

Use and Improvement of Larch in the Netherlands

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Facts & figures of Larch in The Netherlands

- 320.000 ha covered with forest = app. 12% area NL
- 19.000 ha covered with Larch= app. 6% forest area NL (European, Japanese & Hybrid Larch)
- NL not within the distribution range of Larch
- Most Larch forest is planted
- Majority with imported material (mostly Japan, Germany & Slovakia)
- Interest in Larch is decreasing, but somewhat reviving (conifers in general)



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Larch in The Netherlands

- Significant tree species in the 60s and 70s
 - Imported FRM + little NL
 - Wood production
- Selection & Breeding activities in Larch



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Selection & Breeding activities in Larch

- History of improvement work started in early 1949
 - Phenotypical selection of stands 1949
 - First Provenance trials in 1955
 - First list of selected stands 1967
 - First Hybrid Larch seed orchard since 1969 (2 ha in production since 1975)
 - Second seed orchard in 1971 (1 ha)
 - First tested material 1995



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Selection & Breeding activities in Larch

- 1949 - 1965 individual plus trees selected in Dutch (seed) stands, provenance & progeny trials
 - Japanese and European Larch
 - Open pollinated/controlled crossings -> nursery testing & comparative trials
 - Early selection basis for first generation Hybrid larch seed orchards
 - Based on flower phenology, survival and growth



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Future strategies

- In the 90's interest collapsed
- Until now both seed orchards still more or less in operation
- Recently discussion on re-establishment of one Hybrid larch seed orchard identical to first one
- Need for seed not the reason, but conservation of genotypes for “better” times



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Thank you for your attention!

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