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FRONT COVER

Carefully pruned tomatoes ripen in a greenhouse tunnel. Read about the benefits of tunnel farming to smallholders on page 19.

COMMENT, by Pete Bower — Our inconvenient truth



When a regionally important town of more than 34 000 inhabitants such as Beaufort West in the Karoo has to rely on Gift of the Givers, a Muslim charity, to drill boreholes to provide water to residents, you know something very bad is going on. And when a major historical, educational, judicial and religious centre of more than 67 000 inhabitants (more during term time) such as Makhanda, formerly Grahamstown, has to rely on the same Muslim charity for water supplies, you know that "something very bad" is a euphemism. There's a crisis. And yes, we're not talking about ANC incompetence, corruption, state capture and all of that. But more importantly, we're talking more about what happens when one runs out of water.

Think about it: you live on a smallholding so you probably have a borehole. If you're very lucky you have both a borehole (or even two or three) and access to municipally-supplied water. That gives you almost fail-safe security. If your boreholes fail, you still have access to municipal water, albeit at a cost. And if the municipal supply fails (which happens on the plots as well as in town) you should have access to the water from your borehole, even if it requires a bit of ingenuity in your piping network.

But what happens when your borehole dries up, and the municipal supply ceases? Oh, sure, you can borrow from a neighbour. And when his borehole dries up? What then? Well, you can buy bottled water from the local shop. And when the shop runs out? What happens then, unless you can afford to travel to somewhere that does have water, or have made a plan with tanks and rainwater for example, is that you will, basically, die.

But not immediately. First, you will start to smell, because you will be unable to wash. Then you will become hungry, because water is a key constituent of just about any foodstuff. Vegetables need it to grow, animals need it to live and people need it to cook with.

Next you will become sick because, unable to wash, or rinse food before consumption, or flush your toilet, you will contract dysentery or typhoid.

And all of this will take place while you are feeling very, very thirsty, because even if you consider water to be nothing more than something to put under bridges, you also need it for the production of the brandy and coke, or beer, or wine, that may be your habitual form of hydration.

And with extreme thirst will come desperation. Even the most mild-mannered individual will fight, steal and even kill to gain access to water. At this rate it is true that the next great wars will be fought over access to water. Wait and see how things develop over the next couple of years between Egypt and Sudan as the latter complete their mega-dam on the Nile upstream of the Egyptian border.

The point is that life is impossible without water, either for you or the plants and animals around you that sustain you. You can do without electricity, even though it may be inconvenient. You can do without fish, or meat, or fruit, though your diet may not be as healthy as it should be. Hell, teenagers can even do without their cellphones and not suffer a fatal breakdown! But no water? Impossible.

And there's a spin-off which is rarely considered. Your local economy will die, because there will be no tourists, no visitors, and no industry. Consider the fall-off in tourists to the Western Cape following the water rationing early last year, now thankfully nothing more than a bad memory ... hopefully.

The problem with crises such as this one (and the looming scarcity of water is not confined to southern Africa) is that it creeps up on one. And activists and scientists are the first to stridently point out the looming calamity, their cries, pleas and warnings often decried by politicians and Luddites, or at the very least simply ignored. Oh, it's considered nothing more than an "inconvenient truth".

But as time moves on, things go from mildly concerning, to bad, to worse and finally to the point of no return, ending in a coffin.

Are we at the point of no return in South Africa? Not yet. But what we save through mandatory water restrictions on the one hand, we squander through leaky infrastructure and pollution of our rivers, and acid mine drainage on the other.

So unless we urgently tackle meaningfully the pollution of our rivers and the mitigation of persistent drought conditions in the worst affected areas we certainly will be at the point of no return, sooner that we could think possible.

And that's a very scary thought.



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Depts unite under experienced Didiza

The recent cabinet reshuffle has seen the Dept of Agriculture reunited with the Dept of Land Reform & Rural Development, under minister Thoko Didiza.

Didiza was minister of agriculture and land reform in the Mbeki administration, so she will know the challenges that face the sector.

Mcebisi Skwatsha stays on as deputy minister of land reform, while ex-union boss Sdumo Dlamini is deputy

minister of rural development. Didiza has acknowledged the work done by the state

owned enterprises within the agricultural sector, namely the Agricultural Research Council

(ARC), Office of the Valuer General, National Agricultural

Continued on page 8

MAILBAG: Let the waste pickers pick

Sir ~ We have noticed in the last couple of years that the waste pickers and their trolleys have moved into smallholding areas. I would like to suggest that, instead of regarding them as a nuisance, we should rather work with them. If each household pre-sorts their refuse, more of it can be recycled, resulting in a win-

win situation.

If we put plastic in one bag, tins in another and paper and cardboard in a third, there will be little left for the municipal refuse removers to take.

The bags can be put out on rubbish collecting days, next to the rubbish bin. Then the waste pickers can simply take what they can use, instead of

leaving a mess after they have gone through our bins.

They can then take the waste to the recycling depot and less refuse will land up in landfills.

I am sure Greta Thurnberg (see the June edition of the Smallholder) would approve!

Rosemary Dee
Randfontein

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NEWS

From page 8

Marketing Council (NAMC), Onderstepoort Biological Products (OBP) and the Perishable Products Export Control Board (PPECB).

The Agricultural Research Council conducts research with partners, develops human capital and fosters innovation to support and develop the agricultural sector. The institute focuses on agricultural economics and capacity development, animal sciences, crop sciences, research and innovation systems.

The Office of the Valuer

New minister acknowledges important role of agri SOEs to farmers & land reform

General was instituted in 2014, with a view to providing independent and impartial property valuations for the purposes of land reform.

The National Agricultural Marketing Council was established in 1996, and its mandate is to increase market access for all market participants, to promote the

efficiency of the marketing of agricultural products, to optimise export earnings from agricultural products and to enhance the viability of the agricultural sector.

In 1908 Onderstepoort Veterinary Research Institute was established. In 1968 a dedicated vaccine production facility was established and in 1992 Onderstepoort

Biological Products (OBP) and Onderstepoort Veterinary Institute were separated and the Veterinary Institute became one of the research institutes of the Agricultural Research Council.

Today OBP, as a fully corporatised entity, operates as a commercially-driven enterprise, whose achievements in research and product development have won international recognition.

Established in 1926, the Perishable Products Export Control Board (PPECB) is an

Continued on page 9

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ERRATUM: Landini's small tractors at Nampo

In our review of this year's Nampo Harvest Day outside Bothaville (June edition) we omitted to mention that Landini have a range of mini-tractors and machines in the 15-26kW (20-35HP) range ideally suited to smallholder farmers' needs.

They are imported and assembled by Argo Industrial of Boksburg and sold through a wide range of dealers countrywide.

Our thanks to Evert Tijssen of Tarlton-based Genius Landbou, who are Landini dealers themselves, for pointing out our error.

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Survey starts to test Gauteng's brucellosis levels

Gauteng's State Veterinary Services will conduct a Brucellosis Prevalence Survey in Gauteng between July and September. Officials will visit 300 randomly selected farms and bleed the cattle for Brucellosis. A blood test will

be used to determine possible infection on a provincial basis. This data will be used by the Directorate Veterinary Services to assess ongoing efforts at control and to improve strategies in the fight against the disease. Livestock owners who are called on have been asked to

allow officials from Veterinary Services on to their properties to conduct the survey. Officials will be identifiable by way of an ID card with their photo and will have a letter of introduction from the organisation's director, Dr D

Nemudzivhadi. "Stock owners can be assured that the info received will be dealt with confidentially and personal information will not be made public."

SOEs

From page 8
independent service provider of quality certification and cold chain management services for producers and exporters of perishable food products.

Didiza has asserted the need for the SOEs to support the transformation of the agricultural sector and the development of the agricultural economy in order to ensure food security.

FMD scare ends, other remain

The Foot & Mouth Disease outbreak in the high surveillance area of the FMD free zone in Limpopo has now been declared at an end by the Dept of Agriculture, Forestry & Fisheries (Daff), as there have not been any new cases

of FMD detected in the declared disease management area since February, and more than three incubation periods has lapsed with no new cases being observed. Meanwhile, the African

Continued on page 11

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5G will prove a boon to tech-savvy farmers

Donald Trump may think that the latest breakthrough in wireless network technology, 5G, is a threat to world peace (or US hegemony) but it has the potential to disrupt a huge number of industries, and is

already in development in one, namely farming. 5G networks can be 100 times faster than 4G, making communication between devices and servers much quicker. 5G can also carry much more data than older

networks. That makes the technology ideal for transmitting information from remote sensors and drones, key tools that are being tested by farmers. 5G is also helping to automate farming processes.

Drones that use 5G are helping to improve potato production in the Netherlands. And in Japan, 5G sensors are used to monitor the water temperature and salt concentration of oyster farms.

In the UK 5G RuralFirst launched a smartphone app in March called Me+Moo, which lets farmers track a "connected" cow and receive daily updates on the animal's health and behaviour.

Continued on page 12

DISEASE OUTBREAKS

From page 9

Swine Fever outbreaks in and around Gauteng (Smallholder, June), a notifiable and fatal disease among pigs, continue to require attention, with quarantine measures still in place.

And, most recently the Lesotho Veterinary Authority has reported three anthrax outbreaks to the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE). The first outbreak started on 12 May and a total of 24 cattle were reported to have died of

anthrax.

Anthrax is a disease of humans and warm-blooded animals and is caused by the bacterium *Bacillus anthracis*.

Animals become infected by eating or licking material that is contaminated with spores or breathing in the spores. These spores are formed when the bacteria are exposed to oxygen in the event that an animal that died of anthrax is cut open.

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NEWS



Left: Cows fitted with 5G enabled collar transmitters in a UK trial

From page 11
The system, which is being tested on cows at the Agri-Epi Center in Somerset, is

funded in part by a UK government grant and supported by the tech

company Cisco. Cows are equipped with 5G-connected collars that monitor their health and habits. The collars send data to the app on everything from what the cows are eating to how they are sleeping. Farmers can see the info instantly, and pass it on to veterinarians or nutritionists.

"This provides peace of mind that the cows are happy, healthy and behaving normally, as well as early warning if they are getting sick, are pregnant or need to be checked," says project manager Duncan Forbes.

5G evangelists argue that because farms cover large areas that are difficult to monitor, the agriculture sector is well placed to benefit from remote data collection.

The technology could help irrigation systems to turn on at the optimal time of day, or cattle to be grazed on areas that provide the best nutrition. By improving efficiency, it will be possible to produce more food. Yet to make a difference, 5G will first need to be installed in rural areas. Nevertheless, in 2017, another 5G RuralFirst project became the first in the world to successfully plant, tend and harvest a crop without a single human stepping foot in the field.

Autonomous tractors sowed the seeds, drones with sensors monitored the crops, and smaller machines took samples to assess what fertilizers and pesticides to apply and where. The project, called Hands-Free Hectare, reported another successful harvest in 2018. It is now going even further by using 5G technology to increase precision and efficiency in crop spraying.



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The honeybee: A truly remarkable insect

The humble bee is indeed a wondrous beast. Here are some facts about bees that may astound you.

□ A bee's lifespan is about 35 days, after which, with all the wear and tear on its body and wings, it becomes too

decrepit to fly efficiently.

□ Talking of flying, decrepitude of wings is not surprising really, considering a bee will fly about 88 500 km during its lifetime, about one and a half times the circumference of the earth.

□ Their wings beat 12 000

times a minute, perhaps another reason why they wear out.

□ Bees pollinate around one third of the world's crops

□ Bees will visit around 2 000 flowers a day, collecting pollen or nectar. But, they will only visit one species of flower per journey, ie they will never fly from a lavender flower to a geranium on the

same trip, thus making them very efficient pollinators.

□ Bees communicate in a number of ways, the most visible being the "air dances" they do outside the hive to communicate such details as direction of flight and duration of flying time to various patches of flowers etc, to their coworkers.

Beecon in Limpopo this month

Gauteng's beekeepers will be pleased to know that this year's annual apiculture jamboree, Beecon, will be held about

two hours' drive from Johannesburg, at the Zebula Golf Estate & Spa, in Limpopo. A Protea Hotels property, Zebula is situated some 40 km north of Bela Bela.

The conference, under the auspices of the SA Bee Industry Organisation (Sabio), will run from 18 to 20 July. The event is split into three parts.

On the Thursday Sabio will be running the morning practical sessions at the Figtree Boma, with a practical session on

Continued on page 17

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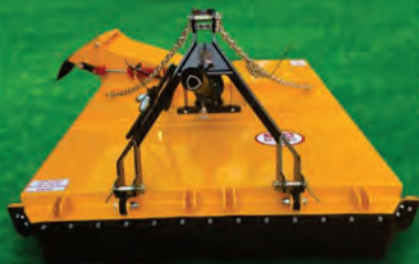
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BEEKEEPING

From page 15

"Swarm Splitting – Making Increase" with Koos van der Merwe showing how it is done. Protective clothing is essential. Following this Northerns member Frenchie Lemmens will demonstrate Beeswax Cleansing and Preparation.

On the Thursday afternoon a special event dubbed

Wanna keep bees? Sign up here

Smallholders who are interested in keeping bees have access to assistance, advice and support from one of three beekeepers associations in the province. All three associations welcome new beekeepers to their regular meetings and have active Facebook pages to keep members abreast of developments.

The **Northern Beekeepers Association** (known as "Northerns") meets as a rule around Pretoria and caters for beekeepers around Pretoria.

Adventures with Elephants, close to Zebula, providing an interaction between man and elephants will be hosted by Sean Hensman, himself a budding beekeeper, who will also be discussing the use of beehives in protecting crops and vegetation from elephant damage.

The programme will also be run on the Saturday after-

noon. For details call Riekie on 082 972-1889.

The **Southern Beekeepers Association** ("Southerners") covers beekeepers in the Johannesburg, West Rand and southern Gauteng. Email Lantz at info@beekeepers.co.za for details.

The **Eastern Highveld Beekeepers Association** ("Easterners") caters for beekeepers on the East Rand, as well as members in Mpumalanga. Call Mike on 083 430-8707 for details.

noon.

The main plenary session of the conference kicks off on Friday morning at 08h30. The theme of this year's programme is "Facilitating Growth from Rural to Commercial Ventures in South African Apiculture". Sabio not only wishes to promote opportunities for developing beekeepers to grow their operations into commercial ventures, but also to address the growing demands on commercial beekeepers to meet the concomitant demands of their customers in both honey and pollination markets.

The final part of the convention will be held on the Saturday morning up until lunch time with more interesting speakers, debates and interactions.

They will of course be starting off on the Saturday morning with the Sabio Annual General Meeting which this

year has to be an important gathering if they are to discuss the future of Sabio as the representative body of the beekeeping industry in South Africa.

Sabio has also decided that it is an ideal time to resuscitate interest among the country's beekeepers in a National Honey Judging Competition. Sabio has appointed Lorin Bowen (Pty) Ltd to run the Beecon 2019 event.

All correspondence and enquiries will be run through their consultancy. Contact details: beecon@sabio.org.za



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- The pipes itself are more cost effective, because LDPE is used instead of HDPE.
- The farmer is responsible for assembly, included in the kit is a complete set of instructions.

The components can be purchased individually, and can be expanded as the irrigation needs expands.

Quick Coupling DIY KIT 50/40mm

This system uses a 50mm LDPE pipe as mainline, and 40mm LDPE pipe as laterals. The fittings provided are enough to irrigate 3 600 sqm.

The price of this kit is R 4 490.00, incl Vat, excl delivery.

Quick Coupling DIY KIT 65mm

The system uses 65mm LDPE pipe. The fittings provided are enough to irrigate from 3 800 sqm to 6 300 sqm, based on the chosen design. The design depends on the spacing of the lines and sprinklers, which can be 12 or 18 meters.

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Continued on page 21

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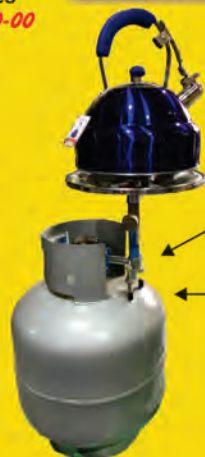
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TUNNEL FARMING

From page 19

available to work the soil before planting. Or they can be grown in soil in raised beds or containers, or in containers of soilless growing mediums of different structures, which is known as hydroponics.

Various crops can be grown successfully in tunnels, including tomatoes, cucumbers, sweet peppers, lettuce, spinach, cabbage, cauliflower,

strawberries and even flowers. Compared to open field farming, tunnel farming has many advantages and benefits. For example, a greater number of plants can be planted in a tunnel than on open land, because of the space needed for tractors, harvesters etc. However, the cost of building and maintenance of the tunnel means that the real profit is to be had, if setting up a commercial tunnel operation, when growing higher-value crops, especially those with a long harvesting period, and especially those, too, that can be trained

to grow vertically rather than those which spread runners along the ground. Because of the precision with which everything is done in a tunnel in terms of plant spacing etc, it is possible to precisely regulate the amount of water, or nutrient solution,

received by each plant. Moreover, because of the closed nature of the growing space, evaporation is minimised and humidity increased. While this can lead to occurrences of mould and fungus, careful regulation also

Continued on page 23



Above: A farm of conventional free-standing tunnels. Right: A multispan tunnel arrangement gives a little more growing area per hectare, among other features.



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TUNNEL FARMING

From page 21

means that water usage is minimised ~ something that is important in water-scarce South Africa.

One of the most important advantages of tunnel farming is that crops can be grown out of season. For example in some parts of the country open-field tomatoes can only be grown in the warmer months. By planting in tunnels, extreme temperatures can be controlled. A smallholder in many parts of Gauteng even can thus plant tomatoes all year round. Being able to provide produce to markets out of season means realising higher prices.

It should be noted that the cost of heating a tunnel using some form of artificial heater, for example a coal fired furnace fitted with an electric fan to drive the heated air into the structure, can render the exercise too expensive for profit.

As a result, what some do is to grow their crops from as early as possible in the season to as late as possible, then shut the operation down for the two or three coldest months, using this time to effect repairs, modifications, fumigation etc, ready for the next season. There are a number of things to consider before establishing a tunnel farm.

First is the topography of the land you propose using. It should preferably be flat and fairly level, and free of trees, rocks etc, although a slight slope is useful for assisting drainage, and a line of trees to the south of the tunnels

can assist with wind abatement.

If planting direct-in-soil is considered, soil tests must be done to determine if the soil is suitable.

After construction of the tunnels, some form of soil erosion prevention must be undertaken because of the volume of runoff from the tunnel plastic. An easy method is to plant grass in between the tunnels to prevent flooding during the

rainy season.

A tunnel farm can be limited only by the size of the land available, or by the extent of one's budget.

A standard sized commercial tunnel, such as manufactured and installed by arguably Gauteng's leaders in tunnel farming equipment



A hobbyist's greenhouse, suitable for a suburban garden, will keep a family in vegetables and flowers.

and expertise, namely Dicla Farm & Seed of Muldersdrift, measures 10,5m x 30,8m, of

Continued on page 25



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TUNNEL FARMING

From page 23

which 27 can be erected per hectare. While this may be a standard size it is by no means the only size tunnel available. For growers who want a tunnel for growing for home consumption a variety of hobbyist's tunnels are available, some in DIY kit form, such as the UK-designed Bell & Paton units.

There is even a little unit that would fit into a small suburban garden and which would provide vegetables for a small family, made of polycarbonate sheeting and sold by Masbiz Trading of Boksburg. A variation of the conventional tunnel idea are multispan tunnels, where the working area is one common space under a series of arches supported internally on pillars

tunnels, namely 4,2m and 4,7m height. Reason for the difference in height is to increase ventilation inside the tunnel, and allow the plants to grow higher if necessary. However, structural strength of the tunnel decreases with the 4,7m tunnels, so these are not an option in windy areas. The tunnel should stand with the length parallel to the

prevailing winds. This is to ensure proper ventilation. In South Africa the relationship of the sun to the position of the tunnel is not as important as ensuring correct and adequate ventilation, as the country enjoys plenty of sunshine. There should be a minimum of 2m between tunnels. This

Continued on page 28



resulting in a saving of space. This means one can get more growing area per hectare. There are two different heights to consider in Dicla's standard

Different growing methods. Above: In ground, a mixed crop.

Left: Tomatoes in a Bato, or Dutch, bucket system grow hydroponically in a soilless growing medium.



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TUNNEL FARMING— City Deep co imports tunnel equipment

Constructing a tunnel and covering it with plastic is only part of your journey in the field of greenhouse growing. There's a heap of material, both permanent and consumable, that is needed to equip it for successful production, and one of the specialists in the field in Gauteng is Greenhouse Technologies of City Deep.

Greenhouse Technologies specialises in greenhouse related products. This includes greenhouse plastics, peat moss, coir, irrigation systems and Dutch greenhouse technology. Says managing director Francois de Kock, "Our first warehouse opened in City Deep, Johannesburg at the Multi-Flora Market in 2007 and today we are known as one of the market leaders in the greenhouse film and growing mediums industry, with more than 30 employees nationwide."

Products on offer include greenhouse film/plastic, of various types with different properties aiding all the growers' needs.

And, for growers looking for soilless growing media a useful starting point is coir, which is coco pith, which has become a standard in the industry. It is a 100% organic growing medium and is used to improve the structure of the producer's growing

medium.

Greenhouse Technology's irrigation systems are imported from Rivulis of Israel. Rivulis provides a wide range of agricultural products including drip lines, both brown and green, Supertif button drippers, filters and valves.

The company also supplies peat moss imported from Lithuania, manufactured by world-leading supplier Klasmann-Deilmann.

All these products are certified and tested off-site and arrive at Greenhouse Technologies ready to be applied. The peat moss is tested in Lithuania, but the coir-cocopeat is imported from India (where each container has been tested) and greenhouse covering film is imported from Israel.

"At Greenhouse technologies we ensure that the factories where our products are manufactured have done all the necessary tests before products are imported, to ensure the quality and most importantly to maintain relationships with our foreign investors.

"We strive to offer our clients the best possible product for their individual needs, and a sale doesn't end at point of sale. The after-service is just as important," says de Kock. For more information: Greenhouse Technologies, tel 011 613-3103

TUNNELS

From page 25

is to ensure that the shade of one tunnel does not fall on to the next tunnel, prohibiting optimal growth in that area. It also makes any maintenance needed, for

example replacing plastic, much easier if there is enough space.

Diela calculates the labour requirement for a tunnel project as two workers per

Continued on page 29

TUNNEL FARMING

From page 28

ten tunnels planted.

A vast range of machinery and equipment is available to make their tasks more efficient, including tractors, cultivators, sprayers, etc. Having made the point earlier that tunnel farming saves water, one should nonetheless bear in mind that a full sized tunnel in full production can drink upwards of 2 500 litres a day, so plenty of water is required for a commercial

sized operation.

Furthermore, pumping infrastructure, and therefore electricity supply, is necessary to feed sprayers, drip lines etc, an exercise made more complicated if one is to "fertigate", that is, feed nutrients to the plant in soluble form along with the water. Timers, mixers and testing equipment make this possible and ease the task. Water analysis is also essential as it affects crop yield and quality.

A key consideration is that the species to be grown will dictate the best growing method ~ in ground, in containers or hydroponically ~ the optimum temperature and humidity at each stage of the grow, and the amount of water and nutrient required. This, in turn, will determine what if any heating or cooling will be necessary, taking into consideration the ambient weather on your smallhold-

ing.

Most importantly, market research should be undertaken beforehand to establish where and how the crop will be sold and to whom, what packaging and transport is required, phytosanitary requirements, and the possible revenue that will be realised upon sale. Of course, this will not apply to a hobbyist growing only for home consumption, and who will want a greenhouse producing a multitude of different vegetables at once. In such a case access to the individual plant, from a watering/feeding perspective, from a harvesting perspective and from its access to sunlight, will determine its position in the house. Tall plants, for example tomatoes, should therefore be planted at the southern end of the tunnel, with shorter species, for example, spinach or brassicas, to the north of them

to ensure they are not shaded out.

Dicla maintains a comprehensive website, with a wealth of information on tunnels, their construction and management, as well as on the individual requirements for a number of suitable species for tunnel production. Go to www.dicla.com.

For more information: Dicla - 011 662-1371, Bell & Paton 083 650-0711, Masbiz Trading 011 894 2873

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somebody who wants to plant only a few rows of mealies for home use, to a smallholder with access to a tractor wishing to plant five or more hectares.

That's because the range extends from a simple hand seed planter, where the operator walks up the row plunging the planter into the ground at each point he wants to deposit a seed. A base plate above the delivery spout ensures the seed is deposited to exactly the correct depth.

For slightly larger areas there is a two-man wheeled planter where one man pulls the planter, or drives the quad bike or controls the ox or donkey, while a second walks behind the planter to guide it along the row.

and renders it a one-man implement again.

Finally, Backsaver also has a two-row planter that fits onto a tractor's hydraulic arms.

That's all for maize.

Backsaver also has planters for other crops, notably beans and fineseed crops, and has even developed an adjustable tractor-drawn planter that can deliver rows of one crop (eg maize) interspersed with another cover crop. Most recently, van Rensburg has been working on seedling hand planters, including for example an onion seedling planter, where the user plunges the delivery

tube into the ground, then drops the seedling down the chute into the resultant correctly drilled hole. This really illustrates the name

Continued on page 33



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Janse van Rensburg demonstrates the motorised version of his combination walk-behind fertilizer and seed planter.

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SMALL IMPLEMENTS

From page 31

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Two-wheel hand tiller dislodges small weeds between rows.

weeds inter-row. This implement comprises two steel wheels, the rear one larger than the front, and the front fitted with little transverse "blades" that dig into the soil. The two are connected, likewise, by a chain drive. The larger rear driving wheel has a larger gear that the front "skoffeling" wheel, meaning that the front wheel rotates very much faster than the rear. This results in the blades digging into the soil a few millimetres and scraping it up and over, resulting in the

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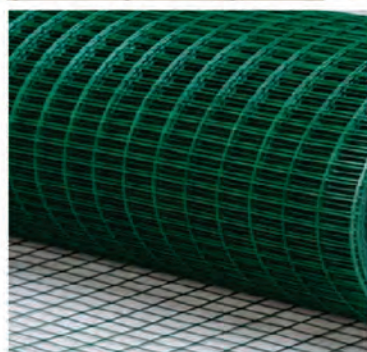
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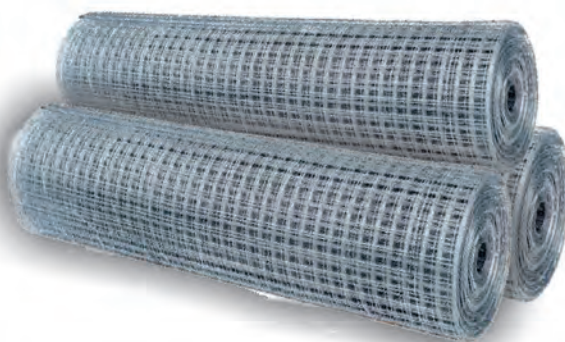
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'FIRE!'

~ What do you do ?

A passerby flicks his cigarette butt into the winter dry grass of the verge outside your smallholding.

The smouldering tip falls against a small blade of brown, dry grass. In a few seconds a small flame flickers upward from the blade of grass, igniting the blade, then blades, adjacent to it.

The small circle of dancing flames that develop fan outward into a circle of fire. A gust of breeze lifts a spark of burning grass into the air, and carries it over your boundary fence and into your field. And the spark repeats the process of igniting a blade of grass, which ignites the next one, and within minutes of the passerby's careless action, your field is ablaze.

Sounds unlikely? Ask any smallholder of long standing. It can happen, and it has, to all of us.

And it's no use muttering "it wouldn't happen to me ... I've diligently made fire-breaks." Windborne sparks falling into, and igniting, fields are a reality, especially as winter drags on and the grass becomes increasingly parched, and more especially as winds start to blow in the later months.

So now your field is ablaze. What do you do? And what equipment and expertise do you have available with which to extinguish it?

The first point is early detection, which means that everybody on the smallholding ~ family members and staff alike ~ must be made aware of the importance of recognising the smell of smoke. As soon as the slightest whiff of a fire is detected drop what you're doing and make a visual reconnaissance to identify the

source of the fire. If it is on a neighbouring property (possibly somebody burning rubbish ~ illegal in most municipalities, but whatever...) check that there is no chance of it spreading to yours.

But what happens if a fire starts at night when you're snug in your bed with the

windows closed to keep out the cold? The good news is that unless it is a "dark and stormy night" there is generally less wind at night, there are fewer idiots abroad tossing cigarette butts aside, dew or frost will probably have settled on the grass rendering it less likely to ignite, and even if it does, the

temperature of the grass will mean it will burn more slowly and less fiercely than in daylight. And this is where your firebreaks come in. By removing all possible sources of ignition from a strip surrounding your field you have made an impassable barrier to the fire.

Continued on page 37



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FIRE SEASON

Fire: A bit of theory will help you

What is fire? If you answered that the flame you see is fire you'd only be half right. For fire is the result of raising the temperature of a material above the point at which that substance will ignite, in the presence of a similarly

combustible substance, ie a gas.

In theory everything has a point of combustion, it's just that some substances burn at lower temperatures than others.

Even metals will burn, albeit at

Continued on page 39

WHAT TO DO

From page 35

So let's assume that a fire starts during daytime, spreads to your field, and you or a worker detect smoke and react accordingly. What do you do?

Firstly, act fast. The quicker you act the smaller the fire will be, and thus the more chance you have of extinguishing it.

This presupposes, therefore, that your firefighting equipment is readily available, and prepped for use. And that your family members and workers know where it is and how to use it. This includes firebeaters, hand and battery-operated backpack sprayers, trolley-, trailer- or bakkie-mounted sprayers, and motorised backpack blowers. One of your preparations for fire season should be to ensure that all the machinery is working, that engines are filled with fresh fuel and will start, and that water tanks, sprayers etc are filled and ready for use.

If you use a fire retardant additive in your water, have this ready to add to the tank, but don't mix it in till necessary as the chemicals will rot any rubber washers, plungers etc in the equipment.

If you use hosepipes as a source of water in the field, ensure they are leak-free and are fitted with sprayers at the business end, enabling you to stand some distance from the

flames (they are HOT!) and still direct a meaningful jet at their base.

Also, work out beforehand how far into the field the hoses will reach, and if there are areas unreachable by them, work out a plan for fighting the blaze in those areas with other equipment. Work out beforehand how you are going to refill tanks with water and fuel as necessary.

If you take a bakkie or tractor into the field (carrying a spraying unit, for example) preferably have the driver stay with the vehicle at all times. Or, at the very least, never remove the keys from the ignition in case a quick getaway is necessary.

There is a chance, the fire having started in daylight, that there may be livestock grazing in the field. Have an escape plan worked out beforehand, which may have to include cutting a hole through your fence, so sturdy wirecutters should form part of your firefighting kit.

By the same token, discourage dogs from attending the proceedings. They will become excited by the inevitable heightened tensions and activity of the participating firefighters and will soon become disoriented by the smoke and flames.

Finally, how does one fight a grass fire? Some pointers are given in the adjoining article.

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FIRE SEASON

From page 37

different temperatures, for example with aluminium burning at a much lower temperature than iron (a fact that Britain's Royal Navy learnt to its tragic cost during the Falklands War when the Argentinians fired an Exocet missile at the frigate *HMS Sheffield*, whose aluminium alloy (a mixture of aluminium and even more combustible magnesium) superstructure ignited and burned for six days before the vessel sank). But, because combustion is the result of heating a substance to its point of ignition, the volume of the substance being ignited plays a part. Think of your kettle: bringing one cup of water to the boil is a lot quicker than bringing a full kettle to the boil. That's why when one starts a fire (well, using traditional methods and not firefighters) one places kindling, ie small, dry twigs, atop the scrunched up paper, before adding more substantial logs atop the kindling. The thin paper, ie not very much to heat to combustion point, lights when in contact with the single little flame of one's lighter or match. As this paper fire spreads it heats the thin kindling sufficiently for it, in turn, to ignite. And this small fire burns long and hot enough to heat the bigger logs sufficiently so that they too ignite.

Now let's translate that to a grass fire. A cigarette butt (or match flame) heats up a single blade of dry grass sufficiently for it to ignite, it heats up the blade or blades next to it and they ignite, and so on, and soon you have dancing orange flames rising into the air.

And it all takes place because the material now heated to combustion temperature happens to be surrounded by the presence of air, which contains considerable volumes of oxygen and hydrogen, among others,

both of them combustible gases (air also contains volumes of inert gases, such as carbon dioxide and nitrogen, but not in sufficient quantities to prevent ignition).

So much for the theory, what does this mean in practice? Simply this: If you want to extinguish a fire you need to do one of two things ~ either cool the burning material to below its point of ignition, either by throwing water at it or by blowing a blast of air at it (how does one cool a spoonful of hot soup, or extinguish a candle?), or by depriving it of a combustible gas, eg oxygen, by smothering it, either physically, or with an inert gas.

Thus, when fighting a fire with a jet of water, the jet should be directed at the base of the fire, ie at the source of the flames, rather than at the flames themselves. In most cases people need to be told this, and be shown how to do it.

Similarly, if using a blower for fire control the blast of air should be directed at the base of the flame from in front of the fire, in effect blowing the fire away from the still combustible material back into the area already burnt. Note, also, that there are very few backpack blowers that are suitable for firefighting: the unit you have for blowing autumn's yellowing leaves off your driveway is nowhere near powerful enough to use on a grass fire.

Note also that firebeaters, whether made of rubber fingers, wet sacking or old conveyer belt, are not suitable for fighting fires in long grass, or in windy conditions and are really only suited to controlling fire when burning breaks, or fighting flames in short grass, and then preferably in unison, meaning a team of people working alongside each other.



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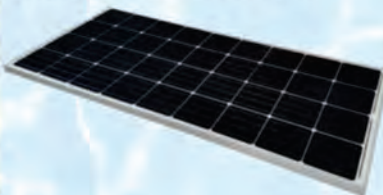
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TREES

How to deal with PSHB

The tiny Polyphagous Shot Hole Borer beetle (PSHB), *Euwallacea whitfordiendrus*, continues to spread throughout South Africa, and one of the ways it is spreading is by the transportation of firewood, for example to a picnic or braai site, by unsuspecting holidaymakers. (See the *Smallholder*, April 2018 for a full description).

PSHB is an ambrosia beetle native to Southeast Asia. PSHB has a symbiotic relationship with three fungal species, including the pathogen *Fusarium euwallaceae*, which serves as a food source for the adult beetles and their larvae. In susceptible hosts this leads to *Fusarium* Dieback, a disease-causing branch dieback and tree death. The beetles can establish in a wide range of alien and indigenous tree species in urban, agricultural and natural landscapes. Susceptible tree species can be reproductive or non-reproductive host trees and show different responses. (go to www.fabinet.up.ac.za-/index.php/pshb for a list of known reproductive species

affected by PSHB in South Africa. Note that this list is regularly updated. For a list of non-reproductive species affected go to www.sasmallholder.co.za). Reproductive host trees are those in which both the beetles and the fungus establish, and where the beetles successfully reproduce. In most cases the reproductive hosts will eventually be killed by the fungus.

Non-reproductive host trees are attacked by the beetle and the fungus establishes, but the beetle does not successfully breed. The fungus may or may not cause disease and kill the tree.

It is important to note that, at this stage, there is no registered insecticide or fungicide available in South Africa that is effective against either the beetle or the fungus and therefore the only effective method of controlling the spread of the beetle, and therefore the fungus, is by pruning and destroying infected limbs, or felling and destroying badly infested trees.

Continued on page 43



City of Cape Town chips PSHB-infected timber directly into a covered vehicle for transport to a commercial composting facility.

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From page 41

While the Johannesburg Parks Dept is busy with a tree felling programme on the city's streets, the City of Cape Town (COCT) has compiled a useful set of guidelines for local authorities and householders to follow should a tree, or trees, on their properties become infested. If pruning or felling is the only method of controlling the spread at this stage, what does one do with the timber? For a start, handling and transportation should be kept to a minimum, with any transportation necessary being under complete coverage by sealed tarpaulins.

Better, says the COCT, is to chip the cut timber on site, with the chippings delivered right away into a sealed vehicle, eg a trailer or truck, the top and sides of which are covered by tarps. These chips can then be composted, although the COCT warns that it is important that the temperature of the composting process must be sufficiently high, and the process long enough, to kill both the beetles and the fungus. The COCT therefore recommends material to be composted to rather be delivered to a commercial or municipal composting facility rather than on to the home compost heap.

An alternative to composting of the chips is to "solarise" them, that is, to cover them completely in heavy black plastic and allow the rays of the sun to "bake" them at high temperature for an extended period, whereafter

they can be mixed into a normal compost.

As far as the stumps of affected trees are concerned, the COCT recommends their immediate removal at the time of felling. Where this is not possible the stump should be completely covered in heavy black plastic, after a suitable herbicide, such as Garlon, has been liberally applied.

Warning signage should be erected on any trees, stumps or timber that has not been removed from public places, says the COCT, and workers handling affected timber, chips and equipment, should exercise strict hygiene protocols by washing their clothing, boots, protective gear, and their vehicles and equipment, thoroughly after coming into contact with infected trees.

The general public can also help slow down the spread of PSHB by their buying habits.

Firewood, for example, should not be transported any distance lest it harbour the beetle. Thus, when going into the country for a braai, rather buy the wood for the fire at the site of the braai, in the hope that it has been felled and dried locally, rather than bringing it from home.

Female PSHB beetles are black and 1,8–2,5 mm long. Male beetles are brown and smaller than females at 1,5

Continued on page 44



Stump covered in plastic after treatment. Picture: City of Cape Town

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LIVESTOCK

Are sheep dumb? Maybe not...

As a prey species, sheep rely on their senses to keep themselves safe. Their eyes are placed more on the side of their heads and this allows for wide peripheral vision ~ with each eye they can span some 145°. This is actually an advantage for a prey animal, enabling it to quickly scan its surroundings for potential danger. After locating a threat in their peripheral vision, they turn to examine it with binocular

vision.

Binocular vision is much narrower ~ 40° wide. They have no vision 2-3cm immediately in front of the nose.

They have a blind spot at their rear around 70°, which is wider than the cow and useful when catching sheep. In some breeds, unshorn facial wool can limit the visual field; in some individuals, this may be enough to cause "wool blindness".

They have colour vision and are able to distinguish a variety of colours: black, red, brown, green, yellow and white. They might react in fear to novel colours



Ewes and their lambs.

that they're not used to.

Sight is a vital part of commu-

PSHB

From page 43

mm long. The female tunnels into the host tree forming galleries, where it lays its eggs. More females are produced than males. Mature siblings mate with each other so that females leaving to start their own galleries are already pregnant. Males do not fly but stay in the host tree. The beetles have special structures in their mandibles called mycangia, in which they carry the spores of their fungal symbionts. PSHB carries three fungi: *Fusarium euwallaceae*, *Graphium euwallaceae* and *Paracremonium pembeum*. As adult female beetles burrow into trees to establish brood galleries, they introduce the fungal spores which

nication and when sheep are grazing they maintain visual
Continued on page 45

colonise gallery walls, becoming a food source for developing larvae. The full COCT PSHB management protocol can be downloaded from www.cape-towninvasives.org.za/shot-hole-borer

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provinces. The biome covers 349 174 km², which makes up 16.5% of South Africa's land surface.

A biome is a very large ecological area on the earth's surface, with animals and

Continued on page 46

SHEEP

From page 43

contact with each other. Mothers and lambs also use visual clues in recognising each other.

When it comes to sense of smell, sheep have an olfactory system that is more highly advanced than that of humans.

Ewes use smell to identify,

recognise and locate their newly born lambs. Rams use smell to detect whether a ewe is in heat. Sheep's sense of smell assists them in locating the best foods to eat, as well as water to drink and they will not eat mouldy or musty feed. Sheep will actually attempt to face into the wind, using their sense of smell to their fullest advantage. They are also able to detect predators with their sense of smell.

Sheep possess an excellent sense of hearing. The sound actually arrives at both ears at different times, enabling sheep to amplify sounds with pinpoint accuracy. They can

direct their ears to the direction of the sound.

Hearing helps in recognition between ewes and lambs. Tests show that ewes and their lambs can recognize each other based solely on their calls. Vocal recognition of the lamb by its mother is present at 24 hours after birth and that of the ewe by her lamb is present at 48 hours. A sheep's sense of taste will help it in distinguishing the type of food to eat. Sweet and sour plants are preferred with bitter plants being more commonly rejected.

A sheep's sense of touch is experienced through the sheep's mouth, lips and

possibly ears, as the rest of the body is covered with wool or coarse hair. However, body contact between a ewe and its lamb is very helpful in the bonding process. It has also been discovered that flocks of sheep that have close body contact are generally calmer.



Flehmen Response, curling the upper lip, is not peculiar to sheep

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BIOMES

From page 45

plants which have adapted to their environment. Biomes are influenced by climate, relief, geology, soils and vegetation.

Grasslands are second only to the Fynbos Biome for plant diversity in South Africa. In fact, the grasslands support a greater number of species per unit of measure than fynbos - grassland carrying 81

species per 1 000 m², while fynbos carries 65.

However, the grasslands are under serious pressure due to increased habitat fragmentation, expansion of farming operations, injudicious or unplanned urban development, habitat modification and loss, misapplication of fire, inappropriate grazing practice, invasive alien species, bush encroachment,

over-harvesting of natural resources, hunting and wildlife trade.

According to *Grassland Ecosystem Guidelines*, a document published by the SA National Biodiversity Institute Grasslands Programme, these are the signs of a healthy grassland:

☐ High basal cover, which binds the soil and so prevents erosion. (Basal cover refers to

species.

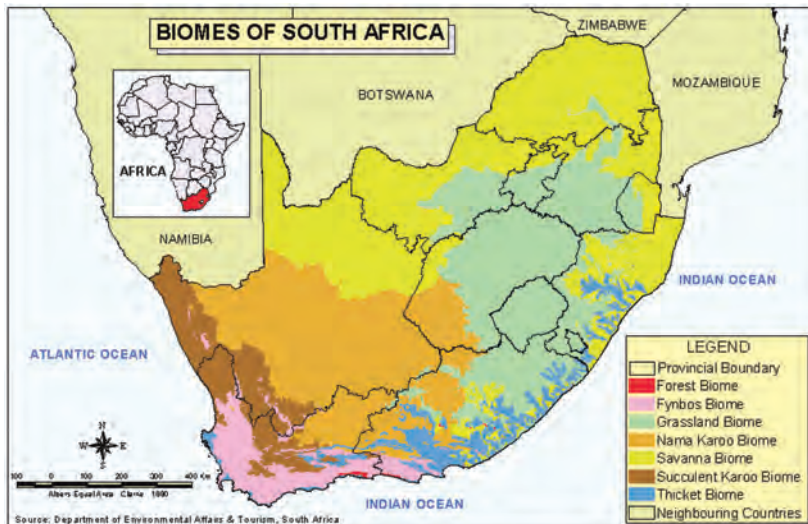
☐ Topsoil that is intact, rich in organic matter and uncompacted, with lots of evidence of soil-turning through the action of various animals.

☐ An even grass sward, rather than tussocked veld – tussocked veld is an indicator that all the palatable species have been eaten, leaving big tufts of unpalatable species.

☐ An absence of invasive alien plants or areas with heavy bush encroachment; note, however that in some grasslands indigenous woody species may occur naturally (eg, stands of protea trees on southern slopes in sub-escarpment grasslands), but these should be present in naturally occurring low densities or isolated patches (or small forest patches or bush-clumps where fire is naturally excluded).

Conscientious smallholders

Continued on page 47





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From page 46

issues in their own pastures, to make a small contribution towards the biome which supports the smallholder lifestyle. Smallholders support biodiversity through managing fire, managing grazing, managing habitats and species and managing soil erosion and physical disturbance.

The *Smallholder* has always spoken out against wholesale burning of fields. However, Sanbi urges the landowner not to withhold fire. This is because the annual accumulation of unburnt, dead plant material forms a dense canopy that shades out new growth, killing plants in a few years. Over time the soil is exposed, leading to a loss of topsoil and the seed bank. It is very difficult to restore grassland that has been damaged in this way. However, one should burn according to a plan, as an appropriate burning regime is

an essential management tool in grasslands, along with a grazing management plan. The time of the burn and the intensity of the fire are other critical aspects of fire management.

The *Smallholder* has also emphasised the need for caution when dealing with fire, by ensuring that there are adequate firebreaks, as well as sufficient well-trained personnel and equipment. Planning also extends towards grazing, which must be implemented according to an intentional, coherent grazing plan. A grazing plan should pay attention to the choice of animal (bulk or selective grazers), stocking rates, rotation and resting, numbers of animals, proposed fire management, history of grazing and fire, and the sustainability of the grazing regime.

In managing habitats and species, pasture must be

kept free of alien invasive species, bush encroachment must be prevented, basal cover must be maintained and soil erosion reduced. At first glance, it may appear that there is a solid cover of vegetation, but a closer inspection at ground level shows that there is space between the bases of individual plants. The less space there is, the higher the

basal cover.

There are two useful documents that have been published by Sanbi as part of the Grasslands Programme: *Grassland Ecosystem Guidelines* and *Grazing and Burning Guidelines: Managing Grasslands for Biodiversity and Livestock Production*. The guidelines can be downloaded free of charge.



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DIARY

ATTENTION CRAFT MARKETS, CLUBS ETC: If you would like details of your events included in the Diary, please fax or email your information to the Editor. For non-commercial enterprises this service is FREE.

NOTE: FARMERS' & CRAFT MARKETS. For a listing of REGULARLY HELD markets and fairs please see the separate section on page 51. Only markets that are held infrequently are now listed in this calendar section.

Every Sunday
SA Lipizzaners weekly display at 10h30. SA Lipizzaner Centre, Dahlia Rd, Kyalami. Go to www.lipizzaners.co.za for details of special shows.

Cattle drive with City Slickers breakfast, Diamond X Cowboy Ranch, near Rayton. Call Rudan on 082 410-3180 horses@diamondx.co.za, www.diamondx.co.za, R500 per person.

Mnandi Methodist Church, 09:00, Mnandi Centre, cnr Tulip and Short Streets, Jen 012 651-5509. Gail 072 477-0708. A small community who worship together. We have a Youth and Children's church.

Premier Mine Presbyterian Church, Lower Oak Ave, Cullinan. Garden of Remembrance (Columbarium), 079 060-9990 or 012 734-1640, Worship and Sunday school. Holy Communion for all on the 1st Sunday of every month.

Every Monday
Alcoholics Anonymous. 'Courage to Change' Group meeting, 19:30, Benoni Agricultural Holdings, Marcus 082 042-7730. Warren 082 335-0049. Glen 072 239-3024. If you want to drink – that's your problem! If you want to stop – that's our problem! No fees; no dues; just concerned fellowship.

2019

July

2: New Moon
5-7: Vlakvarkfees at Aquizi Lodge, Cullinan dist. Fri 5th 16h00 – 22h00, Sat 6th 08h00-22h00, Sun 7th 08h00 – 16h00. R50 per day. Vlakvark Potjie Competition, Miss African Effect, Various artists, more than 100 stalls. Tickets from itickets.co.za
2-5: Introductory Course in Beef Cattle

Management, ARC Irene Campus. R3 200. Call Mokela Mothabela 012 672 9402
6: Bokkie Park Food & Craft Market at the Bokkie Park, Southvale Rd, Parkdene, Boksburg, 09h00 – 14h30. Crafts and food stalls, live entertainment, tea garden, pony and camel rides. Contact Janine 072 713 3332

6-7: SANESA Eventing Qualifier & Graded Eventing at Fourways Riding Centre, Dassie Road, Timsrand. Call Surei 083 265-8278

8-12: Introductory Course in Pig Production, ARC Irene Campus. R3 000. Call Mokela Mothabela 012 672 9402
9 – 11: IFAT AFRICA. Africa's leading trade fair for water, sewage, refuse and recycling. Gallagher Convention Centre, Sandton. Call 11 476 8093, E-mail annalize.cillierseccles@mm-sa.com

13: Showjumping show: 6th leg of new series (AYED), 70cm – 1.30m, (all grades). Fourways Riding Centre, Dassie Road, Timsrand. Call Surei 083 265-8278

14: Tree Owl Community Market at Brandmuller's Garden Pavilion, 5 Dave Nourse St, Unitas Park, Vereeniging. GPS: -26.627823, 27.927976. 09h00 – 14h30. Stalls with hand-crafted goods, home-bakes, olives, honey, food stalls, cash bar, tea garden, live entertainment by RNK from 12:00. Proceeds of the market are donated to various charities in the Vereeniging area. Follow us on Facebook: Acorns Coffee Shoppe. Enquiries: Michele 083 378-0715
14: Showjumping training show. Pole on ground – 1.30m. Fourways Riding Centre, Dassie Road, Timsrand. Call Surei 083 265-8278

15-19: Introductory Course in Poultry Production, ARC Irene Campus. R3 200. Call Mokela Mothabela 012 672 9402

16: Full Moon
16:18: Combatting soil erosion course at African Land-use Training's farm, Modimolle. R2 950. For reservations email courses@alut.co.za

19- 4 Aug: Big Aloe Festival, Witkoppen Wildflower Nursery, 363 Valley Rd, North Riding. Email: witkoppen@webmail.co.za.
20-21: Showjumping Show: Fourways Challenge Cup, 70cm – 1.30m, and FEI Challenge, Leg 2. Fourways Riding Centre, Dassie Road, Timsrand. Call Surei 083 265-8278

27-28: SANESA stadium eventing & Gauteng Eventing Classics. Fourways Riding Centre, Dassie Road, Timsrand. Call Surei 083 265-8278

August

1: New Moon

3: Bokkie Park Food & Craft Market at the Bokkie Park, Southvale Rd, Parkdene, Boksburg, 09h00 – 14h30. Crafts and food stalls, live entertainment, tea garden, pony and camel rides. Contact Janine 072 713 3332

8-10: Kragdag Expo, Diamantvallei Estate, Rayton district, Pretoria. Call 087 231-1644

9: National Womens' Day

11: Tree Owl Community Market at Brandmuller's Garden Pavilion, 5 Dave Nourse St, Unitas Park, Vereeniging. GPS: -26.627823, 27.927976. 09h00 – 14h30. Stalls with hand-crafted goods, home-bakes, olives, honey, food stalls, cash bar, tea garden, live entertainment from 12:00. Proceeds of the market are donated to various charities in the Vereeniging area. Follow us on Facebook: Acorns Coffee Shoppe. Enquiries: Michele 083 378-0715

12-16: Introductory Course in Small Stock Management, ARC Irene Campus. R3 200. Call Mokela Mothabela 012 672 9402
12-23: Farm planning (agricultural land-use planning) course at African Land-use Training's farm, Modimolle. R9 950. For reservations email courses@alut.co.za
15: Full Moon
20-23: Dairy Processing Course: Cheese, ARC Irene Campus. R5 000. Call Mokela Mothabela 012 672 9402
26-27: Artificial Insemination Course, ARC Irene Campus. R2 500. Call Mokela Mothabela 012 672 9402
30 New Moon

September

4-5: Dairy Processing Course: Yoghurt & Maas, ARC Irene Campus. R3 500. Call Mokela Mothabela 012 672 9402
7: Bokkie Park Food & Craft Market at the Bokkie Park, Southvale Rd, Parkdene, Boksburg, 09h00 – 14h30. Crafts and food stalls, live entertainment, tea garden, pony and camel rides. Contact Janine 072 713 3332



8: Tree Owl Community Market at Brandmuller's Garden Pavilion, 5 Dave Nourse St, Unitas Park, Vereeniging. GPS: -26.627823, 27.927976. 09h00 – 14h30. Stalls with hand-crafted goods, home-bakes, olives, honey, food stalls, cash bar, tea garden, live entertainment from 12:00. Proceeds of the market are donated to various charities in the Vereeniging area. Follow us on Facebook: Acorns Coffee Shoppe. Enquiries: Michele 083 378-0715
14: Full Moon
17-20: Meat Processing Course, ARC Irene Campus. R5 000. Call Mokela Mothabela 012 672 9402
23: Spring Equinox
24: Heritage Day
28: New Moon
28-29: Gauteng Rabbit Breeders' Association Spring Show, Walkerville Showgrounds, Walkerville. Rabbit Judging on 28 September, sales and rabbit jumping on 29 September. For enquiries contact Jens 082 447-5080

October

1 – 4: Dairy Processing Course: Cheese, ARC Irene Campus. Call Mokela Mothabela 012 672 9402
5: Bokkie Park Food & Craft Market at the Bokkie Park, Southvale Rd, Parkdene, Boksburg, 09h00 – 14h30. Crafts and food stalls, live entertainment, tea garden, pony and camel rides. Contact Janine 072 713 3332
8-10: Control of problem plants course at African Land-use Training's farm, Modimolle. R2 950. For reservations email courses@alut.co.za

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Regular Gauteng Farmers' Food Markets

NOTE: This is a listing ONLY of markets held weekly. Markets held less frequently (eg 1st Saturday of each month) are listed in the DIARY section of the magazine and we urge readers to check each month for dates and events of interest. We would like this list of food markets to be as comprehensive as possible. If you know of farmers' food markets that are not listed here, please email us the contact details of the organisers, and details of the market. Only FOOD markets are included. Similarly, if you know of markets in this list that have CLOSED please inform us so that we can delete incorrect or outdated information. We invite you to tell us of your experiences when visiting these markets so that we can better inform our readers. Were they as advertised? Was the produce on sale plentiful, well-priced, well-presented and fresh? Email your comments to gautengsmallholder@gmail.com

DAY	WHAT	WHEN	WHERE	CONTACT	WHAT TO EXPECT
Thursday					
Every Thursday	Bryanston Organic & Natural Market	09:00 – 15:00	40 Culross Road, Bryanston (off Main Road)	011 706 3671 enquiries@bryanstonorganicmarket.co.za	Quality hand crafted goods, unique art and fresh organic and naturally grown produce.
Saturday					
Every Saturday	Pretoria Boeremark	05:30 – 09:30	Moreleta Street entrance, Krige Street ext, Silverton	012 804 8031 or 079 987 1025	Fresh produce, traditional bazaar treats like jaffles, kaings with pap & boerewors rolls.
	The Fresh Co-op Weekly Farmers Market Halfway House, Gauteng	07:00 – 10:30	204 Allan Road, Glen Austin	Info.freshproducecoop@gmail.com 082 369 7755	Fresh produce, pickles, preserves, home industry, arts & crafts, food, etc.
	The Hazel Food Market	08:00 – 14:00	Greenlyn Village Centre, Cor Thomas Edison & Mackenzie St, Menlo Park, Pretoria	078 593 7716 www.hazelfoodmarket.co.za	Fresh produce straight from the producer, coffee, eats on sale.
	Waenhuiskrans Plaas / Farmers	08:00 – 13:00	Cor of Veda & Enkeldoorn Ave Market opposite Montana Traders and next to Kollonade Centre	Marius 084 505 3393 or office 012 567 6076 to book a stall	Stalls: Food, arts and crafts, fresh produce, eggs, chicken, meat, fruit & veg, Kiosk, Maders pies, coffee.
	Glenfresh Farmers Market	08:00 – 12:30	118 Allan rd, Glen Austin	Stefan: 082 829 0185 market@glenfresh.co.za	Local naturally grown produce, hand crafted goods, home baked treats, raw honey, biltong.
	Bapsfontein Farmers Market	09:00 – 14:00	Edith Street, Bapsfontein	Charlene: 082 892 4304 / Paul: 083 296 8006	Fresh produce, Livestock Sales, Flea Market, handicrafts, food stalls, great outdoor vibe that is pet and child friendly & live entertainment.
	Bryanston Organic & Natural Market	09:00 – 15:00	40 Culross Road, Bryanston (off Main Road)	011 706 3671 enquiries@bryanstonorganicmarket.co.za	Quality hand crafted goods, unique art and fresh organic and naturally grown produce.
	Waterfall Estate Farmers Market	09:00 – 15:00	Waterfall Estate, Waterfall Cor Midrand	Robyn 083 311 4768	Fresh produce, pickles, preserves and home industry & craft, food, etc. Enquire about stall prices.
	Walkerville Farmers Market	09:00 – 15:00	112 R82 Main Road, Walkerville	079 076 7680 info@wfmarket.co.za	Fresh produce, arts & crafts, food court and kids play area.
	Walkerville Country Market	09:00 – 15:00	Walkerville Country Market @ the Showgrounds	Ivan 084 590 2312 market@walkervillesa.co.za	Fresh produce, crafter's market, food court, craft beer, kids play area and pet friendly.
	Bosheuvel Fresh Produce	08:00 – 14:00	54 Glory Road, Muldersdrift	Mitch 082 553 2846	Outdoor country experience working farm cattle, sheep, and pigs. Free range meat, cheese, eggs, poultry, and craft beer.
Last Saturday	Windpomp Handwerk Market	08:00 – 14:00	Broodblike & Koffiepit Pretoria Road between Petit and Bapsfontein	Adele 083 445 1608	Pet friendly. Hand crafts, food, music, coffee, kids' play area, preserves, goat's milk products biltong, pap & kaings.
Sunday					
Every Sunday	Waterfall Market	10:00 – 17:00	Waterfall Park, Magwa Cres, Halfway House, Midrand	064 759 6154	Live entertainment, fresh artisanal tastes & flavours, craft beverages, kid's play area & plastic-free zone.
	Fourways Farmers Market	09:00 – 16:00	Cor Montecasino Boulevard & William Nicol Drive, Fourways	011 465 0877 www.fmarket.co.za	Get your groceries...in the garden!

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Excellent neighbours

Amid all the “sturm und drang” of life in South Africa today along come a bunch of complete strangers to help one out of a crisis, restoring (partially at least) one's faith in the human race.

It started on a Sunday morning when my flock of sheep chose to escape from their field by pushing a hole through a rusty wire fence and onto the verge of a busy road. OK, I know ... why didn't I repair the fence as one of my winter tasks beforehand? Truth be told, I'd repaired most of the fence by covering it with new field fence, but the roll was just a few metres short of the required length, and another roll is necessary to complete the task, a job that was scheduled for the next few weeks.

So the sheep were outside on the verge, unbeknown to me who was working on the other side of my plot at the time. My cellphone rings. Is this a work call (it's a Sunday, after all)? Or a personal call? I don't know so I answer it. “Hello, this is Peet. I've just driven past your place and I see your sheep are out on the verge.”

“Oh, (expletive deleted)! Thanks,” I reply, dropping what I was doing and heading off, calling the only two bodies in the house at the time, the ladyfolk, to help.

Seconds later the phone rings again. “Hello?” “Hi, I live on the corner just over the road from you and I see your sheep are out on the road,” says the caller. “Thank,” I reply, “I'm on my way.” The sheep, the entire flock of 24, are indeed on the verge, huddled in a group, staring sheep-like into the middle distance. I vault the fence and find the hole. Widening it I call to my daughter who has arrived to help me try to herd the sheep back through the now-enlarged hole.

With a little bit of running around, some bad language and a lot of gesticulating we coax the sheep closer to the hole. And one goes through. And then another.

And then it dawns on the rest of the flock that they'll be left behind if they all don't go through, so they all try at once. Traffic jam.

So one backs out, spooked, and sets off down the road at a pace, while the others sort themselves out and squeeze through.

By this time a young lady named Shannon has stopped on the road to help.

She sets off after the errant escapee, which promptly flees into a vacant, unfenced plot alongside mine, overgrown with black-

jacks, reeds and weeds. And home to a fearsome population of rinkhals (a fact which I neglect to impart to the ladies...)

Shannon, on seeing my better half trudging across the plot with a bucket of feed and a carrot top (favourite sheep snack) laughs, “Typical mother. They always want to solve a problem by feeding you!”

With the rest of the flock safely secured in another field we join Shannon, who has disappeared into the jungle after the sheep, now totally concealed by the thicket.

So we set about making a fearful din, which flushes the sheep, now even more spooked, out of the thicket and into the fence, whence it scampers up and down the fenceline escaping any attempt by me to catch it.

The hullabaloo brings two neighbours into the picture, one a fit young Malawian worker named Samuel who takes the chase as an athletic challenge and, after a few failed attempts at concealment and capture by surprise, launches himself after the sheep like Bakkies Botha after a Golden Lions winger heading for the try-line.

The sheep proves no match for Samuel's athleticism when he launches himself into the air through the grass and blackjacks and brings the sheep to the ground, though it must be said that a “kykweer” would have had him penalised for a high tackle.

The capture now complete we drag the sheep to the fence, grab it by its legs and hoist it unceremoniously over and into my property. All's well that ends well.

I hope Shannon and Samuel were able to pick all the blackjacks out of their clothes. It took my better half the best part of an afternoon to pick ours clean.

And next time my sheep escapes I want to be armed with a shepherd's crook with which to snag the animal's leg because I'm too old to be throwing myself around like a rugby player. Either that, or I'll simply rely on Samuel, neighbours and passers-by to help in an emergency. Seems like one can do that on the plots.



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