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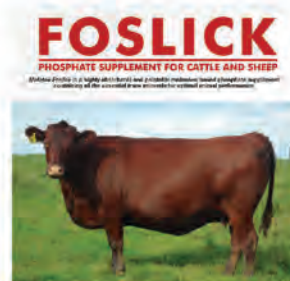


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FRONT COVER

Two members of the Riverpark branch
of the SA Pony Club negotiate a water
hazard during the annual Childrens'
Hunt at the Inanda Country Base.
See Page 12.

COMMENT, by Pete Bower

Planning ahead



By about July, oceanographers studying the central Pacific Ocean will have a pretty good idea on how the temperature of that vast body of seawater is going to behave over the ensuing six to ten months.

If they predict that the temperature will rise, they'll be telling us in the southern hemisphere to prepare for another dry summer ~ an El Nino effect. If they believe the temperature will be lower, they'll be telling us to prepare for a wet, or at least a normal, summer ~ a La Nina effect.

By about July, of course, we in South Africa will be in the full swing of winter. Endless cloudless days of bright sunshine followed by bitterly cold cloudless nights in which pipes freeze up and frost hammers vegetables, flowers and grassland alike.

(And in time, this dry brown grassland will turn black as the veld fire season gets into full swing. But that's another story.)

By about July, too, the effects of this season's drought will have started to be felt throughout the food supply chain. In the shops market forces will mean customers will be dealing with higher prices. In the ports, by about July, ships will start arriving to discharge the millions of tons of maize, wheat and other grains that South Africa will have to buy to cover for the shortfall created by this season's drought. Maize and grains that will be bought on international markets and paid for in Rands, which considering the value of the currency has deteriorated by 25% in the past year (and heaven only knows where it will be four months from here...) will make it very expensive maize indeed.

There may be temporary or even chronic shortages of certain commodities.

Consumers of all classes will find that their salaries don't go as far as they used to and cuts to luxuries such as dining out, holidays and entertainment may have to be made.

For the poor and unemployed, of course, the effect of rising food prices will be doubly devastating and markedly higher prices coupled with possible shortages make food-related riots a distinct possibility.

That, in a nutshell, is how the situation looks. You can, of course, choose to do nothing and simply ride out whatever the effects of the drought are for you, your family and your plot.

Or you can use the intelligence you will glean from the Pacific oceanographers in about July to plan ahead and prepare for whatever next season throws at you.

For your family this should at the very least entail planning a vegetable garden, if you don't already have one, to foresee the needs of the kitchen and in so doing make you at least partially independent of the high-priced supermarkets.

And as you live on a smallholding and probably have space to spare, planting a little extra for use by your staff, and as a donation to the needy, will be a sensible thing to do and give you a warm feeling of goodwill to boot.

If you have livestock of any kind, the intelligence you glean in about July should inform any decision you may need to make concerning stocking numbers and feeding regimens.

If another dry summer is expected it may be worthwhile cutting back on the number of animals you keep. You may need to sell off all but the very best to ensure you can get by with limited grazing or expensive, scarce, bought-in fodder.

Another strategy will be to buy in non-perishable feed such as hay earlier than you normally would, establishing your own contingency fodder bank, to see you through the lean time ahead.

This is something you can do as a simple smallholder. It's also something farmers can do individually or co-operatively.

Indeed, proactively establishing emergency fodder banks is something the government, in the form of the various provincial departments, and the national department of agriculture, should be doing too.

Rather, therefore, than being re-active to the effects of drought and flood, if the government were proactive and used the intelligence we all will receive from the scientists in about July, its efforts would surely be more successful. For, frankly inadequate relief aid after the event, when farmers are already on their knees financially, will be nowhere near as effective in the long run as putting in place the necessary regulatory framework and infrastructure (eg barns) to establish regional fodder banks in the most drought prone regions when fodder is available and plentiful and storing it carefully for use when it is not.

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Grass-fed vs bought feed meat: a difference

Sir ~ I must express my great sense of appreciation for the valuable, open and honest information in the *Smallholder* magazine. Such information from experienced seniors is getting harder to find nowadays, especially for those who prefer a hard copy over a computer screen.

I write today requesting an article on concentrate animal feeds and the effects on the human body.

The reason for my query is due to some observations.

I have been eating meat (beef and goat), chicken and eggs from a small time farmer who fed his animals as naturally as possible. The cattle and goats were fed only grass and old vegetables. The chickens were fed corn and vegetable scraps. Although a few rands more expensive than the local butchers', the quality of the meat was far different. A lot more cooking time was needed for all, including the eggs, no smell would emanate from the meat and eggs and they all provided a very

wholesome meal.

Unfortunately the farmer has now passed on so I started purchasing meat from another friend on a smallholding who feeds his animals concentrate feeds (something similar to Molatek), claiming it has all the nutrients the animals need.

The differences I found were as follows:

- ☐ The meat was far softer and if cooked for too long will separate off the bone very easily.
- ☐ The egg yolks were very

yellow as opposed to the orange yolks of before, and the eggs fry a lot quicker.

☐ The chicken bones could be broken by hand as opposed to the old ones that needed much more force. Cooking time is a lot quicker as well.

☐ Our worst point to note: the eggs, and more so the meat, would give my entire family such nasty foul smelling winds (passing of gas) with an extremely lingering chemical stench. This was never the

Continued on page 6

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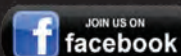
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MAILBAG

Monica, the septic sucker water truck

Sir ~ I thoroughly enjoy reading the *Smallholder* each month. It is very informative and entertaining. The highlights of your March edition, as far as I'm concerned, were the 'Quirky' article about the true history of the world and the piece about Suck Well donating a water tanker to residents of

the Marister/Benoni agricultural holdings.

My congratulations to whoever gave the name 'Monica' to a water tanker belonging to Suck Well! However, I did wonder what Ms Lewinski would have thought of the name. Whoever it was - give that man a Bells!!

Fred Pearson

By email

Alet Potgieter of Suck Well responds: And that is why our big truck is called BILL. Who says you can't have a sense of humour when you work with sh&t?

□ And in further news just in: Ms Lewinsky has released the following statement on Hillary Clinton's run for the US presidency: "I will not vote for Hillary Clinton. The last Clinton Presidency left a bad

Continued on page 8

MEAT

From page 5

case before.

I have given a few kgs of meat to a different household as a test and they found the same results.

□ The kids complain of a lot of pain when passing stools and they emerge from the lavatory almost traumatised. Understanding that buying meat from a feedlot/smallholder system is far different than free ranging meats we find in the larger farm areas. But here is a comparison and

effects of two methods of feeding, both from a smallholder.

Please shed some light on the animal feed effects on the human body based on my observations.

Basheer Essop

By email

We will certainly look into the composition of various animal feeds, and the various methods of feeding animals for slaughter, in forthcoming editions. ~ Editor

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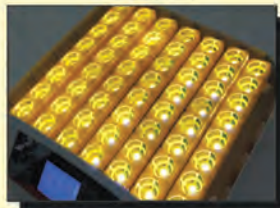
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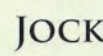
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Laezonia feedlot, abattoir mooted

A basic assessment process has been announced for a 1 000-head cattle feedlot and abattoir that has been proposed for a 14ha property in Laezonia. This will form a preliminary part of the environmental impact assessment process required for such a development, in terms of the National Environmental Management

Act, No 107 of 1998. The so-called Delpont development covers portions 25, 26 and 27 of Laezonia Agricultural Holdings and if approved will have a capacity of 1 000 cattle or 1 500 small stock, with associated structures and buildings, as well as an abattoir. The developer is given as Isidwedwe Clothing Primary Co-operative and interested

or affected parties, ie residents of Laezonia and surrounding areas, have been invited to register with the environmental assessment practitioners to be able to have input and to view the basic assessment

report once completed. The assessment body is Hydro Geo Engineers. Contact person is Blessing Taenzana, tel 078 488-2247 or email btaenzana@gmail.com

SA's record pumpkin

A new South African record was set last month when a pumpkin grower from Henley on Klip presented a 506kg Atlantic Giant pumpkin at a weigh-in organised by heirloom seed merchant Livingseeds and sponsored by Standard Bank and Talborne Organics. Shirley Olivier's giant pumpkin was her fourth effort. She used seed imported from the US and tells the *Smallholder* that it was planted on 10 October last year. How do you achieve a records



Shirley Olivier of Henley-on-Klip with her 506kg pumpkin and cheque for R20 000.

MONICA

From page 6
taste in my mouth.
"As we get closer to November of this election year, citizens must remember that they cannot trust Hillary Clinton to create American jobs.
"The last time she had a meaningful job, she outsourced it to me. And I simply blew it".

Continued on page 9

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Drought? What drought? Extra-wet March in Gauteng

Although rain has been falling over Gauteng in gratifying quantities since the start of the year, it

has come too late to be of much benefit to many crop farmers in the area. Indeed, while the first half of

summer was dry in Gauteng, the latter period from New Year to mid-March has seen above average rainfall, with

the first half of March proving to be particularly damp in East Gauteng, in fact the wettest March we have recorded since 2001.

As a result, if the rainy weather continues, this season could prove no dryer than any other year of normal rainfall in Gauteng. But, while it has filled dams

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From page 8

pumpkin? Olivier's advice is to feed it copiously. In her case she estimates it takes about ten times as much fertilizer to achieve record growth than one would use in a regular pumpkin patch.

What does one do with a 500-plus kg pumpkin? Olivier says the Atlantic Giant, while edible, is not particularly tasty, being rather watery. "So we feed them to our cattle, which relish them," she says.

Making her efforts all the more worthwhile was her prize of

R20 000.

At the same competition, the juvenile section was won by an entrant from Morehill in Benoni, seven-year-old Angelique Attwell, who managed a gourd of 93 kg from seed planted on 15 Oct last year.

☐ Olivier has a way to go if



How you move a half ton pumpkin.

PUMPKIN

she wants to win the world record: It stands at more than double her effort at 1 054kg and was set by a Swiss grower in 2014.

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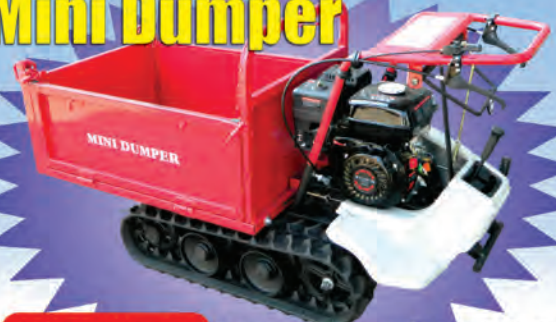
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Pony Club to run W'ville Show horse events

This year's equestrian events at the 54th Walkerville Agricultural Show this month will again be run by the Walkerville branch of the SA Pony Club, which took over the running of the horse events at the show in

2013, hosting best of the breed parades, mounted games demonstrations, dressage, showing and show jumping competition classes in subsequent years. The large grass arena at the Walkerville show grounds has

been a popular venue for horsey events since regular gymkhana competitions were run there in the 1970s and 1980s. Des and Jean Linden of Thornhill Stables were instrumental in building and

maintaining the facilities and the showgrounds became the home of the Southern Transvaal Equestrian Society in 1981.

In addition it was the home

Continued on page 12

From page 9

Rainfall in Bredell, East Gauteng 2001-2016. March only, and annual totals from Sep-August. Figures for 2016 are to March 18 only.

	March	Total
2016	255.5*	785*
2015	80.5	605.5
2014	194.5	928.5
2013	44	874
2012	87	757
2011	218	907.5
2010	88.5	977
2009	114	662
2008	129	926
2007	35	456
2006	76.5	768
2005	83.5	603.5
2004	113	751
2003	85	556
2002	48	720.5
2001	46	762.5

(Hartbeespoort Dam saw all ten of its sluice gates opened for the first time in years), flooded rivers and caused loss of both life and property, the rainfall has been too localised to affect the fortunes of many farmers further afield.

In the wheat-producing areas of the Western Cape, for example, not enough has fallen to make planting successful, while in the inland dryland maize areas two types of situation are apparent. On the one hand some farmers

decided to save money on inputs and effort by not ploughing or planting at all. So, while they may have saved money on inputs they will generate no income whatsoever. On the other hand, some farmers took the plunge and planted (incurring the input costs thereof). The rains, such as they were, came too late, and were too meagre, for a good crop but, hopefully, the little they are able to reap will be enough at least to cover the

Continued on page 12

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NEWS

Popular children's hunt starts kids drag hunting

To introduce young riders to the sport of hunting with hounds the Rand Hunt organises an annual Children's Hunt at the Inanda Country Base in Blue Hills.

This meet is aimed at giving children and young riders a chance to experience the excitement of being out with the hounds, but in a slower and safer context than a full-on adult hunt.

Members of SA Pony Club

branches from around Gauteng traditionally take part and at the most recent event riders from the Rand Hunt, Khaya Lami, Riverpark and Walkerville branches participated.

The Rand Hunt itself allocated extra hack masters for groups who were 'first timers' and for those who prefer to take it a little slower or who prefer not to jump the obstacles on the course.

Continued on page 13

W'VILLE SHOW

From page 11

base for both the Southern Transvaal branch of the SA Pony Club and the Walkerville Polocrosse club.

National showing judge, Gregory Goss, fondly remembers competing in many showing and showjumping horse shows in his youth, run by Pat and Phil Yeo.

The dual purpose competition arena enjoyed a makeover in 2013 as the centre of the speedway track was changed into a sand arena for horse events with the sponsorship and help of a number of local businesses and individuals.

The 2016 Walkerville Horse Show which forms part of the agricultural show is a two day event and will consist of the ever popular show jumping classes from 40cm to 1m, a mounted games competition and some in-hand and ridden showing classes for all breeds.

DROUGHT

From page 11

costs incurred in undertaking a planting at all.

What this means is that estimates of necessary maize imports to cover the shortfall in local production have diminished from the initial gigantic total of seven million tons, to something closer to half that.

With the backdrop of the 53rd Walkerville Agricultural Show, riders will be spoiled for choice for food, drink and entertainment in



A correctly-attired SA Pony Club member at a previous Walkerville Show: Courtney MacKenzie of the Walkerville Branch.

between competition classes. VCR Media House will be handling all the show's entertainment and will have their outside broadcast unit

Continued on page 13

From page 12

More proficient Pony Clubbers joined the main field led by the Field Master, and thus had the opportunity to see first-hand the Whippers-In working with the hounds at the head of the hunt.

The most exciting part of the hunt, however, for both riders and spectators, was the water crossing, where with much whooping and splashing riders and horses plunged headlong into chest-deep water.

□ In South Africa, riding to

hounds usually takes the form of a "drag-hunt", a necessary poor relation to the more traditional (and nowadays much maligned) form of British foxhunting, for two reasons; firstly because we don't have foxes to hunt in South Africa and secondly because we must have some way of overcoming the barbed wire fencing that South African land owners use to surround their fields. Drag hunting entails two riders setting off a few minutes before the hunt to lay a trail of scent for the

hounds. This is done by dragging a sack behind them that has been heavily soaked in ferret urine. They ride over a predetermined course (and sometimes lay short false trails off the main route to confuse the hounds and make the exercise more authentic.) The predetermined course will have been laid out before the meet, with rustic jumps and other obstacles having been constructed over wire fences to prevent injury to the horses as they cover the course.

In all other respects, drag hunting resembles the real thing, with a hunt master at the head of the field, assistant hunt masters to help out as necessary and whippers-in to control the pack of hounds (who are never referred to as dogs).

In a traditional fox hunt the hounds will pick up the scent of a fox and follow it wherever it may run until they catch it and kill it.

Thus participants have no way of knowing where the hunt will take them and they must be willing and able to jump any hedge, gate or stone wall over which the fox may choose to leap, and may end up many miles from their home base at the end of the meet.

Along the way they will also be troubled by the attentions of anti-hunting activists, and there is sometimes "collateral damage" where domestic dogs and cats, or poultry, are "taken out" by the hounds should the fox decide to lead the hunt close by a village or farmstead.

W'VILLE SHOW

From page 15

there for the weekend.

In addition the organisers say the show's livestock section will be a lot bigger this year. There is also a full programme of entertainment for children, lots of food available, a beer garden and performances by Dusty Dixon, Liezel Pieters, the DZL Band and others,

apart from displays of agricultural machinery, auctions, home industries, crafts and hobbies and working dog demonstrations. The show takes place at the Walkerville Showground, just off the R82, on Saturday and Sunday 9 and 10 April from 0900 hrs till late. Entrance is R30 per car.

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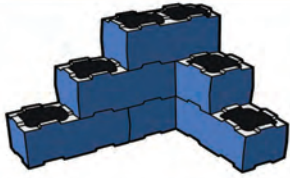
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How to handle your water without waste

What you can do on your plot ~ horticulturally at least ~ depends in large measure on how much water you have available, either in the form of that which comes from your borehole or, if you are lucky enough to enjoy riparian rights, that which you are allowed to pump from a stream or river. There is

another source, of course, namely rainfall, and how you handle and store that is a complete subject on its own. For most smallholders, therefore, irrigation water is not unlimited and some attempt must be made to use it sensibly, if not sparingly. How you irrigate, and when you irrigate, and how frequently you irrigate, will have a direct bearing on both

the health of your plants and the amount of water you use. But there is also a labour component to the equation. While a permanently-installed system may be more expensive initially, over a couple of years the cost of the labour involved in moving pipework and

sprinklers every few hours will become a factor to be reckoned with.

Designated, fixed planting areas with permanently installed irrigation systems are the most convenient from a labour standpoint and can often be automated to irrigate at set times and at set rates, even to the extent of not switching on when the timer senses sufficient rain has fallen.

The drawback of permanently installed irrigation systems, however, is that they render it impossible to cultivate the growing area mechanically, ie with a tractor and plough or rotavator, for fear of damaging the pipework.

A compromise, which still allows one to automate the irrigation process, is to use movable, semi-permanent pipework linked to a permanently-fixed timer. In this set-up the pipework will be lifted

out of the field at cultivation time and relaid before the field is planted.

The type of irrigation you use will also be dictated by the crop you are watering. Permanent plantings such as vines and fruit trees can be irrigated most effectively by driplines.

A dripline is basically a length of pipe connected to a tap or a timer at one end and sealed at the other, into which holes are drilled at exactly the same spacing as the plants are planted which

Continued on page 16



Driplines watering lettuce plants

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IRRIGATION

From page 15

they are to water.

Properly positioned, therefore, driplines deliver a measurable amount of water directly to the base of each plant, with no loss of water through misting and spray or, if the flow is slow enough, through run-off.

The only maintenance necessary in a dripline system is a periodic check to see that the delivery holes are not blocked.

Even plantings of annual crops, particularly of larger plants spaced some distance apart, such as tomatoes, can be irrigated using driplines, with the added advantage that the system will benefit plants (such as tomatoes) that are prone to leaf mould and mildew if they have their leaves wetted.

A further advantage of dripline irrigation is that it can be achieved using very low water pressure. In some cases

the pressure achieved merely by mounting a tank on a tank stand will be sufficient. Thus, dripline irrigation becomes possible for smallholders without electricity or who cannot afford booster pumps.

The moment some kind of spray is involved, either in the form of microjets, rotary impact sprayers, or cannon



Microjet irrigation in an orchard

sprayers, pumps become essential because the pressures required are very much higher.

Microjets, like driplines, can be used to water individual plants. They will usually be in a permanent irrigation system and the little spray heads can be found in various spray configurations and spray angles, from 90° (for corners of beds,) 180° (for watering on only one side of a path) and 360° (for watering in the middle of a bed).

If your water supply is in any way contaminated, with fine sand or plant material (including algae) it is essential to install an inline sieve or filter in the system to save yourself from spending hours unblocking clogged microjet heads.

A further disadvantage of microjet irrigation is the considerable amount of water that is lost in spray mist, particularly when the system is run on a windy day.

Plus, of course, the fact that the entire plant, and bed, is soaked is disadvantageous to plants that prefer their leaves and stems to remain dry.

Rotary sprayers come in many types, from pop-ups typically found in permanent garden irrigation systems where the pressure in the pipework causes the sprinkler head to pop up out of a hole in the ground to do its job and which, on completion of its task, falls back into its hole. In this way pop-ups are great when laid in a lawn as they allow mowers to do their job unhindered by either having to move pipework or sprinklers or having to work around protruding irrigation

Continued on page 17



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From page 16

hardware.

In a vegetable garden or field one is more likely to find rotary impact sprinklers. Typically these are either of plastic or brass and are usually



Pop-up sprinklers are ideal for lawns mounted on standpipes.

These, in turn, are typically attached to rigid delivery pipe in a semi-permanent set-up. Alternatively individual impact sprayers can be attached to a tripod and fed by a hosepipe, which makes them able to be moved to cover large areas of lawn or field.

The large spray holes of impact sprayers mean they are unlikely to become clogged unless your irrigation water is really contaminated,

and the spray can, to some degree, be directed into arcs of any angle you desire, or into a full 360° circle.

Disadvantages of rotary impact sprayers are that their delivery becomes inefficient in even a slight breeze, and like a microjet system a considerable volume of water is lost to mist and evaporation.

Moreover, unless they are very carefully set up they water unevenly, with the ground close to the spray head being soaked while that at the limit of the spray circle is merely moistened.

This is particularly apparent when you use permanently-mounted impact sprayers in a line. Where two sprayers' circles overlap the ground will be doubly watered, but there will also be dry patches where no water reaches.

For this reason the most water-efficient way of planting vegetables if you use impact

sprayers is in circular beds, the diameters of which are identical to the diameters of the water delivery pattern.

The big daddy of rotary sprayers are the large wheel-mounted cannon sprayers, typically used on sports fields, but which can also be used in paddocks and fields. These can be either stationary models that must be moved by hand or they can be self-deploying, with the flow of water in the system slowly turning their wheels so that they move down the field at a predetermined rate, reeling out the delivery hose behind them as they go.

Whatever system you opt for, many other factors affect how efficiently your irrigation system works. These include:

□ The size of pump you use. A typical 0,75kW domestic

booster pump, either of the inflatable bladder type or of the microprocessor controller type, is good for two or three impact sprayers, but nothing else at the same time.

□ The length and diameter of the pipework between the pump and the delivery heads, including the number of connectors involved along the way. If you have the luxury of laying a new system you will be able to choose a diameter of pipe that is ideally suited to

Continued on page 19



Common rotary impact sprayer

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IRRIGATION



Water cannon is ideal for large fields and pasture, but requires a powerful pump and large volume of available water

From page 17

both the pump and the number of delivery heads you wish to use, ensuring sufficient volume of water is available at the point of delivery at sufficient pressure to achieve the desired result. Unfortunately (and certainly on older plots) irrigation systems tend to be a mish-mash of pipe diameters, with lengths of 32mm diameter LDPE pipe connected to bits of 40mm pipe and holes being repaired by connector pieces along the way. All of these differences of diameter will mean that the volume of water available at the end is limited by the smallest diameter of the

components along the way. Typically, a 32mm plastic pipe fitting (eg elbow or straight connector) will have an internal diameter four or five millimetres less. Thus, it doesn't matter if there are bits of 40mm or 50mm pipe in the set-up; the volume of water at the end will be governed by the 32mm fittings.

☐ The nature of your soil. Heavy, clayey soils retain moisture better than light sandy soils and thus require less water to achieve saturation.

☐ How much mulch you spread atop your beds to prevent evaporation.



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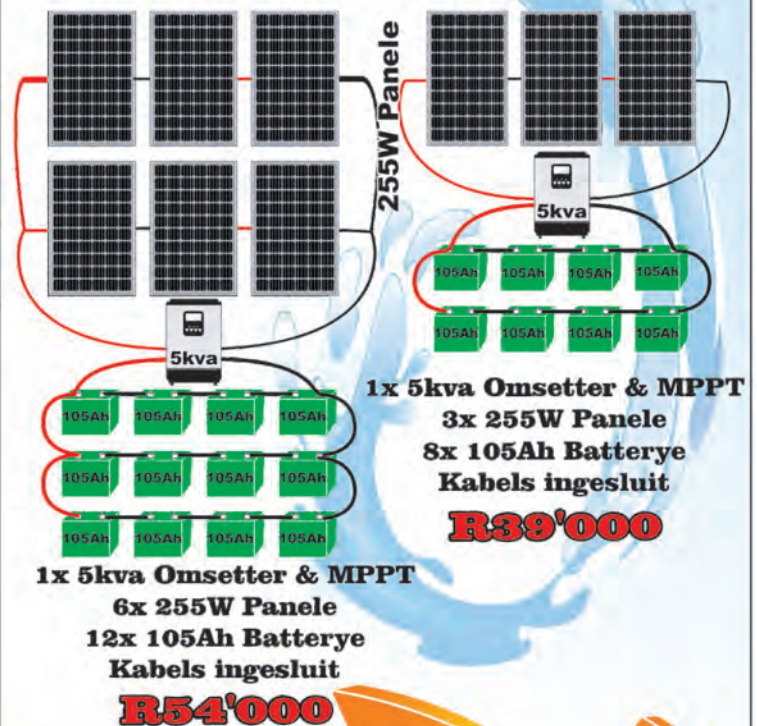
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BEEKEEPING

It's all about the honey, honey

The heatwaves this year which have been a trial for bees in hives standing all day in the hot sun, should have provided a lesson for beekeepers to place their bees in shady spots, especially in the afternoons. During a heatwave one observes bees working frantically to bring what one thinks is nectar, but is, in fact, water to cool the hives, and

How bees make honey, and keep the hive cool in a heatwave ... another in our series on bees and beekeeping by Peter Clark of the Eastern Highveld Beekeepers Association

bees will be noticed fanning at the entrances of the hives evaporating the water to cool the bees inside.

Distressed bees will also sit outside near the front of the hives. These are usually young bees that have not started to work yet.

But this is also one of the indicators that the bees are about to swarm off.

This is due to congestion in the brood chamber and overheating of the hive by the sun.

Beekeepers can help by gently smoking the entrance of the hive and lifting off the lid. You will notice the bees that come to the tops of the super frames, fanning their

wings in thanks for your efforts to cool the interior.

The heat and the rain showers that followed have produced a good crop of honey this summer season that will close in May, as the blackjacks and cosmos continue to flower until the frost starts.

But what is honey made of? And how come different honeys have different colours and flavours, sometimes so sweet and sometimes rather "sharp" tasting?

The sources of the bees' raw material are very wide indeed: from the nectaries of flowers and a juice secreted from trees such as Acacia elata, that secretes nectar

from pores at the base of its leaves, and from any source of sweetened liquid, including dregs from discarded cooldrink cans, even washing water from sweet factories and anywhere else that sweet juices are to be found.

The foraging bees have a second stomach in which they carry this nectar to the house bees in the hive. They regurgitate the nectar and the house bees pass this nectar among one another until it thickens, adding enzymes in the process, until it is suitable to be placed in the cells. The remaining water content of this processed nectar is driven off by the bees continually fanning over the cells. The excess moisture condenses down the inner sides of the hive or super chamber and can be seen dribbling out at the entrance of the hive.

Continued on page 21

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BEEKEEPING

From page 20

When the moisture content is reduced down to 19% and lower, the bees cap the cell with a thin layer of wax.

The foraging field bees will only bring in an amount of nectar that the house bees can process overnight and during the next day.

There is no surplus of nectar

stored somewhere in the hive waiting to be processed. The field bees gauge their activities to suit the processing bees in the hive.

While there can be a lavish nectar flow from the flowers, the field bees will only bring into the hive the amount of nectar that can be processed into honey and the overall

strength of the hive is determined by the house bees who are able to process the nectar as rapidly as it is foraged.

Moreover a foraging bee will not mix sources of nectar. If it starts on, say lavender, it will continue working only lavender plants till it has a full belly of lavender nectar,

rather than mixing up, say, lavender and lucerne nectar. Once the hive becomes full of honey the bees stop working.

This is where the beekeeper helps out, by removing the frames full of honey and replacing them with empty ones so that the bees can resume their work again.

For more information: Peter Clark tel 011 362-2904, author of *Tales of an African Beekeeper*, and chairman of the Eastern Highveld Beekeeper's Assoc, secretary Mike Alter, tel 011 965-6040.

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Luca, says that her fleet of three Kubota tractors has been "life-saving". "I have had our Kubota

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Random Harvest's drivers with one of their machines: Sidney Chikaonda, Ben Lolwana and Michael Ramunyandi

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Frost: When, what and how to deal with it

When, on average, do you experience your first frost? When do you expect your last? And how variable are occurrences of frost from season to season on your plot?

To predict when the frosts can be expected, weather scientists consider five factors:

☐ Altitude ~ in general the higher the altitude the lower the temperature and hence a greater likelihood of frost occurrence;



- ☐ Latitude ~ the further from the equator the lower the temperatures;
- ☐ Distance from sea ~ on the assumption that the further a location is from the moderating influence of the ocean the more likely it is that freezing temperatures would be reached;
- ☐ A topographic valley index ~ a location surrounded by higher altitudes experiences

cold air drainage resulting from radiative cooling on the upper slopes, causing the denser cold air to "sink" into the valleys, with the intensity of valley frost occurrence depending on the steepness of the surrounding topography;

☐ General minimum temperature conditions ~ ie, those areas which in terms of daily minimum temperatures

already display relatively low values (below 6°C), would also be more prone to frost formation.

Based on these factors and using data from 216 climate stations in southern Africa, meteorologists inform us that on average first frost occurs in May over most of the interior of South Africa.

In Gauteng 20% of the province, on average, will

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ON THE PLOT

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experience the first frost around 19 May and 80% of the province will have frost by 1 June.

In terms of the last days of frost, 20% will have the last frost on 15 August, while 80% of the province will have the last frosts by 3 September. These are of course averages and used as a guideline, for frost is notoriously erratic.

There are other factors within your property that will also affect your choice of planting. There can be a noticeable temperature variation within a few hundred metres in most areas of Gauteng.

The cold collects in valleys and depressions. If your smallholding is in a flat area, it means your land is more exposed to cold winds in winter.

If there a number of buildings on your or your neighbour's plot, you may be sheltered from cold winds or the buildings may channel the



Plants covered with lightweight frost cloth.

wind into your garden. There will also be temperature variation within different parts of your smallholding. These 'zones' can change over time as buildings and plants within and surrounding your land change.

One way to find the cold areas in your property is to walk around your garden very early on a cold morning, preferably dressed minimally,

so that you can feel where the cold collects, where it flows and where it is warmer and more protected.

Knowing this will enable you to better plan where to plant hardy plants to screen your garden and veggie patch. What actually happens to cause frost? During the night both the soil surface and the air cools, until water vapour in the air condenses on

exposed surfaces, such as foliage and lawn, forming dew.

When temperatures drop to below freezing, the water vapour changes the ice crystals, which is known as frost.

In winter, frost is most likely to occur on wind-free, cloudless nights as both wind and cloud cover can keep the air temperature warmer.

In some regions the air is too dry for ice crystals to form. Nevertheless the below-freezing temperatures damage plant structure and such frosts are known as black frosts, so-called because of the colour of the damaged plant foliage and stems. Frost damage occurs when the cell sap in plants freezes. This causes the sap to expand and the cell walls rupture, thereby destroying the plant. Some plants cannot survive frost – these are commonly

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From page 26

known as frost-tender plants. Others can tolerate mild frost (0°C to -3°C) – these are called half-hardy plants.

The range of below freezing temperatures tolerated by plants that are commonly known as frost-hardy varies enormously.

Some plants are killed outright by frost while others suffer damage, such as complete defoliation, from which they can recover.

Frost damage also depends on the manner in which temperature changes, as well as on the season and the growth stage of the plant. For example, if freezing is rapid the plant can be killed at higher temperatures than if freezing is gradual.

Furthermore, greater injury to the plant is likely to occur during a period of continued freezing than during a short freeze. Some plants may also

survive winter frosts, but may be killed by unexpected spring frost.

When looking for cold resistant plants there are some pointers that are helpful. Look at where the plants occur naturally, those that grow in the Karoo, northern Eastern Cape, Free State and grasslands of Mpumalanga and Gauteng are typically cold hardy.

Typically evergreen plants that are cold hardy have small to tiny or narrow leaves and the plants themselves tend to be almost stunted. They are also very often rather slow growing. If they have slightly larger leaves they will be rather leathery or hairy, or have even have a waxy layer protecting them.

Obviously choose vegetables that are able to cope with frost. Check on the seed packets or ask the nursery staff if you are buying

vegetable seedlings.

There are also precautions that you can take to help your plants and vegetables to survive. Mulching helps to protect the roots at night you can put hessian, straw tepees or lightweight frost cover over plants that may be damaged by frost.

Plants are better able to cope if they are strong and healthy. If you regularly feed and

water your plants according to their needs during the growing season, they will be healthy and strong going into winter. There is strong evidence that potassium (potash) strengthens plant cells, so you can fertilize your garden with 3:1:5 late in the summer to provide extra potassium before the winter cold.

It is important to be aware of

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Strategies for highveld winter veg

Smallholders trying to live sustainably will be thinking about their winter vegetable gardens now. While a cold, dry Highveld winter makes it impossible to grow certain species in winter ~ at least outdoors without considerable frost protection, especially in the Easter and southern areas of Gauteng, there are a number of vegetables that can be grown

year-round, and which will provide something fresh and nutritious for the table even in the dead of winter.

In Gauteng we are able to grow beetroot, brassicas such as cabbage, cauliflower and broccoli, broad beans, carrots, dwarf spinach, garlic, kohlrabi, leeks, lettuce, onions, parsnips, peas, potatoes, radishes, Swiss chard and turnips during

winter.

Choose the cultivar that suits the climate in your area. Such cultivars should also be in demand locally.

The site you choose for your food garden will contribute greatly to its success. The amount of sunshine it receives, the soil type and other factors need to be factored in.

When deciding where to set

your vegetable garden, think about the vegetables you want to grow:

- ☐ Vegetables such as beetroot, beans, leeks, cabbage, peas and onions require a full day of sunlight.
- ☐ Root vegetables such as carrots can cope with half a day of sun.
- ☐ Leafy vegetables, such as lettuce and spinach, can grow

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FROST

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the rest or dormant period that plants from the summer rainfall areas have in the dry winter months. Watering them in this period often stimulates them into a growth phase, and the plant becomes more susceptible to the cold. Do not prune or cut back cold sensitive plants just before or during winter. Also, resist the temptation to cut

back plants that have suffered frost damage, no matter how bad they look at the time, until after the threat of any more frost is completely past. The material you would have cut off will help insulate the plant in the event of another cold snap. Remember also that many plants are adapted to getting frosted back in winter and then sprout new growth from below the

damaged parts when the weather warms up again. You could wait till mid-September or even October before cutting out the 'dead wood' of frost damage.

It is important to irrigate in the morning rather than in the evenings so that the water is absorbed before temperatures drop below freezing.



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with even less sunshine. You will need to place your garden to receive the kind of sun exposure your plants need to grow their best. Bear in mind, also, that the angle of the sun in winter is more acute than in summer and thus the area shaded by trees, buildings etc will be very different to that in summer.

You can also plan your planting so that some sun-loving vegetables give shade to others. For example, if you are growing peas up a trellis, that will create shade for your lettuce.

Also check what kind of soil the plants you want grow best in and plant your garden accordingly. The soil should support plants to produce healthy root systems.

Avoid planting your vegetables near tree roots to avoid your produce competing with the root systems of established

trees and shrubs.

To overcome the problems associated with frost, particularly in Eastern and Southern Gauteng, some form of permanent or semi-permanent covered growing area may be required. Using black 80% shade cloth as a roof and surrounding your growing area with some form of impermeable walling, such as greenhouse plastic or old roof sheeting, will go a long way towards protecting your plants from all but the harshest frosts.

If the idea of building a covered growing area is too extreme you can still protect individual plants or single beds from frost by using small "teepees" made of plastic, for small, single plants, or by manufacturing clothes out of heavy-gauge wire or bamboo covered with frost cloth, which can be placed over the beds

at night and lifted off during daylight to provide access for watering and weeding. Blocking cold winds around your plants can help control the temperature, giving them a better chance of survival later in the season. Block the weather through wind breaks, walls or by installing cold frames around your plants. Cold frames, made of glass or plastic, also speed up growth by forming a mini-greenhouse around the plant with significantly raised daytime temperatures.

Careful soil preparation is necessary. The best soil for most vegetables is a light to medium loam with plenty of organic matter. If your soil is at either extreme to this, ie

too sandy or too heavy, it may be necessary to replace the soil in your beds with a more suitable mix, which could be one-third river sand, one-third compost and one-third the original soil, well mixed, to a depth of 30 – 40 cm.

Soil does not contain an endless supply of nutrients for all plants. It must be cared for and allowed to recover from planting.

The best way to do this, and ensure a healthy crop, is crop rotation, where you plant different vegetables at different times of year, as each plant uses different nutrients (see table).

Crop rotation may also reduce pest problems, weed

Continued on page 32

Table: An example of a crop rotation system.

	Bed 1	Bed 2	Bed 3	Bed 4	Bed 5
Cycle 1	Leafy crops	Legumes	Brassicas	Root crops	Solanaceae
Cycle 2	Solanaceae	Leafy crops	Legumes	Brassicas	Root crops
Cycle 3	Root crops	Solanaceae	Leafy crops	Legumes	Brassicas
Cycle 4	Brassicas	Root crops	Solanaceae	Leafy crops	Legumes
Cycle 5	Legumes	Brassicas	Root crops	Solanaceae	Leafy crops

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ON THE PLOT

From page 31

infestation and soil diseases. Crop rotation is one of the most basic principles of vegetable production and should always be practised. It means that you do not plant the same kind of vegetable in the same bed for three or four seasons.

While crop rotation is recommended for improving soils and for conservation purposes, its greatest benefit lies in the reduction of disease levels in the soil. Many pathogens can persist in the soil after the crop has been removed (such as black-

rot in cabbage).

To ensure effective crop rotation you can divide your proposed plantings into:

- ☐ Fruiting vegetables such as tomatoes, green pepper, brinjals, cucumbers, etc (loosely grouped in the table as *solanaceae*);
- ☐ Legumes such as beans and lentils;
- ☐ Brassicas (eg cabbage, cauliflower, etc)
- ☐ Leafy vegetables such as spinach, lettuce; and
- ☐ Root vegetables, such as carrots, leeks, onions, beetroot and potato.

Note that not all of these vegetables will be growing at the same time, and certainly not all in winter, so there may well be times when you have empty beds which you can allow to rest for a season and rehabilitate at your leisure.



Crop rotation



Companion planting with herbs and flowers

A continuous supply of vegetables can be achieved by staggered planting: making smaller plantings at regular intervals (for example every two or four weeks) during the planting season to ensure a continuous supply of the crop, but be aware that the colder weather means that crops generally take longer to mature than in summer. Companion planting also has value to protect plants from pests. It is based on the theory that the companion plants — for example, flowers growing next to a food crop — disrupt the search pattern of pests looking for host plants.

They detect the host plants but become confused because of the more diverse planting style. Nematodes occur naturally in the soil, but monoculture can result in a build-up of species that could be harmful to specific crops. These nematodes might feed on the root system of host plants and can cause considerable damage.

A variety of herbal plants planted amongst the vegetables or around the vegetable patch may have beneficial effects. Basil planted with tomatoes and

Continued on page 33

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How to grow vegetables for profit

South Africa's food and agricultural policy historically placed national self-sufficiency as a major objective. Until recently this goal was largely met, as a surplus was produced in most major agricultural commodities.

Farmers and others in the agricultural value chain are recognised for their ability to respond and survive, while managing risk responsibly. However, climate change presents a new and very significant threat to agricultural systems. It has become

increasingly difficult for the agricultural sector in South Africa to provide sufficient quantities of food at affordable prices. This summer's drought and the effect of El Nino have exacerbated the situation.

So should smallholders then

be thinking about growing vegetables commercially, as a means of making an income and to meet the needs of the community?

Before setting up a production unit, we need to consider a number of factors.

We should understand the risks and know our own strengths and how to overcome our weaknesses.

When does production become profitable? According to the Agricultural Research Council (ARC), if, for example, onions are grown on 1ha of land, a yield of 4 000 bags of 10kg each is possible. At R22 per 10 kg bag (R2,20/kg), this can provide a gross income of R88 000.

Say your input costs are R1/kg, your profit is R1,20/kg. But if the smallholder is only paid R16 a bag, his profit is

Continued on page 35

WINTER VEG

From page 32

lettuce may deter insects. Oregano planted with broccoli may repel cabbage flies.

A further protection for your plants is the use of mulch. Mulch is a layer of materials used to cover soil so that you reduce evaporation, keep soil moist, moderate soil temperature (warm in winter, cool in summer), reduce weeds and soil erosion. Mulch can help to fertilise your soil.

Organic mulch can be made

from bark, dead leaves, straw, compost, nut shells, stones, bark chips, pebbles, etc. Simply spread a thin layer of mulch over your vegetable patch, taking care to avoid covering plants and their stems, to gain the benefits. Paying attention to watering is also important to the success of your winter kitchen garden. Gauteng winters are cruelly dry, and because things tend to quieten down in the garden many neglect to water sufficiently in winter. By the

same token, vegetables by their very nature (think of the moisture found in a tomato) generally require much more water than flowers or shrubs, so be sure to water at least twice a week, or more depending, on the vegetable and your soil. Ensure deep watering - the water should reach 30cm into the soil. Water in the warmth of the morning. Where there is risk of frost do not water in the afternoon or evening.

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From page 34

60c/kg.

If onions are grown on 10ha, however, and are successfully marketed, the income derived could be ten times more.

It is essential to keep track of input costs. The prices of some non-urea fertiliser variants recorded double-digit year-on-year cost increases during the latter part of 2015 as the cost of importing these chemicals soared.

It is important to make an informed choice when deciding which crops to grow, and to ensure that you know all that is required to grow a specific crop.

When planning production for the following growing season, therefore, the smallholder should consider additional information for the various crops.

So, is there a need for fresh vegetables in your area that can be marketed on a more commercial scale?

☐ Are you going to deliver your produce to a municipal market, will you do a deal with a retailer, restaurant or hotel in your area, or will you sell off-farm or through a farmstall? Each option has implications in terms of time, cost (eg, labour to staff the farmstall) etc.

☐ How far is it to the market? Transport and marketing costs should be included in production cost estimates.

☐ Is the area to be planted suitable, in terms of climate and soil, for vegetable production? Sandy loam and clay loam soils are best for the production of vegetables. Sandy soils can be problematic because of excessive drainage of water and

nutrients as well as the presence of nematodes. This, in turn, can lead to stress of the crops and result in smaller yields. It is important to analyse the nutrient status of the soil regularly.

The Institute for Soil, Climate & Water (ISC&W) at the Agricultural Research Council will carry out soil and water analysis. After soil analysis has been done, the correct fertilisers have to be applied, in accurate quantities. This should ensure that the plot is

Continued on page 36



Cabbage is quite easy to grow, and is a popular seller, but does not command very high prices.



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HEALTH

Common parasites and ailments in poultry

Many chicken breeds are hardy and generally easy to keep, but there are health problems that can still arise, particularly in flocks that are kept housed, rather than allowed range freely about the plot. Owners should

spend regular time in observing them closely to monitor the state of their birds' feathers, skins and legs. There are quite a few parasites that pose a threat to the well-being of your poultry. Different parasites can be seen on the head and body

of chickens. These parasites appear as black, brown or red "spots" and they are mites, fleas, lice and ticks.

☐ **Mites.** There are different types of mites that affect chickens. They differ from lice in that they feed on the blood of chickens.

This affects the growth and condition of chickens. It is important to know the differences between mites because they have different methods of control.

There are three important types of mites that affect

Continued on page 38

VEG FOR PROFIT

From page 35

run more economically. If the status of the soil is unknown, over-fertilising could eat away your profit margin.

☐ Even more important is the quality of the water available on the farm. Poor quality water will affect soil quality ~ and the resulting crop ~ negatively. If a borehole is the only available water source and it doesn't supply water at a rate of at least a litre/second, you will be unable to grow vegetables on even a small commercial

scale.

The use of municipal water can be expensive for vegetable production, as the quantity of water needed to grow vegetables at an optimum yield can be very high; 15mm — 20mm of irrigation is needed once a week.

Vegetables cultivated on 1 000m² (which is small scale), require 15 000 to 20 000 litres a week; for a crop that grows for 90 days, that amounts to 192 000 ~ 262 000 litres (or 192 ~

262kL) per 1 000 m².

To irrigate 1ha of land, 1 920 ~ 2 620kL litres of water will be required. The current cost of municipal water on the East Rand (Ekurhuleni), for example, is about R15/kL, equating to R28 800 ~ R39 300, in the above example, assuming no assistance from rainfall. The economics of the use of municipal water for irrigation should thus be determined beforehand.

☐ Infrastructure can make or break a sustainable vegetable

production unit. Transport is essential to obtain resources (on and off the farm) and tractors and implements are needed to cultivate large tracts of land.

Irrigation systems must be suited to the soil and crops produced, or the yield will be greatly reduced. The system must be manageable and well maintained.

You will also need post-harvest infrastructure such as packing sheds or cold stores if a high-quality product is to be marketed.

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13mm x 25mm	1mm	30m roll / per metre
13mm x 25mm	1.25mm	30m roll / per metre
13mm x 25mm	1.5mm	30m roll / per metre
13mm x 25mm	1.6mm	30m roll / per metre
13mm x 25mm	2mm	30m roll / per metre
25mm x 25mm	1mm	30m roll / per metre
25mm x 25mm	1.5mm	30m roll / per metre
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25mm x 50mm	2mm	30m roll / per metre

Galvanised BEFORE welding

Block size in mm	Wire dia.	QTY
25mm x 25mm	2.5	30m roll / per metre
25mm x 50mm	2.50	30m roll / per metre
25mm x 50mm	3.00	30m roll / per metre
50mm x 50mm	1.60	30m roll / per metre
50mm x 50mm	2.00	30m roll / per metre
50mm x 50mm	2.50	30m roll / per metre
50mm x 50mm	3.00	30m roll / per metre
50mm x 100mm	2.00	30m roll / per metre
50mm x 100mm	2.50	30m roll / per metre
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width available	900mm	900mm	900mm	900mm	50m roll / per metre
width available	1220mm	1220mm	1220mm	1220mm	50m roll / per metre
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290ml, 9.5cm, R25
5250ml, 12.5cm, R32
845ml, 15cm, R42



HEALTH

From page 36

chickens.

There are three important types of mites that affect chickens.

The red mite is a large mite and the most common by far, and is extremely difficult to eradicate from the housing. It lives in cracks and crevices of chicken houses and feeds

mainly at night. Therefore it is difficult to find during the day.

These are blood-sucking mites, so can cause significant anaemia and even death.

They irritate the chicken and can therefore cause stress-related illness as well.

Both the chickens and their housing need to be treated (with dusting powders) for red mites – this includes all the furniture in the housing because the mites hide under

this during the day.

The Northern fowl mite is a small mite. It stays on the chicken all the time. When there are many of these mites present they can cause blackening of feathers because of their droppings and eggs.

They can cause scaling on the face, comb and wattles. Again, discomfort and anaemia along with scabby skin are the hallmarks of these mites.

The feathers are also affected at the base where they grow, and can look as though they have been chewed at. These mites, unlike red mite, are rare, but are almost impossible to get rid of.

The housing needs to be treated as well as the chickens, but often it is better to burn the housing and purchase a new one if these mites do take up residence. The Scaly Leg Mite lives on

Continued on page 40

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Left: Mites. Above: Pox

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HEALTH

From page 38

the chicken. It causes itching and even loss of feathers and excessive scaliness on the legs, which may lead to thickening and even deformation of the legs. This mite usually starts in an older bird but if one of your birds is affected, the others are in danger of contracting it. The first step is to soak off the dead skin in warm water and Epsom salts, but care must be taken to avoid bleeding because the mites are easily spread like this, and the chicken will need to be

isolated if bleeding occurs. Once the damaged skin has been removed, cover the legs in petroleum jelly to suffocate the mites. This problem is usually associated with damp conditions, so it is important to check that your chickens' housing has adequate ventilation.

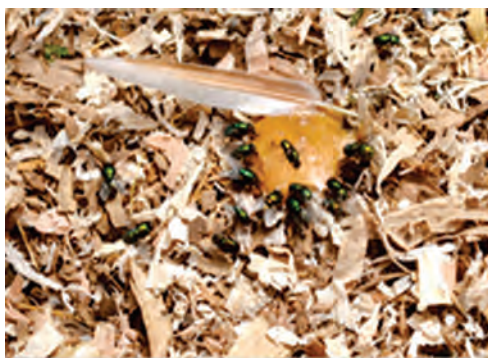
□ **Fleas.** There are many kinds of fleas that infect poultry, the most common being the sticktight flea. They also feed on the blood of chickens. They can survive for a long time in the chicken house.

□ **Lice.** Chickens are mainly infested with biting lice. These can irritate chickens and as a result they do not grow well and produce fewer eggs. Biting lice spend their entire lives on chickens and can be found on the skin around the vent and on the breast and thighs. They feed on skin and feathers. To control lice you have to treat the birds directly — treating the environment doesn't work. Check with your veterinarian which treatment is appropriate for chicken lice.

□ **Ticks.** The most important

tick is the soft tick. Ticks also feed on the blood of chickens. They feed for short periods of time on chickens and spend the rest of their time in crevices and cracks. When large numbers occur on chickens they can cause weight loss and a decrease in egg production. They can cause paralysis and can also transmit a disease called spirochaetosis, which is a gut condition that leads to diarrhoea. If you suspect ticks, catch a chicken several hours after dark and examine

Continued on page 41



Left: Flies on droppings. Above: Scaly leg. Right: Ticks





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From page 38

skin closely in a good light. When filled with blood after their nightly meal, they're large enough to see easily. Ticks are difficult to control. You don't treat the chicken, you treat its surroundings. This means spraying housing and treating pasture areas and trimming or removing weeds and debris around poultry housing.

❑ **Flies.** Flies are a source of irritation to chickens, smallholders and neighbours, and other livestock. They occur in warm places. They multiply in the bodies of dead animals and in the droppings of chickens.

Cleanliness is very important in controlling parasites. Inspect your birds regularly for mites, ticks or fleas. Remove droppings regularly, once a day if possible. Clean, wash and disinfect cages/houses and remove dead birds as soon as possible.

There are various chemicals available to kill these parasites, but you need to know which of these parasites you are dealing with, so that the correct chemical can be used. As a general rule of thumb, if the parasite lives on and off the chicken, for example in cracks and crevices, then treat the birds and the environment.

Before using any chemical make sure that it is correct for the parasite that you want to kill.

There are specific methods for the various parasites. Flies can be controlled by good hygiene, and by using sprays or larvicides. Fly traps and papers can also be used. Using sprays (eg, Malasol 1 %) or dusts (eg, Carbadust) can control mites, ticks and fleas. When these parasites are seen, all chickens should be treated. Malasol 1% can be used on the birds and in the houses. Carbadust should only be dusted on the birds

and not in houses.

Chickens should preferably be kept on concrete floors. However, if they are kept on sand floors, the floors can be sprayed with Malasol 1 %. This is to protect the chickens from the soft tick.

Other skin problems are caused by pox and by bites.

❑ **Pox** is a viral disease that is transmitted by mosquitoes. Pox sores are seen on the unfeathered areas such as the head, neck, feet and legs. The sores begin as red pimples which develop into pimples named vesicles filled with fluid and then pus (pustules). Finally, as the pustules burst open, crusts or scabs form. There is no treatment for fowl pox, as it is a viral disease. The lesions can be kept clean and free of flies if they are in a sensitive area such as around the eyes. Fowl pox can be prevented by vaccination.

❑ **Bites/pecking.** Any stress-related factor such as

overcrowding or bringing new birds into the flock can cause pecking. Salt deficiency can also be a cause. Chickens can also be seen with bite wounds from rats. Sometimes the colouration of the skin indicates an underlying problem.

❑ **Blue skin** (cyanosis). This is seen in any severe condition of the bloodstream when bacteria or viruses are circulating. In diseases such as Newcastle disease, wattles may sometimes show a bluish discoloration.

❑ **Yellow skin.** Yellow skin can be normal or abnormal. Chickens that are fed yellow maize as part of their diet can develop a yellow skin. Abnormally yellow skin is mostly seen in the case of the disease called *Aegyptioeliosis*, which is caused by a blood parasite that infects the red blood cells.

❑ **Feather problems.** Loss of feathers can be caused by mite infestations.

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SUPERSMALLS

Entries in this yellow-shaded section cost R120 VAT included for 25 words, plus R1/word thereafter.

WANTED

Gesoek: Stukkende tweede-handse brei masjiene benodig vir parte. Vir skool vir mense met geleerdheids probleme. Rosa 082 684-9534.

Wanted: Property to put beehives on in the Peti/Bapsfontein area up to Bapsfontein and Fairleads preferably with gum trees in the vicinity. Contact William 078 273-3488.

Wanted: Secure plot in Bredell, with 3 or 4 bedroom house and workshops. Contact Kevin 084 870-3875.

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Rams: 2 Letelle Merino. Have produced twins many times. 18 micron wool. Need to get new rams. R4 000 both on Lanseria area 082 441-9646.

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MISCELLANEOUS

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Knysna blackwood furniture tea trolley R6 500. Hartbeespoort. 082 771-6460.

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Dinokeng: Beautiful 21Ha bushveld game farm for sale only 30mins drive north east from Pretoria and 19km north west from Cullinan. On the farm are various species of game, eg, Blesbuck and duiker. Lovely 3 bedroom, 3 bathroom, open plan thatch roof house. Close by there are outbuildings, including a big storeroom laundry, etc. The property has good water and Eskom electricity. The farm is full title and totally fenced. Established gardens, with irrigation and some lovely fruit trees. About 30m from the house is a bush lapa with full facilities, and a lovely sparkling swimming pool, conveniently located for entertaining friends or clients. Operational eco-friendly campsite which generates an

extra income. There is also a small plant nursery, which is well stocked with plants. There is also 24 hour access control to the area to give you peace of mind and makes this a very safe area. Good schools and shops are within easy reach. For more information please phone 072 397-5055 or email: bushbaby7777@gmail.com. Price reduced to R3,3 million.

Timeshare at Palace Resort Durban Beachfront. 2 Bedroom self-catering, sleeps 6. R1 800 per day. Prime resort on the beach. 5-12 March. Contact Rona 083 651-0553.

Rayton: 2,7Ha plot. 250 pecan nut trees under irrigation. Good income. Modern house. R1 900 000 Contact 013 935-7016 or 076 150-0355.

Eloff: Smallholding 1,6 ha 5km from town. Sturdy closed shed (+- 14 m x 14 m x 7 m) will suit woodworking, etc. Also ±20m x 7m chicken house, half roofed. 3 phase power to be connected, watertank & stand R550 000 neg. Terry 083 449-0780.

Benoni Smallholdings: 1 Bedroom flat, BIC with carport to rent. Available Immediately. R3 000 per month plus deposit. Water & lights excluded. Situated in beautiful, quiet, peaceful and safe area. To find out more, please contact Tys/Jaunine on 083 285-5378 anytime.

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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 47. Only markets that are held infrequently are now listed in this calendar section.

Every Sunday
Cattle drive with City Slickers breakfast, Diamond X Cowboy Ranch, near Cullinan. Call Rudan on 082 410-3180 horses@diamondx.co.za, www.diamondx.co.za, R400 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.

2016

April

7: New Moon
9-10: Walkerville Agricultural Show, 09:00 till late both days. Venue: Walkerville Showgrounds, off the R82. Entrance R30 per car. Contact Pauline 072 146-9176 or email show@walkervillesa.co.za.
11-13: Artificial Insemination for Cattle course. Rothman Livestock Training Services, Irene. Call Andy 082 770-0480, Norman 082 547-7949 or Di 082 772-1208. www.rltsafrica.com.
14: Pregnancy Awareness for Cattle course. Rothman Livestock Training Services, Irene. Call Andy 082 770-0480, Norman 082 547-7949 or Di 082 772-1208. www.rltsafrica.com.
15: Calf Rearing course. Rothman Livestock Training Services, Irene. Call Andy 082 770-0480, Norman 082 547-7949 or Di 082 772-1208. www.rltsafrica.com.
14: First Quarter
17: Leopards of the Magaliesburg with Paul Bartels at The Sheds, Gemstone Road, Crocodile River Reserve from 09:00 until mid/late morning. Cost: R60 pp (kids R30); Refreshments included. Info and booking: Jenny Cornish, jcornish@mweb.co.za or 082 570 4798. Bring: Water, walking shoes, hat, sunscreen, camera! www.crocodilerverreserve.co.za
22: Earth Day
22: Full Moon
30: Last Quarter

May

1: The 20th Annual Tour de Walkerville. Contact Helen 082 553 7700 or go to www.walkervillesa.co.za.
6: New Moon
7: Mother's Day Country Market at Groenvoer, 410 Olifantsfontein Road, Midrand. Contact Cathy on 011 314-1211.
3-6: Introductory Course in Beef Cattle Management at the ARC Irene. Contact Annetjie Loubser 012 672-9153 or aloubser@arc.agric.za.
8: Mothers Day Luncheon and show with Jak de Priester at Garden World, Beyers Naude Dr, Muldersdrift. 12h30 for 13h00. Cost is R250 for adults and children 4-10 years R180. Call Garden World on 011 957-2545
9-13: Introductory Course in Small Stock Management at the ARC Irene. Contact Annetjie Loubser 012 672-9153 or aloubser@arc.agric.za.
13: First Quarter
15: Foraging in the Veld with Carol Martin at The Sheds, Gemstone Road, Crocodile River Reserve from 09:00 until mid/late morning. Cost: R60 pp (kids R30); Refreshments included. Info and booking: Jenny Cornish, jcornish@mweb.co.za or 082 570 4798. Bring: Water, walking shoes, hat, sunscreen, camera! www.crocodilerverreserve.co.za
16-18: Artificial Insemination for Cattle course. Rothman Livestock Training Services, Irene. Call Andy 082 770-0480, Norman 082 547-7949 or Di 082 772-1208. www.rltsafrica.com.
17-20: Nampo Harvest Day agricultural exhibition, Bothaville. Call 086 004-7246
19: Pregnancy Awareness for Cattle course. Rothman Livestock Training Services, Irene. Call Andy 082 770-0480, Norman 082 547-7949 or Di 082 772-1208.

www.rltsafrica.com.

20: Calf Rearing course. Rothman Livestock Training Services, Irene. Call Andy 082 770-0480, Norman 082 547-7949 or Di 082 772-1208. www.rltsafrica.com.

21: Full Moon

24-27: Meat Processing Course at the ARC Irene. Contact Annetjie Loubser 012 672-9153 or aloubser@arc.agric.za.

29: Last Quarter

June

4: Beekeeping course for beginners of the 2016 summer season commences at 186 Uys St, Rynfield A/H at 9.30am. This is orientation day, free to all interested. Contact Peter Clark 011 362-2904.
5: World Environment Day
5: New Moon
7-10: Introductory Course in Pig Production at the ARC Irene. Contact Annetjie Loubser 012 672-9153 or aloubser@arc.agric.za.
8: World Oceans Day
12: First Quarter
12: Astronomy with Claire Flanagan at The Sheds, Gemstone Road, Crocodile River Reserve from 09:00 until mid/late morning. Cost: R60 pp (kids R30); Refreshments included. Info and booking: Jenny Cornish, jcornish@mweb.co.za or 082 570 4798. Bring water, walking shoes, hat, sunscreen, camera! www.crocodilerverreserve.co.za
17: World Desertification Day
20: Full Moon
20-24: Introductory Course in Poultry



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DIARY, cont'd



20-24: Introductory Course in Poultry Production at the ARC Irene. Contact Annetjie Loubser 012 672-9153 or aloubser@arc.agric.za.
 21: Solstice
 27: Last Quarter

July

4: New Moon
 4: Aphelion
 12: First Quarter
 19: Full Moon
 26: Last Quarter
 29 – 4 Sep: Garden World's Annual Spring Festival. Watch these pages for full details in later editions.

August

2: New Moon
 10: First Quarter
 15-19: Introductory Course in Small Stock Management at the ARC Irene. Contact Annetjie Loubser 012 672-9153 or aloubser@arc.agric.za.
 18: Full Moon
 25: Last Quarter

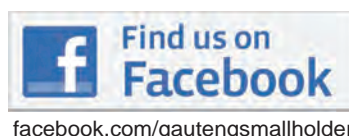
September

1-7: National Arbor Week
 1: New Moon
 1: Lunar Eclipse
 5-9: Introductory Course in Beef Cattle Management at the ARC Irene. Contact

Annetjie Loubser 012 672-9153 or aloubser@arc.agric.za.
 9: First Quarter
 12-16: Meat Processing Course at the ARC Irene. Contact Annetjie Loubser 012 672-9153 or aloubser@arc.agric.za.
 16: World Ozone Day
 16: Full Moon
 22: Equinox
 23: Last Quarter

October

1: New Moon
 4: World Habitat Day
 9: First Quarter
 10-14: Introductory Course in Poultry Production at the ARC Irene. Contact Annetjie Loubser 012 672-9153 or aloubser@arc.agric.za.
 16: Full Moon
 22: Last Quarter
 24: National Marine Day
 30: New Moon



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Regular Gauteng Farmers' Food Markets

NOTE: This is a listing ONLY of markets held to a regular weekly or monthly schedule. Markets held less frequently 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	WHO TO CONTACT	WHAT TO EXPECT
Thursday					
Every Thursday	Bryanston Organic & Natural Market	09:00 to 15:00	Culross Road (off Main Road), Bryanston.	Konrad or Glenda 011 706-3671 or glenda@bryanstonorganicmarket.co.za	Quality hand crafted goods, unique art and fresh organic and naturally grown produce
Friday					
1st Friday	The Shed Night Market	18:00 to 22:00	109 Malcolm Road, Randvaal	Felicity 073 232-0017 or 081 011-9456	Food & craft market.
Saturday					
Every Saturday	Wholefood Country Market	09:00 to 14:00	Sawasdee Exotic Nursery, cnr Main & Zinnia Roads, Kyalami	Robyn 083 311-4768 wholefoodmarket@gmail.com	Variety of organic & homemade foods.
Every Saturday	The Shed Food & Craft Market	08:00 to 15:00	109 Malcolm Road, Randvaal	Felicity 073 232-0017 or 081 011-9456	Food & craft market.
Every Saturday	Pretoria Boeremark	05:30 to 09:30	Pioneer Open Air Museum, Silverton.	012 804-8031 or 082 416-3900 blingsa@lantic.net	Fresh produce and traditional bazaar treats like jaffles, kailings with pap and boerewors rolls.
Every Saturday	Bryanston Organic & Natural Market	09:00 to 15:00	Culross Road (off Main Road), Bryanston	Konrad or Glenda on 011 706-3671 glenda@bryanstonorganicmarket.co.za	Quality hand crafted goods, unique art and fresh organic and naturally grown produce
Every Saturday	The Hazel Food Market	08:00 to 14:00	Greenlyn Village Centre, cor Thomas Edison & Mackenzie Sts, Menlo Park, Pta	Rietha 083 554-5636. www.hazelfoodmarket.co.za	Fresh produce straight from the producer. Coffee, eats on sale
Every Saturday	Walkerville Agricultural Market	09:00 to 15:00	112 Main Road (R82), Walkerville. K154 T-junction with R82	Dominique 082 775-0802 market@walkervillesa.co.za	Organic produce and Crafter's Market. www.walkervillesa.co.za
Every Saturday	Bosheuvel Fresh Produce	09:00 to 15:00	54 Glory Road, Muldersdrift	Mitch 082 553-2846	Meats and vegetables, delicacies, honey, cheese, brewery, crafter's market and children's entertainment.
Every Saturday	Jozzi Real Food Market	08:30 to 13:00	Pirates Sports Club, Braeside Avenue, Greenside	083 532 2992 whitespace@mweb.co.za	Arts & crafts, music & entertainment, inspired cuisine organic vegetables & coffee, pet products
1st Saturday	The Green Market	09:00 to 12:00	Pretoria Botanical Gardens 2 Cussonia Avenue, Brummeria, Pretoria	Melissa 083 562-5249	Products ranging from solar equipment to organic food
1st Saturday	Victus Christi Arts & Crafts Market	08:00 to 14:00	24b Miles Sharp Street, Rynfield, Benoni (north side of Bunny Park)	Schalk 082 561-9409 info@victuschristi.org.za	Arts & crafts, fine art, food, fresh meat & produce and home industry
2nd Saturday	Brakpan Boeremark	09:00 to 14:00	cnr van der Walt and Dirk van der Hoff Brakpan	Marius 011 744-2322 082 904-8852	Over 50 stalls. Food, arts, crafts, etc.
Last Saturday	Rynoue Plaas Mark/ Rynoue Country Market	07:00 to 14:00	Cnr Moloto Road (R573) and Protea Road Opposite Roodeplaat Spar	Bruce 083 442-2552 Sue 082 891-7546 waydack@worldonline.co.za	Fresh vegetables, fruit in season, preserves, flower and plants, homemade food and cakes, arts and crafts.
Last Saturday	Fresh2U Farmers Market	08:00 to 14:00	Corner Main Street and High Street Modderfontein (behind 33 High Street)	Jane 083 376 5567 Chantelle 082 338 7818 wardek@iafrica.com	Over 50 stalls. Fresh produce, home made goods, plants, food and more.
Last Saturday	Fresh Produce Market	08:00 to 13:00	Lakeside Mall Boathouse	Alma 079 940-0201 realfood4realpeople@gmail.com	Local fresh produce direct to the public
Sunday					
Every Sunday	Fourways Farmers Market	10:00 to 15:00	Corner Montecasino Boulevard and William Nicol Drive, Fourways	011 465 0827 www.ffmarket.co.za	Get your groceries...In the garden!
Every Sunday	Jozzi Real Food Market	09:00 to 14:00	Northcliff Country Club, Fir Avenue, Northcliff	083 532 2992 whitespace@mweb.co.za	Arts & crafts, music & entertainment, inspired cuisine organic vegetables & coffee, pet products
Last Sunday	Aloe Valley Food, Arts & Craft Market	10:00 to 14:00	48, R511 Doornrandjies	012 669-3043 info@serendipitycafe.co.za www.serendipitycafe.co.za	Community market to promote local business



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BY POST: Box 14648, Bredell 1623
BY EMAIL: gautengsmallholder@gmail.com
BY HAND: 370 da Costa Dr, Bredell, Kempton Park

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Our water crisis

On our plot we've always had two sources of water: a municipal supply, which flows into a tank and thence, via a booster pump, into the house, and a borehole, albeit a weak one, which pumps into an old portable swimming pool to supply water for the garden, fields and animals.

For the first 20-odd years of our occupation of the property this arrangement worked just fine. Visitors comment on the quality of the water that comes out of the house taps. That's because, I maintain, the municipal water, which is treated with chlorine by Erwat, the East Rand's water authority, loses this chlorine during its spell in our tank, and emerges from the tap clear, sparkling and taint-free, and thus greatly superior in taste to municipal water that comes directly out of the mains.

Watering the garden etc with a weak borehole has been a bit of a challenge but we've become masters at water-wise gardening, mulching and other water saving interventions such as recycling our grey water (which, because it is nutrient rich, turns bright green when exposed to sunlight).

And on the odd occasion that our municipal tank has run dry (more often than not because of an undetected leak in the pipe between the tank and the house, or a stupidly left-open tap) we've been able to temporarily refill the tank with borehole water (adding a cup of Jik to the tank because I'm none too sure of the state of cleanliness of the borehole stuff) using a hosepipe into the tank from a garden tap.

And so I confess to having been a bit smug. I thought I had any potential water supply problem sorted.

So it's amazing to find how much a real water crisis focuses the mind...

Lately, you see, our municipality has become less-than-efficient in ensuring a continuous supply. Firstly, the pressure in the (totally inadequate) pipe in our area has gradually diminished over the years from a pipe-popping six-plus bars (a burst main pipe was a regular feature of our early years here) to a prostate-problem-like dribble.

Secondly, it would appear that the actual location of the pipe in the ground of the verge of our street is different to what the council has on its map because every time a contractor digs up the verge to lay a cable or other infrastructure he invariably cuts the pipe accidentally, leaving us without supply for a day or so (in itself not a problem because under normal conditions because our tank holds enough for about two days' usage).

More recently, ageing municipal water infrastructure has meant

that pipes, pumps and valves have failed periodically, leaving us without any water for increasingly long periods. As I write this, on a Saturday, we have had no municipal water for five days. Given my cunning dual system this should not have been a problem because of our back-up system of our borehole supply, portable swimming pool and hosepipe. Except for the fact that, on Wednesday our borehole pump ceased to function and our portable swimming pool, whose capacity was already stretched in trying to keep a few flowers and vegetables moist due to a heatwave and a lack of rain, ran dry too.

Peering into our tank I observed about half a day's supply left. Thereafter? No water. Nada. Zip. Zilch.

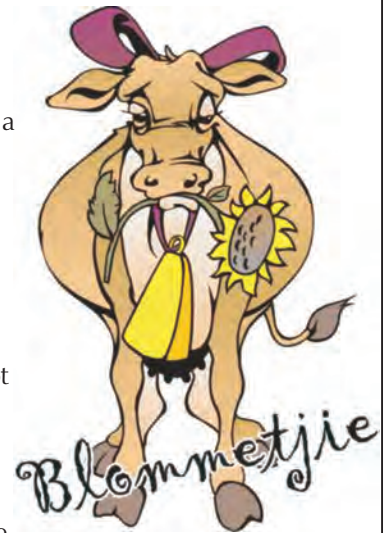
Now we happen to run businesses from home and while it is possible (though not enjoyable) to institute a "if it's yellow let it mellow, if it's brown, flush it down" toilet flushing policy among family members one can't expect the same frugality from members of staff and the sound of every flush of the office loo brought anguished beads of sweat to my forehead.

A frantic call to my electrician son brought some swift diagnostic action, followed by an equally swift repair and by Friday midday the borehole was back in business.

And while the borehole was being repaired I took the time to do some judicious re-piping so that the borehole can now pump, through a filter, directly into the house tank. So now we should never run out of clean, Jik-free water in the house again. Or could we?

What if there's a power failure at the same time? Our borehole pump is a three-phase unit, but our back-up generator, while more than adequate for the house, office, workshop, house booster pump etc (there's me being smug again), is only a single-phase machine.

Anybody got a good three-phase genny for sale? (When you live on a plot it never ends, does it?)





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