



Ministry of Foreign Affairs

# *Collaborations in innovative agriculture*

*Commissioned by the Netherlands Enterprise Agency*

*>> Sustainable. Agricultural. Innovative.  
International.*



## Collaborations in innovative agriculture

*The Netherlands and British Columbia, Canada*



## Foreword

### The Netherlands and British Columbia

The Netherlands and the province of British Columbia share many mutual values, including collaboration, inclusion and innovation. As new challenges continue to emerge, we recognize that we need to work together in order to meet them, as well as to take advantage of the unique opportunities that arise.

Our shared history goes back a long way. While not new, the collaboration between our countries in the Agtech sector is growing. Many Dutch farmers immigrated to B.C. in the 1950s, and played an important role in the development of the agriculture and horticultural sector in the region. We can still see this in the ownership structure of the horticultural sector, as well as in the technology that is being used in some of the province's state of the art facilities.

Now that we are in the middle of implementing COVID-19 recovery plans in both our countries, we are exploring new ways of strengthening our cooperation. It is exciting to see the strong Agtech focus that is included in B.C.'s recovery plan "Stronger BC".

As a renowned leader in agriculture and food, the Netherlands has a key role to play in facilitating and accelerating the global transition towards a sustainable agricultural system that ensures food security and generates economic opportunity. By forging partnerships across borders and cultures, the Netherlands will be able to demonstrate to the world how, together, we can farm the future.

I see many opportunities in B.C.'s diverse economy, agriculture landscape and thriving technology sector, and I look forward to intensifying the relationship between our countries. It is a pleasure to present you with a brochure which highlights several advanced innovative Agtech companies in B.C. as well as the excellent existing relations between the Agtech sectors in our countries!

**Henk Snoeken**

*Consul General of the  
Netherlands in Vancouver*



## Innovative Agtech in British Columbia

*When Dutch companies think of economic opportunities in Canada, British Columbia (B.C.) is not always on the radar. This brochure will tell you why it should be! B.C., Canada's western most province, is known for its diverse economy, agricultural landscape, thriving technology sector and strong research community.*

B.C. has over 5 million inhabitants, of which around 220.000 are of Dutch descent. Metro Vancouver, located in the lower mainland region of B.C., ranks as Canada's 3rd largest city with over 2.5 million inhabitants. B.C. is nearly 1.000.000 km<sup>2</sup> in size, 10% of which is arable land. In comparison, the Netherlands is just over 41.000 km<sup>2</sup> in size with 25% arable land.

### Background

The collaboration between the Netherlands and B.C. in the Agtech sector has been consistent for the last decennia and continues to grow. Many Dutch immigrants immigrated to B.C. in the 1950s, and played an important role in the development of the agriculture and horticultural sector in the region. The rise of established tech companies, the development of government policies to promote technology and innovation, and B.C.'s competitive advantages with a strategic geographical location provide a thriving environment for the acceleration of advancements in smart agriculture.

### Innovative Climate in British Columbia

B.C. is a recognized producer of high-quality, safe, and nutritious agricultural products. With over 300 commodities, from fruits and vegetables to livestock and seafood, B.C. is the most diverse agricultural province of Canada. Farmers are increasingly driving

research into seed genomics, climate-controlled greenhouses, sensor monitored growing technologies, advanced refrigeration systems and numerous other Agtech solutions. The farmers are at the forefront of meeting shifting consumer demands, such as plant-based alternatives, locally-grown food and environmentally sustainable, traceable protein sources.

When doing business in Canada, please be sure to consider B.C. for its:

- Thriving tech sector in close proximity to agricultural operations;
- Access to key networks and infrastructure as part of B.C.'s Asia Pacific Gateway, as well as North America's West Coast;
- Diverse crop mix and landscapes that offer a unique opportunity to pilot agricultural technologies;
- Support from governments of B.C. and Canada to advance the pace of innovation in agriculture by supporting R&D, demonstration and commercialization of new technologies.



Source: BC Government Trade & Invest:  
<https://www.britishcolumbia.ca/TradeBCPortal/media/Marketing/bc-agritech-mit.pdf>



## Future collaboration between British Columbia and the Netherlands

B.C. has the ambition to become a global agtech leader, by developing a safe, innovative and sustainable food system. The Netherlands is the 2nd largest exporter of food and agricultural products in the world, despite having a land base that is roughly 23 times smaller, and a population that is nearly 3.5 times larger than B.C.'s. The Consulate General of the Netherlands in Vancouver works together with several partners to create new business opportunities by making connections between the Dutch and B.C. markets.

In the fall of 2019, a Letter of Intent was signed between B.C.'s Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Jobs, Trade and Technology and the Netherlands' Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality. With this letter, both governments committed to continue the collaboration between the Netherlands and B.C. and create new business opportunities. These include:

- Scientific cooperation between academic institutions;
- Cooperation between Agtech focused accelerators;
- Strategic partnerships between innovative Agtech companies.

## Content

This brochure features a dozen organizations in the Agtech sector from B.C., each with a specific link to the Netherlands and the different government organisations involved:

- **Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality of the Netherlands**  
- Assistant Vice Minister, Guido Landheer
- **BC Ministry of Agriculture** – The Honourable Lana Popham, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries
- **Terramera Regenerative Agriculture Center** – CEO, Karn Manhas
- **Ecoation** – CEO, Saber Miresmailli
- **Cubic Farms** – CEO, Dave Dinesen
- **Lucent Biosciences** – CEO, Michiel Riedijk
- **Qualitree** – Sales Manager, Tony van Oort
- **Goodly Foods** – CEO, Aart Schuurman Hess
- **Advanced Intelligent Systems** – COO, Robert Vahedi
- **Houweling's Tomatoes** – CEO, Casey Houweling
- **Lyne Systems** – CEO, Mike Gardiner
- **Consulate General of the Netherlands in Vancouver**



The brochure articles are written by Vancouver-based Dutch illustrator and artist Renske Werner, based on interviews she conducted with the organizations. Most interviews were conducted in December 2020, but some date from November 2019, just before the visit of Assistant Vice Minister from the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality Guido Landheer to Vancouver.



**Guido Landheer**  
*Assistant Vice Minister*



Dutch efforts to achieve a circular form of farming are on the forefront of a global shift towards sustainable agriculture.

Guido Landheer is the Assistant Vice Minister at the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food

Quality of the Netherlands and he believes that his country's innovative and collaborative endeavours can lead the way toward global solutions for food security: "We are a small country that relies on our strengths in farming and innovation. The joint efforts of Dutch farmers, universities and the government are bearing fruit when it comes to issues like greenhouse gas emissions and supply chains."

Much like the Netherlands, British Columbia has the ambition to become a global leader in Agtech innovation, an aspiration that was accelerated when the Premier of British Columbia visited the Netherlands in 2019. "There is definitely cross pollination happening between the two countries", says Landheer. "Many Dutch immigrants who came to BC played an important role in agriculture and they brought a lot of Dutch knowledge and technology to the sector."

*"Many Dutch immigrants who came to BC played an important role in agriculture and they brought a lot of Dutch knowledge and technology to the sector"*

Both governments agree they're on the right path. "If you want a sustainable solution to food security and supply chains, which means taking into account a growing global population while working with less to minimize the environmental impact, you have no choice but to turn to innovation", explains Landheer.

There is sincere intent to continue the cross pollination, and the pandemic has only heightened the importance of Agtech solutions. Both the Netherlands and British Columbia have acknowledged this with recovery plans and financial support in Agtech, food and farming.



Ministry of Agriculture,  
Nature and Food Quality







*Hon. Lana Popham*  
BC Minister of Agriculture



Greetings and best wishes to all of you who have virtually gathered for the AgTech Winter Talks hosted by the Consulate General of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Vancouver.

We all have a shared desire to build innovative and sustainable food systems and I look forward to discussing how we can use the latest technology to create new opportunities for our farmers and food producers.

B.C. is home to over 150 agritech companies and we are continuing to develop and produce world-class solutions for the agricultural, food and seafood sectors. It is through partnerships, like the one we share with the Netherlands, that agritech and our food production and security will continue to grow.

The future is full of exciting possibilities when it comes to agritech and I look forward to our continuous collaboration.

Lana Popham  
Minister of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries





**Karn Manhas**  
CEO – Terramera

**Link with the Netherlands**

Terramera is fusing science, nature and artificial intelligence to create game-changing technologies that can solve some of the world's biggest problems. They're to developing the Global Centre for Regenerative Agriculture in order to address

three key challenges: economic stability and growth, climate change, and food security. It will utilize Terramera's machine learning and AI capabilities to support the growth of regenerative agricultural techniques across Canada and the rest of the world, boosting rural economies and turning the agricultural sector into a massive carbon sink.

Regenerative agriculture is a set of tools and practices that pulls carbon from the air and transfers it underground, storing carbon and improving soil health with each growing season. Many farmers are already practicing regenerative techniques like no-till and cover crops. The Global Centre for Regenerative Agriculture creates a way for farmers to earn money from a full range of practices that are better for crops, plant health and the environment.

*"We need to transform how we think about agriculture, sustainability and efficiency."*

"Mounting research shows us that more carbon in the atmosphere is bad but more carbon in the soil is good for farms and the earth," explains Karn Manhas, CEO of Terramera. "We're creating a system to pay farmers to pull more carbon in to their soils, where it can benefit their farms, support more nutritious food production, and help turn back the clock on climate change."

- **Dutch Partnerships**  
Terramera's industry-leading automated growth chambers were developed utilizing indoor growing systems from the Dutch company Light4Food.
- **Farm efficiencies**  
Global Centre for Regenerative Agriculture will model farm efficiencies achieved through Agtech innovation in the Netherlands.







**Saber Miresmailli**  
CEO – Ecoation

## HUMAN KNOWLEDGE AND MACHINE PRECISION



### Link with the Netherlands

knowledge and experience with Machine precision and automation to act as a grower's 'eyes on the ground' and offer services in three areas: Closed-loop IPM, Yield Production Assessments, and Crop Work Quality.

Founded in 2010 by a husband and wife team – his background is in biology and plant science, hers in engineering – ecoation merges biology and technology to develop products that change the way we produce food.

*“How can we tell  
that a plant is sick  
before the issue  
gets out of hand?”*

Modern farms usually span hundreds of acres of crop fields or greenhouses, so growers are unable to check on all of their plants. Often when a disease is detected, it's too late for intervention at which point pesticides offer the most effective solution. Dr. Miresmailli, co-founder of Ecoation, posed the question: how can we tell that a plant is sick before the issue gets out of hand?

Miresmailli and his experienced team of 60+ growers, scientists, engineers and business professionals from all over the globe studied a plant's physiology, specifically its internal activities in reaction to stress and diseases and then built a technology that can assess this internal

chemistry. “This is an active probing and sensing technology that interacts with the plant's internal chemistry and provides reliable data that establishes a dialogue between the plant and the grower”, explains Miresmailli before adding: “Luckily, plants never lie about the state of their health.”

Innovating at the intersection of the grower's expertise and knowledge and machine precision is ecoation's sweet spot. “Growing is ultimately a numbers game”, concludes Miresmailli. “And we work to get growers the right numbers, at the right time, so they can make the best possible decisions.”



- **Dutch Partnerships**  
Metazet, Micothon, Deplhy, Koppert Biological Systems, Viscon Group, Enza Zaden, LetsGrow.Com, BlueRadix, and Ridder.
- **Newly patented AI/IA KENNIS Grower Assistant**  
Referencing the Dutch term for knowledge and cognition, KENNIS exists to give growers a tool to turn observational data into decision-making power, essentially moving past what is happening to diagnose why it is happening.
- **Winner of 2018 GreenTech Innovation Concept Award in Amsterdam**  
Ecoation's IRIS! Scout Robot, in partnership with Dutch Micothon and Metazet-FormFlex, won the prestigious Greentech Innovation Award in Amsterdam.

[www.ecoation.com](http://www.ecoation.com)



**Dave Dinesen**  
CEO – CubicFarms Systems Corp.

In 2015, two seasoned Dutch-Canadian farmers invented a unique automated, environment controlled system that enables vertical farming. Fast forward to 2021, and their technology has grown into CubicFarms, a company on a mission to

successfully feed our changing world.

Dave Dinesen, CEO of Langley-based CubicFarms, claims their ag-tech solutions can help break the cycle of long global food supply chains and instead allow a local chain agriculture: “Our plant, food and livestock feed systems can be installed anywhere in the world. And because the temperature and environment inside these machines are controlled, produce and livestock feed can grow year-round in any climate.”

*“Our mission is that food growing takes place nearby where it is consumed. This ensures food security and improves access to food.”*

A good way to visualize what the machines look like is to picture a shipping container. Inside this container are trays of crops that rotate and follow an undulating path, which ensures every side of each plant gets the right amount of light and water. A 40' x 8' x 9.5' sterile cube can accommodate up to 120,000 plant sites. This means the amount of land required to grow substantially more crops is decreased, less physical labour is required to plant and harvest crops, water consumption is

## LOCAL CHAIN AUTOMATED FOOD TECHNOLOGIES



### Link with the Netherlands

reduced by up to 95% and no pesticides are required because everything is grown inside in a sterile environment.

All of these outcomes are relevant on a global scale in a time where we all grapple with food security and the effects of farming on the environment. “We believe long chain food dependence is dangerous. Currently, we’re finding ourselves in the middle of a pandemic with closed borders, which emphasizes the importance of local farming. Our mission is that food growing takes place nearby where it is consumed. This ensures food security and improves access to food.”

- **Dutch Heritage**

CubicFarms’ technology was developed by Jack Benne, founder of Bevo Farms, one of North America’s largest plant propagation businesses, and his son Leo Benne, CubicFarms’ Chief Product Officer. Few people on earth have grown more plants from seed than Jack, born and trained in the Netherlands.



[www.cubicfarms.com](http://www.cubicfarms.com)



**Michiel Riedijk**  
CEO – Lucent BioSciences

## PLANT-BASED FERTILIZER BY UPCYCLING RESIDUES



### Link with the Netherlands

causes death and health issues worldwide. This is a stark reality, but the good news is that there are people who put all their time and effort into inventing technologies that can help solve this large scale problem.

Michiel Riedijk is a Vancouver-based clean tech serial entrepreneur and climate change mitigation initiatives investor. In 2017, he was introduced to a theory involving cellulose (the main substance in the walls of plants) as the main ingredient for a smart fertilizer to improve crop yield and regenerate top soil. "I became very intrigued and got on board. We started with extensive research trials in the lab."

"When our tests proved that this smart fertilizer technology, that we named Soileos, yields great results, we raised funds and started pilot programs in an effort to scale up production. Our pilot plant in British Columbia can currently produce 1000 kilos per day and we are working towards a production speed of 100 tonnes per day."

*Lettuce crop yields  
increased with 40% and  
has a higher nutrition value.*

In recent years, food security and nutrition density have been diminishing at a fast rate because of (top)soil degradation. Pollution, excess flooding and other environmental and agricultural issues are at the core of this global issue. Malnutrition

In early 2020, Lucent Biosciences received funds to conduct a series of field trials to use Soileos smart fertilizer on different crops in different parts of Canada. The results

of these test fields are very promising. Lettuce crop yields increased with 40% and has a higher nutrition value. Other crops report double digit increases as well; not only in size, but also in taste and aroma.

"These are exciting and promising results", says Riedijk. "We are gearing up for our next steps, which is a consumer product for home use and figuring out our large scale business opportunities globally. Right now, we're looking at licensing our technology to food waste industry giants who have the ability to build a plant and sell our smart fertilizer locally at a royalty fee."



- **Dutch Heritage**  
Michiel Riedijk immigrated with his family from Rotterdam, Netherlands to Vancouver in 2009. He started Lucent BioSciences as one of the co-founders in 2014.
- **Dutch partnerships**  
Lucent BioSciences is now planning to conduct field trials in 2021 in the Netherlands in collaboration with Dutch farms and Wageningen University & Research.

[www.soileos.com](http://www.soileos.com)





**Tony van Oort**  
Co-Founder Qualitree

## QUALITY PLANT PROGRAM SPECIALISTS



### Link with the Netherlands

“Access to both skilled and unskilled labour in the horticultural and agricultural sector in North America is the number one limiting factor to growth”, states Tony Van Oort Co-Founder and Sales Director at plant propagation specialist nursery

Qualitree. While this is concerning for the industry, Van Oort believes that green automation can establish a substantial shift towards decreasing this labour shortage issue.

Founded in 1994 by two ambitious horticulture university graduates, Qualitree is set to become the most automated greenhouse nursery facility in North America. To meet this goal within five years, the company is building new greenhouses from scratch on their 100-acre farm in Chilliwack, BC. “We are building from the ground up because we want to do it right. It’s nearly impossible to implement modern technologies in an older greenhouse that was built for humans instead of for robots and machines”, explains Van Oort.

*“[...] Qualitree wouldn’t be who they are as a company without close ties to the Netherlands!”*

With roots in The Netherlands, Qualitree is collaborating with a number of Dutch companies to help them carry out their vision. Van Oort: “The hightech cultivation floors from the Dutch firm Erfgoed have been installed as the foundation of our new greenhouses.” These floors will not only increase yield and

production, they are also the most sustainable base for growing; their technology reuses water and fertilizer. As a member of MPS Sustainable Quality, Qualitree recently received their certification in the highest sustainability classification for horticulture. “The next generation is our future”, says Van Oort, “and right now we’re building a company that millennials and next generations will want to work for. We will be a sustainable, automated nursery with a very low carbon footprint. This is the future of agriculture.”

# Qualitree

- **Dutch Heritage**  
The entire ownership and several key staff members are first, second and third generation Canadians from Dutch immigrants.
- **Dutch technology**  
Much of the technology used at Qualitree comes from the Netherlands. Examples include automation equipment, boilers to heat the greenhouses, the irrigation water management system, grow floors and a custom build ERP system. Qualitree closely resembles a Dutch-style nursery, with concrete driveways, rail systems for transportation and computer-controlled irrigation and climate control systems.
- **Dutch model of specialization**  
Qualitree uses a model concentrating on volume and quality, inspired by friends and consultants in the Dutch industry. Whether it be other growers, suppliers of equipment, hard goods or their close ties with their consultants, Qualitree wouldn’t be who they are as a company without close ties to the Netherlands!

[www.qualitree.com](http://www.qualitree.com)



**Aart Schuurman Hess**  
CEO – Goodly Foods

## REPURPOSING SURPLUS PRODUCE



### Link with the Netherlands

Co-founder of Goodly Foods and former Greater Vancouver Food Bank CEO, Aart Schuurman Hess is particularly passionate about eliminating food waste. Not only because he was raised by war generation parents who would never throw out food, but also because the current retail practice with high standards cause overproduction which is contributing to our global waste problem. “Farmers put time and energy into growing their crops. To throw away perfectly good produce goes against my deep rooted values about food.”

*“Throwing away perfectly good produce goes against my deep rooted values about food.”*

Spotted squash, crooked carrots and bruised tomatoes. Considered ‘cosmetically imperfect’ and rejected by the retail market, Goodly Foods collects these surplus products and turns them into delicious soups, sauces and stews.

The soups of Goodly Foods are 100 % plant based and prepared with few ingredients. Product Development Chef Karen Barnaby, is the mastermind behind the soup’s recipes: “She is a sustainability cook who figures out ways to use the whole vegetable, including pits and skins”, says Schuurman Hess. “We’re aiming for a zero waste policy

when it comes to using our surplus foods. Recyclable and compostable packaging are a next step.”

In partnership with Yuri Fulmer of Fulmer & Company and with the help of a substantial grant from the Walmart Foundation, Goodly Foods is off to a good start. Registered as a social enterprise that offers employment to individuals who experience barriers to enter the work place, the company is aiming to become an organization focused on People, Planet & Profit. Schuurman Hess: “Many similar initiatives remain small because of their not for profit or society status. We hope to become a big brand that can help these smaller companies grow so we can combine forces and reduce the food waste problem together.”

**GOODLY™**

- **“Kliekendag”**  
Goodly is based on the simple idea of “kliekendag” using leftover or surplus ingredients to make delicious soups. You never throw away good food; you can always make something out of it!
- **Dutch heritage**  
Goodly Foods began as a unique initiative led by the Greater Vancouver Food Bank and Fulmer Capital Partners. Dutch CEO Aart Schuurman Hess immigrated to Canada in 2007.

[www.hellogoodly.ca](http://www.hellogoodly.ca)



**Robert Vahedi**  
COO – AI Systems Inc.

**Link with the Netherlands**

Founded by robotics entrepreneur Farhang Bidram and managing consultant engineer Robert Vahedi, AIS provides autonomous robotic solutions for agriculture and forestry. “When we started our company, both my business

partner and I had recently moved to Canada’s West Coast”, says Vahedi. “We assessed our new environment and took note of the significant presence of forestry and agriculture industries.” Focusing on automation that would eliminate labour shortages for repetitive and injury prone tasks in these fields was a logical next step.

The duo developed BigTop; an autonomous spacer robot on wheels with a flat surface and long arms for picking up objects. With a specific purpose to move and space plant pots in (greenhouse) nurseries, BigTop took five years to complete and was developed and manufactured in-house. Vahedi: “Once completed, we applied for a vacant nursery labourer position as BigTop, and our robot got the job immediately.”

*“[...] we applied for a vacant nursery labourer position as BigTop, and our robot got the job immediately.”*

AIS is working on other solutions that are complementary to what humans are doing in the workspace. Vahedi: “There are concerning labour shortages in the agriculture industry and our robots can help fill this gap. The type of robots we

make are collaborative. They interact with humans by providing operations data and doing physically demanding labour.” Having expanded to artificial intelligence solutions for the blueberry industry, Vahedi and Bidram are currently working on robotics solutions for forestry and agriculture.

- **Dutch expat**  
Robert Vahedi is co-founder of AIS and a Dutch expat with Iranian roots.
- **Dutch partnerships**  
AIS is engaged with several Dutch companies to establish European distribution and first customers for its products.



ADVANCED INTELLIGENT SYSTEMS

[www.ai-systems.ca](http://www.ai-systems.ca)





**Casey Houweling**  
*Proprietor Houweling's Tomatoes*

## WORLD LEADER IN GROWING VEGETABLES



### Link with the Netherlands

As a second generation tomato grower, proprietor Casey Houweling from Houweling's Tomatoes has spent the last three decades expanding the family business and he is now considered a leader among growers and farmers worldwide.

He deserves this role not only because of his expertise as a grower, but also because of his early adoption and testing of (green) technologies.

With three locations in North America including one in Delta, British Columbia, Houweling's greenhouses are testing tomato picking robots and using North America's first CHP Generator in Camarillo, California; and reusing waste heat and carbon dioxide from a nearby power plant in Mona, Utah. "We can produce tomatoes in the harsh climate of Utah year round because of the energy generated from the power plant" explains Houweling about the latter. "And the thermal energy we capture from the plant is used for heating the greenhouse and melting snow from the roof, that we collect and store for irrigation."

*"I am an early adopter of modern technology solutions because they help me take better care of my tomatoes and the earth."*

In collaboration with Dutch engineering firm Kubo, Houweling has worked on the design of their patented Ultra Clima greenhouse. This semi closed greenhouse enables to grow profitably in hot dry circum-

stances in an energy efficient way, minimizes the need for pesticides and use of fresh water and improves the productivity. "I am an early adopter of modern technology solutions because they help me take better care of my tomatoes and the earth. It's the least I can do for my children."

- **Dutch suppliers and partnerships**  
 A lot of the equipment, technology, IT and software, but also the vegetable seeds Houweling's uses comes from Dutch suppliers. With regards to innovation, Houweling's works closely together with Dutch companies like Kubo Greenhouse Projects and Meteor Systems.
- **Growing expertise**  
 Growing expertise and crop procedures were learned by adapting Dutch ways and hiring Dutch growers!
- **Dutch heritage**  
 Houweling's Group is a family owned, world-renowned vegetable growing greenhouse with facilities in Camarillo (CA), Mona (UT) and Delta (BC). It was founded by Cornelius Houweling and is now led by his son Casey Houweling.



[www.houwelings.com](http://www.houwelings.com)



**Mike Gardiner**  
CEO – Lyne Systems

## PRODUCT LINE OPTIMIZATION



### Link with the Netherlands

“Information is key”, says product management lead Kyle Gardiner when explaining how Lyne System’s optimization systems work. “Our software eliminates manual input of data so the possibility for human error is minimal.”

Lyne Systems is a production optimization company based in North Vancouver. Founded by Mike Gardiner, a former operations and maintenance manager who spent his career identifying ways to improve processes and data in production lines, Lyne Systems helps customers maximize throughput and yield on production or packaging lines: “If a company has a product that is processed and packaged on an automated line, we can optimize the systems in place.”

The agricultural sector, and specifically the production and packaging of mushrooms, is where Lyne Systems is having great success. “It makes sense that we’re rooted in agriculture”, notes Mike, “One mushroom is different from the next, there are wrappers, fillers and SKU’s involved; it’s got a lot of complexity on the production line. That’s exactly where our expertise lies.”

Currently, the Gardiners are pleased with the completion of a detailed design of their newest product: the Harvest Packing Link. Specifically designed for mushroom picking, this machine solves an issue of a harvest conveyor belt that mushroom farmers install alongside the grow beds: “Traditionally, pickers pick a mushroom with one hand and cut off the stem with the other. This conveyor belt cuts off the mushroom stems automatically, allowing farmers to use two hands for picking. The

problem occurs at the end of the line, where mushrooms are placed into punnets and packagers can’t keep up with the conveyor belt’s speed”, explains Mike. “Our new system handles the whole process differently and prevents having to slow down the harvest line.”

With their extensive knowledge of mushroom picking and packaging lines, Lyne Systems is set to help mushroom and greenhouse packaging companies in The Netherlands. “Our approach to automation and optimization is different than how it’s done there and will provide significant production gains. A Dutch prospective customer is keen to implement our systems at his facility. Expanding our customer base to The Netherlands would be a huge step for us”, concludes Kyle.

- **International markets**  
Lyne Systems has been working internationally for years. On a recent visit to one of the largest mushroom packaging facilities in the Netherlands, the President recognized that the Lyne Systems solution would be unique and valuable in his facility.
- **Developing partnerships**  
Lyne Systems has an agreement with a Dutch project manager with years of experience implementing projects for Greenhouses and other agriculture operations across Europe and North America. His knowledge of automation and process efficiency will ensure that Lyne Systems’ improvements in the Netherlands will be successful.



[www.lynesystems.com](http://www.lynesystems.com)

## Consulate General of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Vancouver

### The Netherlands and British Columbia

The Consulate General of the Netherlands in Vancouver is responsible for a broad range of activities. Besides consular services for Canadian and Dutch citizens, the Consulate focuses on strengthening economic relations between Western Canada and the Netherlands. Our focus areas are aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals and include sustainable agriculture, clean and sustainable energy and healthy lives and well-being for all ages. We bring business, knowledge institutes and governments together to find solutions to support international exchange, trade and investment. For example, we do this by supporting companies directly, or also by hosting webinars and organizing trade missions.

In the agriculture sector, innovation and technology are combined to address global societal challenges, such as food security, climate change and economic growth and stability. The expected global demand for food will double by 2050 due to the combined effects of population growth, rising incomes and urbanization. This reality requires us to rethink the way we produce our food and how we can increase supply, while minimizing the negative impact on the environment.

The Consulate General of the Netherlands works closely together with the Embassy of the Netherlands in Ottawa, the Consulate General of the Netherlands in Toronto and the Embassy of the Netherlands in Washington (USA). For more information on how the Dutch Economic Diplomatic Network can provide assistance to companies doing business in Western Canada, please get in touch.



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