

Proef
me



[taste me]

Logbook

August 20

Sjef has already fenced off a small piece of pasture with an electric fence, to allow the pigs to get out of their cattle truck. The weather is beautiful when I arrive with plants and gear. The P.A.I.R. fits beautifully on the site. With the rear towards the road, head into space. Hence a nice view from the balcony with an overview of the land and the pigs. The pigs seem very satisfied, they have only been out of the truck for an hour and are already chewing away grass happily. I get a welcome greeting.

It's pretty hot today. Quickly entrench the water bowl (it actually is a real scalding tub) as they keep knocking over buckets of water and argue (a bucket is too small for them to drink from all at the same time). We simply collect the water from the ditch by the way.



The P.A.I.R.
under
construction

The soil is rock hard. The pigs help very well with digging, as that is what they do very well: plow the earth. But of course they also just get in the way. At last the water bowl is in, filled with just a few buckets of water; the pigs can no longer wait, to blow bubbles with all four of their noses. Alie gets in all the way, drops herself, closes her eyes and sighs. Total relaxation! The rest follows, one by one. Sometimes they shoehorn themselves with two in the bath, yes, even attempting with three. That really doesn't fit. While blowing bubbles, taking baths, sleeping briefly, munching grass and rooting they look very content. It is clear that they are having a good time.



Alie taking a bath while
Rinus and Anna try to find
space for themselves.

August 21

At 10:00, Paul Bos arrives together with documentary maker Danny. Paul Bos is a sheep farmer, entrepreneur and mediaman in Haarlemmermeer. He pastures his sheep around the national airport Schiphol. He is very interesting, has a lot to tell. He informs us that he steps in as farm assistant under the idea: “It is not about what I want with the pigs, but what do the pigs actually want from me!”

Sjef and I stay until the end of the afternoon, as we also want to prepare the walking route and the next meadow, so the pigs can root and eat there too. Paul helps with driving piles and tensioning wire. Clearly he does this more often. A lot of talk in between about a possible mobile butcher; as we are considering the idea of having one of the pigs slaughtered on site at the Groeneveld Castle. Paul Bos and Onno van Eijk are both involved in the Groeneveld Forum in Baarn on 29 and 30 November, where we also will be with the pigs. Paul knows someone in Belgium who could possibly slaughter on site.

He told another special story about a butcher (probably the Belgian one) who slaughters in the herd itself, in between the cows. The herd seems to be at ease with it. They quietly say goodbye to the one who is being slaughtered...? Hard to understand! But maybe if there is no stress beforehand and it is done well and relaxed, then it is actually fine. Almost in the same way as when a beast dies of natural causes. Possibly search the Internet how ancient tribes slaughter their livestock! I suddenly remembered something about the Maasai who also slaughter in the herd? - Google!



Elles, Paul Bos and the pigs digging a hole for the second water bowl

August 22

The owners of the stud farm also come to visit as in the evening they take the dog for a regular final stroll. I overhear them saying: “Let’s see how our pigs are doing.”. Bom, Anna, Alie and Rinus really do their utmost to fit in. Nice people by the way, these stud farmers, as in the course of leaving they say: “If there is anything, just knock on our door, it is the first farm on the left across the road.” She is actually wondering why we are doing the project here, “as everyone here is used to animals being slaughtered to consume, even children are aware, wouldn’t it be better to do this project in the Randstad?” I try to explain that the point of the project really is not whether animals may be slaughtered. Instead it questions why are we no longer in contact with our food and if this is what we desire, or if we actually want it to change and if there is perhaps another way and what would this entail? Within reason.

August 24

I went to have a look in Coevorden just to check, it was heavy weather last night. Sjef hasn't arrived yet, farm assistant Marieke is just enjoyably communicating with the pigs. The weather is dry but bleak. Much colder than the previous days.

I get a call from reporter Martin something (I'm not very good with names) of the web edition of the regional newspaper. He comes by himself to film and interview. What a boisturous man, yet very funny, instantly looking into everything we say and being very observant. Whether we can do that: slaughter the pigs after we have already built up a closer relationship with them. Sjef and I are pretty much on the same page. We explain that we are emotionally involved with the pigs and that it also triggers something else. When a pig that you have a bond with is slaughtered you probably will be able to shed a tear while it also holds something beautiful as you wouldn't dream of ruining the meat. And make sure that whatever you make of Bom or Rinus is goddamn good!

A tribute: I've used all of you, nothing discarded, nothing ruined. You had a nice life and ate very well, now that is what we are going to taste. Everyone who eats you will honor you because of your nice taste! People who do not appreciate you won't get anything, I promise! And everyone who eats of you, most of all myself, will remember you for what a fantastic pig you were and are! Oink. It is said that only the pig's grunt is not used, that will really change from now on, (soft) oink. When you're alone and I say to you, "Hi Bom," you reply softly: "Oink," and look at me. I explain: "This is a turnip green and I think you'll like it." Then you carefully take the turnip green and eat it with taste. "Yes, Elles, that was very tasty, thank you for letting me taste this..."

Enough said. In any case, Sjef will stay with the pigs tonight. I leave for Veenhuizen and thereafter pick up Zoë from school. Shall I write anything about human flesh? Don't think so.



Elles massages Anna

Colophon Logbook summary

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