



OPEN CALL

spring cycle
2026

farm



VALLEY
OF THE
POSSIBLE



Open Call FARM

spring cycle

40 days

March 27th - May 5th 2026

For the second year Gagel farm will open her ecosystem to facilitate farmers in residence who want to help us in answering the question: **how do we build upon regenerative farming cultures within our European context of the 21st century?**

Industrial agriculture – characterised by intensive plowing, overgrazing, monocultures, animal suffering, pesticides and artificial fertilizers – is still the norm in Europe. Consequently, we live in a time of extreme loss of life due to the destruction of ecosystems and exhaustion of soils. Within this conventional system, the farmers have become the revenue model for large corporations and food is mainly distributed on a global scale, rather than feeding local communities. Additionally, the nutritional value of the food produced by conventional agriculture is plummeting, and pesticides and plastics have become part of our daily meals.

Worldwide, industrial agriculture is causing the loss of 30 football pitches worth of fertile, living soils per minute – amounting to 12 million hectares per year. Food systems that destroy life cannot feed us. Depleted soils can no longer withstand increasing temperatures, severe drought or rainfall, and thus cannot support life. That is, unless they are regenerated.

Regenerative agriculture offers a new, hands-on perspective on how humans can co-create landscapes that are abundant in food as well as life. We need more regenerative farmers to build new food systems which focus on feeding all forms of life, on rebuilding ecosystems and facilitating healthy habitats for all beings that reside in our landscapes.

This residency is meant for regenerative farmers that are about to start their own regenerative initiative or business, or are already partaking in one, and are looking for ways to deepen or broaden their regenerative understanding in both theory and practice. They will do so by working intensely and all round at Gagel farm, while getting in-depth feedback on their own proposals or plans. They will also work with EAT and RECONNECT residents to deepen their understanding of the importance of regenerative food cultures and the role of the arts in visualizing and imagining reciprocal futures.



Some core questions participants can engage with are:

- **How will you farm in a way that considers your bioregional context and enhances the life holding capacity of your landscape?** This includes, for example, ecological and cultural history of place, pattern understanding, landscape design, water management, ecological succession and planned disturbance, crop selection, soil improvement, appropriate farming methods and practices, and ecological engagement
- **How will you build and run a business that actually regenerates?** This includes, for example, sales, marketing and communication, financial planning, business planning, and access to money and resources
- **How will you farm in a way that generates reciprocity, multiple forms of value and that shares abundance?** This includes, for example, sharing skills and knowledge, community building, partnerships, storytelling, teaching, access to land and networks, and European policies and regulations
- **How will you live the life that you want, while building the world you want to live in, with your resources and your own purpose?** This includes, for example, a holistic context, decision making, holistic management, team building, farm life and re-indigenizing, the integration between health, art, science, philosophy, politics, spiritual values and cosmologies

Context

At Gagel Farm, we focus on regenerating our 45-ha landscape by growing edible ingredients while building a habitat for all life that resides in and/or passes through our bioregion. Additionally - but certainly no less urgently - we focus on facilitating the transition to a regenerative (agri)culture in the broadest definition of the word. Holistic management and decision making are central to our regenerative perspective.

This philosophical method means that ecological, economic and social factors receive equal consideration, while equally benefitting from the choices we make.

"What fungi have shown me is that we can't, and we don't have to do, anything alone. They question the limits of individual existence." – Giuliana Furci

Regeneration thrives on transparency and awareness through the feedback we receive from all life — both human and more-than-human — that surrounds us. By choosing to apply to the EAT residency, you share openness to participating and receiving feedback from a variety of human and more-than-human life on the farm.

"Becoming native to a place comes with the give and take between living there, if you're going to live there, and be gifted with the gifts of that place, that you then return your gifts to that place." – Robin Wall Kimmerer

Gagel Farm invites (apprentice) farmers to work from this mindset and allow the reality on the ground at our farm to inspire you and be a guide to your work. We encourage cross-disciplinary projects, self-aware dedication and a collaborative, open-minded spirit.

"Landscape restoration does not only change ecological function, it changes the socio-economic function and when you get down to it, it changes the intention of human society." – John D. Liu

ERF Residency Programme

ERF is a multi-year residency programme hosted by Valley of the Possible and Bodemzicht Foundation at Gagel Farm. Our mission is to facilitate the transition to a regenerative (agri)culture through the cross-pollination of contemporary residences taking place by artists, cooks and culinary professionals, farmers and scientists. ERF consists of three trajectories which each offer space for the situated entanglement of different disciplines through the exchange of embodied knowledge, theoretical knowledge, inspiration and collaboration at a regenerative farm.

EAT Cycle

March 27th - May 5th

40 days, 2 cooks-in-residence

RECONNECT Cycle

March 27th - May 5th

40 days, 1 artist-in-residence

FARM Cycle

March 27th - May 5th

40 days, 2 farmers-in-residence

From March 27th through May 5th 2026, two EAT residents, two FARM residents and one RECONNECT resident will work collaboratively and side by side on the farm. All residents will work, cook, eat and collaborate with the entire Gagel Farm team, have designated mentors, are offered free coaching and are invited to partake in (interdisciplinary) workshops in order to stimulate cross pollination.



Holistic Context

As an integral part of the ERF programme, all residents will be invited to participate in a 3-day Holistic Context course on 10, 11, 12 April, in small groups with other course participants.

During these three days at 't Gagel, you will write your own holistic context under the guidance of Anne van Leeuwen, co-founder of Gagel Farm and Ricardo Cano Mateo, Spanish biologist, regenerative designer and entrepreneuring farmer.

Writing a holistic context is widely used in the regenerative world to articulate what really drives you. In the context, you answer three questions: “What kind of world do I want to live in?”, “What kind of life do I want to lead?” and “What am I willing to do to achieve that?”.

You will take stock of where you are now and, from there, create an ultimate to-do list to get where you want to go. A holistic context provides a basis from which you can make decisions that lead you to the world you want to live in. In addition, everyone receives a 30-minute personal coaching session from Anne or Ricardo to clarify your “statement of purpose”: what gets you out of bed every day!

A context on paper gives you a decision-making framework for both small and big decisions in your life. It is not dogma: you can simply rewrite it if something changes. What it provides is clarity and transparency about a realistic regenerative path that suits you.





What we offer

Space, time, guidance and infrastructure to deepen your practice as a regenerative farmer

40 days stay at Gagel Farm campsite in a cosy, private bell tent

Access to a covered outdoor resident kitchen for experiments and gatherings

Access to a communal indoor space for study and work for all residents

A broad, European network of regenerative farmers and agricultural organisations to refer to in your journey to start or reinvent your own regenerative farm.

Participation in the '[Holistic Context](#)' course at Gagel Farm on 10-12 April, 2026 free of cost. (Participation is obligatory).

A 50% reduction on the [course 'How to start a regenerative farm?'](#) at Gagel Farm to gain insight into regenerative farming and holistic management, departing from a general introduction to regeneration by Anne van Leeuwen

A stipendium with a total of €2000 per person per residency period.

Insight into how a regenerative farm works and who grows, hatches, blooms, sleeps, flies and dies in which season

Professional guidance by Ricardo Cano Mateo, Spanish biologist, regenerative designer and entrepreneuring farmer at Gagel farm

3 hours a week of dedicated, 1-on-1 coaching by Gagel Farm's own entrepreneuring farmers Anne van Leeuwen, Daan Houwers or Ricardo Cano Mateo, based on your personal preference and focus

- Anne van Leeuwen is responsible for storytelling, farm animals and network
- Daan Houwers is responsible for our tree nursery and on the ground operations
- Ricardo Cano Mateo is responsible for design and planning

An inspirational workshop hosted at Gagel Farm by a pioneer in regenerative farming from Europe

(Group) coaching of ERF residents by Olaf Boswijk, co-founder of Valley of the Possible, to help guide you in your personal growth and the specific needs of your creative practice.

Dates, Conditions & Facilities

40 days - March 27th until May 5th 2026

Facilities:

Fully outfitted Bell-tents with a comfortable bed, a chair, a table, a heater and lighting

The campsite includes facilities for cooking, including availability of a kettle, coffee machine and open fire pit, as well as showers and toilets.

Residents are responsible for their own meals, but have free access to the vegetable garden filled with regenerative produce grown and harvested at Gagel Farm and will receive climate eggs from our grazing chicken flock.

Residents have access to a bike, to the on-farm shop and access to shopping at a local grocery store in the nearby town of Lochem.

This farmer residency does not include:

International travel costs and expenses, meals and beverages, costs of visa applications, or budget for individual excursions or field trips.



Candidates

We welcome two farmers per FARM residency cycle who fit the following profile. The candidates demonstrate:

- **Experience** with working on a (regenerative) farm
- **Engagement** with the open call core questions throughout the residency
- **Ability** to take charge of their own learning journey by showing initiative in planning meetings with their farm eöæh mentor, in asking questions and in joining farm tasks
- **Sensitivity** to approach Gagel Farm as a working and living space where a team of people are actively involved
- **aptitude** to work with the complex ecosystem at Gagel Farm
- **understanding** of the potential effect of the hustle-and bustle of farm life, as well as community events, which can influence the residency research and/or projects
- **willingness** to be involved in the preparation and organizing of a final communal event consisting of a workshop and a diner, as well as a departing ritual consisting of an individual and/or collaborative presentation.
- flexibility, independent attitude and pro-active mindset

How to Apply

Applications can be submitted before January 9th 2026. However, once 50 applications for a cycle have been received, the open call for that season will be closed due to the processing capacity of our organisation.

Applicants are asked to submit:

1. A resume/portfolio/holistic context in a pdf format entitled as follows:
FirstName LastName R
2. A motivation letter/essay/storytelling (format is up to the applicant, but must not exceed 10MB – e.g. max. 2 pages of text excluding images or max. 10 minutes of video).
The document should be entitled *FirstName LastName M* and should address:
 - How they will engage with the questions raised in this open call and elaborate on their chosen focus during their residency
 - A description how and why Gagel Farm plays a crucial role in realizing their personal and professional regenerative development as a farmer
 - A sketch of what they plan to bring to Gagel Farm and what they expect to receive and learn in return
 - An illustration of their farming vision and purpose that paints a picture how they plan to contribute to the regenerative farming movement in Europe

All application files should be attached to one email and sent to erf@gagel.nl in an email with the subject title: *Application FARM residency- spring cycle 2026* **before January 9th 2026.**

Once the open call is closed, all applications will be checked to ensure that all requirements are met. Only applicants who submitted all requested information and documents will move on in the selection process. The applications will be judged by Ricardo Cano Mateo, Daan Rovers, Daan Houwers and Laura Wütrich

Selection

All applications are considered based on the response to the following set of standards. The applicant demonstrates:

- Engagement with the main questions raised in this open call
- Previous professional experience working in (regenerative) agriculture
- An independent, pro-active, open and flexible attitude
- Engagement with regenerative principles is required, a deeper understanding of it is preferred
- A demonstrated focus on developing or reinventing a farming business as a main source of income
- Dedication to mutual flourishing between residents, their learning process and the farm – active reflection on the question “Why Gagel Farm? What will I bring to Gagel Farm and what do I expect Gagel Farm to bring to me?”
- How they plan to contribute to the regenerative farming movement in Europe

Applicants will be notified by email before February 1st 2026.

For more information about the farm and program please go to:

www.gagel.nl and www.valleyofthepossible.com
or email: erf@gagel.nl



About

Gagel Farm is a beautiful 45ha regenerative farm operating in a holistic context in Lochem, the Netherlands. The team is creating a landscape full of life: plants, animals, microbes and people whom are all given space to grow and work together on a thriving local food system. With 9 business lines: garden, orchard, tree nursery, animals, courses, activities, camping, catering and shop, they are not only working on a resilient company with beautiful regenerative products, but also on a resilient landscape for future generations. Gagel Farm brings together local, national and European farmers, citizens, scientists, entrepreneurs, artists and policy makers to meet each other in ways of regeneration.

Valley of the Possible is an independent Dutch cultural nonprofit founded in 2018 that offers artists, scientists and other thinkers and makers a place to reconnect with nature, and to provide time and space for research and artistic development. Valley of the Possible fosters new perspectives on the relationship with our planet through regenerative and interdisciplinary exchange. After almost 5 years of working from the Cañon del Blanco, a remote and secluded valley in Wallmapu in Southern Chile, we are now returning home to the Netherlands at Gagel Farm.

Bodemzicht Foundation disseminates and accelerates regenerative thinking and action in the Netherlands and Europe. Together with many partners, Bodemzicht Foundation is working on the question: 'How do we build a regenerative society?' The farm and Bodemzicht Foundation will continue to grow as a [Lenteland farm](#). Daan Houwers and Roos Burger have joined Ricardo Cano Mateo and Anne van Leeuwen as entrepreneurs at 't Gagel.

Members of the Jury

- Ricardo Cano Mateo - co-founder of Gagel Farm, regenerative farmer responsible for holistic design and planning, co-founder of Bodemzicht Farm and Foundation
- Daan Houwers - co-founder of Gagel Farm, regenerative farmer responsible for our tree nursery and on the ground operations
- Daan Rovers - chef and alchemist at Gagel Farm, ecologist, wild forager and fungi lover
- Laura Wütrich - farmer, co-founder De Stadsgroenteboer and Alumna ERF programme 2025

Team

- Anne van Leeuwen - initiator, jury member, on site guidance, introduction to regeneration & landscape
- Daan Houwers - jury member, on site guidance, introduction to farm operations & landscape
- Ricardo Cano Mateo - jury member, coaching, introduction to farm management & landscape
- Felicia Slettenhaar- Felicia Slettenhaar- ground facilitator, central contact point Gagel Farm, back office manager
- Helen Weeres - initiator, habitat & workshop host, connector
- Mirla Klijn - co-founder Valley of the Possible, coordination and online communications
- Olaf Boswijk - co-founder Valley of the Possible, coach



eat

farm

reconnect

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