several new ones. The text below outlines a selection of these new projects and the changes we aim to achieve through them. A comprehensive overview of all our future plans can be found in the full 2024–2025 impact report. For most of our upcoming projects, we are still seeking funding. With this support, we will be able to realise our plans and increase our impact.

STRENGTHENING POLICY AND SOCIETAL COLLABORATION ON THE PROTEIN TRANSITION THROUGH THE MORE PLANT BASED ACTION PLAN

Inspired by the successful Danish Plant-Based Action Plan of 2023, we, together with the Kerngroep coalition, initiated a Dutch version in 2025: *the More Plant Based Action Plan (MPBAP)*. In collaboration with NGOs, businesses, industry associations, knowledge institutions, financial actors, and the Ministries of LVVN and VWS, we are working towards a national action plan to accelerate the protein transition in the Netherlands. Through this initiative, we aim to strengthen the policy and societal collaboration needed to realise the transition.



CREATING A PARADIGM SHIFT IN THE PUBLIC DEBATE ON HEALTHY FOOD AND FREEDOM OF CHOICE

Making healthy eating the new normal remains a major challenge. Through the current design of the food environment, Big Food continues to steer consumers

towards unhealthy products. At the same time, governments are often reluctant to intervene, citing “freedom of choice” and “free market” principles, while consumers perceive measures promoting healthier diets as paternalistic. We aim to break this dynamic by establishing a new coalition focused on developing and disseminating a renewed public narrative. This narrative will make clear to policymakers that true “freedom of choice” does not currently exist, as consumers choices are already being actively shaped by Big Food. Additionally, it will change consumers’ current sentiment by making them aware of how Big Food is steering their consumption choices toward an unhealthy diet.

COUNTERING POLARISATION AND MISINFORMATION IN THE PUBLIC DEBATE ON FOOD

The public debate on food, health, and sustainability is frequently clouded by misinformation – for example, claims that plant-based diets are inherently unhealthy. Such narratives undermine trust in science and policy, fuel polarisation, and distract from the role of Big Food in promoting unhealthy consumption patterns.

To address this, we are working on the development of a *Rapid Address & Response System (RARS)*: an independent network of scientists and experts that can quickly identify and counter misinformation through evidence-based explanations, opinion pieces, and media engagement. RARS will function as a stabilising mechanism and contribute to a more accurate and constructive public debate.

FINALLY

TOGETHER WE CREATE CHANGE

In 2025, we made significant progress in both the protein transition and the transition towards a healthy and sustainable food environment. In 2026, we will continue to build on this momentum and aim to increase our impact. Together with our members, partners, and knowledge institutions, we are driving the change needed for a healthy, sustainable, and fair food system. Would you like to learn more or collaborate with us on one of these transitions? Please feel free to get in touch.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO READ MORE ABOUT OUR CURRENT OR FUTURE PROJECTS?





Please consult the full 2024–2025 impact report.

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FUNDING

Our sincere thanks go to:

