

# NEW ARTICLE Agrifirm

## How do GFLI members turn data into action for a more sustainable feed industry?

Through our communication series “Voices of GFLI” we’re going to dive deeper to answer the question of how members of GFLI leverage GFLI data to support their sustainability goals – and accelerate change across the value chain.

Moving on to our second interview, GFLI interviewed Aart Wemmers, Manager Nutrition B2F Europe, Royal Agrifirm Group, who is a GFLI database user and involved in a.o. Dutch market for sustainability metrics. He is responsible for managing the nutritional content of the compound feed production of Agrifirm in various European countries: the Netherlands, Belgium, Poland and Hungary. With this interview, we get a better understanding of what database users need to make educated decisions on sustainable animal feed.



**Aart Wemmers**  
Agrifirm



### The value of the GFLI as an institute

Agrifirm has been a member of the GFLI since December 2020, among the frontrunners at the time underpinning the relevancy of the Institute. In Aart’s words; *“Through the years as my work related to animal nutrition, I have been seeing more of the rise of carbon footprinting and its related impacts. For Agrifirm, the value of the GFLI is its pre-competitive nature. You need a globally acknowledged metrics that the industry works with.”*

### Using sustainability parameters

Aart has seen the rise of environmental footprinting as an additional parameter to make educated company decisions. *“In the Netherlands you see this has been picked up by the Dutch feed association Nevedi, who have worked together with the dairy industry to bring solutions to dairy farmers through a tool (Kringloopwijzer). It is a great initiative, but the feed industry is a lot more international than the Netherlands only. A European solution, or even better – a global solution, would silence a lot of the national discussions the industry and governments are having to gain credibility and comparability. You can compete on concrete sustainability goals (like grams of CO<sub>2</sub>/kg milk) but you should not need to compete on the system / metrics. This needs to be pre-competitive”*

Aart considers the role of the European Feed Federation, FEFAC, most relevant in order to assure the European feed market has one database to measure its emissions with. The GFLI is the already positioned to become that.

Agrifirm bases part of their sustainability efforts on available LCA data for the ingredients they source. Despite Aart's firm beliefs of the GFLI as an Institute and acknowledgement of the task at hand, he currently is not a very active user of the database.

*"At the moment, for the Dutch calculations we're still utilizing the Nevedi database – which is based on the GFLI methodology and in part also exists in the GFLI database– for our feed formulation software. We do have three commercial licenses to the GFLI database, which I use more so for observing the database and its changes and my R&D colleague works on some scenario analysis for R&D purposes. Besides this we explore the possibilities of using the GFLI database for our foreign activities"*

Although Aart is impressed by the amount of impact categories in scope of the GFLI methodology, those figures are at this moment not as much requested in the market. Part of why he's using a Dutch solution comes down to the available datasets (= ingredients and granularity of ingredients) in the GFLI database.

*"What we're looking for is a – as far as possible– complete database with datasets from all exporting countries and regionally applicable. Some ingredients are missing entirely, such as minerals and specialty ingredients. One last thing that the Nevedi database created which the GFLI hasn't implemented is calculating the inbound transport[1]."*



*"We really want to stimulate GFLI to take their responsibility on taking the step forward."*

When asked about the importance of data quality, Aart responds, *"as a user who utilizes data as additional parameter for optimal nutrition and lower environmental impact, you ideally shouldn't even have to consider the data quality. The credibility of the database and methodology should underline the quality of the data. Moreover, what is more important for me would be the comparability of the datasets."*

*[1] Inbound transport is the transport emissions from all steps within the LCA where a raw ingredient or mixed product is being transported. Within the GFLI, the inbound transport is included from cradle-to-farm or cradle-to-plant. Any inbound transport beyond this system boundary, as well as the outbound transport (beyond the system boundary to the feed mill, livestock farm, or other regions) are not currently taken into account in the GFLI database.*

### **How do you foresee the future of environmental footprinting and the landscape behind it evolving?**

*"Agrifirm wants to support its customers to the best of its capabilities. If a supply chain partner requests sustainability data, we normally would want to comply with that request. As the market evolves, the value chain may create specific requirements, and it is important for our work to deliver upon those requirements. All this to say, a business model behind environmental footprinting is the only way for the efforts to succeed."*

*"Basically the industry will only move when it becomes a regulatory requirement or when a financial incentive can be gained out of it."*

## Some message to share?

*"A burden shared is a burden halved. If we as industry, including our suppliers, come together and carry the costs for this sustainability initiative together, we can not only accelerate in creating a complete database that is globally acknowledged in the supply chain, it'll also be more cost efficient as in the end every company will be confronted with this topic at some point."*

He also has a message for the GFLI: *"GFLI should actively promote itself by getting the attention of upstream and downstream supply chain partners. Suppliers and Retailers may be key to its success, whereas the possibility to rely upon a credible and internationally supported database also benefits their efforts for food environmental footprint calculations."*



## Overview

Wrapping up the interview with Aart Wemmers, ideas were shared about the development of the GFLI database and the needs of those utilizing the GFLI database. It highlights the path forward to create a reliable database where the industry can pre-competitively come together and calculate environmental footprints by a harmonized method.

We extend our sincere gratitude to Aart Wemmers for his valuable insights and contribution to this article.

## Are you the new voice?

We invite all GFLI members to participate in "Voices of GFLI" and share their unique stories. This is an excellent opportunity to enhance the recognition of GFLI, highlight your company's activities around LCA or branded data, and demonstrate the benefits of GFLI through real-world case studies. By joining this initiative, you become a GFLI ambassador, strengthening the collective voice advocating for sustainability in the feed sector.