



COMMUNICATION LIVING LAB BRUGES





INHOUD

Living Lab Bruges: Come and enjoy delicious food @ (H)eerlijk Brugge Festival!

Living Lab Bruges: The power of community to create health

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Living lab Bruges: Kitchen Chronicles: Engaging Elderly Wisdom Through the Language of Food

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Living Lab Bruges: Come and enjoy delicious food @ (H)eerlijk Brugge Festival!

On the weekend of May 6th and 7th, 2023, the **(H)eerlijk Brugge** festival took place at the Koningin Astridpark location in Bruges. During this annual festival, one could literally and figuratively taste what our city has to offer in that regard. This edition focused on **(wild) herbs**.

This festival served as the flagship event for the Bruges Food Strategy and, in 2023, placed a particular emphasis on incorporating **plant-based proteins** into **dietary practices**. Attendees from diverse sectors were provided with the opportunity to engage with various stakeholders within the local Food System. The primary focus was on broadening consumer knowledge, sharing insights on plant-based proteins, and facilitating connections among different stakeholders, all with the objective of fortifying the network.

The **Living Lab Bruges**, representing the Cities 2030 project, was actively involved in this event. Their main objective was to raise awareness about Cities 2030 and the Living Lab Bruges, which involved exploring networking opportunities, educating new stakeholders, and investigating potential collaborations aligned with the goals of the Bruges Living Lab.

Numerous festival attendees had the opportunity to assess their muscular strength and gained valuable insights into plant-based proteins and their role in enhancing muscle strength and quality.





proef de toekomst

HEERLIJK BRUGGE

kom genieten van heerlijk eten

6 & 7 MEI 2023

KONINGIN ASTRIDPARK BRUGGE

brunch
—
boerenmarkt
—
workshops



Living Lab Bruges: The power of community to create health

Community centres are designated as inclusive **meeting spaces within neighbourhoods**, where individuals of all backgrounds are welcomed. These centres celebrate the diverse makeup of their respective neighbourhoods and encourage residents to contribute their skills to both the centre's operations and the broader community, thus fostering a culture of volunteerism. In the Bruges area, there are 17 such community centres overseen by project partner Mintus. One of Mintus' primary objectives is to facilitate aging in place for the elderly population.

The mission of the Living Lab Bruges is to provide customized, nutritious meals for individuals aged 65 and above. One of the initiatives within this living lab centres on the goal of familiarizing more individuals with the operations of community centres. The ultimate aim was to enhance outreach and support for this demographic across various levels of health and well-being.



Research and surveys have revealed that a vulnerable segment of elderly individuals still face challenges in accessing community centres. These are seniors who are at risk of experiencing social isolation. It becomes evident that many perceive the entry barrier as too high. Those who are on their own do not feel at ease having a meal at a community centre. To mitigate this obstacle, it is crucial for seniors to first become familiar with the community centres in their vicinity and the activities that take place there. Once they gain exposure to this environment, the likelihood of them coming for a nutritious meal becomes more feasible.

The Living Lab Bruges explored avenues for bringing this vulnerable group to community centres. The strategy of the **buddy system** was employed. Individuals who are already active in community centre activities extended invitations to those who are not yet acquainted with them. This with a focus on people who do not find their way to the community centre but still have a need to meet other people. Through brochures, posters, and interactions during activities, visitors to the community centres were introduced to the concept and encouraged to participate. In June, the first buddy event was organized, offering participants an incentive if they brought someone new to the community centre on that day. This activity was closely coordinated with the 'Den Heerd' community centre, which provided all necessary amenities. Following feedback gathered from the older population, a second buddy event was organized, tied to a popular activity—**Bingo**. Those who brought a new participant to this Bingo activity were granted free entry.





These initiatives proved to be a 'modest success'. Numerous seniors attended the buddy sessions and even brought along new participants! The principle of "people attract people," especially in connection with inclusive activities, was evident. Through this approach, the Living Lab Bruges aims to establish enduring activities, motivating an increasing number of individuals to visit community centers!

***"Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success."
- Henry Ford***




Living lab Bruges: Eating plant-based in your golden years is investing in health

There are several times scientific demonstrated that the older population needs more proteins in their diet. This under others to preserve their muscle mass and quality to pre-emptively respond to malnutrition and sarcopenia. In an innovative pilot study of the Living Lab Bruges, specific components of the hot meal, produced by project partner Riddersstove, were provided with plant based proteins.

Riddersstove is in charge of preparing and delivering hot meals to homes and local service centers. After a thorough examination, it was decided to enhance the starch component, 'mashed potatoes', with vegetable proteins in these hot meals. Before the mash could be evaluated by the target group, pilot tests were conducted at Riddersstove to determine how adding the plant protein source affected various aspects of the mash, including (1) taste, (2) color, (3) aroma, (4) consistency, and (5) overall observations. This process helped identify the optimal concentration for both protein content and the factors mentioned earlier. For every 100 grams of a soy-based vegetable protein source, 44.75 grams of protein were provided. The addition of soy-based protein had a significant impact on the taste of the standard mash, but no added value was demonstrated in terms of nutritional claims. Therefore, this addition was not further tested in the continuation of this study.





In a second test the plant-based protein, lupine, was introduced. The test design mirrored the approach used in the first phase. While the addition of lupine had a lesser impact on taste, it significantly affected aroma, texture, and thickness. Given these effects on various components, it was decided not to implement this addition in practice, as it would significantly impact the quality of the meals in a sustainable manner.

This initial experiment aimed to evaluate the feasibility of enhancing Riddersstove's meals with existing plant-based protein sources, specifically soy and lupine proteins incorporated into the puree. Previous studies suggested that these sources had the least impact on overall meal quality. Initially, the plan was to introduce enriched mash to the elderly population in two community centers. However, after taste tests involving 20 participants, it was clear that the effect on mash quality was too significant. The enriched mash did not meet the necessary quality standards for distribution to the intended audience. The success rate was considered rather low due to implementation challenges. Nevertheless, it serves as a foundation for further refining current plant-based protein sources.

Living Lab Bruges: Kitchen Chronicles: Engaging Elderly Wisdom Through the Language of Food

The primary goal of the Living Lab Bruges is to deliver healthy and sustainable meals to the elderly residing in the Bruges region. This objective revolves around the significant role played by meal delivery services to both homes and community centres, accounting for approximately 1200 daily meal deliveries. To gain a comprehensive understanding of the elderly population's needs and preferences and to tailor meals accordingly, we sought to capture their perspectives.

In September and October 2022, the Living Lab Bruges organized three distinct focus groups, workshops that involved elderly participants, including various clients from our partner Riddersstove. Together, they brainstormed ways to enhance the meal delivery system. Their valuable input was gathered during these engaging sessions, where topics such as plant-based nutrition, food sustainability, and local products were thoroughly discussed. These dynamic gatherings served as a crucial foundation for the Living Lab Bruges in formulating action plans and future experiments!

"In conversations with the elderly, you'll find an abundance of knowledge, grace, and perspectives that only age and experience can offer."







Living Lab Bruges: Savouring sustainability: a culinary revolution for the elderly

Navigating through the journey of aging, the transition in meal preparation and consumption reflects varying degrees of self-sustainability among the elderly. Initially, individuals find themselves in a stage of independence, where the ability to prepare meals and perform tasks such as grocery shopping is fully within their capability. This autonomy allows for a diverse and self-managed diet, fostering not only nutritional health but also a sense of self-reliance and activity.

As time progresses, a second stage emerges, marking a shift towards a combination of autonomy and support. In this phase, individuals may begin to integrate their meals with services offered by mealcare facilities, opting for a blend of dining at service centers and receiving meals delivered in a cold form to their homes. This approach allows for convenience, as they can reheat these meals at their leisure, maintaining a balance between independence and the assistance they may now require.

Transitioning to the final stage, the need for greater support becomes evident, with hot meals delivered warm directly to their doors. This service is particularly vital for those who may face challenges in meal preparation due to health or mobility issues, ensuring they receive nutritious, ready-to-eat meals that cater to their dietary needs without the strain of cooking.



Our project places significant emphasis on encouraging individuals, who are still able, to dine in service centers. This initiative is not merely about sustaining physical health through nutrition but also about nurturing mental and emotional well-being through community and social interaction. Dining in the company of others can mitigate feelings of loneliness and isolation, creating a vibrant social fabric that enriches their daily lives. Unfortunately, this vital step towards maintaining an engaging and communal dining experience is often overlooked as individuals transition from independence to needing more substantial support. By highlighting and facilitating this intermediate stage, we aim to foster a more inclusive, supportive, and socially connected community for our elderly population, ensuring they continue to lead fulfilling lives at every stage of their journey.

The event, hosted on four separate occasions in two different service centers, was a testament to the power of community and innovation. It was not just a meal; it was an experience designed to elevate the standard of mealcare and challenge the conventional approach to elderly nutrition.

Participants had the opportunity to enroll and immerse themselves in a dining ambiance that was more luxurious, featuring tables adorned with flowers, linen, the finest crockery, and elegant ornaments. This attention to detail transformed the dining area into a space where the elderly felt valued and celebrated.

Central to the event was the culinary upgrade from the usual menu offered at the service centers. With a focus on addressing regeneration issues, each meal was crafted to not only nourish but also to inspire. A professional chef cooked on-site, ensuring that the quality and taste of the dishes were from a different level.



The menu evolved with each edition of the event, starting with sludge tongue with oven-grilled potatoes and home-made tartare sauce the first two editions, followed in the third edition by freshly baked steak, with homemade mushroomsauce and vegetables. Finishing in the last session with lotta fish and leek puree, showcasing a diverse range of flavors and ingredients.



The response from the attendees was overwhelmingly positive. The initiative was met with appreciation and enthusiasm, with many participants expressing their delight and newfound interest in visiting the service centers more frequently. The event successfully lowered the barrier to entry, making it easier for people to engage with the services offered by the centers. This influx of new visitors highlighted the event's success in not only enhancing mealtime experiences but also in fostering a sense of community among the elderly.

Beyond the immediate joy and satisfaction experienced by the attendees, the event underscored the importance of innovative approaches to elderly care. By prioritizing sustainability, quality, and dignity, the collaboration between Riddersstove mealcare, Mintus, The City of Bruges, and Vives research facility demonstrated a commitment to reimagining mealcare. The success of this initiative serves as a beacon for future endeavors, proving that with creativity and collaboration, it is possible to transform everyday moments into extraordinary experiences, thereby enriching the lives of the elderly and setting new standards in mealcare sustainability.