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PUBLISHER & EDITOR

Pete Bower

email: gautengsmallholder@gmail.com

RESEARCH EDITOR

Vanessa Bower

email: vanessa.bower@mweb.co.za

GRAPHIC DESIGNER

Mark Hageman

email: graphics@gautengsmallholder.com

ADVERTISEMENT SALES

Pete Bower

email: gautengsmallholder@gmail.com

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FRONT COVER

Tafe's 22kW orchard tractor on show at Nampo is based on the familiar Massey-Ferguson 35.

COMMENT, by Pete Bower

Land: The nitty gritty



Although it will take the patience of Job, the wisdom of Solomon and the negotiating skills of Cyril Ramaphosa and Roelf Meyer combined to stitch a plan together that is acceptable to all, a new model for land restitution, with or without compensation, is going to become a reality in the near-term future.

It's a multi-legged issue that the politicians are trying to address.

□ There's the uncomfortable colonial reality that European settlers and colonials dispossessed black families, communities and tribes in wars, treaties and laws dating back far earlier than the easily-identified dispossession that took place with the 1913 Native Land Act.

Not to mention the forced removals and Bantustan policy of the Apartheid era. All of those thousands of homesteads established by those removed to Bophutatswana, Venda, Transkei and Ciskei, etc? They were never properly surveyed, and the "owners" never received title to their land.

□ There's the cultural and traditional reality of land ownership, tenure and occupation in South Africa. While some land is secured by title deed, registered with the Deeds Office and often financed by a bank, other land is occupied communally and used accordingly, by age-old customs which vary from nation to nation. In KwaZulu-Natal, for example, the Ngonyama Trust, of whom the King is the trustee, "owns" some four million hectares, which is occupied by his subjects.

And, of course, the state in its ridiculously over-complicated three-tier format, owns vast tracts through municipalities, provinces and national departments.

And that's not to mention the fact that many millions of township dwellers and occupiers of RDP houses have no title deeds to their properties. Giving title to the occupiers of such properties would instantly turn millions of previously disadvantaged people into homeowners, and unlock a magnificent store of wealth.

□ Then there's the economic nightmare of inequality in our society, and the unsustainable reality of the small number of taxpayers funding the large number of social welfare recipients, not to mention the suicidally-high level of unemployment, officially at 26%-plus, but arguably much higher.

□ And, probably not finally, there are the political realities of an election looming, and the associated populist posturings of the ANC, desperate to retain ~ or regain ~ its support base, coupled to the firebrand and often racist radical socialism espoused loudly by Julius Malema and his EFF.

That makes for one helluva omelette to try to unscramble.

Although it's probably too early to gauge with certainty, the ANC's approach would seem to address the historical, economic and populist realities outlined above by carving up parcels of land and handing them out to previously dispossessed families. This, the ANC hopes, will solve the problem of inequality by giving many poor families a bankable, if not saleable, asset through which to raise money; it will solve the problem of unemployment by creating a new class of smallholder farmer, and it will ensure family and local food security, if not national food security, by the abundance of produce such a new class of farmer will grow and sell.

And all of this, despite a very similar model of land redistribution having by-and-large failed dismally over the past 24 years...

But here's a nitty-gritty issue that the ANC probably hasn't thought of yet: What, precisely, will be the size of the piece of land it proposes to hand out to the new recipients? Will it go for a simple, one-size-fits-all approach and carve up the land into parcels of, say, 2Ha, or 5Ha? Or 10Ha?

Or will it complicate its life immeasurably by attempting to establish what a workable size would be in any particular area?

For example, if you own 2Ha of the Cape winelands you don't own a smallholding. You own a wine farm. 2Ha of the Great Karroo, by contrast, is probably smaller than the average Karroo farmer's back yard.

And on 2Ha of land in eastern Gauteng you and your family will starve to death if you try growing an extensive crop such as mielies. But if you establish a tunnel farm, growing high-value mini-veg for airfreight export to Europe, for example, you could become as rich as your wine farm-owning fellow recipient in the Western Cape.

The point is that, whatever model the ANC finally alights upon, it needs to guard against simply developing another class of peasant subsistence farmers who still need help in the form of social grants.

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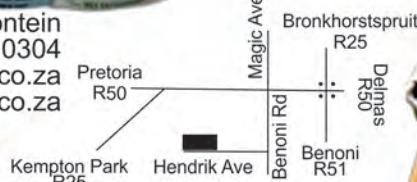


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Disneyworld comes to K'dorp reserve

A portion of the Krugersdorp Game Reserve may soon be developed into a massive edutainment centre aimed at international tourists ~ but questions are being asked about why a conservation area is being targeted for the development.

The Mzanzi Dreamland was proposed by an entity calling itself the Hadassah Group, and the estimated cost of R3-billion will be funded by the developer. No decision has yet been taken, as the relevant impact studies still need to be completed, according to reports. If given the go-ahead, 400 ha of the total 1 600 ha of the reserve would be used for the development.

The reserve already has various facilities such as a conference centre, chalets

and a camping area, and visitors can enjoy a host of activities such as riding, birdwatching and game viewing. The reserve has been managed by the Red Ants for the last four years, with the

contract ending in November this year, and the facilities are said to be in need of refurbishment.

Dr Nandi Msimang, a controversial dentist and businesswoman, is a director

of the Hadassah group. She said the West Rand Development Agency has not informed her company yet of where the theme park will possibly be situated.

"We are very excited about this project," she said. "We are a South African company which looks for opportunities for foreign investors."

The Hadassah plan calls for a theme park of the standard and magnitude of Disneyland, to include an educational centre with

Continued on page 7

MAILBAG

Sir ~ So many of the free magazines available at feed and tack shops are appallingly written. Yours is written in proper English and with an intelligence and even wry humour that is sorely

missed in the other glossy rags. Keep producing a thoroughly enjoyable read.

Michelle Nel
Environmental journalist
by email

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Sanbi wins 36th gold at Chelsea show

The 2018 Sanbi Kirstenbosch exhibit at the Royal Horticultural Society's Chelsea Flower Show has been awarded a Gold Medal, the 36th won by the South African exhibit in the country's 43-year history of participation at the show. And, after 24 years at the helm of the exhibit the design team of David Davidson and Raymond Hudson was replaced this year by a new team headed by Cape Town-based landscape design

specialist Leon Kluge. The Chelsea Flower Show in London is among the top flower shows in the world and is visited by 160 000 people annually. This year's show ran in late May. During their tenure Davidson and Hudson designed and created an annual exhibit that garnered 18 RHS Gold Medals, as well



The volunteers and workers who built the award-winning South African exhibit.

as several additional special awards. In 1995, the exhibit received the Anthony Huxley Trophy, and in 2006 the Lawrence Medal for the best

floral exhibit shown to the RHS. The exhibit went on to becoming the first recipient of the RHS President's Most Creative Award, introduced at Chelsea in 2008, and last year it received the RHS President's Award. Exhibiting and excelling at the Chelsea Flower Show has put Kirstenbosch and its sister gardens in the Sanbi group in the spotlight internationally, as botanical gardens and

Continued on page 8

DISNEYWORLD

From page 5

simulation facilities for professions such as engineering, medicine, fire fighting and more, as well as a mall, sports grounds, aquarium and a beach area.

A Brics village will showcase

each of the five Brics countries' heritage, traditions, food and culture.

DA councillor for the area and caucus chairperson Jaqueline Pannall said this is not the only land available for a development and there are

other options.

"Mogale City and the region has lots of other land available. For example, there's a property of more than 400 ha called Carmel Estate outside the Magaliesberg Mountains that would be perfect."

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R347m vaccine factory for Onderstepoort

Onderstepoort Biological Products, South Africa's leading producer of livestock vaccines, will start on the construction of a new manufacturing plant, to be completed by 2020, for R347 million.

According to agriculture minister Senzeni Zokwana, "this will lead to large scale

production of competitively priced vaccines manufactured under global quality standards; consistent availability

of OBP vaccines and improved response to animal disease outbreaks; penetration of previously inaccessible

markets and sustainable job creation in the fields of veterinary and biotechnology-

Continued on page 11

KIRSTENBOSCH

From page 7

important tourism attractions, proof being that Kirstenbosch is visited by more than a million people from around the world every year. It is

recognised as one of the top seven botanical gardens in the world, and one of the Cape Town Big 7 tourism attractions.

Leon Kluge and his team have

been appointed to design and lead the construction team of the exhibit for the next five years. Kluge has a solid background in horticulture and landscaping and a track record in creating show gardens worldwide.

Moreover, Kluge is not new to the Chelsea Flower Show. He joined Kirstenbosch's Chelsea team in London as a volunteer on four occasions over the past ten years, where he learned different aspects of creating floral exhibits from Davidson and Hudson, whom he still regards as his mentors. He also worked closely with Davidson on this year's Chelsea design.

Iconic Landscapes was the theme of this year's Chelsea Flower Show exhibit.

The design starts off with the Mother City and its Table Mountain National Park, often associated with the Cape Floral Region or fynbos biome, then travels northwards along the iconic West Coast with its very different vegetation of succulent forms and the architectural styles that make this home to the West Coast fishermen, and then moves north of the country to Limpopo, Gauteng and Mpumalanga with their own unique and diverse flora. Khayelitsha crafter Elmon Muringani was invited by Kluge to create the art work that will form the backdrop of the exhibit.

This year the SANBI team included Mpendulo Gabayi, Ricardo Riddles and Lihle Dlamini. Chris Randlehoff from Leon Kluge Garden Design also joined the team in London.

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Once again the SA Green Industries Council (Sagic) will run its popular four module invasive species and herbicide training during May and June. In Johannesburg the course

will run from June 19 to 22. Invasive species and herbicide training expands participants' career prospects, enabling them to become a Sagic invasive species consultant, to head up an invasive species

removal team or to learn how to draw up control plans for municipalities, large landowners and residential estates. SAGIC offers four modules: Module 1: Identification & Legislation (Day 1): Learn to

identify invasive species, categories and understand the legislation. Module 2: Directives & Control Plans (Day 2): How to manage declarations, permits, pre-directives, directives and control plans. Module 3: Theory: Herbicides & Control Methods (Day 3):

Continued on page 12

Nersa scraps registration plan

A plan by the National Energy Regulator of SA (Nersa) and Eskom to propose a law that would have made it mandatory for owners of any power generating system of less than

1MW to register their devices, have been abandoned. This follows a vigorous outcry by the public, consumer bodies and energy experts that the proposal was nothing more than a subterfuge under

which the government would introduce a tax on supplementary generation devices to bolster Eskom's falling revenues.

The proposal was to include all generating devices of less than 1MW, which would have included domestic solar panels and standby generators. Anything larger than 1MW is classed as a power station, which requires licensing of its own.

VACCINES

From page 8

cal sciences."

It is hoped that the new facility will improve OBP's performance and production efficiencies of current

products.

The minister adds that OBP will also increase the number of distribution points of its products in rural areas to nine.

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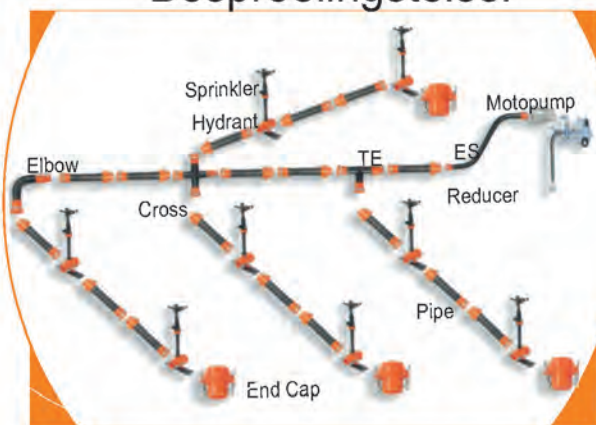
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NAMPO 2018

Another bumper Nampo show

Publisher Pete Bower spent a day at the Nampo Harvest Day outside Bothaville, reviews what was on show, and gives hints on how you can make the best of a visit next year...

Following the bumper show last year on the back of an excellent season one would have been forgiven for expecting this year's Nampo Harvest Show outside Bothaville last month to have been a less-spectacular affair. But one would have been wrong. Grain SA says a record 82 800-plus visitors shuffled

through the gates this year, and casual observation following five hours of walking around the showground on the first day showed that it was well attended by exhibitors this year. Certainly, the show has become a mammoth affair, too big to take in completely on one day alone, and in

Continued on page 15

Veld goat book

The Indigenous Veld Goat Society comprises a group of breeders with common interests who share responsibilities for the welfare of the breed, the society and for fellow breeders.

To mark the tenth anniversary of the existence of the society, the IVG Journal has been produced.

A colourful coffee table book, it is an informative guide to every IVG farmer and anyone else who is interested in indigenous livestock in South Africa.

The journal is free of charge to all IVG members and will

be available for collection at the Bloemfontein Show Grounds, during the IVG Bloemfontein AGM and auction on May 26. Cost to non-members will be R130. To order your copy, phone 054 891-0058 or 073 307-8607.



INVASIVES

From page 11

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From page 12
itself one of the biggest trade fairs of its type anywhere. For anybody with a serious interest in agriculture, whether on an extensive scale or on a smallholding, a periodic visit to Nampo is a must. But before you make the two or three-hour trip from Gauteng into the mielie fields of the Free State, here, with some impressions of this year's show, we give you an idea of what to expect when you go next year.

How to get there

Unless you have friends or

family who live in Potchefstroom, Klerksdorp or surrounds, with whom you can stay for the night, a day trip is your only option because all hotels, B&Bs, guesthouses and the like are booked up for the Nampo week at least a year in advance. Literally. Farmers in the area, too, cash in on the show, by hosting guests in accommodation of varying degrees of luxury. Some even erect Wendy houses in their gardens, equip them with rudimentary furniture, and let them out

solely for the Nampo show. And afterwards they lock them up and use the proceeds for a holiday at the coast.

If you're a caravanner, or are willing to doss down in a tent, these options are also available.

For a day-tripper from Gauteng, unless one wants to leave home at 04h00 and arrive back late at night, one's time at the show is limited to the five hours between 10h00 and 15h00, which gives one three hours of travelling time to the show,

with a comfort break along the way, time to park and walk to the gate, and time to queue for a ticket, with three hours driving home in the afternoon.

That's the travelling time from Eastern or Northern Gauteng. You're lucky you if you're coming from the west of the province.

Your alternative to driving is to fly in, if you're lucky enough to own a plane or a helicopter. The showground has its own grass landing strip, parking for many

Continued on page 16



Left: Electric wheelbarrow from Snapper. Centre: A range of feed mixers from Afri-Ca Implements. Right: The only example of a Chinese two-wheel tractor was this one, used to illustrate a single row no-till planter.

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NAMPO 2018

From page 15
aircraft, and even an air traffic controller and its own radio frequency. No aviation fuel is available at Nampo, however.

What's there to see

Every conceivable agricultural contraption is on display, including some you have never dreamed of. Many are massive, costing many millions of rands, and probably affordable by, or useful to, no more than two or three farmers nationwide. But it's not just a show for tractors and implements. Static stuff, such as silos,

in that there are a few dedicated manufacturers of hand, animal and quad-bike-drawn implements who seem to do a roaring trade each year, and this year there was one dealer of implements sourced from China whose models are suitable for smaller users.

And talking of China, and specifically cheap Chinese tractors, it appears the romance with these machines is over. I noted only one Chinese brand at the show, namely the relaunched Foton Lovol make, although there

were two Indian makes putting up good displays, namely Farmtrac (which are reworked Fords) and Tafe (which are reworked Massey Fergusons).

Of the noisy, dangerous, smoky, hand-cranked, single-cylinder, two-wheel Chinese tractors ~ those with the rectangular shiny chrome headlight ~ there was one on display, and that only as a prop to show off a small locally-made implement.

Being a national show there is also equipment

on display that is not marketed in Gauteng such as, for example, orchard tractors used in the fruit and vineyard industry (some of which would be ideal on a plot), and forestry machinery.

And, being southern Africa's premier agribusiness show,

Continued on page 17



Stihl's Nadine Green shows off the range of battery-powered machines.

fencing, liquid storage tanks of all shapes and sizes, security, trucks, engines, pumps, chainsaws, mowers and more are to be seen, and you can see and buy medicaments for your animals, fertilizer for your crops, insurance for your farm, carpets for your home and even jewellery for your wife at the show.

Not unnaturally, it's not a show dedicated to smallholders, and such stuff that is suitable for use on a plot is often to be found tucked away, often as an after-thought, among the bigger machines.

There are exceptions



Foton Lovol, the sole Chinese tractor brand left

From page 16

Nampo also attracts national stands organised by participating countries' export trade bodies or embassies, although these seem to have become fewer over recent years.

If one cares to look carefully at what's on offer from year to year, one can pick up the trends and fads in agriculture. For example, a few years ago the show was awash with Chinese tractors. Now there are just about none.

A few years ago a number of stands were selling green

barley feed production systems. This year only one remained.

Over the past couple of years the popularity of no till cultivation has taken off, with even small hand-operated planters on offer of the no-till variety.

Focusing on small powered machinery such as chainsaws and brushcutters, the trend is towards electric models using Li-ion rechargeable batteries.

Over the past few years the popularity of forest-handling machinery, such as chippers,

log splitters and log handlers has grown and this year was no exception. In the same category, many stands advertise powered firefighting machinery.

On the eastern edge of the showground a number of exhibitions plots were established a few years ago, on which seed suppliers grow small stands of various varieties. Maize varieties are, naturally, well-represented, but forage crops, such as beets and Japanese radish of various types, now also

feature prominently, as do the new, imported "wonder grasses" from Brazil, Russia and elsewhere.

Of livestock, most cattle breed societies have representative quality animals on display in a dedicated hall, and it is instructive for anyone interested in purchasing cattle for their smallholding to be able to compare breed for breed in the flesh, and to discuss the merits of each

Continued on page 19



Left: Neat DAB domestic booster pumps from Magnum Power. Right: Emergency firefighter, with space for a casualty stretcher, fitted to a Gravelly ATV, imported by Mfangano Solutions.

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NAMPO 2018

From page 17

with knowledgeable breed experts.

For small livestock, there are some, but not all, sheep, goat and pig breeds on display. A few horse breeds are also always present, but not in large numbers.



Groenvoer's Cathy Khoury-Prinsloo discusses the company's round-bale savers with a visitor

What to do

Five hours is simply insufficient time to take a leisurely stroll around all the stands and see everything. The best one can hope to achieve is to visit those stands of vendors of stuff that may be of interest to one's specific property, with time for a bite to eat and a little bit of viewing of stuff other than that in which one has a direct interest. To do so efficiently, even then, requires one to know where the particular stands are located and to head straight there, then on to the next etc. To guide one a handy directory and map booklet is available at the entrances, and one can take the weight off one's feet by hopping on the of the tractor-drawn shuttles

that run on preordained routes around the ground all day.

Making one's navigation around the grounds a bit easier is the fact that many of the long-standing exhibitors book the same stand year after year.

Grain SA organises a daily "Ladies Programme" of talks and demonstrations of interest to the fairer sex, so that ladies don't need to be dragged around as one wanders from stand to stand kicking the

tyres of various tractors. That having been said, many wealthy farmers seem to let their wives loose with their credit cards, which they use to good effect buying furniture, carpeting, artwork



Backsaver's implements for smallholders

and clothing for their homes and children.

In previous years the show included an ongoing ploughing competition where farmers could show their skills by ploughing straight, level furrows on shiny new small

tractors. The area in which that took place has, this year, been turned into additional visitor parking, and the exercise scrapped. Similarly, in previous years demonstrations of



Built to last ... the quality of Tuffy's implements is self-evident in this small plough

Continued on page 20

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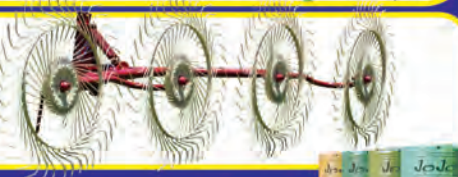
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NAMPO 2018



Tractors new and old ... Left: Tafe's two-cylinder Massey-Ferguson-based orchard tractor. Centre and right: Two beautifully-restored rare classics, a Bolinder-Munktel and an Allgaier A1.

From page 19

large implements and tractors was held in a mielie field behind the showground. That, too, looks like it's been scrapped.

Not that it's a totally static show. A number of stands have working examples of their machines, with the staff

on the stands only too eager to fire up their machines and show off their capabilities at any sign of interest from a visitor.

Of interest to anybody who likes to see an old machine working is Consolidated Wire's stand, which always features an old barbed wire-

making machine in action. And if you like old farm machines, there is a rudimentary tractor and implement museum with some beautiful restorations. New this year were two unusual and rare tractors, both restored to showroom condition, a Bolinder-Munktel and an

Allgaier A1. The museum also has a beautifully-restored Ruston stationary engine that pops and clatters away all day long. And if you arrive at the right time you might see an old-timer start up a Lanz Bulldog. You don't need to be close by to know when this happens. The loud BANG as the single cylinder fires for the first time can be heard throughout the grounds.

What to eat

If you are lucky enough to crack an invitation from Grain SA or one of the exhibitors you can expect more than adequate victuals in reserved dining and drinking facilities. A press accreditation, too, gets you entrance to your own premises where there is refreshment and the ability to file stories etc.

For the hoi-polloi there are fast food outlets dotted around the showgrounds, most being near clean and well-maintained toilets in which one can freshen up before eating. The most enticing food-on-the-run to be had is a sosatie from the

Continued on page 21

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Sabio outlines registration rules

If you are a beekeeper and you had difficulty in registering and re-registering as such with the Dept of Agriculture (Daff) after March 31 this year, The SA Bee Industry Organisation (Sabio) has sought clarity from Daff on the issue following a meeting with the department,

Our regular article on beekeeping looks at the arrangements for registering as a beekeeper with the Dept of Agriculture

and the current state of play is outlined below

□ The closing date annually for the registration of beekeepers is the end of March each year in line with

Control Measure Relating to Honeybees GN R858/2013;

□ Applications will be accepted from new beekeepers after the closing date and their registration

numbers will be provided to them, but they will only receive their Registration Certificate when they re-register for the following year; □ No applications for re-registration of a beekeeper will be received after the March 31 of each year. Beekeepers who continue beekeeping and have not re-registered by that date will be deemed to be operating illegally;

□ The department may send out reminders to beekeepers

Continued on page 23

NAMPO 2018

From page 20

the kiosk on the western edge of the showground near the main road. You'll know you're getting close by the aroma, which wafts mouthwateringly over the grounds from about 09h00 each day. Get there early, unless you want a wait in a long, snaking queue. For the rest it's hamburgers, curry and rice and boerie rolls produced with great efficiency by the congregants of various churches in the area, and sold

from stalls all over the showground.

Off Nampo

Over the years, a number of "off-Nampo" venues have sprung up, housing flea-market vendors and bric-a-brac, but also housing exhibitions by vendors of agricultural equipment unable to secure a stand in the actual show, or for whom the prices of exhibition space are too steep. One used to be held in

Bothaville itself, but this was closed by the municipality a couple of years ago. In its place there now appear to be two just outside the showground (but not within walking distance), one of which is now housed in a large circus-like marquee. To visit these "off-Nampo" venues you will have to cut in to your five hours allocated to the real show or you will find yourself arriving home late at night.

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1.0m high	R536.00	2450 x 1225 x 2.5	R823.01	32 x 32	R131.04	R178.80	125 x 50 x 20 x 2	R337.02	R556.47	12mm	R80.58								
1.2m high	R598.06	2450 x 1225 x 3.0	R968.43	38 x 38	R166.98	R199.50	150 x 50 x 20 x 2	R381.84	R593.79	Flat Bar	6m								
1.5m high	R619.06	2450 x 1225 x 4.0	R1 356.79	50 x 50	R216.72	R294.72	175 x 50 x 20 x 2	R445.08	R667.31	20 x 3	R42.30								
1.8m high	R784.06	2500 x 1200 x 5.0	R1 689.69	76 x 76	R324.66	R392.88	200 x 50 x 20 x 2	R478.26	R737.65	20 x 5	R57.42								
2.0m high	R846.04	2500 x 1200 x 6.0	R2 017.55	100 x 100		R600.30				25 x 3	R50.34								
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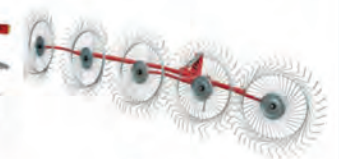
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BEEKEEPING

From page 21

who have not re-registered to do so before March 31;
☐ For this year an extension was granted until April 30 for re-registrations, and no further late renewals will be processed;
☐ Consideration is being given to setting up an on-line registration and re-registration process. Sabio has also suggested that registration certificates be sent to recipients by e-mail as a PDF document, rather than by post;
☐ A list of current registered beekeepers and their registration numbers will be posted on the Daff website;
☐ The crop protection industry and crop growers' associations are to be approached by Daff requesting that they enforce regulations on their members or at least encourage their members to ensure that only registered

beekeepers be allowed to supply pollination services, and to discourage the use of un-registered or non-registered pollination service providers who would be operating illegally;
☐ Consideration is being given to the amendment of the control measure with regards to the annual registration of beekeepers.
☐ As a result of all of this Sabio recommends that all pollination service providers and bee removal service providers provide their clients with a copy of their annual registration certificate when tendering for jobs. Associations should also ensure that all members who keep bees provide a copy of their current annual registration certificate when renewing their annual membership with their associations. Smallholders who are

Continued on page 26

Northerns' Field Day

Members of the Northerns Beekeeping Association went on a day trip to fields of sunflowers near Roetdan in Limpopo, where they saw a pollination operation in action. Afterwards, lunch and refreshments were enjoyed beside a local dam. Below: All suited up and studying a frame from an open hive. Bottom: Suits off and it's time to party ... members take a break for a selfie beside the water.



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LIVESTOCK

Playtime: how to entertain your goats

The Devil makes work for idle hands, goes the saying, undoubtedly made up to apply to naughty humans, but which could just as easily have been made up about goats. South African smallholders

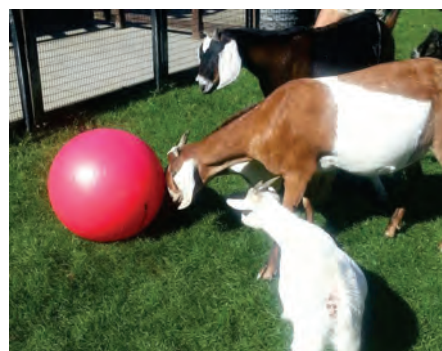


Notched tree trunk for climbing

are likely to roll their eyes at the idea of providing "intellectual" or physical stimulation for their livestock. But the one topic that they will concede is that it is important to keep goats entertained and busy.

That is because goats are clever, curious and energetic, so when they are bored they are likely to get up to mischief. They love to wander around, lounge or find stuff to head butt. They are also

infamous escape artists, but the theory is that if the goats' pasture has enough entertainment, they won't try to escape. They like to jump and climb. The easiest things to add to your pasture for their amusement are large tree stumps, preferably of different heights, and logs of different lengths. Providing stumps at



Goats love to butt balls

increasing heights will keep them going up and up and

Continued on page 27

BEEKEEPING

From page 23

interested in keeping bees have access to assistance, advice and support from one of three beekeepers associations in the province.

All three associations welcome new beekeepers to their regular meetings and have active Facebook pages.

☐ The Northerns Beekeepers

Association (known as "Northerns") meets as a rule around Pretoria and caters for beekeepers around Pretoria. For details call Riekie on 082 972-1889

☐ The Southern Beekeepers Association ("Southerns") covers beekeepers in the Johannesburg, West Rand

and southern Gauteng. Email

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☐ The Eastern Highveld Beekeepers Association ("Easterns") caters for beekeepers on the East Rand, as well as members in Mpumalanga. Call Peter Clark on 011 362-2904 for details.

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LIVESTOCK

From page 26

then leaping off the tallest one with great gusto.

If the stumps have rough bark so much the better, as goats love to scratch. They scratch their sides, they scratch their heads, they scratch their rumps and they will scratch their belly if they can find



something to rub them on. Having a nice, rough log lying around in their pen will give them something to rub their sides and bellies on.

You can also make a scratch post by screwing hard scrubbing brushes or a broom head to posts or trees.

Goats are browsers. If they do not have access to trees, the next time you are trimming branches throw some into the goat pen. It is a wonderful treat for your goats and will keep them busy for a while. Or install a trampoline. The goats will love bouncing on it, even a small one.



Left: Scratch post made from a stiff brush. Above: DIY see-saw.

Pallets can provide the start to a jungle gym for goats: leave the pallets intact and stack them at various heights. Put the stacks next to each other so that the goats can climb from stack to stack. You can also add "bridges" by putting wooden boards between stacks so that they can walk from stack to stack.

Another cheap goat toy is to use scrap wood to build tables, benches or other platforms for your goats. Wooden cable drums will also be useful as platforms for them to jump onto and cascading different size spools

make great goat toy obstacle courses.

You can create a see-saw by attaching a sturdy plank to an upturned bucket or rock as the fulcrum. Or sink a tyre half into the ground and attach the plank to that. Some goats enjoy kicking around hard plastic balls, while others love climbing or jumping on to large exercise balls. Some people hang a ball from a fence which the goats enjoy butting.

Different sized tyres can be stacked for them to jump on or set into the ground to form tunnels. An old water tank

Continued on page 28

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LIVESTOCK

From page 27

with both ends taken off will also make a tunnel.

They enjoy ramps, so you can carve steps into a tree log which can be attached to the side of one of your stacks. Keep a lookout for second hand jungle gyms that you can adapt. They even enjoy slides.

If you have large rocks on your property, you can make a rock playground. Again, anything goats can climb on makes great goat toys. The

added bonus of using rocks is that the texture of the rocks will help keep the goats' hooves worn down and you won't have to trim their hooves as often.

All these things need to be put in the centre of your field though. Make sure that you do not put anything that goats can climb on too close to their fences, as it will create an escape route for them. They will jump from high objects to clear a fence and get out.

To keep your goats amused make sure they always have plenty of hay, fresh foraging grass and branches to nibble on, and a mineral block for licking and jumping on.



Playground attraction: A jungle gym for goats made from old pallet wood.

QUIRKY

Nine inescapable truths:

Number 9 - Death is the number 1 killer in the world.
Number 8 - Life is sexually transmitted.

Number 7 - Good health is merely the slowest possible rate at which one can die.

Number 6 - Men have two emotions: hungry and horny, and they can't tell them apart. If you see a gleam in his eyes, make him a sandwich.

Number 5 - Give a person a fish and you feed them for a day. Teach a person to use the Internet and they won't bother you for weeks, months, maybe years.

Number 4 - Health nuts are going to feel stupid someday, lying in the hospital, dying of nothing.

Number 3 - All of us could take a lesson from the weather. It pays no attention to criticism.

Number 2 - In the 60's, people took acid to make the world weird. Now the world is weird, and people take Prozac to make it normal.

Number 1 - Life is like a jar of jalapeno peppers. What you do today might burn your butt tomorrow.

...and finally, don't worry about old age; it doesn't last that long.

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Fat ponies and equine metabolic syndrome

Many horsemen and women grew up with the idea that ponies should look like "Thelwell ponies" ~ round and fat. However, studies show that a fat pony might be an unhealthy pony. If most of the fat is laid down in the abdomen and the pony shows a tendency to have laminitis, the pony might have a condition called Equine Metabolic Syndrome (EMS). The fat in the abdominal area is called omental fat and it has been found to produce hormones. These help regulate a number of body processes and are programmed towards enhancing ponies' ability to survive long cold hungry winters. The fat also produces cortisol, a steroid that inhibits the action of insulin, so high

You're doing your kid's pony no favours by over-feeding it, as laminitis could be the result.

cortisol levels result in insulin resistance and a degree of hyperglycaemia (high blood sugar levels). In the wild, ponies are programmed to put on weight during summer and autumn when there is plenty of pasture, and fat is laid down. As the pony gradually loses weight during the winter, the level of omental fat reduces and the state of insulin resistance becomes reversed. However, in a domestic environment ponies are fed grain-based feeds year-round, or even just hay and other forages, so they don't lose weight over winter.

This means their insulin resistance is not reversed, and so they are vulnerable in spring when the sweet new grass comes up, because their high levels of cortisol and sugar increase the risk of laminitis developing. The horse cannot properly metabolize carbohydrates,

including starches and sugars. Laminitis is a painful inflammatory condition of the tissues (laminae) that bond the hoof wall to the pedal (coffin) bone in the horse's hoof. (The historical name for laminitis was "Monday morning sickness" as it was first identified among urban working horses pulling, for example, coal carts. Such horses would work hard on weekdays, but would spend



Continued on page 31

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HORSEMANSHIP

From page 30

the weekend "resting" immobile in their stables while receiving full rations, with the result that they would manifest painful lameness on Monday morning when required to return to work.)

Common signs of EMS are:

- ☐ Obesity in adult ponies or horses (although a minority may be normal-sized);
- ☐ A "good doer" who puts on weight easily and loses it with great difficulty;
- ☐ A horse that is ravenously hungry all the time;
- ☐ Urinating frequently;
- ☐ Lethargy and laziness;
- ☐ Infertility or abnormal cycles in mares;

☐ Abnormal body fat distribution, eg, thickened, cresty neck; excess fat around head of tail; fatty shoulders; flabby, fatty sheath; pot-bellied look.

To prevent EMS, firstly control the pony's diet. Reduce calorie intake and eliminate simple sugars (carbohydrates). Mature ponies that are in ideal body condition and in light work may need little more than good quality pasture or hay and possibly a complete vitamin and mineral supplement.

This ration, though simple, is low in starch, and this is an important step in avoiding equine metabolic syndrome. There are also feeds available that are grain free and have

been formulated for horses with this sort of condition. Ask the feed supplier for examples.

Do not feed carrots, apples or sweet feeds.

Some research has shown that soaking grass hays in warm water for an hour and half before feeding can reduce the non-structural carbohydrate concentration of the hay by as much as 40%.

Even if the hay is soaked for a shorter time, or in cold water, there is still some reduction of non-structural carbohydrates because they are water soluble. Soaked hay should be fed immediately to

prevent mould formation.

Supplements containing antioxidants, chromium and magnesium claim to be of help (possibly by increasing insulin sensitivity), but the research is not yet conclusive. Veterinarians may have an opinion on this.

Exercise is also essential as it encourages a loss in omental fat, and it also promotes an increase in glucose uptake.

Continued on page 32



Pony with painful laminitis

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POULTRY

Poultry mites: nuisance that is easy to treat

Chicken mites are tiny, crawling, external parasites that can become a problem for your chickens if they are given the opportunity to take up residence on your flock.

You can suspect that you have a mite problem on your birds if your hens begin to lose their feathers, particularly out of their usual moulting period (early autumn), or if you see them biting excessively under their wings or around their vents. The mites bite and chew on your birds while sucking their blood, to the extent that they can make the birds anaemic, which can become so bad if not treated that the chickens might even die.

Mites are spread by bringing infected birds into your flock, by wild birds, rodents, or by

carrying them in on your shoes or clothing.

The mites can also migrate to humans, causing itching, and while they will live on humans they don't reproduce.

They are more prevalent and active in warm weather and during summer, although some types do live in cold climates as well.

While their life cycle is only five to seven days, each mite can lay more than 100 000 eggs during that time, so treatment must be repeated and ongoing to completely eradicate them.

Chickens can actually combat these pests on their own. When the weather is dry, and they have dust that they can bathe in, it helps them to combat mites. The

Continued on page 33



Lifting the feathers to check the skin for microscopic mites.

HORSEMANSHIP

From page 31

A fit pony (even if slightly overweight) has increased sensitivity to insulin and will lose weight faster than an unfit pony.

The exercise must be tailored to the abilities of the animal. Vigorous exercise is obviously not sensible for very old or stiff animals or those that already have laminitis.

Nevertheless, if the pony cannot be ridden because of the school or extramural

commitments of the rider, a few minutes on a lunge-rein in either direction at a gentle trot, or a walk out on a lead-rein by a groom for half an hour will, if done regularly, do the trick.

If laminitis develops exercise may not be possible and this presents difficulties in management. It is therefore worth being proactive and tackling the condition before laminitis occurs.



Left: Many hands make light work ... dusting a chicken in diatomaceous earth. Above: Pressure-washing the coop will rid it of mites.

From page 32
dusting smothers the bugs. So when you see your birds out in the yard rolling in the dust and stretched out in the sun, know that they are also taking care of bug issues or preventing them from getting started.

However it sometimes happens that the mites are able to set up an infestation and the solution is quite simple. Food-grade diatomaceous earth, a very fine powder comprising the

fossilized remains of tiny millennia-old aquatic creatures which, in South Africa, is found in the Northern Cape, works as an effective remedy when used liberally in the chickens' housing and as a dusting compound.

It is harmless to poultry, but you should wear a dust-mask when applying it to avoid irritating your lungs.

Pour the DE into a bath or tub and put one chicken at a time into it. It is helpful if

there is more than one of you to do it, so that one can hold, while the other is sprinkling the DE on and rubbing it into the skin under the feathers.

While the chickens won't enjoy the experience, once completed and released they soon shake themselves off and hurry off to join their companions.

You might see them pecking at the diatomaceous earth, but it is not dangerous for them to eat it and might even be helpful in ridding them of

internal parasites.

If the chickens are free range, sprinkle DE in the places where they like to congregate or dust themselves.

Continued on page 35

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Mesh: Galvanised After Welding Sold in 30m rolls or p/m

Block Size	Wire dia.	915mm	1220mm	1830mm
6.4mm x 6.4mm	0.7mm	✓	✓	✓
9.6mm x 9.6mm	0.9mm	✓	✓	✓
13mm x 13mm	1.0mm	✓	✓	✓
13mm x 13mm	1.6mm	✓	✓	✓
13mm x 25mm	1.0mm	✓	✓	✓
13mm x 25mm	1.25mm	✓	✓	✓
13mm x 25mm	1.5mm	✓	✓	✓
13mm x 25mm	1.6mm	✓	✓	✓
13mm x 25mm	2.0mm	✓	✓	✓
25mm x 25mm	1.0mm	✓	✓	✓
25mm x 25mm	1.5mm	✓	✓	✓
25mm x 25mm	1.6mm	✓	✓	✓
25mm x 25mm	2.0mm	✓	✓	✓
25mm x 25mm	2.5mm	✓	✓	✓
25mm x 25mm	3.0mm	✓	✓	✓
25mm x 50mm	1.5mm	✓	✓	✓
25mm x 50mm	1.6mm	✓	✓	✓
25mm x 50mm	2.0mm	✓	✓	✓



Mesh: Galvanised Before Welding Sold in 30m rolls or p/m

Block Size	Wire dia.	915mm	1220mm	1830mm
25mm x 25mm	2.5mm	✓	✓	✓
25mm x 50mm	2.5mm	✓	✓	✓
25mm x 50mm	3.0mm	✓	✓	✓
50mm x 50mm	1.6mm	✓	✓	✓
50mm x 50mm	2.0mm	✓	✓	✓
50mm x 50mm	2.5mm	✓	✓	✓
50mm x 50mm	3.0mm	✓	✓	✓
50mm x 100mm	2.0mm	✓	✓	✓
50mm x 100mm	2.5mm	✓	✓	✓
100mm x 100mm	2.0mm	✓	✓	✓
100mm x 100mm	2.5mm	✓	✓	✓

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Food forests: what are they?

The term "food forest" has entered the lexicon of home gardeners, permaculturists, off-gridders and greenie beanies recently, conjuring up a mixture of trees, plants, insects and flowers, all bathed in dappled sunlight and delivering forth a magical harvest of fresh vegetables, herbs and fruit. But is this correct? Or more prosaically, what exactly does the term entail?

A food forest is a gardening technique or land manage-

A food forest is a gardening technique or land management system which mimics a woodland ecosystem

ment system which mimics a woodland ecosystem by substituting edible trees, shrubs, perennials and annuals. Food forests are based on the observation and understanding of the forms and patterns found in forest ecologies and applying these principles to a selection of plants safe for human consumption.

Forests in their natural, undisturbed condition present a complex system of life, biodiversity and fertility, where mutually beneficial relationships are created between organisms; natural harmonious communities form, and life forms multiply and proliferate.

If we emulate nature, we can design and build natural

ecosystems full of life, that look after themselves just like a forest ~ but which contain plants of our choosing.

Nature grows in a highly optimised pattern, utilising multiple layers and making the most of both horizontal and vertical space.

To achieve a low maintenance abundance of fruit, nuts, berries and herbs you will want to create a forest-like system where fertility comes from various sources,

Continued on page 36

POULTRY

From page 33

Also sprinkle it liberally on the ground, in laying compartments and in their coop.

If you have a high-pressure washer, use it to spray the perches, shelves, nesting boxes and the outside of the hen house.

If you don't have such a hose, pour boiling water into the cracks and joints. Once it is dry sprinkle with DE.

Clear out all the bedding, wrap it in newspaper and

burn it. The mites will survive and multiply if you put it in the compost.

Continue to monitor your chickens and their housing closely, as the mites undoubtedly laid eggs in the little time they had. Repeat the process as necessary.

Check after another seven days, and dust again if needed.

To prevent mites and lice from taking foot again, take these measures:

Do what you can to keep wild birds away from your chicken coop. Secure your chicken feed, remove wild bird nests, or even build that scarecrow you've always dreamed of. Keep layering your chickens' dust-bathing area with diatomaceous earth and change their bedding regularly.

You can try putting pest repellent dried herbs, such as mint and lavender in their bedding. Some people mix a little apple cider vinegar and garlic into their chickens' water.

Do a full coop clean every six months.



Sprinkling diatomaceous earth where the chickens like to scratch.



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IN THE GARDEN

From page 35

where you are aided by fungi, where wildlife is your primary pest control, where soil holds water like a sponge, and where you have a high diversity of plants.

A food forest typically comprises seven layers, the uppermost layer being the canopy layer.

The starting point is to decide what you want to get out of a food forest ~ why are you doing it? Options include being more self-reliant, making an income, producing healthy food, educating others or having a fun project for the whole family, for example.

Then observe your proposed site. If you have a small forest in your area, it would be good to study that to see what grows in your area and how you can grow similar plants. Study your land and make a map of it. Permaculturists urge one to read the land-



Food forest
scape, making notes on your water situation, climate, soil, slope, aspect, natural vegetation and wildlife. Then plan your layout. In Gauteng we are likely to choose a Savanna type system, which involves alley cropping and a silvopastoral system. With alley cropping, crop strips alternate with rows of closely spaced tree or hedge species. Normally, the trees

are pruned before planting the crop. The cut leafy material is spread over the crop area to provide nutrients for the crop. In addition to nutrients, the hedges serve as windbreaks and eliminate soil erosion. Silvopasture or wood pasture is the practice of combining woodland and the grazing of domesticated animals in a mutually beneficial way. Recall a few years ago the

hype around growing tree lucerne as a forage species. You will look at the infrastructure that you already have, if any, to see how you can incorporate them into your plan. If you have none, then plan your water, access and structures.

Next make a master list of plants ~ your desired species and others necessary to fulfil a certain purpose in your food forest. The very core of forest gardening is to create guilds of plants, by bringing together plants that meld with one another in a balance. All survive and flourish; weeds are excluded.

You have to consider how you will improve the soil before you plant anything, building it up and improving the soil structure. Finally, source your plants and start planting.

This land management system needs patience and dedication to long-term goals.



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Fast-growing indigenous tree for warmer areas

If you live in a warmer part of Gauteng, with little winter frost, there is a variety of acacia which, while not indigenous to Gauteng, is a widespread native of the eastern part of Africa, and which in the wild is an important source of forage for animals, as well as being a useful medicinal plant.

It is commonly known as the Ana tree (anaboom) (*Faidherbia albida*). It is found from Israel in the North to KwaZulu-Natal in the south, particularly along river banks, and in marshes and on flood plains.

A leafy tree growing up to 30m tall, it flowers from March to September and forms fruit from September

to December. It is the only acacia with straight thorns and prolonged inflorescence. The trees are mostly leafless in summer and the shape of the pods is characteristic. It is a valuable feed tree for wildlife, especially taller browsing species such as elephant, giraffe, kudus, etc, and for livestock.

An adult tree can deliver up to a ton of pods per season. The pods fall from November to January. The seeds have high protein content, are 50% carbohydrate, with tannin, and almost 25% a dark yellow volatile oil.

Pods can be collected on the ground. To propagate, seeds are soaked in warm water overnight. The seedlings

develop long roots early. Seedlings of 50-80 mm high can have roots of 500-600 mm long. It is therefore better to plant seedlings directly into the garden or field when they are + - 50 mm high.

Young trees are

susceptible to the Australian woolly louse.

It can withstand up to five days of frost per year and is relatively drought resistant. It is a protected tree in South Africa.

Anatree lanes can be planted close to each other on

contours to stabilise the soil with their extensive root systems. It is one of the fastest growing indigenous trees, with a growth rate 1-2m a year.

A bark extract is used for diarrhoea, bleeding, inflammation of the eyes.



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Mature ana tree (picture Seeds for Africa)

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Extra income? Consider floriculture

Many agricultural producers in Gauteng are considering alternative enterprises to increase their incomes and floriculture or flower farming might be worth investigating. You might already know a great deal about growing flowers. You will need that knowledge, along with a detailed business plan. Issues such as weather, soil types, water quality, fertilising and spraying programs, harvesting, packaging and marketing should be addressed.

Smallholders in Gauteng are well placed to export cut flowers. However, high export costs are too exorbitant for a small producer, who should focus on the local market instead. The Multiflora flower auction is by far the most important and convenient marketing



Popular and indigenous ... Strelitzia channel for local flower marketing. The auction, situated at City Deep, has daily auctions from Mondays to Saturdays from 07h00 where major agents and wholesalers buy flowers. The auction is market driven and prices for products are determined by supply and demand. For newcomers to the industry a visit to Multiflora is essential to see the heartbeat of sales in the floricultural industry in South Africa. There is also a strong network of flower wholesalers and distributors.

So where on your smallholding would you start your cultivation? Most plants for cut flowers prefer a location in full sun throughout the entire day. The field and soil should be well

drained.

Wind protection is highly desirable for all plants. Windbreaks serve to reduce water stress on plants and help prevent stem breakage and floral damage. It is important to consider any competitive effect which may

occur from the roots of any plant used as a windbreak. The site should have sufficient cold air drainage to avoid recurring early or late season frosts.

A source of irrigation water is essential.

If animal foraging is a problem, fencing will be required.

Flower production requires intensive management. The site should have ready access for production equipment and removal and handling of the harvested product.

Study the proposed site for ease of movement of materials and plants into the area to begin production, within the site while producing and harvesting the crop, and movement of the harvested crop to storage and packing areas.

Continued on page 40

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IN THE GARDEN

From page 39

The idea is to maximize efficiency of the labour required for all production and marketing functions. An interesting marketing possibility is a "pick-your-own" strategy. In this case, a site with easy access is critical. Easy access from public roads to parking areas and from parking to the fields will enhance the consumer's overall shopping experience. Plants should be grown in beds raised 10–15cm to maximize drainage. Poorly drained soil should be corrected by placing drain lines 25 to 30cm deep under the beds. Check for the existence of a hardpan in the soil. A deep-rooted cover crop such as alfalfa may help to break up the hardpan. A well-drained soil environ-



Above: Agapanthus have long stems. Right: Red hot pokers are colourful, last well when cut, and you'll do your bees a favour, too.



ment is essential for maximum root development and reduces the potential for root rot problems.

Organic matter should be incorporated into the beds to a depth of 25 to 30cm. The addition of organic matter is best if incorporated in autumn, but can be done any time before planting if the nitrogen status of the soil is monitored.

For beds planted to perennials, it may not be possible to work additional

organic matter deep into the soil until the plants are divided or replaced. For these beds, sufficient organic matter should be added initially to provide a soil structure with optimum aeration and drainage.

It is advisable to have the soil tested for nutrient content before adding any fertiliser to the planting bed. Production decisions made without adequate information are merely guesses and can be costly.

Marketing strategy, plant growth habit, and labour efficiency determine the ideal size of a planting bed.

If a pick-your-own market strategy is the choice, beds should be narrow ~ about 85 to 95cm wide ~ so consumers can easily pick their flowers without damaging the crop. Bed length should be about 8m, with sodded aisles to provide customers with quick and clean access to any product they desire.

Traditional production beds are about 120cm wide,

depending on the growth habit of the crop.

Bed width is set to allow maximum light penetration to the centre of the bed and to facilitate harvesting. The wider a bed is, the better the ratio of production space to aisle space and the greater the return per hectare.

Tall, dense flower growth habits reduce the amount of light reaching lower leaves in the centre of the bed.

An ideal cut flower crop, either fresh or dried, would have the following characteristics:

- ☐ low cost of production—materials and labour;
- ☐ high value and unlimited demand;
- ☐ high production per square metre of bed space;
- ☐ extended production and marketing season;
- ☐ long productive life;
- ☐ ability to sell fresh and to sell surplus as a dried or preserved floral product;
- ☐ postharvest vase life of at least 7 days;

Continued on page 42

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ON THE PLOT

The essential tasks of winter

In the seasonal routine of life on a smallholding, the winter months are the best time to carry out maintenance and repair tasks that one might otherwise not have time for.

There are many jobs to be done, and a plan and efficient time-management will go a long way to getting through the work, without a mad rush to complete the tasks when the spring ground preparation and planting season starts or, worse, running out of time with maintenance tasks uncompleted.

Also, by planning and scheduling, and drawing up a budget of the material you will need for each task, you can spread the expenditure out over the winter months so that it is easier on your pocket.

And this applies as much to one's machinery as it does to

Maintenance, repairs & painting ... all part of the rich seasonal tapestry of life on a smallholding

one's infrastructure. In other words, now is the time to plan the next few months' cleaning, scraping, tightening and painting. Or, if one looks at it logically, after the lawn has been mowed for the final time, the edges trimmed, the paddocks cut and the firebreaks prepared, much of one's machinery, such as mowers, brushcutters, slashers and haymaking equipment will have been put away, and will lie idle for the next few months until the next growing season.

And if it has an engine, just parking it in one's shed is a sure-fire recipe to encounter problems when you come to start it next season and will, in fact, shorten its life considerably.

Preparing a machine-driven device for winter storage is neither onerous nor time-consuming.

Start by draining the remaining fuel from the tank, for use in an appropriate machine elsewhere, such as your car for pure petrol, or in a chainsaw for two-stroke mix. Draining the fuel ensures that

when you come to start it next season the engine is powered by fresh fuel, as stale fuel has been found to be one of the leading causes of starting problems in small engines, fuel being, somewhat counter-intuitively, positive hygroscopic, ie is absorbs moisture from the atmosphere.

With the tank empty, if it's a metal tank spray in a couple of bursts of a light lubricant such as Q20 to discourage rust on the inside.

Next, remove the spark plug and pour a teaspoon of engine oil into the cylinder. Then crank the engine a couple of times by hand to coat the inside. Take the

Continued on page 43

IN THE GARDEN

From page 40

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From page 42

opportunity to clean the spark plug, and replace it fully. Don't just screw it in finger-tight: when you come to start it in spring chances are you will have forgotten that it wasn't properly tightened. Clean the air filter.

In a four-stroke mower, don't replace the engine oil. Do that after the first scarifying mow of spring, when you will be kicking up a cloud of dust. Rather let any dust that gets into the oil be drained out at the first opportunity thereafter than contaminate a new sump of oil which you will run with through the summer. Much the same applies to blades on your lawnmower. Don't replace them now, but wait until after the first scarifying cut of summer, which will blunt and wear them down. Replace them which fresh blades thereafter for a neat, vibration-free cut throughout the summer.

Clean the machine of oil, dust and grime and cover it with a dust sheet for winter. Don't use plastic sheeting as it has a tendency to cause sweating underneath, which results in

Winter is the ideal time to take your machinery to a lawnmower dealer for major repairs

rust.

If any major repair is needed, such as the replacement of bearings, bushes or gears, winter is an excellent time to take the machine to your mower repair shop.

Many offer special rates for machines brought in during the quiet months and even if yours doesn't, the workshop will be considerably quieter, and turnaround on the machine considerably faster, than if you wait till the height of summer to have your machine repaired or serviced. But it's not only machinery that needs to be taken care of now. Out in your fields, and particularly on your boundaries, there is also work to be done. For now is the time to repair fences and apply a lick of paint to your gates and posts.

For, not only will this make your smallholding smarter and thus add value to the property, it will also have the effect of extending the life of

fencing components. Painted regularly, a steel gate or a fence post should last, well, almost indefinitely. Left unpainted these components will rust away in a decade or two at most.

While winter is not a good time to tighten up fence wires ~ that should be left to the warmer summer months when the wires are at their slackest ~ winter is certainly a good time to repair or replace broken strands, and to permanently fix holes in sheep fence, wire netting enclosures and the like. And if you have a greenhouse, winter is a good time to replace or repair the plastic, to clean out drip-feed nozzles and to repair any leaks in your irrigation system.

Don't neglect your security system, either. If you have infra-red beams around your property, spend some time removing the covers and cleaning out the ant and insect nests that accumulate inside, and then reset the beams for maximum efficiency.

Also, while you have the covers off, tighten the screws securing the power wire and communication cables. Somehow, with time, these often work themselves loose, and allow corrosion to build up, making the connection less efficient.

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Some of our recent Facebook items

In case you missed them, here are some of the items we have featured on the Smallholder Facebook page in recent weeks.

Managing Tetanus on your Plot

We smallholders a tough bunch, most of us wouldn't let the odd cut or scratch bother us. By the nature of our lifestyle, we're exposed to injuries or even bites from our animals and so we are encouraged to keep a record of when last we had a tetanus shot.

Our animals are just as vulnerable to puncture wounds from standing on nails or scratches from rusty wire, as well as inherent danger when they are dehorned, castrated, tattooed or have their tails docked. To learn more about the prevention and treatment of

tetanus on smallholdings read the full article on the *Gauteng Smallholder* website.

Preparing for Fire Management

Now is the time for smallholders to begin to prepare for the fire season. When the dry season approaches there is one important piece of legislation which anybody who lives on a plot should know and understand and that's the National Veld & Forest Fires Act of 1998.

Smallholders can refer to the Frequently Asked Questions section of the *Smallholder* website.

Green Woodhoopoe

The arrival while one is out walking of the Green Woodhoopoe always lifts the spirits. They are beautiful birds and their chattering is so delightful. They used to be

called Red billed Woodhoopoe, but the Zulu name captures their sound so well – Hlekabafazi, meaning "laughing women". In Afrikaans they are called Gewone Kakelaar.

When one bird starts calling, it is joined by others in the group. In this communal calling, the birds often gather close to each other, sometimes facing each other and they bob and sway as they cackle.

Firebreaks

Many conscientious smallholders will spend the long weekend in their fields making firebreaks. A firebreak is a bare strip of land around your fields and around your property.

There are a number of articles on the SA *Smallholder* website about ploughing and burning firebreaks.

Heirloom? Organic? Hybrid?

So what are heirloom seeds? And are they different from organic seeds? And what do they mean when they refer to open pollination? And what about hybrid seeds? To read more about them go to the *Smallholder* website

Bokashi

Bokashi composting is an anaerobic process that relies on inoculated bran to ferment kitchen waste, including meat and dairy, into

a safe soil builder and nutrient-rich tea for your plants.

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About the Ostrich

Everyone knows that the flightless ostrich is the world's largest bird.

But did you know that they have three stomachs? Lacking teeth, ostriches swallow pebbles to grind their food. An adult ostrich carries about 1kg of stones at any one time.

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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 48. 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 Rayton. Call Rudan on 082 410-3180 horses@diamondx.co.za, www.diamondx.co.za., R500 per person.

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

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

Every Monday
Alcoholics Anonymous. 'Courage to Change' Group meeting, 19:30, Benoni Agricultural Holdings, Marcus 082 042-7730. Warren 082 335-0049. Glen 072

239-3024., If you want to drink – that's your problem! If you want to stop – that's our problem! No fees; no dues; just concerned fellowship.

2018

June

1: Permaculture Design Course starts at Puschka Farm near Magaliesberg. Course runs over six weekends. Call Peter 083 445-5058 or email info@puschkafarm.co.za
2-3: OutdoorX outdoor lifestyle show, Malonjeni Game Farm, Heidelberg. 0900-1800 daily.
11-15: Harvesting & Marketing Vegetables Course, ARC Vegetable & Ornamental Plants Institute, Roodeplaat. R3 200 per person. Contact Lerato Sebego 012 808-8000
12-14: AvAfrica Show. Wild Fig Business Park, Johannesburg. Products such as animal feed, irrigation products, agricultural products, feed supplements and more in the meat, poultry & seafood industry. Organised by SA Poultry Association
13: New Moon
16: Youth Day
25-27: Cattle Artificial Insemination Course, Rothman Livestock Training Services, Muldersdrift. Call Lily 078 546-7985
26-28: Foundations for Farming 3-Day Basic Conservation Agriculture Course, African Blessings, Bronkhorstspuit. The courses comprises theory and practical training, including Conservation Agriculture Principles, Feed Your Family, Vegetable

Gardens, Herb Cultivation, Uses of Herbs, Compost Making, Practical Home Remedies, Agroforestry, Cover Crops, etc. For bookings Contact Neill Jackson on 082 407 6774

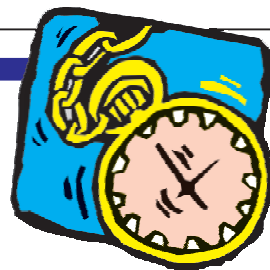
28: Full Moon
28: Cattle Pregnancy Awareness Course, Rothman Livestock Training Services, Muldersdrift. Call Lily 078 546-7985
29: Calf Rearing Course, Rothman Livestock Training Services, Muldersdrift. Call Lily 078 546-7985

July

6-7: BEECON 2018, hosted by the Kwa-Zulu Natal Bee Farmers Association, Pietermaritzburg. Themes for discussion include feeding of bees and the Capensis problem.
13: New Moon
20-22: WODAC – World of dogs & Cats & Pets Show, Gallagher Convention Centre, Midrand. 0900-1730 daily. Products for Dogs and Cats etc in the pet & veterinary industries.
21: Northern's Beekeeping Association members' meeting at Silver Valke Rugby Club, Silverton. Visitors invited from Pretoria & surrounds. Dr Lynne Hepplestone will talk on Wound Management Using Honey. For further details call Riekke van den Berg 082 972-1889
23-25: Cattle Artificial Insemination Course, Rothman Livestock Training Services, Muldersdrift. Call Lily 078 546-7985
26: Cattle Pregnancy Awareness Course, Rothman Livestock Training Services, Muldersdrift. Call Lily 078 546-7985
27: Full Moon
27: Calf Rearing Course, Rothman Livestock Training Services, Muldersdrift. Call Lily 078 546-7985
28: Garden World's Spring Festival event: Tjhoko Paint Workshop, 13h30 for 14h00. Nadine Vosloo from Tjhoko Paint will demonstrate various paint techniques to create a masterpiece on a crate. R400 pp & includes the workshop, everything you need to create your masterpiece, refreshments & fabulous prize giveaways. Call Garden World, on 011 957-2545

August

4: Garden World's Spring Festival event: Container Gardening, 09h30 for 10h00. Johan 'Panda' du Preez from Starke Ayres plants up an edible box full of scrumptious veggies. R250 per person & includes the



workshop, container, plants, refreshments as well as fabulous prize giveaways. Contact Garden World on 011 957 2545
5: Country Charity Market in aid of the Manger Care Centre, 0900 – 1500, Plot 31, Uitzicht, Van der Hoff Road, Pretoria West. Fresh produce, food, arts & crafts and live entertainment. To book stalls etc call 012 376-0042 (The market will run every Sunday thereafter).
9: National Womens Day
9: Garden World's Spring Festival event: Topic: Women's Day Makeover, 10h30 for 11h00. Hannon Bothma, the Glam Guru, performs a live makeover on stage. No persons under 18 will be allowed. R200 pp & includes the demonstration, refreshments & fabulous prize giveaways. Contact Garden World on 011 957 2545
9-11: Kragdag Expo, Diamantvallei Landgoed, Donkerhoek.
11: New Moon
11: Garden World Spring Festival event: Mother & Child Fun Day with a Flower Arranging Course, 09h30 for 10h00. Join Ina Roodt, Interflora & Makro Home & Garden for a fun-filled morning where you can create your own beautiful flower arrangement, the perfect workshop for Mother & Child! R140 per child & includes the workshop, refreshments as well as fabulous prize giveaways. Contact Garden World on 011 957 2545
18: Northern's Beekeeping Association members' meeting. Visitors invited from Pretoria & surrounds. For times, venue and details call Riekke van den Berg 082 972-1889
18: Garden World Spring Festival event: Succulent Container Gardening, 09h30 for 10h00. Join Ekefto & John Sauer from Ngena Succulents as he will show you how to plant a succulent container garden, and also discuss water scarcity in South Africa due to a growing population and rapid urbanization. R100 pp & includes the talk and demonstration, a goodie bag, refreshments & fabulous prize giveaways including Succulents in container. Contact Garden World on 011 957 2545



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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 editor@gautengsmallholder.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)	Konrad or Glenda 011 706 3671 glenda@bryanstonorganicmarket.co.za	Quality hand crafted goods, unique art and fresh organic and naturally grown produce.
Friday					
Last Friday	Walkerville Farmers Market	18:00 - 22:00	112 R82 Main Road, Walkerville	079 076 7680	Fresh produce, arts & crafts, food court and kids play area.
Last Friday	The Market In The Garden	09:00 - 15:00	Garden Shop, Braam Fischer Drive, Bryanston (next to Sandton Clinic)	Robyn 083 311 4768	Fresh produce, home industry & craft, food etc. Enquire about stall prices
Saturday					
Every Saturday	The Red Windmill Village Market	09:00 - 15:00	104 Main Road, Walkerville	082 627 3134 or 072 637 9355 Stalls: 082 641 8982	Fresh produce, food stalls, coffee shop, plants, arts & crafts, book etc.
Every Saturday	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.
Every Saturday	Pretoria Boeremark	05:30 - 09:30	Moreleta Street entrance, Krige Street ext, Silverton	012 804 8031 or 079 987 1025	Fresh produce & traditional bazaar treats like jaffles, kaings with pap & boerewors rolls.
Every Saturday	Bryanston Organic & Natural Market	09:00 - 15:00	40 Culross Road, Bryanston (off Main Road)	Konrad or Glenda 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 - 14:00	Greenlyn Village Centre, Cor Thomas Edison & Mackenzie St, Menlo Park, Pretoria	Rietha 083 554 5636 www.hazelfoodmarket.co.za	Fresh produce straight from the producer. Coffee, eats on sale
Every Saturday	Walkerville Farmers Market	09:00 - 15:00	112 R82 Main Road, Walkerville	079 076 7680 info@wfmarket.co.za	Fresh produce, arts & crafts, food court and kids play area.
Every Saturday	Walkerville Country Market	09:00 - 15:00	Walkerville showgrounds on the R82	Noorunisha 074 141 8485	Fresh produce, crafter's market, food court, craft beer, kids play area and pet friendly.
Every Saturday	Bosheuvel Fresh Produce	10:00 - 19:00	54 Glory Road, Muldersdrift	Mitch 082 553 2846	Outdoor country experience working farm cattle, sheep pigs. Free range meat, cheese, eggs and poultry. Craft beer
Every Saturday	The Fresh Co-op Weekly Farmers Market	07:00 - 10:30	204 Allan Road, Glen Austin Halfway House, Gauteng	info.freshproducecoop@gmail.com 082 369 7755	Fresh produce, pickles, preserves, home industry, arts and crafts, food etc.
Every Saturday	Jozi Real Food Market	08:30 - 13:30	Pirates Sports Club, 25 Braeside Road, Greenside	Ingrid 083 532 2992 jozirealfoodmarket@gmail.com	Outdoor pet & child friendly, organic vegetables, food, arts & crafts
2nd Saturday	Brakpan Boeremark	09:00 - 14:00	Cor van der Walt & Dirk van der Hoff Road, Brakpan	Marius 082 904 8852 or 011 744 2322	Over 50 stalls, food, art crafts etc.
Last Saturday	Fresh2U Farmers Market	08:00 - 14:00	Cnr Main & High Street, Modderfontein (behind 33 High St)	Jane 083 376 5567 Chantelle 082 338 7818 wardek@iafrica.com	Over 50 stalls, fresh produce, home made goods, plants, food & more.
Last Saturday	Fresh Produce Market	08:00 - 13:00	Lakeside Mall Boathouse	Alma 079 940 0201 realfood4realpeople@gmail.com	Local fresh produce direct to the public.
Last Saturday	Windpomp Market	08:00 - 14:00	Broodblik & Koffiepit on the R51 between Pettit & Bapsfontein	083 445 1608 adelekoffiepit@gmail.com	Homemade crafts & food stalls, bakery & coffee shop and entertainment.
Sunday					
Every Sunday	The Red Windmill Village Market	09:00 - 15:00	104 Main Road, Walkerville	082 627 3134 or 072 637 9355 Stalls: 082 641 8982	Fresh produce, food stalls, coffee shop, plants, arts & crafts, book etc.
Every Sunday	Fourways Farmers Market	10:00 - 15:00	Cor Montecasino Boulevard & William Nicol Drive, Fourways	011 465 0827 www.ffmarket.co.za	Get your groceries... In the garden!
Every Sunday	Carlington Craft & Food Market	09:00 - 15:00	The Bru House on the R563 Hekpoort-Kruger'sdrop Road	For stalls 0827824142 Debbie.Prinsloo@outlook.com	Restaurant, live music, kids play area, safe parking

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Facebook, fake news & snakes

There are some things in life, like good wine, pretty women and clotted cream, that can be both a blessing and a curse. A modern example of such is Facebook. On the one hand it is a blessing, enabling people to re-establish communication with old friends, and especially old friends now spread around the globe, for whatever the reason.

But while Facebook is a wonder in keeping people in touch ~ and you'll be surprised at how many elderly people use Facebook for just this purpose ~ it can also be a curse. Parents of a teenaged child or young adult will be familiar with the sight of their offspring hunched over their cellphones, tapping out messages to their friends. Endlessly, and frankly to the detriment of their social and physical development.

But there's another reason why Facebook is a curse. And that's because it's a very fertile source of misinformation and scaremongering.

This was brought home to me recently when an august nature group named the African Snakebite Institute (ASI) sent out a newsletter to its impressively-large membership warning of the dangers of believing what one sees on Facebook and on the internet in general, citing three examples of videos that are widely circulated showing either dangerous practices or snakes that simply don't exist.

For example, one video clip shows a man "hypnotising" a cobra. In the video, says the ASI, "it looks like an Egyptian Cobra and the handler puts pressure on the snake as he strokes it (especially in the region of the heart) and the snake immediately shams dead. It is then nonchalantly picked up ~ a dangerous practise as the snake may strike out unexpectedly. This is risky and not recommended.

"Playing dead is just one self-defence strategy for some snakes."

Another popular video cited by the ASI shows a man free-handling three Puff Adders, reportedly in Northwest Province. "Not just does he freely handle and even kiss one of the Puff Adders twice, but he drops one and catches it in mid-air. Many snakes are reluctant to bite and in this video he really pushes his luck. While he is not bitten while this video was shot, it is only a matter of time before one of these snakes will bite. Not a safe practise at all and certainly not recommended."

Photographs of giant snakes often do the rounds, invariably around 10% longer than the known length. "In most cases, however, the length of a snake is guessed and then there is forced perception where the snake is held close to the camera

and the photograph taken using a wide angle lens.

There have also been a number of films since as far back as 2010, showing what is supposed to be a giant Anaconda "and the snake in these photographs is clearly one made for a film set. "Although the bulkiest snake in the world, the Anaconda is not the longest (that would be the Reticulated Python of Asia at around 7,5m) reaching a maximum length of around 6,5m.

"In some of the photographs the snake is on the back of a low-bed truck. High resolution

photographs reveal that the items posted are in fact toys. The images were created for a student project entitled "Vietnam Army caught the giant snake" in 2010, according to snopes.com, a popular and credible myth-busting website.

And, pushing the bounds of credulity to the max, says the ASI, "In June 2015, a story in which the same photographs were used, also included the following information:

'The world's largest Anaconda was caught in the Amazon forest. This snake had eaten

257 people & 2 325 animals. It is 134 feet long and 2 067 kg. This anaconda was caught alive by a long struggle after 37 days and killed by the Royal British commando force."

This is a perfect example of the accuracy of the view of Adolph Hitler's PR guru, Joseph Goebbels who said something like "tell a lie often enough, and make it big enough, and people will believe you." Who, after all, would have counted, so precisely, the number of human and animal "victims" of the snake? And if you can despatch an elephant, which weighs much more than two tons, with one well-aimed bullet, it sure as hell ain't gonna take longer than a month for a British Commando force to shoot a snake. Which brooks the question, of course: what would a British commando unit be doing in the Amazon in the first place? Invading Brazil? What bull-turd!

But if the entire German nation were taken in by the lies of Hitler and Goebbels what hope does a poor maligned snake have of a fair appraisal on the internet?.



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