

Solid result Royal HZPC Group and announcement of change CEO

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Potato breeding company Royal HZPC Group expects to achieve a similar result for the financial year 2023 / 2024 (July - June) as the year 2022 / 2023. In addition, Gerard Backx, CEO of Royal HZPC Group, announced he is stepping down from the breeding company. Hans Huistra, COO of Meatable will take over Gerard's role as of September 1, 2024.

Solid result in a turbulent year

The 2023 crop year produced low yields per hectare of seed potatoes in seed sizes in Europe, especially in the Netherlands. This is due to a late and wet spring followed by warm and dry months. This allows Royal HZPC Group to sell significantly fewer tons from Europe than planned. Many customers are also buying top of seed sizes this year to use as seed potatoes. This compensates part of the shortage of availability. In countries outside the EU, this usually requires government permission. An exception is rarely given, but this year these exceptions were made. Outside Europe, yields are in fact generally higher than average and Royal HZPC Group is growing solidly.

Gerard Backx: 'We expect the total tonnage that we sell and/or is sold by licensees to increase by 3%, despite the decline in direct sales from Europe of over 10%. This includes additional sales of top of seed sizes.' The tonnage grown under license by Royal HZPC Group licensees is growing by 25%, especially in the Americas and Asia. The changing ratio of direct sales to tons produced by licensees, combined with increased selling prices, means that turnover remains the same as last year: about €420 million.

The breeding company anticipates a constant gross margin of €71 million and constant normal operating costs. However, it expects higher total costs due to possible provisions for hard-to-collect debtors in politically unstable regions of the world. This element causes uncertainty in the expectation of the final result. Royal HZPC Group's net result is estimated between €5 million and €7 million, excluding costs of the [Connecting Growers program](#).

Change of CEO Royal HZPC Group

Gerard Backx (1959) expressed to the Supervisory Board (SB) some time ago that he would like to step down as CEO of Royal HZPC Group in the course of 2024. He has led the potato breeding company with heart and soul since 2001.

The SB will appoint Hans Huistra as CEO of Royal HZPC Group September 1, 2024. Hans is born in Joure in 1968 and is currently COO of Meatable. He has over thirty years of leadership experience at Unilever, Friesland Campina, Hero and Fonterra, among others. For the past seven years he has also been a member of Cosun's Supervisory Board. Hans has lived and worked in various countries. He has extensive experience in the agricultural and food sectors in Europe, Asia, America and Africa, in which interaction with farmers has always been of great importance.

Following Hans Huistra's nomination in September, Gerard will continue to work for Royal HZPC Group for as long as desired.



About Royal HZPC Group

Founded in 1898, and rooted in Dutch soil, Royal HZPC Group has expanded to become the international market leader when it comes to potato breeding, seed potato trading and product concept development. Royal HZPC Group offers innovative potato varieties that are optimised for local growing conditions. The business also shares expertise and solutions that relate to the climatic, cultural and commercial challenges facing the food industry. With around 400 employees in 16 different countries, and with exports to over 90 countries, Royal HZPC Group makes a significant contribution towards the availability of responsible food and the well-being of millions of people worldwide.

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