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PUBLISHED BY

Bowford Publications (Pty) Ltd
Established 1985

(Reg No 2004/019727/07)

PO Box 14648, Bredell 1623

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or 076 176-7392

Fax: 086 602-3882

website:

www.sasmallholder.co.za



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ADVERTISING RATES

(All Rates Full Colour, incl 15% VAT)

Full Page - R7 546

Half Page - R4 661

Quarter Page - R2 593

1/8 page - R1 372

Smaller sizes: R105 per col cm

(Minimum size - 4 col cm)

(Black only: colour rate less 20%)

Booking discounts

Payment lumpsum in advance.

3 insertions - less 10%

6 insertions - less 15%

(other payment and discount options are available)

Circulation

More than 19 000 copies* distributed free through outlets in the Agricultural Smallholding settlements of Gauteng and adjoining provinces.

* excluding on-line readers.

By Mail

To receive the *Smallholder* by mail subscribe for only R210 per year. See coupon in this edition.

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FRONT COVER

"Good morning, World"

A Crested Barbet peeps out of its home in a tree in the Rietvlei Nature Reserve. Picture by Victor da Souza of Edenvale.

COMMENT, by Pete Bower — Illustrating the divide



Two events on the outskirts of Pretoria last month, both with an agricultural focus, amply illustrate the inequality and cultural "apartness" that still exists in South African society.

For, just north of Onderstepoort, the first iteration of the Agri Gauteng Ekspo was held over three days, ostensibly targeted at emerging and smallholder farmers. Organised by a newly-launched agricultural magazine in conjunction with Agri-SA, the show will hopefully gain identity and focus if it is held in the future, for some of the exhibitors seemingly hadn't understood who the show was aimed at. What, for example, was a new Afrikaans community radio station named Lekker-FM doing there? Nevertheless, the organisers had arranged a long list of lectures and talks on various aspects of animal husbandry and horticulture clearly aimed at the farmers and smallholders in nearby Soshanguve and Winterveld. These talks, on subjects such as disease prevention, animal nutrition etc, would clearly have appealed to their audience which is, in the main, always hungry for knowledge (although, in our experience many emergent black farmers and smallholders, having grown up rurally growing their own food and surrounded by livestock, are often better informed than they let on). Hopefully, the organisers learnt from their mistakes this year and will be able to attract more, and more suitable exhibitors, to next year's event, while sticking to their idea of offering free-to-listen talks and lectures to interested visitors.

Such exhibitors should include many more providers of equipment, consumables, medications and services especially aimed at smallholders. Thus, unless you are aiming to enter this market seriously, if your current offering comprises only bulk quantities of feed, additives, medication or fertilizer, save your money and stay away. Because smallholders need stuff in small quantities, with packaging, labelling and user instructions that can be easily understood and applied by someone without the need for precision measuring equipment etc (I am pointing here particularly to medication, pesticides and herbicides).

Meanwhile on the eastern side of town, the three-day Afrikaner Kragdag jamboree included an agricultural component for the first time.

An altogether bigger show than the Agri Gauteng Ekspo, Kragdag was started in 2008 by a group of Afrikaner mapplotters in Donkerhoek who became gatvol of the dubious electricity supplied by Eskom, and its price; and resolved to become self-sufficient. With the motto of "doen jou eie ding" the first few shows concentrated on solar energy, renewables and self-sufficiency in various fields, including education (eg, home schooling), security etc.

Backed this year by Afrikaner business organisation Sakeliga, the show now is by far the biggest of its kind in Gauteng, especially as it included, from this year, an agricultural wing, run in conjunction with farmers' organisation TLU SA.

Like the show near Onderstepoort, Kragdag and its agri-offshoot featured a comprehensive series of talks and lectures, and comparing the content and focus of the two gives an instructive insight into the differences between black and white (particularly Afrikaans) rural folk, and the inequalities that divide us.

For while the Agri Gauteng Ekspo talks were largely geared simply at beginner and aspirant small farmers, much of the focus of the agri talks at Kragdag were aimed at a more experienced, and moneyed, audience.

To illustrate this compare, for example, the Onderstepoort Ekspo's talks entitled Farrowing House Management & Piglet Care with Kragdag's Biosecurity in the Livestock Industry: Are you ready for a disaster? (In Afrikaans, of course).

For all one may think of its seemingly racial exclusivity Kragdag has become a roaring success, both in terms of the number of exhibitors (330 in the Kragdag section and an expected further 165 agri-exhibitors, according to the organisers) and the number of (paying) visitors (more than 21 000 this year).

So much so that the organisers should really think seriously about moving it from a plot on the Donkerhoek hillside to a custom-designed showground with easy access, ample parking, show arenas, lecture halls, etc. The Tshwane Exhibition Centre, formerly the Pretoria Showgrounds, comes to mind...

But roaring success or not, it's a pity that the Kragdag expo and the Agri Ekspo, too, are so obviously racially (and economically) exclusive. In the South Africa of today we don't believe this approach, while it may be the absolute right of the organisers and participants to do so, is the most beneficial way to tackle the problems we all face.



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Tenants: Twit, Lipless and Snotnose

Sir ~ I happened across your February edition wherein you discussed tenants, landlords and rights. I found the article very interesting and thought you might like to hear of our experiences and how we found a loophole in those pesky laws that do nothing for law-abiding landlords! My widowed mother has, for the last few years, taken in tenants to help make ends meet. Over the years we

thought we'd seen them all. Then we met Twit, his ex, Lipless, and their teenage son Snot Nose. It started with Twit looking for a place to store some furniture (his auction-bought "antiques collection") and a bedroom for a few days every three months or so as he worked in Mozambique. Within two years we somehow had all three in the house, Twit had taken over the lounge without permission because Snot Nose "wanted his privacy" and we were stuck with tenants from

hell! Although Twit had a large "antique collection" and Snot Nose had everything that opened and shut (except discipline and manners), they owned little else. No crockery or cutlery, no fridge, no microwave and no washing machine. So suddenly they were using my mother's ~ and not being particularly careful either! Discussions regarding house rules were ignored. We also had Twit and Snot Nose getting more and more belligerent towards my mother when no-one else

was around, leading to several occasions where the police were called. My 81 year old mother was becoming a nervous wreck and I was starting to think of how we could hide their bodies. Don't expect any help from the police or the courts. The police were ineffective and never arrived without at least a three hour lapse between call for help and arrival of help. One does feel for them, though. They have all manner of real criminal

Continued on page 9

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From page 7

matters to deal with and they get called out because some a**hole is terrifying his elderly landlady.

Anyway, all they could do was tell Twit that he was wrong and advise my mom to seek legal help.

The courts were even less helpful. After waiting six hours in the queue where she was told to wait, she was then told that they could do nothing as she had to follow certain procedures and referred her to Legal Aid.

Legal Aid wrote a very nice letter advising Twit to vacate the lounge or face further action. He tore it up as we gave it to him.

Then they wrote a very nice eviction letter which caused him to call the police. The police told him that according to the letter he had one month to find new lodgings or face eviction. He told them that they were wrong and no-one would make him leave. The police then advised my mom that she had to wait until he had refused to leave, and only then could she apply for a court order and have the Sheriff remove them, but this

could take months.

In the meantime, we were stuck with these (expletive deleted) that were going out of their way to be difficult. I went down to the courts to find out exactly what we would have to do. They referred me to Legal Aid. On my way out the building, muttering away to myself, I got chatting to a very nice lawyer and discovered a wonderful and largely unknown loophole! Yes,

according to the law we needed a court order to legally evict them but if we chose the other route and just tossed them out, they would require a court order to force us to take them back! There was another little snippet that was very interesting, but more about that later. All we had to do was get them out!

And so we began to plan. D-day arrived but Twit and company had not so much as packed a box. And now began one of the most satisfying days of my life.

Armed with a sjambok and a taser (bought for my mom when the troubles began), I supervised three of our local junk pickers as we marched into the first room and began

He has a bunny problem

Sir ~ As a smallholder in Kyalami I need advice from your readers on a serious rabbit problem.

Over the last two years we have experienced an infestation of rabbits.

These rabbits have slowly destroyed my garden and neighbours' gardens.

I think at some stage they were somebody's pets and have escaped and bred like ... rabbits.

Is there anybody making a cage which we can use to capture these bunnies and then relocate them, or somebody who specialises in

the capture of these rabbits?

Simon Meanwell

Kyalami AH

Reader Meanwell's contact details will be made available to anybody who can help.

~ Editor

Continued on page 11

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Climate change: 'Somebody tell the minister'

Sir ~ I hope you or somebody has sent a copy of your editorial on the climate crisis to Barbara Creecy, our Minister of

Environment. And you also better send it to our ministers of Public Enterprises and Energy & Mineral Resources. There she was, in delivering

her budget the other day, going on about how the whole nation needs to work together against climate change. She said "the

underpinnings of our economy and our social fabric are facing unprecedented threats from climate change,

Continued on page 12

TENANTS

From page 9

to stuff clothes and junk willy-nilly into blankets and duvet covers, which we dumped on the pavement.

The presence of three strange men, taser, sjambok and me seemed to quiet Twit. He stood open mouthed, watching, as we tossed their belongings out. Twit called the police but by the time they arrived most of the stuff was out. All that remained was his junk - sorry "antique collection" in the garage.

And when the police finally arrived there followed a most satisfying conversation.

Remember that snippet? A policeman informed me that I was doing a "wrong thing". I said I knew that I was doing a "wrong thing" but now that I had, had I not made the matter a civil matter? The policeman conceded that I was correct.

Police have no authority in civil matters. They could not force us to take Twit and his stuff back! What Twit needed now was a court order to force my mother to take him back.

Did he have such an order? No? Ah well, there's the door mate and don't darken our doorstep again unless you have one.

That was eleven glorious Twit-free months ago.

We still see Twit and Lipless

occasionally around the neighbourhood but they have a marked tendency to cross to the other side of the road when that happens!

Was it legal? No, but then

neither was what he did and it's a damn side better than expensive lawyers or being stuck with hellish tenants for months!

Now it unfortunately doesn't

work in every situation but when faced with something like this please remember ~ there is more than one way to skin a tenant - sorry cat!

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MAILBAG

Climate change: follow the youth

Sir ~ As you pointed out in your August editor's comment, our house is on fire and we must sound the alarm.

The time has come for multigenerational action against climate breakdown. We must follow alongside the youth who have been leading

the way this year.

On 20 September people everywhere will walk out of their homes and workplaces together, and join young

strikers in the streets to demand climate justice and emergency action to tackle the climate crisis.

We know governments won't

Continued on page 15

TELL THE MINISTER

From page 11

environmental degradation and the loss of our biodiversity."

All of which is true.

But the government just sails on totally ignoring the

catastrophe that awaits the planet.

We've reached the stage when the government has been sued for failing to do anything about some of the world's worst air pollution emitted by power plants operated by Eskom and refineries owned by Sasol. A case has been filed in the Pretoria High Court by groundWork, an environmental-rights organisation, and the Vukani Environmental Justice Movement in Action. A Greenpeace study for the third quarter of 2018 showed that Mpumalanga had the worst nitrogen dioxide

emissions from power plants of any area in the world. The environmental justice groups are asking the court to declare the current levels of air pollution on the Highveld a violation of people's constitutional rights, and to force government to take meaningful action.

Independent atmospheric scientists have undertaken studies in the area and have found that the plants also emit sulphur dioxide, mercury and fine particulate matter that cause illnesses ranging from asthma to lung cancer and contribute to birth defects, strokes and heart

attacks.

But all the president and his cronies are worried about is which faction is winning the battle within the ANC.

They fiddle while our environment burns.

Keep up the good fight!

Jack Stark

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Land report: no clear way forward

For an issue of such national importance and public interest such as land expropriation without compensation, the speed with which President Cyril Ramaphosa appointed the Presidential Advisory Panel on Land and expected it to deliberate fully and deliver a comprehensive report on its finding and deliberations brooks the question of whether the government is actually serious in its intent. For the advisory panel, which included many skilled and talented individuals, was given an overambitious brief and far too little time and

Hasty report on EWC is short on detail say experts

resources to do justice to its mandate.

The outcome is a report full of interesting suggestions, but it is also a patchy, sometimes contradictory document which is far from a blueprint for progress.

That's the view of Prof William Beinart, Professor Emeritus at St Antony's College, University of Oxford, and a man who conducted research on the Eastern Cape pilot land reform scheme in the 1990s and who has

served as an expert witness on restitution cases, and Prof Peter Delius, Professor Emeritus at Wits University and an extensive writer on rural transformation.

They say a central weakness in the report is its failure to locate its recommendations within the current fiscal crisis, "which will place severe limits on state expenditure in the foreseeable future."

The report "recognises the severe capacity constraints and pervasive corruption within the state but makes recommendations rooted in

the idea that the state will be able to fund, initiate and oversee complex legislation as well as a host of new agencies and other initiatives."

Long lists of desired outcomes are provided without clear priorities. "With two decades of administrative failures and scores of failed projects behind us, the question is: what real progress can be made on what specific fronts? There are recommendations that the pair strongly supports. For example, the panel emphasises the importance of including urban areas within the framework of land reform policy and practice. The major movement of people

Continued on page 17

CLIMATE

From page 12

do it on their own, so we're going on #climatestrike to show them what people power is capable of. As Greta Thunberg asks: "If not you, then who? If not now, then when? We need everyone."

Remember, there is no Planet B. This is the only one we've got, and we need to fight for it.

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From page 15

within South Africa is still from rural to urban areas. The strongest demand for land continues to be in urban and peri-urban areas, where there is more access to employment, informal sector opportunities, services and retail outlets. "Unsurprisingly, most land occupations are in these areas."

The report also includes a number of valuable strategies for urban land acquisition and financing. But a great deal more work needs to be done before a holistic policy for urban land reform is in place. "We fully support the panel's proposals for speeding up and concluding the process of restitution. And we completely concur with the recommendation that the Ingonyama Trust be abolished or radically reformed."

"Beyond this, the report is rather ambiguous about the role of traditional leaders in land reform and administration."

"The report underestimates the significance of commercial agriculture both in the economy as a whole and in the food supply. This affects its understanding of land and agriculture in South Africa." In marked contrast to what the report has to say about commercial agriculture it obscures the reality that smallholder agriculture has not been expanding. It recognises that there is much under-utilised land and that there is massive unemployment in rural areas. However, it fails to ask why smallholders do not maximise their land and why unemployed younger members of households do not put their labour into that land.

The report states that "More than 60% of the active population of southern Africa depends on land for their livelihoods, whereas rural and urban poor communities depend almost entirely on

land as a source of food." With reference to South Africa, this figure is profoundly wrong. Village surveys of agricultural villages and settlements in the former homelands suggest that smallholders produce perhaps 20% of food needs (more in relation to meat). Most families are dependent on purchasing most of their food. This context could provide a huge opportunity for rurally based producers. As a rough measure, the former home-

lands have a population of perhaps 18 million, totalling a third of South Africans, and roughly 80% of the food supply of this population is available as a market for smallholders in the vicinity. The state should consider it a priority to engage more effectively with smallholders who currently hold land both in the former homelands and in the transferred land. As the report notes, post-settlement support has been a major problem. But this is not an

argument for redistributing large amounts of the commercial farms to smallholders in the hope that they will suddenly become self-subsistent.

"The priority should be to facilitate intensification on existing smallholder land with gradual transfers in well-supported schemes. The state can play a leading role here in an effective extension."

When the report deals with the issue of land tenure in

Continued on page 19

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Aloe marlothii

plants grow wild, have the opportunity to influence the protection level of the *Aloe Marlothii* species.

Any person can submit sightings of either the removal, transporting, and selling of *Aloe Marlothii*, or all three, presumably collected from the wild.

The information necessary is:

- ☐ A physical description of the location, address or GPS coordinates;
- ☐ A photo (if possible) of the vehicle carrying the plants, and its registration number; and,
- ☐ Date and time.

Importantly, members of the

public are warned not to collect this information if doing so will in any way endanger their personal safety or property.

The data collected will not be used for prosecution. It will be used as evidence of the pressure the species is facing

Continued on page 21

African Swine Fever hits West Rand pigs

There has been an outbreak of African Swine Fever (ASF) on the West Rand, notably around Swanieville, Kagiso and Randfontein, it has been reported.

As a result, the local pork abattoir, Chamdor Meat Packers, will no longer accept

animals for slaughter from unregistered farms on which proper biosecurity measures are not guaranteed.

The abattoir advises that "producers from non-compartmental farms or smallholdings who need to slaughter pigs must supply a blood test conducted by a

private veterinarian before consent to slaughter will be granted, and the abattoir must receive the test certificate before the pigs are brought to the abattoir.

Blood tests can be arranged through Gauteng Meat Inspectors. Paul Rabie can be contacted on 011 762 1205.

LAND REPORT

From page 17

communal areas "it seems intent on closing down debate on critical issues rather than engaging with them." The report strongly advocates a Land Register Act as a means of cementing land rights and facilitating land administration.

The report offers ambitious

plans for new laws and new administrative bodies and calls for yet another restructuring of the Dept of Land Affairs. Most of these proposals have admirable aims. But they gloss over the track record of immense delays, difficulties and rocketing expenses involved in new initiatives and institutions.



WINNER: Pretoria East smallholder Gerhard van Zyl cracks a mean whip ~ and he's got the prizes to prove it. At the recent Whip Cracking European Championships in Newark, UK, he won 1st place in the Vertical Shotgun Cartridge Target class and 3rd in the One-minute Freestyle with Whip class.

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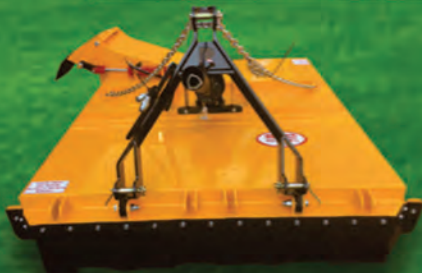
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Scientist tells BEECON capensis infestation through unscrupulous hive movement could threaten SA's scutellata bee areas

Measures to manage, reduce or eradicate the capensis parasite from the scutellata regions were highlighted in a talk by scientist Prof Robin Crewe at last month's Beecon get together held outside Bela

Bela. Crewe warned that if drastic steps are not taken soon by beekeepers, because this is a beekeeper problem, not a honeybee problem, there will be a second wave of infestation of the capensis bee into

Continued on page 23

ALOES

From page 19

in order to potentially afford it a better protection status.

Working with the Gauteng Dept of Agriculture & Rural Development (Gdard) the information will show enough evidence of the plundering of these plants by unscrupulous persons, often for sale at the side of a road, or if not sold, left to die.

The process of affording a species a protected status is not a simple one. However this should not hinder every attempt to raise a strong

awareness both with the authority that manages the process (Sanbi) and the "clients" who unknowingly have created a market for this environmental damage. Even if you just drive past someone selling Aloes on the side of the road, you can submit the location, time and date with a description of the vehicle, so there is no need even to stop for a photo.

The evidence collected can be emailed to jcornish@mweb.co.za or dusmanb@mweb.co.za

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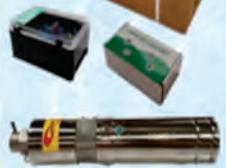
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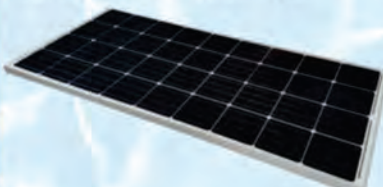
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BEEKEEPING

From page 21
the wider *scutellata* areas
of the country.
The drastic increased need

agencies, the industry could itself, in conjunction with the Pest Control Industry Board and with Croplife assistance,

□ Dr Gerhard Verdoorn gave an overview of pesticide management and the dangers of irresponsible behaviours of both crop growers, who do not read label instructions, and beekeepers who do not communicate with farmers, which result in unnecessary destruction of bee colonies. In addition Thilivhali

highlighted the problems facing the macadamia industry, with its exponential growth and the challenges of providing pollination services in the future for this sector. He estimated that something in the region of 160 000 beehives will be needed to

Continued on page 25



Frenchie Lemmens of Northern's discusses the use of beeswax with BEECON delegates last month

for pollination units in *scutellata* territory may become the catalyst for irresponsible use of Cape bees if beekeepers do not adhere to the statutory regulations regarding the movement of bees.

A number of other burning issues affecting both bees and beekeeping in South Africa were discussed at Beecon. These included:

☐ Debate regarding the proposal to licence bee removal service providers and professionalise this part of the industry to restrict service providers who have no regard to the bee colonies' survival and protection. While it was acknowledged that this type of service could not be policed by government

develop industry standards and accreditation for such services.

Nepfumbada from government, pesticide management and representing the Registrar, Act 36 of 1947, explained what the Dept of Agriculture, Forestry & Fisheries has now done to not only encourage but also enforce compliance and the introduction of a new symbol, (a bee with a red line through the label) on those chemical products dangerous to bees.

□ Dr Schalk Schoeman

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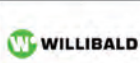
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Control flies with a natural wasp enemy

Fly control is vital in summer, but despite ongoing attempts to rid a premises of flies, one is often not very successful.

Effective chemicals are developed, expensively, only in time to lose their efficacy with the build-up of immunity within the fly population.

Fly control, naturally, has cost-implications but an effective fly control programme that reduces production losses and the carrying of fly-borne

diseases would be a great asset, and there is increasing consensus that an integrated approach to fly control must

Continued on page 26

BEEKEEPING

From page 25

meet the demands for future macadamia pollination. In contrast with this demand has been the devastating effects on South Africa's Bluegum forests, especially as large hectares of eucalypt forest outside Mbombela have been removed to make way for macadamia plantations.

There is also the growing threat to eucalypts by the invasion of the recently unknown insect, *Drosophila flavohirta*, the eucalypt nectar fly, on the destruction of eucalyptus plantations.

The conference was opened by David Mukomana, president of the Apimondia Regional Commission for Africa. He gave an overview of challenges facing beekeeping in Africa and the demand for apicultural services.

On the subject of Apimondia, outgoing Sabio chairman Mike Miles told delegates that efforts to pitch for the hosting of the Apimondia Convention in 2023 in Cape Town came to naught, despite encouragement and support from SA Tourism, which funded and hosted a visit from Italy by the

secretary general of Apimondia, because politics and mis-guidance on South Africa's eligibility status ultimately led to the withdrawal of Sabio's application. All has not been lost, however, and Sabio still has an opportunity of hosting a

Regional Apimondia Conference in South Africa in 2020.

As of March 2019 there were 679 beekeepers registered with Daff, of which 437 were renewals and 242 were new beekeepers registering for the first time.

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INSECTS

From page 25

be developed.

For economic sustainability, a complete fly control programme should take into consideration the following factors:

- ☐ Physical management requirements of the fly menace such as effects on production facilities, misuse etc;
- ☐ The lifecycle and biology of the affected fly species;
- ☐ The role and effective use of the fly's natural enemies, and,
- ☐ The role and effective use of the application of chemical substances.

Animal production units

Some easy fly control tips are to keep manure as dry as possible, ensure good drainage, limit water leaks, and remove spilled feed and rotting fodder

should actively plan for fly control with an eye on economic sustainability. This means, obviously, that potential fly breeding spaces should be managed in such a way that will result in the minimum of fly breeding. Some easy tips are to keep manure as dry as possible, ensure excellent drainage, limit water leaks and remove spilled feed and rotting fodder. Be aware of the development of potential fly

breeding spots and control them in the best way to limit fly populations.

The house fly and the stable fly have almost identical life-cycles, with the house fly's being slightly shorter.

In practical terms it means that the female fly must take in ample nutrition, after which eggs in typical "parcels" of up to 50 a time are laid. A single female can lay up to 800 eggs in her lifetime.

Fly eggs develop into larvae within twelve to 18 hours, and pass through three larval stages of one to three weeks, after which the larvae pupate. Pupae can take from three days to three weeks to develop, depending on species and environment. Then flies emerge from the

pupae as adults.

Adult flies can be caught in various commercially-available traps or be killed off using proprietary chemicals.

To protect the natural enemies of flies care must be taken to ensure that the chemicals are not applied to the fly breeding spots.

Chemicals should be sprayed or painted onto walls, poles under roofs and on other fly resting spots. Pets and livestock can also be dipped in fly control chemicals.

There is an increasing belief that control should as far as possible work in harmony with the environment. It is possible through the introduction of large numbers of parasite wasps that feed exclusively on fly pupae and which develop themselves in fly pupae. The female stings the pupa, feeds on the developing fly and

Continued on page 27

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☐ Epigeic species live in organic material near and on the surface and ingest large

From page 26

can also lay her eggs in the pupa.

The developing fly in the pupa is thus killed and its place taken by a new generation of wasps that emerges through the process of parasitism.

The flies' ability to breed is higher than that of the wasps, which makes it necessary that a formidable quantity of wasps must be released regularly to keep the breeding of flies under control.

The advantages of biological fly control are, among others:

❑ Flies are controlled before they can cause irritation and

damage;

- ❑ It is easy and convenient, and effective to reach very difficult breeding places;

- ❑ It prevents chemical pollution;

- ❑ Flies cannot develop immunity to the parasites.

Thus, the parasites offer a long-term solution.

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incorporation of organic material into soils.

- ❑ Endogeic species feed on subsurface material containing large amounts of soil, with a preference for soil rich in organic matter. They build burrows that are mostly horizontal and repeatedly branched, and play an important role in decompos-

Continued on page 31

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SOIL HEALTH

From page 27

posing roots, mixing and aerating soil.

□ Anecic species build permanent, vertical burrows that penetrate the soil deeply. These species come to the surface to feed on partially decomposed litter, manure, and other organic matter. They have profound effects on organic matter decomposition, nutrient cycling, and soil formation.

South African conditions are



The indigenous green giant wrinkled earthworm

quite harsh for earthworms, so our species live well below the surface of the soil. Local earthworms need a lot of territory in which to roam. For these reasons our worms are not suited to vermicomposting and worm farms, where worms are kept in large containers and are fed organic waste, producing vermicompost or liquid fertiliser (vermi-tea) as a result.

Eisenia fetida, its close relative *Eisenia andrei*, and *Lumbricus rubellus* are the earthworm species most commonly used in vermiculture. They are referred to by a variety of common names, including red worms, red wigglers, tiger worms, brandling worms and manure worms.

They are often raised together and are difficult to tell apart. They are native to Europe, but have been introduced (both intentionally and unintentionally) to every other

continent except Antarctica. These worms are also used in industrial sized worm farms at large hotels and other institutions to deal with organic waste and to provide compost. They are epigeic. Apart from South Africa's proven indigenous species, scientists have found as many as 50 species of earthworms in South African soils which are not native to South Africa. The majority of species are well known as broadly distributed all over the world. Some of them are now well

adapted to South African soils and climatic conditions, and have developed into large communities.

Some of these species occur in arable fields, sometimes replacing local worms, which were partly or fully exterminated from these habitats by unfavourable agriculture or industrial practices.

There is growing concern that introduced worms may have a negative effect on the local environment. Some species are great eaters of organic

Continued on page 33

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From page 31

matter and might be competitive consumers of food needed for native invertebrates.

It is usually accepted that earthworms may spread naturally, although very slowly, being carried by water (rivers, streams, rainfall), possibly by birds, and certainly transported intentionally or accidentally by humans. It is inevitable that some of the exotic worms will get into the soil, as compost from the worm farms is dug in. Some exotic worms are also used as bait for fishing. They are also increasingly being used for soil improvement.

The *Eisenia* worms are able to adapt to local conditions, which means that they are living near or on the surface of the soil or in leaf litter. The indigenous worms live deeper in the soil, so the worry is not that the introduced worms will compete for resources with the indigenous worms, although this possibility has not been ruled out. What researchers have expressed alarm about is the effect that the exotic worms have on the soil structure near the surface. One of the main issues is the resulting loss of the "O Horizon" – the uppermost layer in the soil profile (consisting primarily of fallen leaves and other organic matter in forest environments) and mixing of organic matter into the "A Horizon" (next

layer down) once certain invasive species become established.

When no earthworms are present, this organic matter breakdown generally takes place over the course of years ~ whereas the process is often greatly accelerated when earthworms are present.

This rapid breakdown of the O Horizon can greatly impact nutrient cycling. Some evidence suggests that certain

key nutrients such as nitrogen (N) and phosphorus (P) become less available, or end up lost via leaching as a result. It has been found to reduce understorey vegetation and result in the loss of certain plant species altogether (namely those dependent on the habitat, and other benefits provided by the O Horizon).



Eisenia fetida, aka, Red Wigglers

It is within this context, as well as the fact that the earthworms in South Africa

Continued on page 35

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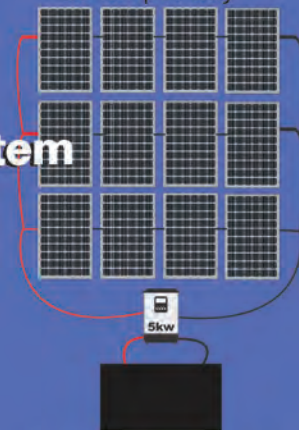
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In grains it can happen during yield initiation and where the

Stage of growth dictates energy needs. Supplying according to these maximises plant health, vigour and crop yield

plant changes from vegetative to reproductive (flowering) stage. With vegetables and perennials this can happen during flowering, cell division and fruit fill.

If and when this unique energy requirement is not

met, the plant experiences an "energy crisis" is called metabolic stress.

Metabolic stress is where the plant ran out of energy and it can be measured in BRIX, pH and conductivity of the plant sap. Metabolic stress can also

be initiated by chemical damage, or mechanical and climatic causes.

When the plant is in metabolic stress the yield and quality of the crop goes down and the plant becomes susceptible to pathogen and insect attacks due to lack of available energy.

By adding natural organic metabolism support prod-

Continued on page 41

SOIL

From page 35

have not yet been fully documented, that there is an urgent need to build capacity and to conduct earthworm research.

According to animal ecologist Dr Adrian Armstrong, "There are indigenous invertebrates that can be used in composting. This is a field of research that needs to be urgently tackled, as spreading invasive alien species is, in my opinion, always going to have negative consequences for indigenous biodiversity.

"I do not know of any peer-reviewed scientific study that has properly demonstrated that the spread of an alien invasive species has not had any negative consequences on biodiversity in the long-term."

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Spare a thought for grass-dwelling birds

When planning your veld management, spare a thought for the birds that live in your pasture, as they will be affected by your burning

and grazing programmes. South Africa is home to 844 bird species, of which 350 species occur in our grasslands, 40% of which are 'grassland specialists', meaning

they do not live anywhere else.

Birds provide a service to the environment by controlling insects and rodents, pollination, seed dispersal and

nutrient cycling. They are also good indicators of the biodiversity of an area. The Grassland Biome in which most Gauteng smallholders live is under threat, which means the birds which inhabit it are equally threatened by loss of habitat through agriculture and human expansion. So they need our help in their conservation.

Grazing and fire are impor-
Continued on page 39

PLANT ENERGY

From page 35

ucts the plant's energy levels can be restored, says World Focus Agri. This results in

- ☐ More enzyme activation,
- ☐ An increase in hormone activity;
- ☐ Continued regrowth of hair roots
- ☐ Increasing concentration of plant sugar and nutrients
- ☐ Increasing balance of abscisic acid and an increase in plant sap mobility
- ☐ Increasing photosynthesis activity;
- ☐ Buffering of the soil or growing medium pH which protect seedlings against the high salt index of chemical fertilizers;
- ☐ Increased production of transport enzymes - for better growth and hardiness;
- ☐ Optimal photosynthesis and respiration.

Because of these changes in the plant's metabolism there will be significant increase in glucose, sugar, starch and amino acid production.

It provides excellent conditions for optimal flowering, fruit set and thus eventually improved yield and an extended shelf life

To achieve integrated plant energy management, World Focus Agri suggests the use of tGliogrow, CCM, Complex, Calsus, Complex Calsul, Complex, SuperCa, COA

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From page 37

tant tools used to create a mosaic of grass height and cover that would support high densities of desired bird species.

Grass height and grass cover are the most important habitat features that support a variety of bird life. Some birds prefer relatively short and open grass, while others like short and relatively dense grass and yet others prefer grass of intermediate height

and cover. Some also need tall and dense grass. Burning and grazing programmes should represent a compromise between keeping livestock and protecting biodiversity. Such regimes typically include variability in the fire frequency, timing and intensity, as well as the appropriate grazing system that avoids the extremes of high- or low-intensity grazing, but that ensures complete rest for at

least one growing season out of four. Most experts now advise against annual burning, except in one's firebreaks. Burning too often leads to changes in the plant composition of the field, which in turn impacts the availability of food and nesting sites for birds. One should certainly avoid burning at any time of the year other than

early winter, because the extra-dry conditions of late winter (such as now) allow for a much "hotter" burn which not only destroys the old top grass growth, but which also destroys much of the surface-level growth and even the roots.

Avoid repeatedly burning extremely large camps. Animals and insects that can't survive fire need to be able to return to burnt areas from neighbouring unburnt populations. If the burnt area

is always too large and not burnt patchily, localised extinction may occur.

If you do choose to burn, only burn one of your fields per year, so that the other fields offer protection and food for the birds.

Different bird species specialise in different stages of grass evolution, so there are climax specialist bird species as well as short grass and pioneer bird specialists.

Continued on page 41



Grass owl (picture: Matt Pretorius)

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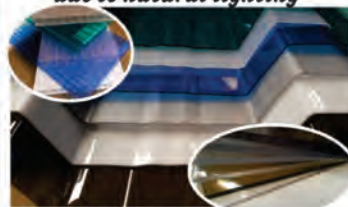
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PASTURE



Spotted thick-knee
From page 39

Conversely, management areas should also not be burnt less frequently than every four years. Some veld management experts maintain that grasslands are fire climax adapted systems and need to be burnt in order to retain their diversity and ecosystem processes, which will in turn support the bird life.

Bird experts would also prefer it if natural grasslands were not mowed. If you do need to mow, consider mowing from the centre of the field. The typical practice of mowing a field from the perimeter towards the centre forces birds into a continually smaller space as they try to avoid the mower. Instead, farmers have found that harvesting the field from the centre and gradually working towards the edges can encourage grassland nesting birds and other animals to scatter outward towards cover.

Grazing has always been part of the natural management of grasslands. However the number of animals that we put in our fields is often detrimental to the plant variety, the invertebrate food webs and the birds that depend on forbs or broad-

leaved herbaceous plants. It makes sense not to overgraze, as this may lead to a loss of vigour in the sward, altered species composition and veld degradation. It will also lead to a change or decrease in bird diversity. If you are keeping sheep, do not leave them in a field for too long, as they are selective grazers. They will eat certain grasses and plants and leave others.

Once again this affects the balance of plants and leads to domination of certain plants which will not suit either the sheep or the birds. The Smallholder has written before on multi-specie grazing for the good of the veld.

Minimise intensive late-season grazing, because ground-nesting birds could be negatively impacted through trampling or by increasing predator detection of nests. Grazing the new growth immediately after a burn can increase susceptibility to soil erosion and result in loss of the humus layer in which many invertebrates live, thereby decreasing prey availability to grassland birds. This also results in nutrient leaching of the soil, causing reduced productivity of the veld and hence lower carrying capacity for grazing animals.

We also need to plan to rest one of our fields at any one time, to allow the grass to return to good vigour, recover from grazing and trampling, and build up sufficient energy reserves to be able to grow quickly in the new growing season. Increasing the length of rest periods might also

Continued on page 43

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CROPS

Pomegranate: The next big thing?

Pomegranate is an emerging crop in South Africa. According to the ARC Infruitec-Nietvoorbij, its popularity is rising both for local consumption and for export.

Not only has the pomegranate extensive culinary uses, where the brilliant colouring of the

seeds, which are called arils, is used to great effect, but the health benefits of the fruit and juice are also being highlighted.

Smallholders might therefore consider establishing a pomegranate orchard, particularly if you are not badly affected by frost.

Continued on page 44



Pomegranate, var Wonderful, a commercial variety

PASTURE

From page 41

allow birds to return to an area and to breed there.

If you are lucky enough to have a wetland on your smallholding, burning and grazing should also be limited in this area. Many bird species use wetlands seasonally for nesting.

Even your crop planting can be bird friendly. Although small grain and row crops do not provide ideal habitat for most grassland birds, some birds will forage for waste grain in these fields. Use conservation tillage practices to provide residual cover and

food resources for wildlife and reduce pesticide and synthetic fertilizer input. Establish grassy conservation buffers along waterways and field borders to reduce runoff and provide wildlife and bird habitat. Practice crop rotation and resting your fields.

We need to approach the management of our land as holistically as possible, maintaining awareness of the entire eco-system in order to give it as much support as we can. This includes the birds, which also bring so much pleasure and interest when we observe them.

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CROPS

From page 43

However, don't expect to make a quick buck. Be prepared to wait, because it will take two to three years before the tree bears fruit and then the fruits mature late, or drop before maturing. It will take five to six years for the tree to mature and produce large harvests. There is an association of pomegranate producers, so enough people must have decided that it's worth the wait.

There are several ways to

propagate pomegranates, but the trees do better when propagated from 25 to 50 cm long hardwood cuttings. The cuttings should be placed in a bed with one or two buds above the soil and allowed to remain in place for a year; thereafter they can be transplanted to their permanent positions.

It is also possible to buy trees. Go to www.superpoms.com/ to find a nursery near you where you can buy them.

If trees are purchased as established container grown plants, they can be transplanted at any time of the year except in regions that experience severe frost. In areas with severe frost it is best to plant only once all danger of frost has passed (normally after mid-September). If you purchase bare-rooted trees or wish to transplant trees that are already established, you can only do



Pomegranates on tree

this during the dormant period (usually June to mid-August).

The most constricting factors for commercial pomegranate

Continued on page 45

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Pomegranate orchard

From page 44
production are areas with too high humidity and rainfall during summer or areas that receive severe frost during winter.

Pomegranates can tolerate moderate frost (around -5°C) well but trouble starts when severe frost (around -10°C) occurs on a regular basis.

Frost resistance varies greatly from variety to variety and is also dependant on the age of the tree.

Pomegranate can successfully be grown on a wide range of soils. Optimum growth conditions though, will be achieved in deeper well-drained loam soils with good moisture and nutrient retention and a pH ranging between 6.5 and 7.5.

Aside from soil type and drainage, site selection should also take into consideration to ensure sun exposure and air circulation. Pomegranates need as much sun as they can get ~ a minimum of six hours a day ~ so that they can produce quality and abundant fruit. Aligning the orchard rows and planting slopes according to optimum sun exposure (but minimising sunburn) is important. Soil drainage is as important as row orientation and trees should be planted in best possible position related to these factors.

They are fairly drought tolerant, but for a high fruit yield they should be irrigated. Keep the soil moist during the growing season and particu-

larly during harvesting time in late summer and early autumn. This will also reduce the number of fruit that split. It is important that the soil preparation is finished, and the irrigation is laid out and water is available, before the trees are planted, as one must be able irrigate the plants immediately after planting. The water is essential to make sure that the soil compacts around the roots to prevent the drying out of the root.

If you are planting an orchard, the spacing should be at least 4m apart in the rows and 5-6m between the rows.

There are two common approaches for training a pomegranate plant: single or multi-trunked. The single-trunk plant has a short (50 – 60 cm) trunk with five to six major branches diverging to form a vase-shaped structure. The single-trunk approach has the advantages of easier orchard floor maintenance and reduced costs associated with pruning suckers.

Pomegranate being a perennial crop, producing huge quantity of biomass generally demands specific amounts of nutrient elements. Depending on the soil analysis results, about 200 kg/hectare nitrogen is given annually.

Most commercial pomegranate orchards are irrigated and drip irrigation or micro

Continued on page 47



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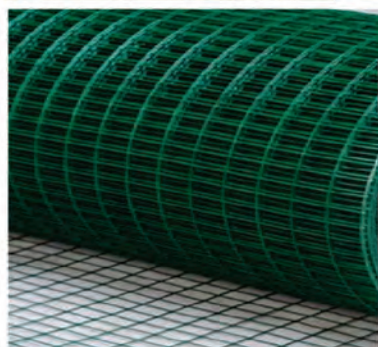


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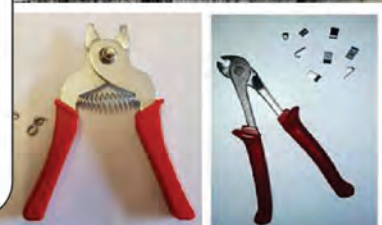
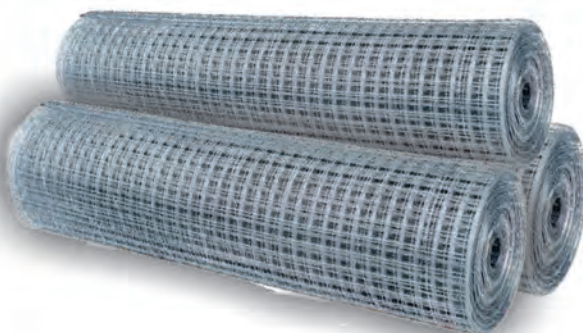
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In praise of 'grow-your-own'

A survey carried out a few years back in Gauteng showed that an astonishing 31% of our readers did not grow any

—POMEGRANATES

From page 45
sprinklers can be used. Cultivars vary with respect to fruit size, external colour (ranging from yellow to purple/black), internal aril colour (ranging from nearly white to red), and hardness of the seed, juice content, acidity and sweetness. The most popular cultivars are Wonderful, Acco, Kessari and Hershkowitz.

The pomegranate is a fruit that contains hundreds of edible seeds called arils. They are rich in fibre, vitamins, minerals and bioactive plant compounds, but they also contain some sugar. They also

vegetables on their plots. With the spring planting season upon us, perhaps smallholders should reconsider, for a number of

contain punicalagins and puniceic acid, unique substances that are responsible for most of their health benefits. They are also useful in the fight against heart disease and inflammation and they have antibacterial and antiviral properties. Due to the high tannic acid content in the skins of pomegranates, the Ancient Romans used the skins in the leather tanning process, while in certain cultures the juice is used as a dye.

For more information on producing and selling pomegranates go to www.sapomegranate.co.za.

powerful reasons ~ and not necessarily to do with filling their pantries.

The most obvious reason is, of course, the saving on buying something which you can grow yourself. If you have space and adequate water (and all smallholdings have the space, if not the water), it makes sense to grow your

own.

Particularly as the difference in flavour is undeniable ~ anyone who has picked a tomato off a vine and eaten it there and then will tell you that the taste is incomparable to anything bought in a shop, however fresh the latter may seem.

Continued on page 49

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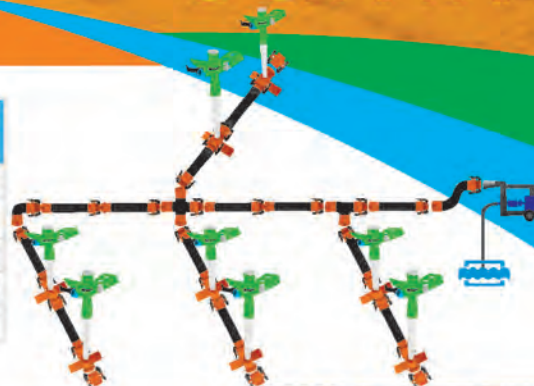
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IN THE GARDEN

From page 47

Because you are eating the veg straight out of the garden the freshness also contains great health benefits. And you know exactly what has gone into the soil to produce this bounty, as well as to discourage pests ~ hopefully few or no chemicals.

Doctors recommend gardening as a form of exercise. If your back was sore after pruning in August you will acknowledge that gardening includes a lot of physical exertion. Working with plants helps individuals get the physical activity they need to stay in shape or improve their current condition.

Thirty minutes a day digging, raking, watering or generally pottering in the garden will improve your fitness and the health of your heart, lungs, joints and muscles. Some research suggests that the physical activity associated with gardening can help lower the risk of developing dementia.

The physical activity improves the flow of blood to the brain, which in turn leads to an increase in release of "feel-good" chemicals in the brain, such as serotonin and dopamine.

The vegetables that you choose to grow can also affect your mental state. Stock your vegetable gardens with feel-good foods that are good for brain health.

Leafy green vegetables such as spinach, along with turnips and beets are high in folic acid. Deficiencies in this mineral are thought to contribute to conditions such as depression and fatigue. Onions and broccoli are thought to contain selenium which can help reduce symptoms of anxiety.

Neurologist Dr Oliver Sacks maintains that we are in fact hardwired to work outdoors. "Biophilia, the love of nature and living things, is an essential part of the human condition. Hortophilia, the

desire to interact with, manage, and tend nature, is also deeply instilled in us. ... The effects of nature's qualities on health are not only spiritual and emotional but physical and neurological. I have no doubt that they reflect deep changes in the brain's physiology, and perhaps even its structure."



As well as being a good workout for your body, studies indicate that the sophisticated brain activity

involved with planting and gardening is also a good workout for the brain. Gardening strengthens attention span and concentration, which helps us to cope with the noise and information that modern existence is constantly throwing at us.

Another physical improvement is due to the fact that you are breathing fresh air. Plants play an important role
Continued on page 51

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IN THE GARDEN

From page 49

in cleaning the air and carbon sequestration, so you are making your small contribution in the battle against global warming.

There is also a benefit in physically getting your hands dirty in the garden. We know that soil has its own microbiome and research has revealed that our contact with it has value for our own immune systems, gut biomes and general quality of life. A common harmless soil bacterium, *Mycobacterium vaccae*, has been shown to stimulate neurons in our

brains that produce serotonin as well as positively affecting the immune system.

We also know that our health depends on the flourishing microbiome in our guts, so there is little need to be horrified if you toddler ingests a mud pie or two.

Neuroscientists are working on research that seems to show that our gut microbiomes are healthier if they are exposed to the ancient and beneficial parasites, fungi, and bacteria that are found in soil.

Researchers are also studying the possibility that an ancient soil bacteria might ward off anxiety and depression.

Many of us are pretty depressed about what is going on in our world and issues like the climate crisis ~ perhaps getting our hands productively busy in the soil and encouraging our whole family to do likewise, might

help us to cope a bit better.

Laboratory tests also show that exposure to *Mycobacterium vaccae* helps in reducing anxiety.

All in all growing vegetables is great therapy!

And, while on the subject, if you are a keen gardener in your adulthood, think back to your childhood. Chances are your mother or father was a keen gardener too, and introduced you at a young age to the practice. How many adults today remember planting radish seeds as young kids? Why? Because radish

sprouts the fastest of all vegetables, putting up a robust structure of dicotyledonous leaves only a couple of days after the seed is buried and watered. Plenty fast enough not to stretch the attention span of even the most impatient youngster.

So while you're out there this summer planting, watering, trimming, weeding and harvesting, drag the kids along and turn the time you spend into family fun.

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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 55. 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 / call Lizelle on 079 716 4792 for details of special shows. Cattle drive with City Slickers breakfast, Diamond X Cowboy Ranch, near Rayton. Call Rudan on 082 410-3180 / visit <http://www.diamondxrancho.co.za>, R500 per person.

Mnandi Methodist Church, 09:00, Mnandi Centre, cnr Tulip and Short Streets, Jen 012 651-5509 or 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, NG Kerk, 8 Canadair Ave, Impala Park, Boksburg, call Warren 082 335 0049 or Tony 082 443 4425, 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

September

4-5: Dairy Processing Course: Yoghurt & Maas, ARC Irene Campus. R3 500. Call Mokela Mothabela 012 672 9402
6-15: Permaculture Design Course, Muldersdrift. Cost: R5 000 (incl course materials, catering, manual, facilitation). You will learn about water, soil and waste management solutions; sustainable, organic and ethical ways to grow fruits and vegetables, raise animals and repair ecosystems; sustainable building and energy solutions. To register go to <https://www.sapermaculture.com/calendar>.

For more info email grow@sapermaculture.com or contact Raquel 084 782-3230 or see SA Permaculture or Unity Farm's Facebook page.

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

7: Vaalbank Country Market, next to Wet Nose on R104 near Rayton, 09:00 – 15:00. Wide variety of community stalls, even art classes. Karen 081 271 2300

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

17-19: Open Commercial Rabbit Breeds Championship Show, Afridome, Parys. Enter your rabbits at the show, rabbit meat tasting, meat for sale, breeding stock, expert advice. Prize money up for grabs! For more information contact 081 765 0469.

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 Showground's, Walkerville. Rabbit Judging on 28 September, sales and rabbit jumping on 29 September. For enquiries contact Jens 082 447-5080

October

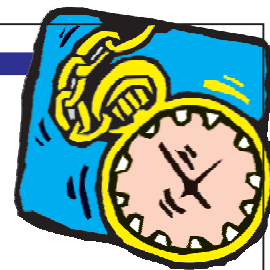
1 – 4: Dairy Processing Course: Cheese, ARC Irene Campus. Call Mokela Mothabela 012 672 9402

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

13: Full Moon

13: 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
28: New Moon

November

2: 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

10: 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: Full Moon
20-21: Dairy Processing Course: Yoghurt & Maas, ARC Irene Campus. R3 500. Call Mokela Mothabela 012 672 9402

26: New Moon
30: Bokkie Park Food & Craft Night 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

30: BirdLife South Africa's 35th Birding Big Day (BBD). To register or find out more go to <https://www.birdlife.org.za/support-us/events/birding-big-day-2019/>



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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, Krieger Street ext, Silverton	012 804 8031 or 079 987 1025	Fresh produce, traditional bazaar treats like jaffles, kailings with pap & boerewors rolls.
	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 Midrand	08:00 – 12:30	30 Olifantsfontein Rd (opposite RMM Builders), Glen Austin (Cor Allan & Olifantsfontein Rds)	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 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, play area, 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.
	Midrand Circles Market	09:00 - 15:00	118 Allan Road, Glen Austin	Margaret 079 394 5054	Freshly locally grown produce, raw honey, indigenous flowers & trees, food stalls, fresh meat stalls, cheese, eggs, coffee, books, Gallery, and Paint Your Own Ceramics.
Last Saturday	Windpomp Handwerk Market	08:00 – 14:00	Broodblike & Koffiepit Pretoria Road between Pettit and Bapsfontein	Adele 083 445 1608	Pet friendly. Hand crafts, food, music, coffee, kids' play area, preserves, goat's milk products biltong, pap & kailings.
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.ffmarket.co.za	Get your groceries...in the garden!



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It's enough, already!

Some poor logistical planning recently on the part of my son and I saw us cruising the streets of Cullinan on a public holiday looking for a beer and lunch. But it seemed that many others had suffered poor logistical planning too and had also descended on the town, and all the more obvious eateries seemed fit to bursting.

And then my son saw a sign for the Oppiestasie Restaurant & Pub pointing down a rutted dirt track. So there we went. It is, indeed, the old station. All the tables on the old platform were full so we were ushered inside, to what would have been a waiting room or ticket office. It's a homely, small place, with wooden panelled walls and a wooden slatted ceiling that hasn't been repainted from the days when it was a station, which must have been shortly after Mr Cullinan found his diamond. The ceiling's pale green gloss enamel paint is now faded and stained by smoke to a pale brown, and some slats are coming alarmingly loose. Nevertheless there's a sense of character to the place which makes one feel right at home.

Outside, where the railway tracks were, is a playground for children, trains having become no more than a ghostly memory. The friendly young waitress warned us that we faced a wait for our orders as they were understaffed and under pressure. No matter, we assured her. We had the whole day ahead of us free of the cares of work, the state of the nation etc.

And so we settled down with a couple of beers to a good chat ~ family skinder, and banter about this and that.

In time we ordered a simple lunch of homemade beef pies and salad, and more beer.

Now here's the thing. I have eaten food out of many things in my decades upon this earth. Plates of paper, china, plastic and enamel, plastic lunch boxes, metal scoff tins, planks of wood (of dubious cleanliness), slabs of super-heated granite or cast-iron (that continued to cook one's medium-rare steak to the point of ruination), even banana leaves. Not to mention the more modern fad by a certain fish restaurant chain of serving food in cheap aluminium frying pans.

But Oppiestasie in Cullinan has taken absurd eating surfaces to a whole new level.

For in time, from the kitchen, appeared two old miner's shovels, the handles shortened to a few inches, and the shovel part resting on four welded-on bits of round-bar to make the thing stand level.

In the shovels were our pies and salad with a small enamel mug of thick gravy for the pie.

The grub itself wasn't bad. The pies were, indeed, home-made, generous both in size and in their filling, which was a well-flavoured mixture of tender gristle-free beef chunks and mince in a rich sauce, and the salad a generous portion of lettuce, tomato, and the usual.

A bottle of vinaigrette dressing, which appeared unbidden to adorn the salad, drew the comment from my son that it added an interesting, somewhat galvanic, flavour to the salad when it came into contact with the steel of the shovel.

Hmmm...

Now don't get me wrong. Full marks to the owners of the pub for some imaginative thinking. The rear of the pub overlooks the Cullinan Mine's big hole (incidentally, at one time the largest man-made hole in the world), and miners' shovels must have been ten-a-penny in the town at one time.

But it's enough, already. Because where to from here?

Imagine, for a moment, what the next bright idea for eating surfaces might be.

Imagine, for example, a pub near a hospital (it would probably have a name like The Broken Syringe or The Surgeon's Scalpel). And imagine if the owners became really "creative". Would they serve the food in old bedpans?

And then I saw a boredpanda list on the internet entitled weird-food-serving-ideas-restaurants-we-want-plates, and I realised that, somewhere on this crazy planet, it's already been done. Well, not a bedpan, exactly, but there's a restaurant in Cuba that serves food in a porcelain urinal. Chunks of well-done meat smothered in a thick, brown gravy. Whether the obvious resemblance of this dish to the usual contents of a water closet is intentional I have no idea. But it's better, perhaps, than being served a urinal full of chicken soup.



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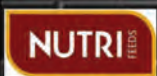


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