

WOMEN

Platinum Region holds conference
p6 + 7

NAMPO

SA's biggets Agri festival is back
p11

NATURE

Insects frolic on hyacinths
p12

How “hot” are we with solar energy?

For how much longer will South Africa and its diversified agricultural society have to depend solely on the national energy supplier (Eskom) for all its domestic and industrial electricity needs and are there perhaps encouraging indications that alternative, renewable energy will be available in the near future to offer a more reliable and affordable energy solution? These are some of the most burning questions to be answered in this week's edition of Agri-Pulse. In addition to this, Agri-Pulse also paints a broader picture of the progress that has been made on solar energy in recent years. In the Northern Cape several solar power initiatives are currently taking shape offering countless employment opportunities. See reports on p 8 en 9.



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Agri drives SA exports























AGRI-PULSE – The South African economy is vibrant with agriculture, food and beverages exports for 2021 hitting a new record high of US\$12,4 billion (R187,61 billion). According to Agbiz, the top exportable products include wine, maize, citrus, nuts, berries, grapes, wool, fruit juices, and apples and pears. The significant factors underpinning this total export value are the sizeable agricultural output in the 2020/21 production season, combined with general solid global demand, and generally higher agricultural commodity prices and large export volumes, specifically in maize which reached the highest volume since 1994/95, and citrus which reached a record export volume.

From a destination point of view, the African continent and Asia were the largest markets for South Africa’s agricultural exports in the fourth quarter of 2021, accounting for 45% and 23% in value terms, respectively. The European Union was the third-largest market, taking up 16% of South Africa’s agricultural exports. Trailing these regions was the United Kingdom with about 6% of South Africa’s agricultural exports, and the fourth largest destination if we rank the export destinations by country, not as regions. The balance of 10% value constitutes the Americas and other regions of the world. Efficient logistics are also vital for imports as South Africa still relies on other countries for crucial food products such as wheat, rice, poultry, palm oil, and sunflower oil. These products dominated the food import bill in the fourth quarter of 2021, as they cannot be sustainably produced at scale in South Africa because of unfavourable climatic conditions. As such, in the fourth quarter of 2021, agricultural imports increased by 9% y/y to US\$1,8 billion (R27,23 billion).

South Africa recorded a trade surplus of US\$1 billion (R15,13 billion) in the fourth quarter of 2021, which is up by 36% from the corresponding period in 2020, primarily underpinned by robust agri exports.

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CROP		AREA*								SEED / g	PLANTS PER HECTARE	SOW DEPTH (mm)	DISTANCE IN ROW (cm)	BETWEEN ROWS (cm)	SOIL TEMPERATURE FOR GERMINATION	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8						MINIMUM °C	OPTIMUM °C
Bean (Dwarf)		Aug - Jan	Aug - Feb	Feb - Sep	Sep - Jan	Aug - Jan	Oct - Jan	Sep - Jan	Sep - Nov	4 - 6	60 - 80 kg	40	7	50	16	16 - 29
Bean (Runner)		Aug - Dec	Aug - Dec	Feb - Aug	Sep - Dec	Aug - Dec	Oct - Dec	Sep - Dec	Feb - Aug	4 - 6	50 kg	40	10	100	16	16 - 29
Beetroot		Aug - Mar	Aug - Apr	Feb - Jul	Feb - Mar	Aug - Apr	Jul - Feb	Jan - Dec	Feb - Jul	50 - 60	170 000 - 350 000	20	7	20	4	10 - 29
Eggplant		Aug - Oct	Aug - Nov	Jan - Sep	Aug - Oct	Aug - Oct	Aug - Oct	Aug - Nov	Jan - Sep	230 - 250	10 000 - 16 000	20	50	75	16	24 - 32
Broccoli		Dec - Feb	Dec - Feb	Mar - Apr	Dec - Feb	Dec - Mar	Dec - Mar	Dec - Mar	Mar - Apr	280 - 330	30 000 - 36 000	10	45	60	4	7 - 30
Butternut		Sep - Nov	Aug - Jan	Feb - Aug	Aug - Nov	Sep - Nov	Sep - Dec	Aug - Jan	Feb - Aug	8 - 10	10 000 - 18 000	20	50	100	16	21 - 35
Cabbage		Jan - Dec	Jan - Dec	Jan - Dec	Jan - Dec	Jan - Dec	Jan - Dec	Jan - Dec	Jan - Dec	280 - 350	25 000 - 30 000	10	45	60	4	18 - 35
Carrot		Oct - Nov Jan - Mar	Jan - Mar Sep - Oct	Feb - Aug	Jan - Mar Aug - Oct	Jan - Dec	Jan - Dec	Jan - Dec	Feb - Aug	800 - 1100	1200 000 - 2500 000	20	3-5	20	4	7 - 29
Cauliflower		Dec - Feb Sep - Oct	Dec - Feb	Feb - Mar	Dec - Feb	Dec - Mar	Dec - Mar	Dec - Mar	Feb - Mar	280 - 350	20 000 - 35 000	10	45	70	4	7-30
Cucumber		Sep - Dec	Aug - Jan	Feb - Sep	Sep - Dec	Sep - Dec	Sep - Jan	Sep - Jan	Feb - Sep	30 - 50	2 - 2.2 plants/m²	20	40	130	16	16 - 35
Lettuce		Jan - Mar Aug - Dec	Jan - Sep	Mar - May	Jan - Mar Aug - Sep	Jan - Mar Aug - Sep	Jan - Dec	Jan - Dec	Mar - May	800 - 1000	55 000 - 75 000	20	25	40	2	4 - 27
Melon		Oct - Nov	Aug - Dec	Jan - Sep	Sep - Nov	Sep - Oct	Sep - Nov	Sep - Dec	Jan - Aug	30 - 40	12 000 - 13 000	20	25	150	16	24 - 35
Onion		Feb - Mar	Feb - Mar	Mar - Apr	Mar - Jul	Feb - Mar	Mar - May	Apr - May	Feb - Mar	250 - 280	700 000 - 850 000	10	8	20	2	10 - 35
Parsley		Feb - Apr Sep - Oct	Aug - Oct Mar - Apr	Feb - May Jun - Sep	Feb - Mar Aug - Sep	Aug - Sep Dec - Jan	Aug - Feb	Mar - Nov	Mar - May Aug - Sep	550 - 800	300 000 - 450 000	20	10	30	4	10 - 29
Pea		Jul	Mar - May	May - Jun	May - Jun	Apr - Jun	Apr - Jun	Mar - Jul	Apr - Jun	4 - 8	70 - 90 kg	30 - 70	7	60	4	4 - 24
Pepper (Hot/Sweet)		Aug - Oct	Aug - Oct	Jan - Apr	Aug - Nov	Sep - Oct	Aug - Oct	Sep - Nov	Jan - Apr	120 - 150	25 000 - 35 000	20	50	80	16	18 - 35
Pumpkin		Oct - Nov	Aug - Dec	Feb - Aug	Sep - Dec	Sep - Dec	Sep - Nov	Sep - Nov	Feb - Aug	3 - 5	6 000 - 8 000	20	70	250	16	21 - 32
Swiss Chard		Aug - Oct Jan - Mar	Jul - Oct Jan - Apr	Feb - Aug	Jan - Mar Jul - Oct	Jan - Mar Aug - Oct	Jan - Mar Jan - Mar	Mar - Apr Aug - Sep	Feb - Aug	50 - 60	7 kg	20	20	60	4	10-29
Squash		Sep - Nov	Aug - Jan	Feb - Aug	Aug - Nov	Sep - Nov	Sep - Dec	Aug - Jan	Feb - Aug	8 - 10	15 000 - 18 000	20	50	50 - 75	16	21 - 35
Sweetcorn		Sep - Dec	Aug - Jan	Mar - Oct	Aug - Nov	Sep - Nov	Sep - Dec	Sep - Jan	Jan - Dec	7 - 11	55 000 - 65 000	25	25	75	5	20 - 30
Tomato		Sep - Nov	Aug - Dec	Jan - Jul	Aug - Nov	Aug - Nov	Aug - Oct	Aug - Dec	Jan - Jul	350 - 400	10 000 - 14 000	20	45	120	10	16 - 35
Watermelon		Sep - Nov	Aug - Sep	Jul - Aug	Sep - Oct	Sep - Oct	Sep - Oct	Sep - Nov	Jul - Aug	10 - 25	5 000 - 6 000	50	100	175	16	21 - 35

01 GAUTENG

02 FREE STATE

03 LIMPOPO

04 NORTHERN CAPE & GREAT KAROO

05 KWAZULU-NATAL MIDLANDS

06 EASTERN CAPE & LITTLE KAROO

07 WESTERN CAPE & SOUTH COAST

08 KWAZULU-NATAL, LOWVELD & COAST

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Moon
10 March**



**Full
Moon
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**First
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Moon
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Electricity supply: A bone of discontent

BY: JACO KLEYN (STELLALANDER)

AGRI-PULSE - VRYBURG - Electricity distribution and generation capabilities keep being a baton for political rivals to use. That been said, at the end of it all it seems that the only people that will feel the pain will be the end-user in South Africa - with an especially harsh reality awaiting the agricultural sector.

For years now ESKOM has been plagued with insufficient generating capabilities. Load shedding has become part of our daily lives, and most farmers has made - at a considerable cost - plans to overcome this obstacle. President Ramaphosa gave insurances that private individuals will be allowed to generate their own electricity up to 100 MW.

The ink on this announcement where still wet when the rumours started coming from government that private individuals will be taxed for this privately generated electricity to a point where it will just not be economically viable, especially if the costs for solar generation capacity is brought into the calculation. Not to even mention the looming of changes proposed to the constitution as far as land ownership is concerned.

While most role players in the agri-business sector where still trying to keep up with all of this, the newest chapter in the electricity saga broke - the fight between ESKOM and SALGA over the rights to distribute electricity.

The South African Local Government Association (SALGA) is pressing on with its demands that all electricity being distribute, and by implication, sold by them to end-users. They motivate this demand by stating that in the 2019 fiscal year local municipalities lost around R119bn in revenue due to the dual supply (local municipalities as well as ESKOM) of electricity. On their side ESKOM showed around an R20.7bn lost for the 2019 fiscal year with an increase of municipal debt to about R20bn.

The obvious question now is what will happen if local municipalities keep not-paying their accounts with ESKOM and as a result ESKOM is forced to cut supply? This will not just be catastrophic for the end-user (farmer) but will also undermine food security for the whole of South Africa. On top of that it will indirectly put extra pressure on the already embattled Agri-job market.

According Dr Piet Croucamp from the North West University, the idea of ESKOM selling to one customer instead of hundreds if not thousands will be to their advantage especially when it comes to people not paying their bills on time or at all. "It is much easier for ESKOM to send out one account to a local municipality instead of billing all the consumers living in that local municipal area," Dr Croucamp explained.

There are 278 municipalities in South Africa, comprising eight metropolitan, 44 district and 226 local municipalities. As were mentioned before the debt owed to ESKOM is in access of R20bn by these municipal councils. As were mentioned by Dr Croucamp, it does make sense for ESKOM to reduce their billing structure from thousands of clients to 278.

Although this makes excellent business sense as far as ESKOM is concerned, one must not forget about the stance of Local Governments throughout the country. Corruption, poor management and the fact that between 30% and 40% of Local Government's budget goes towards salaries must light up the red lights as far as fiscal discipline are concerned. Fiscal discipline, or rather the lack thereof, which will at the end trickle down to the end-user. It will also be Important at this stage to look at the audit outcomes for Local Government in 2019/20. Only a total of 27 municipalities received clean audits - that is unqualified audit with no findings.

Where, in other words, will the money come from to uphold the infrastructure

needed? Kolani Siweya, an economist with Agri SA reaction to the question whether this is something that might be feasible; "At this stage Agri SA is still in the process to collect relevant data to have a formal and final view of this. That been said, it is quite interesting how the same local governments that cannot uphold basic infrastructure are now planning to possibly maintain the electrical grid for the country."

In the end it must be concluded that for SALGA to push forward with this would have been the best thing for ESKOM from a financial point of view. It would indeed take a lot of pressure from ESKOM as far as debt collection from individuals is concerned. On the other hand it must also be stated that at this point in time South African Local Councils just will not be up for the task at hand to manage and maintain the infrastructure needed for this endeavour.

Taking the critical financial situation in consideration, end users cannot be blamed if they should belief that this is just another scheme to create more income for local councils.

SALGA would have to proof that they will indeed be able to keep corruption or corrupt officials away from any such developments, that they will be able to maintain and where necessary rebuilt infrastructure needed, that they will not finance overspending or bad management with money received in the form of electricity end-user payments and lastly that they will not create a situation whereby ESKOM will be under more pressure due to default payments. If this cannot be guaranteed the words of Agri SA Economist Kolani Siweya saying that "in principal this is not a good idea" would sum it up very good.



Dr Piet Croucamp

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Sheepdogs are her passion

AGRI PULSE – LICHTENBURG - Ragni Pretorius lives with her great love, her sheepdog children, on the farm Hakboslaagte, in the Coligny district. She spends hours with them every day and appreciates each one’s unique nature.

Her journey with sheepdogs began in 1984 when she decided to purchase a sheepdog for their flock of sheep on the farm because there were not always workers available for this side of the farm. “I bought my first dog in Harrysmith, read sheepdog books and decided to get a certificate that says my dog can work. I started taking part in sheepdog trials, and the bug bit me. I joined the Sheepdog Association and a hobby became a way of life. I breed sheepdogs for farmers to order and take part in trials across the country,” she says.

She says that sheepdog trials are very common in the Cape but in the North West only she participates in competitions. Sheepdogs can have short or long hair, flat or pointed ears and are bred for farmers who want to use them on farms.

Sheep dogs do not make good pets because they are dogs that have a lot of energy and they are bred to work with sheep. Prices for small sheepdogs range from R5000 to R8000 and mature, trained dogs cost between R15 000 and R25 000.

The training of sheep dogs is time consuming and requires a lot of love, respect, patience, discipline and obedience from both the dog and the handler. Ragni says she first teaches a dog with word commands and then the whistle is used. The basic word commands are ‘turn left, turn right, bring them, chase and stop.’ She repeat the drill once a week with short sessions of 15 minutes each. In this way the learning process grows until a dog can participate in the Junior class at 18 months to 2 years. A 3-year-old dog knows all the commands of his handler and can be classified as a top dog. “Such a dog can respond to commands over a distance of 500 meters,” she says.

Ragni has won many competitions over the years, but some of the highlights were when she won the category of ‘Dog of the Year’ as well as the national championships for three years in a row. About 35 - 45 dogs take part in competitions that usually last two days. Among the criteria is that a set-up track consisting of gates and camps must be completed within 15 minutes with five sheep and that the handler must at times stand still over a distance of 100m and give orders to the dog.

Ragni is very excited about the trials that took place on 2 and 3 March on Hakboslaagte.

Participants from all over the country gathered there and some came as far as Zimbabwe. She says they are like one big family and everyone shares the love for the sport. A prize giving follows at the end of the two-day trials.

She says that Sheepdogs had their origins in England when they worked with sheep in the mountains. Dog owners started challenging each other in pubs to show how ingenious their dogs are, and so the sport evolved. Ragni, a widow originally from Natal, says her dogs keep her busy and she love the outdoors and does not like sewing and homework very much.

The Agri Pulse’s April edition will carry a follow-up report about the trials at Hakboslaagte. For any enquiries, please contact Ragni on 0725001361.



As one can see, she won a lot of prizes over the years in Sheepdog trials.



Jack is one of the oldest Sheepdogs on Hakboslaagte. On the photo is he busy to take the herd to the grazing field.



Ragni Pretorius of Coligby with ‘Sheperds Own Jack’ that she imported from Germany in 2012.



On the photo Ragni shows the interesting whistle she uses to train the dogs.



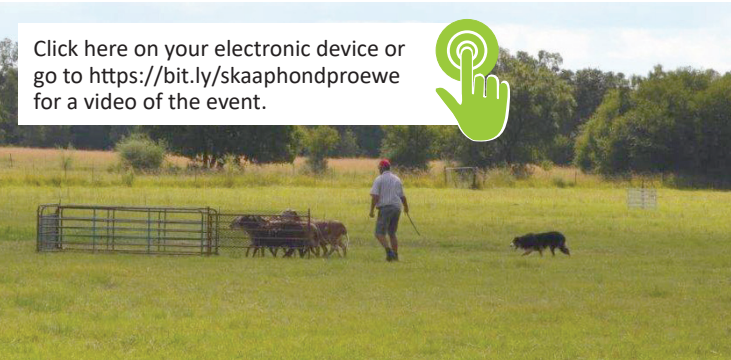
Ragni with the five loves of her life, her Sheepdogs each with their own unique orientation.

Sheepdog trials held at Hakboslaagte

by: Anita Kotzé)



Participating Sheepdogs had to fetch a herd of sheep at 400 meters and bring them to their handler where he / she is standing in one place on the track. After that, the handler has to convey instructions to the dog by means of various whistles, such as chasing the herd through the gate, separating the herd as well as chasing the herd into a camp.



Pictured is Pierré Strydom with his dog Mac in action during the competition.



A participant from Swellendam, Mark Trollip with his dog Gus completing the course during the trials.

AGRI - PULSE - The North West Sheepdog Trials took place on 2 and 3 March 2022 on the farm Hakboslaagte in the Lichtenburg district. Ragni Pretorius, with whom we visited (reported elsewhere) to find out more about her involvement with Sheepdogs, presented the trials this year.

Twelve handlers with 32 dogs competed against each other in different classes, namely beginners, junior, senior and top dog. Participants come from all over the country and the furthest participants were from Zimbabwe. Judges during the competition were Hennie Ferreira and Elaine Portch. Hakboslaagte also hosted this competition about four years ago. Ragni Pretorius held Northwest’s name high and won the senior class as well as the Top dog, which is the highest class in the competition, with two dogs.



The winners in different classes decided over two days, along with their dogs. From left are Claire Taylor with her dog Morag (Junior winner - day 2), Rose van der Ruit with her dog Hemp (Senior class winner on day 1), Martyn Portch with his dog Meg (Junior winner, day 1), Nola Bouwies with Skye (winner, Beginner class) and Ragni Pretorius with her dogs Elke and Fia. Each won the Senior class on day 2 and Fia won the Top Dog class of the competition two days in a row.



Participants in the North West Sheepdog Trials on Hakboslaagte in conversation while waiting for the announcement of the winners in various categories.



The Sheepdogs Mac and Jen rest wonderfully after their participation in the competition. Dogs are exhausted after completing the course and enjoy cooling off in a bath of water available to them at the competition before taking a well-deserved rest.

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UITVOERBELANGE MET REDSUN PEKANNEUT FASILITEIT VERSTERK

Suid-Afrikaanse pekanneutprodusente kry geen of baie min staatsondersteuning en moet self die inisiatief neem om die bedryf te laat groei. Met sy nuwe moderne verwerkingsfasiliteit baan RedSun Raisins and Nuts, by Keimoes in die Noord-Kaap, weer die weg na die beste moontlike geleentheid vir produsente en hul internasionale kliënte.

RedSun Raisin, 'n Suid-Afrikaanse maatskappy, gestig in 2009, is in private besit.

Hulle is verwerkers van hoë kwaliteit rosyne wat langs die oewer van die Oranjerivier, in die Noord-Kaap en Olifantsrivier in die Weskaap en Namibia, geproduseer word.

RedSun Raisins is aan die voorpunt van die ambisieuse, nuwe generasie rosyntjieverwerkers in Suid-Afrika.

Hulle glo dat hul stewige, internasionale bemarkings-netwerk die ontwikkeling van hul besigheid sal verseker, en saam met hulle die voortgesette welvaart van die 250 produsente langs die Oranjerivier, wat hulle van gehalte songedroogde, Suid-Afrikaanse Rosyntjies voorsien. Nou fokus hulle ook op die florerende pekanneutbedryf.

80 tot 90 persent van Suid-Afrikaanse pekanneutproduksie is in die Noord-Kaap, waar nou ongeveer 23 000 ha pekanneut-bome uit die land se totale 40 000 hektaar groei, spesifiek rondom Upington, Prieska, Douglas en Hartswater, geleë.

Die Wichita-, Choctaw-, Mohawk, Navaho en Barton-variëteite is die gewildste in die land se huidige groot produksiestreek.

RedSun sê, met reeds gevestigde uitvoerverbindings en 'n vaste internasionale kliëntebasis, kan hulle Suid-Afrikaanse produsente ook kans sien vir groot sukses en daarna streef om hul deel van die mark te verower, wat hulle dieselfde blink toekoms gee as hul Noord-Amerikaanse eweknieë.



900 mt NIS. Die 2020-oes, 10 jaar later, was 21,377mt NIS. Dit is 'n gemiddeld van 33% groei per jaar.

Die beplanning van RedSun is uiteindelik om 'n kraakfasiliteit te hê wat 4 000 NIS per jaar (2,000mt kern), en pak 2000mt NIS vir in-dop uitvoere..

Hierdie nuwe proses, met die res van die moderne verwerkingsfasiliteit, sal deur die hele jaar in werking wees en nie net gedurende die oesseisoen nie.

Die verwerkingsfasiliteit sluit in chemiese beeld-tegnologie (wat in China en die Middel-Ooste gebruik word), DNA-skandering om alle vreemde deeltjies uit te skakel en die moderne kraakmasjiene (vervaardig in die USA).

Neute (NIS) wat van plaaslike boere gekoop word, word in die behandelingsaanleg gegradeer, gesorteer en verpak. By inname word monsters getoets en neutte word skoongemaak en behandel om 'n onbesmette produk vir hulle gewaardeerde kliënte te verseker.

Niks word by RedSun vermors nie en by hul nuwe pekanneutfasiliteit is geen uitsluiting nie.

Die neutte, wat by plaaslike boere gekoop word, word verwerk en verpak om 'n produk met toegevoegde waarde uit te voer. Verteenwoordigende monsters word van elke besending getrek en volgens fisiese, mikrobiologiese en chemiese spesifikasies ontleed om uitsonderlike kwaliteit en eenvormigheid te verseker. Neute word gegradeer en voorberei om uit te voer volgens neutgrootte en kernopbrengs. Afval word as kompos aan hul verskaffers verskaf.



“ PEKANKRAAKAANLEG IN AANBOU OP KEIMOOES ”

RedSun se ultra moderne verwerkingsfasiliteit met moderne masjinerie vorder goed en nader voltooiing.

Teen Julie 2022 sal RedSun die beste pekanneut-produkte aan hul kopers verseker, terwyl die tegniese afdeling produsente sal bystaan met boordbestuur, interne kennis oor pekanneute en verskeie verskillende bemarkingsstrategieë.



Suid-Afrika is die derde grootste pekanneutprodusent ter wêreld. Net soos produsente in Mexiko en die Verenigde State meer bome aanplant en belê, sien Suid-Afrikaanse pekanneutprodusente 'n blink toekoms in pekanneute en bly die bedryf floreer.

Deur die data wat deur 'n derdeparty-konsultasie-maatskappy ingesamel is, het die Amerikaanse Pecan Council beraam dat Suid-Afrika teen 2027 ongeveer 145 miljoen pond neutte produseer, wat meer as 10 persent van die wêreldvoorraad uitmaak. Hierdie geprojekteerde groei strook met die toename van 529 persent in Suid-Afrika se pekanneut-produksie van 2006 tot 2018.

Klimaatstoestande in die sentrale Oranjeriviervallei en dele van die Oos-Kaap provinsie is soort-gelyk aan die warm kontinentale klimaat in die Suidelike Verenigde State - waar pekanneute floreer. Dit is 'n belowende potensieële area vir pekanneute, veral in die binneland van die Oos-Kaapprovinsie.

Deesdae, na die oes van pekanneute, word die dop meganies gekraak om die “kern” binne te verkry. Meganiese natkrake verseker minder kern beskadiging, tydbesparing en verhoog die markwaarde van uitgedopte pekanneute.

Met hul vyf nuwe ultra moderne kraakmasjiene kan RedSun hul kliënte van die beste moontlike kwaliteit neutte voorsien en die beste moontlike uitvoerpryse vir alle neutgroottes verseker.

Hierdie noukeurig gekalibreerde masjiene kan neutte so vinnig as 700 neutte per minuut kraak en met hul nat-kraak-tegnologie verseker hierdie masjiene meer en beter kwaliteit heelheltes as met die droë kraakmetode, wat die neutkern bros en beskadig kan laat.

“Ons kyk na die verwerking van minstens 11 ton neutte in elk van ons twee agt-uur skofte” vertel Peter Kuilman, uitvoerende hoof van RedSun.

“Sodra ons kraakfabriek voltooi en in gebruik geneem is, beplan ons om die fasiliteit te gebruik om 1000 mt NIS, wat aangekoop moet word uit die 2022-oes, te verwerk. Die volume sal verhoog tot 2000mt vir die volgende jaar, 2023. Daarna het ons planne om die kapasiteit te verdubbel in ooreenstemming met die ontwikkeling van die SApekanneut-oes.”

Die SA Pekanneut-oes groei teen 'n indrukwekkende tempo. Gedurende 2011 was die oes in Suid-Afrika 4



Peter Kuilman uitvoerende hoof van RedSun (heel regs) en sy twee regterhande, Stry Strauss en Lorna Basson, is baie opgewonde oor die nuwe uitbreidings by RedSun.

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Gaste tydens die Platina-streetskonsferensie saam met Louise Herbst (Platina-streekvoorsitter): Maatje Hobson (Verwes - staan in vir Elsie Marx), Gené Conradie (Sonneblomstreekvoorsitter) en Gerda Swart (NWVLU-president).

NWVLU Platina-streetskonsferensie

RUSTENBURG – RUSTENBURG HERALD – Platinastreek Vrouelandbou-unie (VLU) het op 2 Maart 2022 hul jaarlikse Konferensie (27ste) by NG Kerk Bergsig aangebied.

Rustenburgtak was die gasvrou en het hul goed van hul taak gekwyd. Die tema was Skaak. “Chess is not always about winning. Sometimes it's simply about learning...and so is life”. Eregaste en lede was mooi getooi in swart, wit en geel. Ds Hennie Coetzer het geopen met skriflesing en gebed. Santie Bingle, die gasvrou, het almal teenwoordig welkom geheet. Louise Herbst, streekvoorsitter van Platinastreek, het gaste voorgestel. Daar is hulde gebring aan lede met die aansteek van 'n kers. Voormalige presidente, Pam J van Rensburg, word in besonder gemis. Presidente van NWVLU, Gerda Swart, het Konferensie as amptelik geopen verklaar tydens haar groetboodskap. Gaste Gené Conradie (streekvoorsitter Sonneblomstreek), Maatje Hobson (namens Elsie Marx streekvoorsitter Verwesstreek), Petra Seymore (NWK) en Ekkehard Pape (Boerevereniging) het hul groetboodskappe oorgedra. Spreker, Carien Kruger, het voetspore

gelaat met haar inspirerende vertelling van haar tamatieboerdery. Verona Loots (visie-voorsitter) het bedankings waargeneem. Presidente, Gerda Swart, het spesiale sertifikate oorhandig aan lede wat al 50 jaar en langer lid is van die VLU. Dis voorwaar 'n groot prestasie. Sy het ook lidmaatskapknopies oorhandig aan lede. Verder het sy die takke uitgedaag om nuwe lede te werf en selfs 'n kontantprys aangebied vir die tak wat die meeste lede kan byvoeg. 'n Bietjie vermaak is verskaf deur gaskunstenaars, Charles Kendall en Wendy Wallace.

Voete het behoorlik gejuik toe hulle die kitare getokkel het. Prysuitdeling is soos gewoonlik 'n hoogtepunt. Geluk aan elke lid wat deelgeneem het. Rustenburgtak was op hul stukke. Nie net het hul 'n uitstekende Konferensie aangebied nie, maar het ook weggeloopt met die beste voorsittersverslag en die tak met die meeste punte. Baie geluk Rustenburg. Hoogtepunte as volg: Tak met die meeste groei was Brits. Mees kreatiewe artikel, Cheré Cocklin (blommerangskikking). Dame met meeste inskrywings, meeste punte handvlyt en kunsvlyt

was Francis Liebel. Dame met meeste punte kunsvaardigheid en uitstekende artikel was Heleen Labuschagne. Dame met meeste punte in gebak en gebottel was Elsa van Rooyen. Elsa van Rooyen het algeheel die meeste punte verwerf. Baie geluk dames. Streekvoorsitter, Louise Herbst, het almal bedank en gelukwense oorgedra aan die presteerders. Santie Bingle, gasvrou, het almal betrokke bedank vir hul harde werk en teenwoordigheid. Neeltje Louw, voorsitter van Britstak, het almal uitgenooi na 2023 se Konferensie wat deur hul aangebied gaan word. Moenie dit misloop nie en moenie daardie kersversierings en toebehore ver wegpak nie want ons gaan Kersfees hou in Maart 2023.



Dames met meeste punte, inskrywings en kreatiewe artikel: Elsa van Rooyen (Marikana - Dame met Meeste Punte), Francis Liebel (Marikana - Dame met meeste punte in handvlyt en meeste inskrywings), Heleen Labuschagne (Rustenburg - Meeste punte Kunsvaardigheid en Uitstaande artikel Foto) en agter Cheré Cocklin (Marikana - Mees Kreatiewe Artikel Blommerangskikking).



Gerda Swart (NWVLU-president) verskyn hier saam met dames wat 'n sertifikaat vir 50 - 60 jaar SAVLU-lidmaatskap tydens die Konferensie ontvang het: Joan van Wyk (Rustenburg – 57 jaar), Christa Grey (Derby – 56 jaar), Lettie de Bruin (Jubenetie ontbind – 56 jaar), Neeltje Louw (Brits – 50 jaar), Rina Erasmus (Rustenburg – 56 jaar) en Susan Loots (Mosaiek – 60 jaar). Afwesig: Baba Coetzer (61 jaar) en Rita Coetzee (60 jaar).



Die Dagbestuur van die VLU Platina-streek: Verona Loots (1ste vise), Rolien Scholtz (sekretaresse), Martie de Villiers (skakelbeampte), Elsa van Rooyen (beoordelaarsameroeper), Istella van Rhyn-Nel (voormalige skakelbeampte), Louise Herbst (streekvoorsitter) en Sandra Strydom (tesourier).



Louise Herbst, huidige Platina-streekvoorsitter (agter) saam met voormalige streekvoorsitters tydens die Platina-streetskonsferensie op Woensdag 2 Maart: Elaine Smit, Judy Steynberg en Lettie de Bruin.



Masjienwerk: Francis Liebel (eerste - Marikana), Antonette Antha (tweede - Mosaiek), Ronel Steyn (derde - Derby) en agter Miemie Scholtz (vierde - Rustenburg).



NWVLU Uitvoerende-bestuur: Maatje Hobson (NWVLU-beoordelaar), Louise Herbst (Platinastreek-voorsitter), Sanja-Mari van Rooyen (NWVLU-redaktrise) en voor Gené Conradie (NWVLU 1ste vise en Sonneblomstreek-voorsitter), Gerda Swart (NWVLU-president) en Istella van Rhyn-Nel (NWVLU-skakelbeampte).

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Blomme (Middelbaar en Gevorderd): Elsa van Rooyen (eerste Gevorderd - Marikana), Elaine Smit (tweede Gevorderd - Brits), Cheré Cocklin (eerste Middelbaar - Marikana) en agter van links Istella van Rhyn-Nel (vierde Middelbaar - Marikana), Mariska van Aswegen (tweede Middelbaar - Marikana), Martie Willems (derde Gevorderd - Marikana), Francis Liebel (vierde Gevorderd - Marikana) en Ann Fitzgerald (derde Middelbaar - Rustenburg).



Preservering Tamatie-puree: Priscilla Motsisi (eerste - Volmoed), Elsa van Rooyen (tweede - Marikana), Rebecca Molapa (vyfde - Volmoed) en agter van links Francis Liebel (derde - Marikana) en Santie Bingle (vierde - Rustenburg). Afwesig: Christelle Buys (sesde - Brits).



Borduurwerk (Australiese-kruissteek): Francis Liebel (eerste - Marikana), Charlotte Rossouw (tweede - Brits), Hettie Maré (derde - Rustenburg) en agter van links Miemie Scholtz (vierde - Rustenburg) en Santie Bingle (vyfde - Rustenburg).



Marikana (tweede op Konferensie): Istella van Rhyn-Nel, Francis Liebel, Elsa van Rooyen, Emmentaria du Preez en agter van links Martie Willems, Mariska van Aswegen, Emmerensia Coetzee en Cheré Cocklin.



Gerda Swart (NWVLU-president) oorhandig 'n 50-jaar toekenning aan Lucia van Zyl (Derby-tak).



Joan van Wyk (Rustenburgtak) ontvang haar 60-jaar toekenning van Gerda Swart (NWVLU-president).



Takke met Beste Voorsittersverslag: Neeltje Louw (derde - Brits), Charmaine Coetzer (tweede - Kashané) en Santie Bingle (eerste - Rustenburg).



Ina Pelser (Skuinsdrift) en Suzie Buys (Skuinsdrift) ontvang hul 20-jaar toekennings van Gerda Swart (NWVLU-president).



Skrifkuns: Antonette Antha (eerste - Mosaiek) en agter van links Elaine Smit (sesde - Brits), Miemie Scholtz (vierde - Rustenburg) en Heleen Labuschagne (vyfde - Rustenburg). Afwesig: Priscilla Motsisi (tweede - Volmoed) en Bettina Terreblanche (derde - Mosaiek).



Skakelbeamptes ontvang erkenning: Christelle Rossouw (Brits), Istella van Rhyn-Nel (voormalige Platina-streek skakel), Martie de Villiers (huidige Platina-streek skakel) en agter van links Theresa Ladywyck (staan in vir Mosaiek skakel), Netta Louw (Volmoed), Charmaine Coetzer (staan in vir Kashané skakel), Ronel Steyn (Derby), Madelein van Heerden (staan in vir Skuinsdrift skakel) en Dina van Dyk (Rustenburg).



Breierwerk: Francis Liebel (tweede - Marikana), Elsa van Rooyen (sesde - Marikana), Santie Bingle (derde - Rustenburg) en agter van links Martie Willems (vierde - Marikana) en Emmerensia Coetzee (vyfde - Marikana). Afwesig: Ria Pretorius (sesde - Rustenburg).



Blomme (Beginners): Lynette Venter (eerste - Rustenburg), Charmaine Coetzer (tweede - Kashané), Emmerensia Coetzee (derde - Marikana) en agter van links Miemie Scholtz (vierde - Rustenburg) en Hettie Maré (vyfde - Rustenburg).



Dames wat 10-jaar toekennings van Gerda Swart (NWVLU-president - tweede van links) ontvang het: Ronel Steyn (Derby), Bettie Slabbert (Derby) en Hansie TerréBlanche (Derby).

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What does the first large-scale wheeling project mean for South Africa?

AGRI-PULSE - UPINGTON - SOLA has officially launched a first-of-its-kind 10 MW solar plant in the Northern Cape three months ahead of schedule, which provides clean energy to Amazon Web Services via the Eskom grid. Energy wheeling, a new model of private energy procurement, allows power to be generated and purchased in geographically distinct locations.

The Adams Solar PV project will provide over 28 million kWh of clean electricity to Amazon Web Services annually.

This is the first operational large-scale solar PV wheeling project in South Africa, and the model is futuristic: it uses Eskom's grid to connect private buyers and sellers together making the way for more choice and competition. It's the first step forward in creating grid independence where private buyers and sellers of energy can trade with each other.

This means that the renewable energy plant will provide a low-carbon alternative to coal-fired power for a private offtaker (in this case Amazon Web Services) without needing to be geographically located at the site of use.

How?

The solar PV plant comprises over 24 000 bifacial solar modules on single axis trackers, covering an area of 20 hectares. It is situated in the Northern Cape, where the solar resource is one of the best in the world. The solar PV facility tracks the sun throughout the day and absorbs irradiance from both the sky and reflected light from the ground. This design will see over 25 000 tons of carbon emissions being avoided annually – the equivalent of taking 5400 cars off of the road for a year.

This model could also help South Africa significantly in sticking to its carbon emission reductions targets whilst supporting economic growth and a just energy transition.

Amazon, like other large corporate consumers of energy, have committed to aggressive renewable energy procurement targets – in their case, 100% by 2025. But the successful provision of renewable energy can only be provided in an environment that supports it. Recently, the Department of Minerals and Energy, NERSA and Eskom have become supportive of renewable energy generation, which has allowed for the approval of renewable power plants such as this.

“Amazon is committed to working with governments and utility suppliers around the world to help bring more renewable energy projects online,” said Nat Sahlstrom, director of energy at Amazon Web Services. “We’re honored to work with the Department of Minerals and Energy, the National Energy

Regulator of South Africa, and Eskom to help deliver a new model for renewable energy generation in South Africa.”

This is great news in light of the onslaught of load shedding in South Africa. Power generated from wheeling projects will increase the amount of IPPs and relieve the sole electricity provision burden on Eskom.

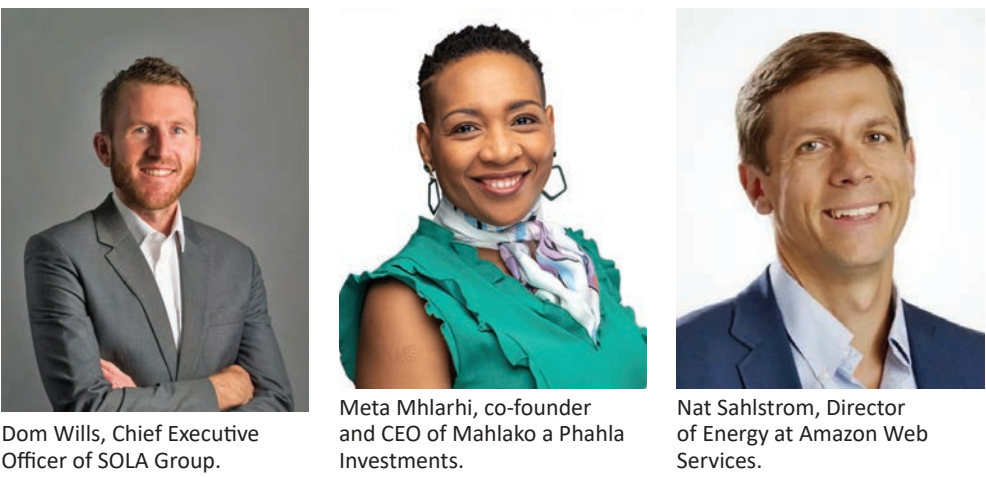
The support of renewable projects means the equal prioritisation of economic and social factors. The Adams project is more than 63% black owned, with investor Mahlako a Phahla Financial Services holding stakes in the project, who are committed to delivering returns for local black investors. SOLA is also 100% South African owned, including a 40% shareholding by black investor African Rainbow Energy and Power.

“Historically, black women have been critically underrepresented in infrastructure, agriculture, and utility ownership,” says Meta Mhlathi, co-founder and executive director at Mahlako a Phahla Investments, an investor in the project. “Energy projects that enable black investment are our surest way to a just transition to renewable energy.”

Renewable energy projects which take into account local development are able to develop South African skills and provide jobs. “While we’re building renewable energy capacity in South Africa, we must also develop South African companies and skills,” says Dom Wills, CEO of SOLA Group, the South African company responsible for developing and operating the energy plant. “SOLA is committed to transforming South Africa through clean energy, and being able to sell renewables to corporates at large scale makes this one of the most significant power projects in South African History.”

During construction, the Adams Solar Project created 167 jobs, 63% of them from the local surrounding area, and it will sustain permanent jobs for its lifetime in electrical maintenance, cleaning and security. Wooden waste generated during construction, including pallets and electrical cable drums, were donated to local furniture businesses and special skills schools, in order to further bolster the SMME contributions of the project.

Although the Adams Project is just the start of an energy wheeling and trading landscape in South Africa, it's indicative of where the picture is heading: toward a modernised grid with renewable energy at its core. It also demonstrates the willingness of the government and the private sector to work together on solving South Africa's electricity crisis.



The other three operational, Scatec solar power plants are situated on adjacent plots, 25 km outside of Upington in the Northern Cape. Photo Credit Scatec Solar

AGRI-PULSE - KENHARDT : After the Norwegian green power producer Scatec ASA (OSL:SCATC) was forced to reschedule construction of its Kenhardt 540-MW solar-plus-storage project in the Northern Cape, due to a delay in the government approval process, and backed out of projects in Brazil and Ukraine, in October last year - the project is finally in the final stages of approval.

The Oslo-based company secured preferred bidder status for Kenhardt's 150 MW in South Africa's Risk Mitigation Power Procurement (RMIPP) programme in June last year, and was initially expected to reach financial close by the end of 2021.

In October last year, Scatec said it had been informed of the approval delay for RMIPP, which pushes the financial close to the end of January 2022.

The solar and battery project, to provide electricity to South Africa's grid, is one of the largest in the world and represents a R15 billion investment.

The farm to be constructed near Kenhardt is one of three projects that will provide 540MW of solar generation and 225MW – or 1,140MWh – of battery storage.

After the setback, Scatec has partnered with the local clean energy company H1 holdings to carry out the project.

The company's general manager, Jan Fourie, told the media that environmental approval had already been granted and that Scatec SA is finalising the financing process.

After that, the project requires final approval of the purchase agreement from Eskom's board of directors and the National Treasury, which will apply for 20 years.

One of the energy department's requirements for renewable power production is that power must be available on-demand from the system operator from 05:00 to 21:30, regardless of weather conditions.

The power will be sold under a 20-year PPA (Power Purchase Agreement). The project is expected to be funded by project finance debt from a consortium of commercial banks and Development Finance Institutions with expected debt leverage of 80%. Scatec will own 51 % of the equity in the project with H1 Holdings, our local Black Economic Empowerment partner owning 49%.

Scatec's solar and battery technology accounts for weather conditions and can supply

electricity even if overcast weather persists for extended periods.

Its tariff will start at R1.88 per kWh for the 20-year contract and have an annual inflation-linked adjustment.

They could limit increases to inflation because the project is not subject to fluctuating commodity prices or the exchange rate.

The Department of Mineral Resources and Energy recently published its Electricity Pricing Policy Review for public comment.

The review included plans to establish a separate independent transmission company under Eskom, facilitating electricity transmission from other providers.

Assuming the policy review is passed, the move should help resolve the country's electricity crisis.

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The Premier of the Northern Cape, dr. Zamani Saul, visited the Redstone CSP Project situated in the ZFM District, 30km before Posmansburg.

AGRI-PULSE - POSTMASBURG: The premier of the Northern Cape, dr. Zamani Saul, visited the Redstone CSP Project situated in the ZFM District, 30km before Posmansburg.

The project is currently in its construction phase, where a 256m solar tower as well as the electronic control room is being built.

It is estimated that around May 2022 200m of the tower would have been constructed.

At the peak of construction, this project is set to employ approximately 2000 people.

The Project, which will be completed in 2024, will see the Northern Cape producing alternative energy, ultimately contributing to the National grid.

Saul says work is progressing well at the Redstone Concentrated Solar Power Project in Postmasburg, which is expected to bring additional power to the country's energy network.

In his state of the province address on Thursday (24 February), Saul said the project is one of the largest capital investment projects in the Northern Cape.

The 100 Megawatts of Concentrated Solar Power (CSP) plant will be constructed over a period of 31 months, achieving full commercial operation by the end of October 2023. The project had, to date, employed 636 direct jobs on site of which 91% are South Africans. and 339 are from the Tsantsabane and Kgatelopele municipalities. More than 45%

of employees are young people under the age of 35 and 15% of all employees are women in various job disciplines.

The project is expected to peak close to 1,800 employees by the end of this year, said Saul.

What to expect

The project will see the construction and operation of a concentrating solar thermal power (CSP) plant in the Hay District, around 30 km from Postmasburg in the Northern Cape. A CSP tower plant generates solar power using mirrors, known as heliostats, to concentrate a large area of sunlight onto a small area known as the receiver. Electricity is then generated when the concentrated light is converted to solar thermal energy. It will be capable of producing approximately 480 gigawatt-hours (GWh) net of renewable energy annually, with a nominal net generating capacity of approximately 100 megawatts (MW). The Project's Sponsors are ACWA Power and SolarReserve. ACWA Power is a developer, investor, co-owner and operator of a portfolio of power generation and desalinated water production plants with operations in 12 countries in the Middle East and North Africa, Southern Africa and South-East Asia regions.

Absa, which is involved in the funding and development of the project, has previously said that the Redstone CSP Project will have 12 hours of full-load energy storage.

This will enable the power plant to reliably deliver a stable electricity supply to more than 200,000 South African homes during peak demand periods, even after the sun has set.



Multibillion-dollar port project to change Northern Cape's economic landscape



The port, described by Premier Zamani Saul as a "game changer", is expected to be built at Bugue Bay near Alexander Bay.

AGRI-PULSE - PORT-NOLLOTH: A multi-billion rand project to build a port in the Northern Cape is expected to provide much-needed economic relief for the province. The port, described by Premier Zamani Saul as a "game changer", is expected to be built by Alexander Bay near Alexander Bay. Saul says plans are underway to ensure that the construction of a port begins in 2024. He says R100 million has been earmarked by the provincial government to conduct a feasibility study on the project. Saul says the construction of the harbor will cost R13 billion. He is sure it will change the socio-economic status of the province. "Usually such projects take a very long time to get into the execution phase, where you actually see the construction of the harbor. But we are doing pretty well in terms of our work. We had our own target that the construction of the project teenager will start in 2024, 2025," says the Premier. Residents say they hope the port will create jobs for everyone in the area. Unemployment rates in the province

currently stand at 24.9% with extended unemployment close to 50%. The planned port will also be built on a site rich in Nama history. "We are not talking about what is happening to the port and that is all they are difficult about, but we want to know for ancestral things what is going to happen and will be included in the discussions," said an Alexander Bayer. "I do not know if it is just a story or if they will continue with the plans they have. Because it will create jobs for the youth, which will be a big thing," adds another Alexander Bayer. "The Community Property Association (CPA), which has hundreds of residents whose land will be used, says they have been posted that the construction of the harbor could disrupt marine life, but are hopeful measures will be put in place to protect the environment," Nicodemis Swartboo said. The government recently announced another project through Bugue Bay, a R10 billion green hydrogen project. This project is currently in the feasibility study phase.



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Prickly pear jam

In this article on prickly pears we are sharing all kinds of interesting facts on the “Western Transvaal’s (North West) best-known wild fruit. Prickly pears have been a delicacy in the South African farming community for generations, much the same as watermelon but considerable more “maintenance” before it could be enjoyed.

We have wondered: How many people are familiar with prickly pear jam? This is not something you would find on the shelves of many people very often. The reasons being that it is quite a lot of preparation before you could finally start to cook and secondly, you really need a lot of prickly pears to make just a few cans of jam. But yes, it is rewarding to those who attempt it. We know that some people may have a problem with the pips – problem is – you can’t remove all of these as this will leave you with even less jam in the end. So here goes - we are cooking prickly pear jam...

And there we have it – now allow to cool and enjoy!



Use 1 kg of peeled prickly pears.

Kook met ‘n gekneusde gemmerwortel. Ons het die gemmer somer goed met ‘n vurk geprik.



Ingredients

Peel 1 kg of ripe prickly pears and cut in smallish pieces. Ad 625 ml water, bring to boil and cook for 15 minutes with the lid closed. Remove from stove, add 375 g white sugar, the juice of half a lemon, 1 piece of pierced ginger root and a pinch of salt.

Now bring to cooking temperature very slowly to allow sugar to melt and stir regularly. Cook at medium heat until the jam appears thickish and clear. Allow to cool slightly and bottle immediately. Cover after cooling and store.

Waldie Volschenk of Agri-Pulse who attempted to cook prickly pear jam.



Click here on your electronic device or go to <https://bit.ly/agripulsekookturksvykonfyt> to watch a video..

Juicy prickly pears without the sting

AGRIPULSE – NORTH WEST – Can you imagine a farm in the former Western Transvaal without the ever present prickly pears on the horizon? Prickly pears are so familiar to rural areas in South Africa as a field of maize or the blue gum tree. In addition to being an important form of food for cattle, it is especially known to humans as a delightful delicacy.

People in South African are generally divided in their opinions on the prickly pear. Some wants to see the plant destroyed as a matter of urgency, while others enjoy the taste and texture of its juicy and colourful fruit.

The prickly pear is definitely not appreciated by everyone but has proved to be quite useful and various forms for ages.

Prickly pears were introduced to South Africa more than 300 years ago. The more popular thornless type (the so-called Burbank type) however, has only been imported into the country since 1914. In South Africa, the long thorn prickly pear has been declared an invader and only the thornless type may be planted in recent years.

There is no question though that the prickly pear is enjoyed and used in various forms. In Mexico for instance,

the thorns are cut away while the rest of the plant is widely used in salads and vegetable dishes. This is known as “Nopalitos”. The fruit of the prickly pear is mostly marketed as fresh fruit, but it can also be processed into jams, syrups or even dried fruit. In the Eastern Cape the indigenous population is known for brewing a type of beer from the fruit.

But as the name clearly warns, the prickly pear is not very “friendly” when it comes to peeling the fruit. Few things are as unpleasant as a finger or hand riddled with prickly pear thorns and there is only a few ways of successfully peeling the skin without having to carry a pair of tweezers in your pocket for weeks on end.

Many people prefer a used newspaper or magazine which is paged as the peeling continue. Other prefer a fire to burn away the sticky thorns. The following is a easy and proven method to keep your hands free from thorns.

Rinse the prickly pears roughly twice but thoroughly in cold water. It can also be allowed to remain in a bucket or bowl of water for a few hours. Be sure to put on a pair of surgical gloves which are available at any pharmacy. Insert a fork into the fruit and start by cutting away the corners or edges some 6mm from

the sides. Do not cut through the skin completely to keep the skin in one piece. Then make a 6 mm cut across the width of the fruit and with a sharp knife in your right hand and the fork in your left, start to “unroll” the skin gently away from the fruit. Take extreme caution towards the end not to allow the skinned fruit to come into contact with the surface you are working on, and gently “lift” the fruit with your fork from the remaining piece of skin and place in your bowl or container. Immediately pick up the empty skin with the sharp end of the knife and dispose into a container that is not used in your home. Otherwise wash the container well with water with the gloves still on before placing it outside to dry.

If however to you prefer to enjoy your prickly pears as jam, following one of the easy recipes below. It is highly unlikely that you will find prickly pear jam on the shelves most people.

Whole Prickly Pear Jam

Skin/peel approximately 10 to 12 medium sized prickly pears which is usually enough for a standard “honey flask”. Prick repeatedly with a fork right through the fruit and boil the fruit in 1 l of water until clear and drain. Use the water for

the syrup, add 4 cups of sugar to the water and the juice of half a lemon. Stir until the sugar is dissolved. Bring syrup to the boil and add the fruit one by one to allow the syrup to continue boiling. Continue boiling until the fruit is soft and syrup is clear. Bottle in hot jars and seal immediately.

Prickly Pear syrup with sugar

Peel ripe fruit and cut flesh into small pieces. Slowly boil without water until soft. Gentle push pulp through a sieve and measure the mixture. Ad 50 to 100 g of white sugar to each 250 ml of pulp and ad 15 ml lemon juice. Bring to boil very slowly and stir initially until sugar has dissolved. Gently boil syrup over medium heat and stir frequently. Bottle the syrup and seal immediately.

Prickly Pear Jam

Peel 1 kg fruit and cut into small pieces. Add 625 ml water, bring to boil and boil for 15 minutes with closed lid. Remove from oven. Ad 375 g white sugar, the juice of half a lemon, 1 crushed ginger root and a pinch of salt. Bring to boil slowly until jam is clear and thick. Remove ginger root and bottle hot to seal immediately.

Earlier in January and February, there was once again a drastic increase in water hyacinths on the Hartbeespoort Dam, but at our going to press, Petrus Venter, Regional Director of Water Resource Management for the Department of Water and Forestry at Hartbeespoort Dam confirmed that due to success with the insects, less than 20% of the dam surface is currently covered in hyacinths and that it will decrease significantly within the next two months. Photo: Elsabé Klein-Brits Pos)

HARTBEESPOORTDAM

Insects frolic on water hyacinths

The water hyacinth planthopper, *Megamelus scutellaris*, is one of the insects released on water hyacinths (*Eichhornia crassipes*) on the Hartbeespoort Dam. Adult plant hoppers are small sap sucking insects, about 3 mm long. Colouration varies from pale cream to dark brown and adults may or may not possess wings. When plant hoppers feed on sap of the hyacinth, they pierce the plant tissue, damaging cells. The damage leads to water logging, which reduces plant buoyancy and causes the tissue to rot. Damage is evident once leaves start to turn brown, and a sooty mould develops on the leaves. (Photo: Rhodes University)

AGRIPULSE – HARTBEESPOORT - Over the past few years, various plans and initiatives to get rid of the water hyacinths on the Hartbeespoort Dam have seen the light, but each time, this intruder has dominated the dam.

During February 2022, AgriPulse spoke to Petrus Venter, Regional Director of Water Resource Management for the Department of Water and Forestry at Hartbeespoort Dam, to get the latest information on the state of water hyacinths on the dam after receiving numerous enquiries regarding the massive takeover of hyacinths on the dam surface.

"After biological control agents in

the form of plant-specific insects, such as *Megamelus scutellaris* and *Neochetina weevils*, were introduced to the hyacinths, in February 2021, the dam was virtually clean with only 2% water hyacinths," says Venter. "These insects were very effective and cleared hyacinths on the dam in just two months, which at the time, covered 35% of the dam surface."

Biological control agents in the form of plant-specific insects have been introduced on the Hartbeespoort Dam since the 1980s, but due to the periodic application of herbicides, the percentage of insects on the hyacinths has decreased drastically.

"Due to the spraying of herbicides which ends up in the dam and kill the good insects, the recent weather conditions have also been a contributing factor to the increase in water hyacinths," says Venter. Another factor was the high rainfall in the catchment areas of the dam, causing floods which stirred up the

nutrients at the bottom of the dam and gave the hyacinths a booster to thrive on.

"The insects are currently active. If we as humans do not interfere with their activities, it can be expected that the dam will have significantly less water hyacinths within the next six to eight weeks," Venter concludes.

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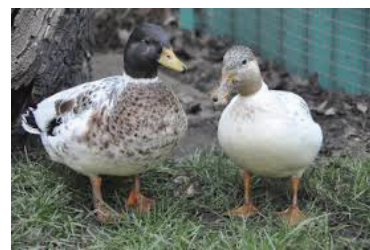
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The Appleyard Duck

AGRIPULSE – RUSTENBURG - The Appleyard is classified as a heavy duck class, and originates from England by Reginald Appleyard in the mid twentieth century, the Appleyard (Silver Appleyard) was developed as a layer of big white eggs and as a white-skinned table bird that attained a weight of 3.0kg (cold and plucked) at the age of 9 weeks. For size, carriage and basic plumage colour, it closely resembles the Rouen Clair. Its unique feature, however, is the expression of the restricted mallard gene that limits the amount of pigment on the face and body plumage of both duck and drake. Little is known about the appearance of the first Appleyards other than from sources like the painting by Wippell commissioned in 1947.

The modern Appleyard (standardized in 1982) and its bantam form (standardized in 1997) are largely the result of breeding by Tom Bartlett of Folly Farm. It is a good layer, an excellent table bird and very ornamental. The drake's weight must be between 3.6 to 4.1kg and the duck (female) between 3.2 to 3.6kg. The carriage is lively, slightly erect, the back sloping gently from shoulder to tail and the type of the body is compact, broad and well rounded. The tail must be broad, the drake having the usual curled tail feathers. The head is bold with a light rise to the skull, the bill is a medium length, broad and must be yellow, the neck must be upright and of medium length. The legs and feet are a medium length and set slightly back. The legs must be orange and the eyes a dark hazel colour.

The plumage differs between the drake and the duck.

The drakes head and neck are black-green with silver-white throat flecked with fawn. Silver-white ring completely circling the base of the neck. Base of neck and shoulders, below the ring must be light claret. Wing coverts is a silver white, matching the breast and under body, followed by the usual band of

iridescent blue. The back and rump is a black-green with white tips to tail feathers. The ducks head, neck and under body is silver-white with a crown and back of neck flecked with fawn. Has a deep fawn line through the eyes. Shoulders and back strongly flecked with fawn, with the usual iridescent blue in the wings. The tail is also fawn coloured.

The Appleyard Bantams origin is from England, classified as a bantam duck. The weight of the drake is 1.4kg and the duck's 1.1kg. The Appleyard Bantam (Silver Appleyard Miniature) was developed in the 1980's and shown at the first BWA Championship Waterfowl Exhibition of 1987 by Tom Bartlett of Folly Farm, this Bantam Duck is a miniature version of the original Appleyard (Silver Appleyard) produced by Reginald Appleyard in the mid twentieth century.

The Appleyard Bantam, first standardized in 1997, is roughly a third of the weight of the original, large breed.

Their plumage doesn't differ from the Appleyard (Large) above it's only their general characteristics that differs. Their carriage is carried well, nearly level from breast to stern. The type of their body is small, the shape bearing a strong resemblance to the Mallard, more slender shape than the Call duck. The head is small, neat and slender and the Bill is yellow, medium length and width. The eyes are round, full and alert. The neck is also of medium length, the legs are short and set midway in the body. The feet are straight and webbed, their legs must be orange and the eyes a dark hazel colour. In short they are the same it's only the size, weight and general characteristics that differ between the Appleyard and the Appleyard Bantam.

For more information please contact Rustenburg Poultry Club: Hanri at 083 465 1486, Dawie at 071 196 7696 or Marlize at 072 668 1495; Email: rustenburgpoultryclub@gmail.com.