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Autumn is great for gardening. Winter veggies such as spinach, leeks, winter lettuce and peas will reward you with goodness from the earth if you get them into the soil now. And to add sweetness to your plate, plant your strawberries now as well. Inside this month’s edition, we have advice and planting tips to make the most of your May garden.

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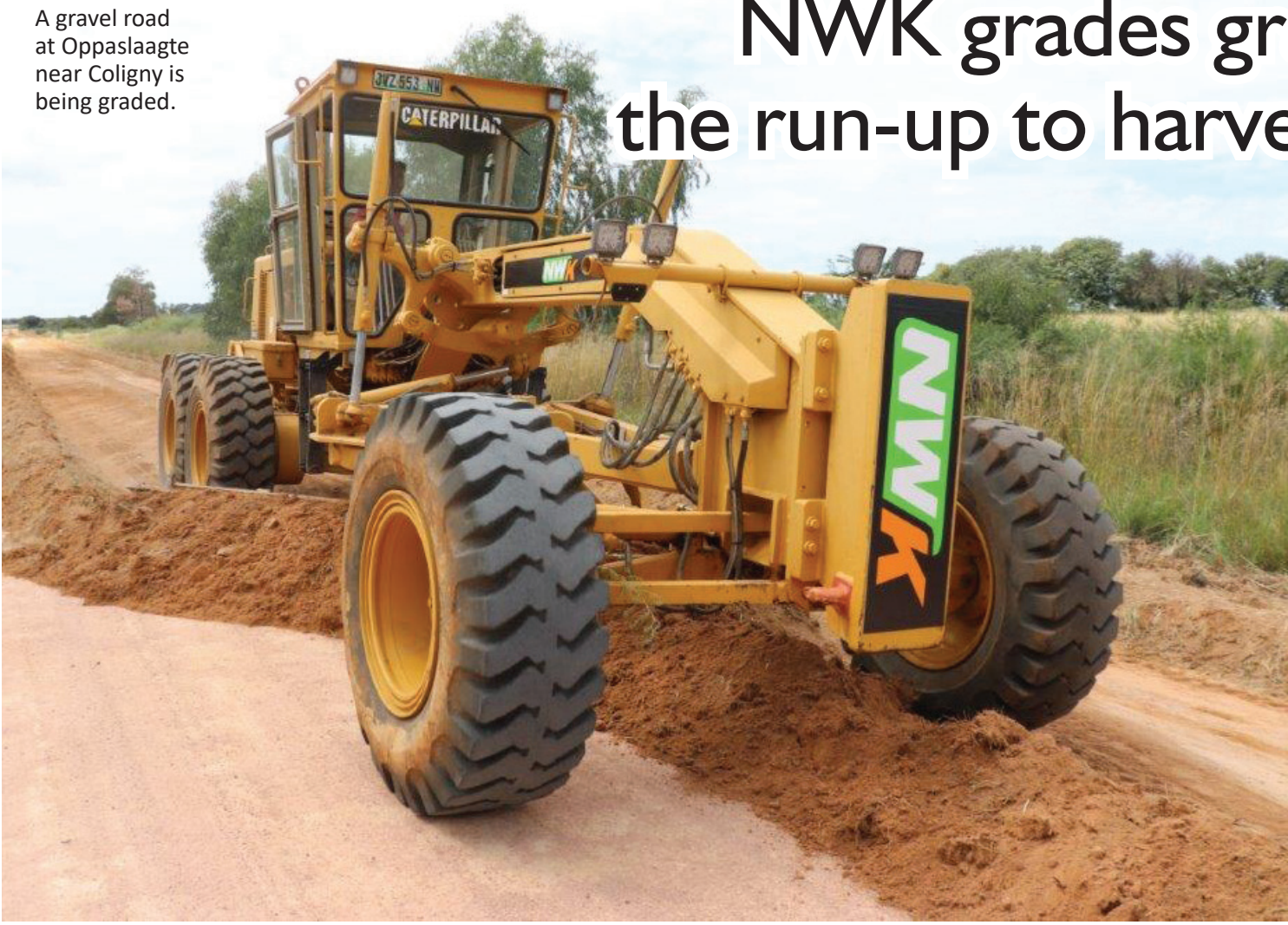


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A gravel road at Oppaslaagte near Coligny is being graded.



## NWK grades gravel roads in the run-up to harvesting season

AGRI PULSE – LICHTENBURG - Gravel roads of about 1 400km leading to NWK’s silo complexes are again being graded to allow grain loads to be transported here as conveniently as possible in the coming harvesting season.

Some of these roads have been washed away by heavy rain over the past few months and basically have to be rebuilt to make it more accessible.

The second phase of this project commenced on 13 March and the costs are estimated at about R1, 4 million.

Roads in the Oppaslaagte and Delareyville areas are currently being graded, after which roads surrounding Kameel, Geysdorp, Sannieshof, Coligny, Bodenstein and Koster will receive attention.

NWK appointed a contractor in July last year and gravel roads of about 1 500km were graded. This followed after NWK signed a memorandum of understanding with North West’s Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport according to which it offers its help to government to make the province’s gravel roads more accessible.

“The state of gravel and even tar roads in the North West vary between poor and extremely poor and the provincial and national government are not really giving attention to the necessary maintenance of roads,” Theo Rabe, group CEO of NWK, said.

“NWK therefore decided to get involved in the grading of roads – not only to improve business with our various operating points – but also to allow our customer base and other residents of the area to benefit from the safer use of the roads.

“The company is already a responsible citizen of the country that pays all taxes. However, this can be described as an additional tax. If we don’t get involved, the risk is high that our road network can collapse entirely. Neither NWK nor our clients can afford it.

“Together with our producers we will aim to make a difference to some of the roads. However, we cannot take over the responsibility entirely. Some of the gravel roads are in such a dilapidated state that the rebuilding of these roads are the only option. Especially roads in the bushveld of Zeerust and Groot Marico are basically inaccessible,” Theo concluded.

The project is estimated to be completed by the end of May.



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# Feedlot diaries: A day in the life of a general manager



AGRI-PULSE – CHRISTIANA - Loadshedding, high fuel prices, and disease management. These are just some of the everyday challenges that Andre Bergh, General Manager of Feedlot and Farms at Beefmaster Group, must navigate to ensure the smooth running of one of South Africa’s largest beef producers. The Group’s feedlot is based in Christiana in the North West.

“It is not easy managing farms and feedlots under sometimes trying conditions that are outside of our control.

However, as with any business one must keep up with trends to be competitive in the market,” says Andre, who remains determined to stay ahead of the challenges and focus on the task at hand.

He adds that – considering the current environment – there are constantly new challenges that need to be addressed and solutions that need to be sought. “Our business consists of a lot of different facets that move every day. It is my job to make sure we find fast solutions to the problems that arise.”

In his position as General Manager, Andre’s day to day tasks centre on everything to do with feedlots and farms. This includes finances, strategic management and future planning.

“I am focused on efficiencies and to make Beefmaster the best it can be.

This means that I research new technology and strategy while keeping the basic principles of feeding and management at the highest standard.”

Andre started his journey with a degree at the University of the Free State. At the time when he was appointed as a Junior Section Manager at Beefmaster Group in 2005, he was mostly interested in nutrition. He soon learned that nutrition has a lot more than just what you feed cattle. In 2015 he was appointed as feedlot manager. His focus shifted from this to management. In this role he oversaw daily

operations of feed yards, provided knowledge and support for heard nutrition, marketing, and environmental conditions for livestock in feedlots. In 2023 he was promoted to his current position. He has been at Beefmaster Group for more than fifteen years. Throughout his career, Andre has undergone extensive training in various aspects of agriculture, including feedlot nutrition in the USA and international standards such as ISO 22 000.

The company has also provided him with ample opportunities to further his career and education. For young individuals who are

interested in pursuing a career in farming or feedlot management, Andre advises setting clear goals and working hard to achieve them. He also suggests applying for work at businesses that can offer opportunities for career advancement.

But more than anything, says Andre, to have a career in this line of work, you need heart.

“If you want to get into this business, the most important skill you will need is human relations. My job has a lot more to do with people than implementation.

The job needs patience, and understanding of people,” concludes Andre.



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## Booted Bantam

AGRI-PULSE – RUSTENBURG - The Booted Bantam is a very ancient breed and since the1600’s it appears on paintings. It has its origin in Europe, Holland and Germany, is classified as a true bantam, soft feather.

Males weigh between 750 to 850 gram and females between 600 to 700 gram. The body is short and compact, full and prominent breast. Short back, males furnished with long and abundant saddle feathers, long, large wings, carried in a drooping fashion. Large tail, full and upright, male’s sickles a little longer than the main tail feathers and slightly curved. The scull is small, beak rather stout, medium length, single red comb, straight and upright. Neck is rather short with full hackle. Legs and thighs fairly short, heavily furnished on outer sides with long stiff feathers, four toes, well spread, middle and outer toes heavily feathered.

Colours of Booted bantam: golden, porcelain, citroen, silver porcelain, white, black, lavender, cuckoo, mottle, ect.

Enquiries sms or whatsapp Sarie 072 227 8031 or Dawie 071 196 7696.





Most of the finishing of granite is manual labour.

Five polishing pads are used to give granite the smooth shiny surface.

The block saw with diamond blades can work for up to 24 hours to saw a 15 ton granite cube into smaller slabs.



The mining of granite from the quarries is labour intensive.

# From the mountain to the grave

Granite blocks are unloaded from trucks at Metgran's factory in Brits with the 20 ton crane.

AGRI-PULSE - BRITS - The humble granite stones that are generally found in cemeteries are nothing less than a natural wonder that is as old as the earth itself.

The environment around Brits in the North West literally groans under the multitude of granite hills and mountains.

AgriPulse spoke to Janus Fourie, co-owner of one of the major granite companies in Brits, Metgran, about the mining and processing of granite.

The inherent unique properties of granite are due to its origin. All granite was formed by volcanic eruptions. It forms from magma, very hot (650 °C to 1200 °C) molten rock within the earth's surface. As soon as the hot rock breaks through the earth it is called lava. It consists of a high content of silica and alkali metal oxides. It will slowly cool and solidify underground. These igneous rocks are granite.

“Almost all the granite that is mined in Brits is black and is called the Rustenburg Nero Impala,” says Janus. “The Rustenburg Nero Impala is very popular both locally and internationally, as it is extremely durable and has a high density.”

Janus says that the reason for the Rustenburg Nero Impala's black colour is the black turf soil in the Brits area. In other parts of the country such as in Potgietersrus in Limpopo, there is a lot of red soil and the granite there is red in colour. It is called the African Red.

Granite itself is not very expensive, but its extraction, transportation and processing are extremely costly and labour

intensive. Before getting to the shiny polished kitchen top, the process is long and intense.

AgriPulse was with Janus and staff from one of the large granite mines, just outside Brits in Kareepoort, on top of one of the granite hills where granite blocks are mined from quarries.

To mine granite, a Checker will identify an area on the hill, after the area is cleaned and marked, mining can begin. The granite is cut into blocks with a specialized diamond saw. The blocks (cubes) are then taken to the dress yard where they are cut into cubes and the quality is determined. After the cube of granite is graded, it is washed and measured again (one cube weighs approximately 15 tons) and then transported to the stock yard where granite companies such as Metgran purchase and process it.

In Metgran's factory, the 15 ton block is moved from the truck with a 20 ton crane to the block saw where it is sawn into smaller slabs.

Cutting one 15-ton block into slabs takes about 24 hours. The sizes of the slabs are then cut according to the customer's specific needs. The polishing process consists of five steps and five different polishing blocks with different degrees of roughness are used to meticulously finish a rough piece of natural stone and bring the granite's unique beauty to life.

Metgran specialises in custom-made headstones, kitchen, office and bathroom tops, as well as installation. For a free quote, call 012 250 2040.



The Fourie brothers in charge of affairs at Metgran in Piet Rautenbachstraat 13, Brits, are Werner, Janus and Reynhard.



On top of the granite mountain where a local mining company is mining the Rustenburg Nero Impala granite for the local as well as the international market. Up to 1,900 tons of granite can be exported monthly at one mine.



The granite mountain can be seen from Brits in the North West. The Department of Mineral Resources (DMR) has strict legislation to rehabilitate the mountain peaks after mining has been done.



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## Sakata Seed SA: Changes in Top Management

Sakata Seed Southern Africa (Pty)Ltd announce the retirement of their Managing Director, Mr. Lindsay Campleman, who has been part of the company for more than three decades. Lindsay joined Sakata on February 1, 1992, as Financial Director and served as Commercial Director from January 2004. In 2009, he assumed the position of Managing Director, while retaining the Commercial role and leading the company’s growth and profitability for the last 14 years. As of 1 May 2023, Susan Allen takes over as Managing Director and Jan-Louis Bezuidenhout as Commercial Director. Susan is an experienced Supply Chain Director, having worked in the agricultural industry and specifically the vegetable seed business for many years. Susan holds a BSc degree in Botany, Microbiology, and Plant Pathology, as well as a BSc Honours degree in Plant Pathology (with Horticulture) and started her career as a sales representative more than 30 years ago. She moved into Supply Chain Management 18 years ago and has been responsible for seed production and processing, quality assurance, warehousing, inventory control, and factory seed packing for both the professional and hobby markets since then. Throughout her career, Susan has been an active participant in the South African National Seed organisation, including a term as Chairman of the Board of Directors (2016 – 2017). Jan-Louis Bezuidenhout, Commercial Manager for Professional Vegetables will be assuming the position of Commercial Director where he will oversee sales and product development for Professional Vegetables, and MayFord branded products, including packets for the retail trade as well as flowers and grass seed for the professional. The new executive structure strengthens Sakata’s commitment to growth, innovation, and excellence in the vegetable seed market.

# Soak up the sun

AGRI-PULSE – RUSTENBURG - It’s general knowledge that moderate exposure to sun – with all precautions taken – are beneficial.

Sunlight enables your body to produce Vitamin D. And you do want the benefits of Vitamin D. These include the strengthening of your immune system, preventing certain types of cancer, lowering the risk of type 2 diabetes and reducing the risk of heart disease.

You can get all these benefits for free – simply spend some time in your garden.

- Things to do in May:**
- Lily bulbs will land on the shelves this month. Plant them as soon as they are available. Trim the flower stalks on old Liliums to ground level.
  - Continue planting spring-flowering bulbs. Water bulbs deeply and ensure they never dry out completely. Feed fortnightly with bulb food or organic 3:1:5.
  - Keep feeding fading bulbs to boost them for next season.
  - Dead-head winter-flowering annuals to encourage further flowers.
  - Continue planting winter-flowering seedlings like Pansies, Violas, Poppies, Primulas, Calendula, Stocks, Sweet Peas, Cineraria, Primulas and Primroses. Feed fortnightly with seedling food or liquid fertiliser. Mulch well.
  - May is the perfect month for planting roses. Come spring they will be settled and you will be rewarded with strong growth and lovely blooms.
  - Plant and transplant trees, vines, shrubs and hedging plants now.
  - Aloes will add warmth and vibrancy to your winter garden, plus they’re waterwise and very easy to maintain.
  - Bring colour indoors with flowering indoor plants like Cyclamen, Chrysanthemum and beautiful Phalaenopsis and Cymbidium orchids.
  - Hyacinth bulbs can also still be planted in pots on a bright window sill from where they will lend fragrance to any room. Feed once a month with a liquid plant food for indoor plants.
  - Feed orchids in flower with a specially formulated orchid food.

- In the Vegetable Garden:**
- Remove the last of the spent summer veg and plant Swiss chard, leeks, brassicas, peas, winter lettuce and oriental greens.
  - Thin out seedlings of seeds that were sown in-situ if needed and feed all seedlings with seedling food or a water-soluble fertiliser. Mulch well to keep their little roots warm.
- May is a good time to lift, divide and replant perennial vegetables like lemongrass, chives and artichokes.**
- Plant strawberries and mulch them well.
  - Prepare beds in full sun for asparagus corms, which will arrive on our shelves later in May.
  - Feed vegetables with an organic 8:1:5 or 6:3:4 fertiliser.
  - Cabbages are prone to aphids. Spray preventatively with an organic aphicide. Interplant with Sage to deter white fly and Calendula, pennyroyal or chives to repel aphids.
  - Also keep an eye open for signs of cutworm around young vegetable seedlings and place bait if necessary.

- Sowing Guide:**
- Flowers: African Daisy, Calendula, Diascia, Namaqualand Daisy, Nemesia, Pansies and Sweet Peas
- Vegetables: Broad Beans, Onions, Peas, Chinese Cabbage, Winter Lettuce, Mustard, Oriental Greens, Radish, Swiss Chard and Parsnips
- Herbs: Rocket and Coriander
- Although it is too late to sow a many varieties of flowers, herbs and vegetables at this time of year, hardened-off winter seedlings are available in the nursery to be planted now.
- For Goodness Sake:**
- Feed the birds more regularly as their natural food sources start to run low. Include suet in your feeding programme to provide them with a source of fat and energy.
- Invest in plants like Wild Dagga and Aloes for nectar-feeding birds and wild grasses for seed-feeders.
- Don’t neglect cleaning birdbaths as birds still enjoy a good splash on the warmer days!

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Going the Extra Mile





Photo (1): Sarel and Nina Bester from Vryburg, North West with but a few of their succulents and cacti collection. (Photo: Charlize van der Linden)



Photo (2) & (3): Lithops flowers range between white, yellow and purple and flower mostly in summertime from late afternoon to sunset. (Photo: Charlize van der Linden)

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# Succulents are the ultimate survivals

AGRI-PULSE-VRYBURG: Succulent plants are mostly found in deserts and semi-deserts and survive in extreme heat and drought. They have devised an amazing number of strategies to survive the extremes of typical desert conditions.

About half the succulent plants on earth occur in Southern Africa. A succulent is a plant that has developed at least one of its parts as a storage tissue for usable water to help see it through times when water is scarce. Succulents occur mainly in Central and South America and parts of Africa. They are found mostly in arid areas and deserts and have adapted to surviving in heat, wind, cold and drought where most other plants are unable to live. Their lack of water is the primary challenge for survival. Half of the plant species of succulents on earth occur in Southern Africa. Namakwaland and the Little Karoo have the richest diversity of succulents anywhere on the planet. Namakwaland is one of the oldest desert areas on the planet. It is slightly smaller than Spain and bigger than California and has about 3000 species of plants, third of which are succulents. Namakwaland is unique among the world succulent areas because half the plant species are endemic that means they are found nowhere else on earth. Although not all succulents are in stressful conditions, the extremes between heat of summer and cold of winter can be huge for them. Most animals have the advantage to move away when conditions become extreme, but plants such as succulents are fixed and their survival challenges are far greater.

They must adapt or die. Being a succulent is thus not for sissies. Many succulents have developed a leave to collect dew, fog or water. Some have developed hairs or bristles. The moisture they find is sufficient to keep them going when everything else is bone dry. Succulents range in size from stone plants, the size of a pebble, to aloes the size of a tree. Due to climate changes, succulents are used as garden plants. They require very little water and maintenance is low and can flourish even though they don't get a lot of attention. Many succulents add lots of colour to a water wise garden. If you are a succulent in the desert, summer is time for hiding away and winter is time for showing off. There are three categories of succulents; leave, stem or root succulents, but these distinctions are not clear and there can be a combination of these.

Leave succulents – These succulents have leaves that are fat and fleshy and are the plant's

main water storage vessels and are by far the biggest categories of succulents in South Africa. Leaves that stand upright minimize the area that face sun radiation but are more exposed to the wind and sand. Some examples of leave succulents in South Africa are *Argyrodema delaeii* Baby's Bottom or Living Stones (*Photo 16*), *Mesembryanthemum digitatum* Finger-and-thumb Plant, *Conophytum concavum*, *Lithops julii* and *lesliei* and *villetii* and *hallii* to mention but a few. A local succulent enthusiast and water wise farmer near Vryburg, Sarel and his wife Nina Bester (*Photo 1*), told *AgriPulse* that there are approximately 270 species of Lithops that are native to South Africa, of which he has 240 species. He said that some Lithops only need water twice a year and even though there are many species that are cross bred, he focuses on keeping species with species. Sarel mentioned that the Lithops flowers range between white, yellow and purple and that the plant uses its own water to survive. (*Photo 2 and 3*) Riëtte van der Westhuizen, a succulent collector in Vryburg introduced *AgriPulse* to string succulents that seem to be growing more and more in popularity. They are prized among many succulent collectors and home decorators for their beautiful delicate form. String succulents implies that their growth habit forms creeping strings or chains. All String succulents display several similar characteristics, such as pendant stems and fleshy green leaves. Riëtte collected a variegated String of Pearls (*Photo 4*) – that has a combination of green and white leaves and are sought after. Usually, variegation is due to the lack of chlorophyll in that section of the leaf, forming a yellow or white band, streak, or mottling of tissue. Sometimes variegation is due to the presence of pigments that mask the chlorophyll pigments, producing even darker colors (purples, reds, etc.). The *Sedum morganianum* or *Donkey's Tail* is another example of string succulents that Riëtte cares for. (*Photo 5*). Nina Bester has a *Senecio 'Hippogriff'*, also known String of Dolphins that is a rare succulent with leaves that look like tiny little dolphins jumping out of the waves. As they grow, they become more and more similar, perfecting themselves as an impressive potted plant. (*Photo 6*)

Stem succulents – They use stems as main water tanks rather than leaves. They generally don't have lots of leaves and many look like bushes. Stem succulents take on a more

cactus looking appearance although they are not remotely related to the cactus family. All succulent plants grow in length by increasing the number of cells at the tips of shoots and roots. These regions of active cell division are called apical meristems, and the growth is called primary growth. Some plants, most notably the monocots, have meristems at leaf bases that cause leaf elongation. Additional meristems, called lateral meristems, produce secondary growth in woody plants. Monstrose and crested growths only involve primary growth. Occasionally something called a growth mutation happens that "messes up" these regulated and coordinated cell divisions in the primary meristems. The causes of these mutations range from injury to bacterial or viral diseases. The three most common growth mutations are crests, monstrose growth, and variegation. In crests, the growth mutation changes the shape of the apical meristem. Instead of a single growth tip, the area of active cell growth becomes a line, resulting in fan-like or crested growth. Sarel Bester is also in possession of a crest. (*Photo 7*) In monstrose growth, the local apical dominance is lost, and every growth tip tries to grow as if it were the dominant point, resulting in a "knobby" or "lumpy, jumbled" growth. Here is one of the monstrose plant of Sarel Bester. (*Photo 9*)

Root succulents - These succulents are difficult to find. They store water in their roots underground that is their way of getting out of the blistering sun. Their growth tends to be very slow.

Pests and diseases - Succulents are easier to grow than most, but like all plants, they have their problems too. Although they come in a wide range of sizes, shapes, and colors, succulents all share a propensity to develop fungal infections when out of their naturally dry habitats. Surface fungi are easy to treat when present in succulents, but the various types of fungi that cause internal rots can pose much more complex problems. Some fungal attacks are extremely difficult to stop. Black Mold, is among the least damaging fungi on succulents. It appears due to feeding by aphids, mealybugs, whiteflies, and scale, as these insects exude a sweet substance called honeydew that the Sooty Mold feeds upon. Grey Mold (*Botrytis cinerea*) is easily identified by its grayish-brown spore masses on the surfaces of affected succulent leaves and flowers. Gray Mold is most common when the weather is cool and wet in early spring or summer. It tends to establish

itself in older, damaged, or dying plant tissues and quickly spreads outward. Succulents have demonstrated a wide tolerance to the fungi that cause leaf and stem spots. Mostly, these fungi are harmless, although they can disfigure landscape plants pretty severely. Shallow tan lesions appear on susceptible plants, creating permanent stippling or spotting. Various root and crown rots are caused by the fungal pathogens of the genus *Phytophthora*. Unfortunately, these diseases are difficult to differentiate from the early stages of other fungal diseases since their symptoms are largely non-specific.

Cacti - The cactus family has nearly 2,000 species, with one exception, all native to the Americas. They range from the Arctic Circle to the mountains of Chile but are most abundant in the southwestern United States and Mexico. Riëtte van der Westhuizen told *AgriPulse* that the only native South African cacti is a *Rhipsalis baccifera* is an epiphytic cactus with many slender, pendent, branched stems. (*Photo 10*) Cacti can be tall and thin or squat and spherical, frequently without branches and almost always without leaves.

These shapes result in a large proportion of internal tissue to the external surface area, reducing the amount of moisture lost through the plant. They often have scales or spines ranging from microscopically tiny to wickedly large and barbed. These protect against predators and are thought to aid the plant in withstanding hot drying rays of the sun. *Melocactus bahiensis* is a small cactus with a green globular stem with 8 to 14 ribs lined with clusters of spines and a woolly and densely bristled cephalium at the top of the stem. Sarel Bester told *AgriPulse* that the cephalium at the top of the Melocactus only appears after a growth period of nine to 15 years. The 30 species of Melocactus is native to Mexico of which Sarel has 27 species. (*Photo 11*) Cacti are one of the most easily recognizable and morphologically distinct families of plants. They are prized in the landscape and as houseplants for their unique appearance and relatively low water and maintenance requirements.

Therefore, it is cause for alarm when a slow-growing cactus appears to suffer or die. The death of a cactus is most likely caused by or associated with excessive moisture around the roots, although factors like a too-deep planting, low temperatures, and fungal pathogens also potentially present problems for a cactus.



Photo (12): A Lophobhora Williamsii that is 80 years old and can reach an age of 500 years. (Photo: Charlize van der Linden). This plant is owned by Sarel Bester from Vryburg, North West.



Photo (14): People tend to confuse the Madagascar palm with the halfmens plant. This plant is native to Madagascar. (Photo: Charlize van der Linden)



Photo (13): Pachypodium namaquanum, known as the halfmens or elephant's trunk grows in Namaqualand and grows extremely slow, only about 0.5 to 1.5cm per year. The halfmens plant can reach an age of around 100 years or more. This halfmens of Sarel Bester is between 10 – 15 years old. (Photo: Charlize van der Linden)



Photo (15): This plant is commonly known as the Bishops Hat. (Photo: Charlize van der Linden)



Photo (4): The Variegated String of Pearls owned by Riëtte van der Westhuizen from Vryburg, North West is a string succulent that has a combination of green and white leaves. (Photo: Charlize van der Linden)



Photo (5): Donkey's Tail is a string succulent and is part of the succulent collection of Riëtte van der Westhuizen from Vryburg. (Photo: Charlize van der Linden)



Photo (9): With the Monstrose the local apical dominance is lost and every growth tip tries to grow as if it were the dominant point, resulting in a "knobby" or "lumpy, jumbled" growth. (Photo: Charlize van der Linden)



Photo (6): The String of Dolphins of Nina Bester from Vryburg is a string succulent. (Photo: Charlize van der Linden)



Photo (10): *Rhipsalis baccifera* is an epiphytic cactus with many slender, pendent, branched stems and is the only cacti native to South Africa and is collected by Riëtte van der Westhuizen from Vryburg. (Photo: Charlize van der Linden)



Photo (7) and (8): A crest has the growth mutation that changes the shape of the apical meristem and is owned by Sarel Bester from Vryburg. Photo 8 are crests owned by Riëtte van der Westhuizen. (Photos: Charlize van der Linden)



Photo (11): One of the many 27 Melocactus species that Sarel Bester from Vryburg has collected. (Photo: Charlize van der Linden)

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**6 JUNIE 2023 | 12:00**

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**9 GEREISTREERDE BULLE**

**100 KOEIE & KALWERS (HEELWAT 3-IN-1)**

**100 KOEIE**

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# Performance of Braunvieh bulls in Phase C tests

AGRI-PULSE - VRYBURG - Due to a continuous rise in the population that is associated with an increased demand for protein, sustainable beef production is also becoming more important to ensure the demand is met over the long term. Together with the rise in the population, the natural resources are also under pressure and beef producers need to produce the proverbial “more from less”. The combination of decreasing hectares available for crop production, increased utilization of grain for fuel, increased input costs and an increase in feed costs are some of the key factors that highlight the changing dynamics of agriculture.

Feed costs amounts to 55% – 70% of the total production cost, and a 10% improvement in feed efficiency of animals may result in a feed cost saving of several hundred million rand per annum for the industry as a whole. Measuring efficiency may result in decisions that increase productivity without increasing costs of production resulting in greater margins. Feedlot studies in the USA demonstrated that a 10% improvement in average daily gain (ADG) as a result of a 7% increase in appetite improved profitability 18%, whereas, a 10% improvement in feed efficiency returned a 43% increase in profits. By improving feed efficiency, it will contribute to a more sustainable and profitable production system. FCR is one of the traits calculated at the end of all Phase C tests at ARC test centres and bulls consume on average 3% of their body weight in feed per day. The average feed conversion ratio in SA (FCR) is 4.5 kg – 7.5 kg, and depicts the actual feed consumed to gain one kg in live mass. The less feed consumed by a bull to gain mass, the more efficient it becomes.

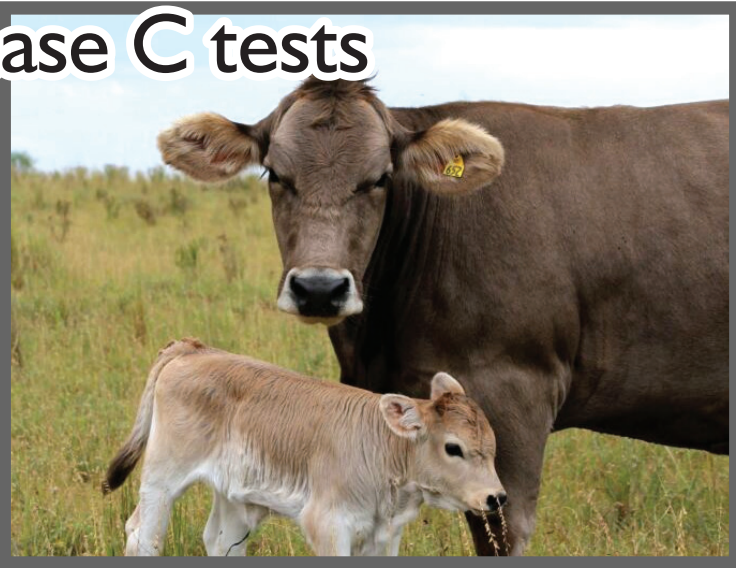
It should however be mentioned that when selecting for a low FCR and high average daily gain (ADG), over time your animals may reach higher mature weights, requiring

more feed for maintenance. Since growth is of economic importance, e.g., weaning weight has a direct monetary value; farmers select this trait to improve their profitability. Care should however be taken when selecting for higher weaning weights since growth traits are highly correlated. Care should also be taken to avoid bigger calves at birth since it may result in calving difficulties while heavier mature weights will require an increase in maintenance requirements. The purpose of this study was to determine what happened with the growth and efficiency of Braunvieh SA bulls. Most of the meat consumed from the formal markets in SA, is produced from cattle coming through feedlot systems. A 1% improvement in feed efficiency has the same impact as a 3% increase in rate of gain. Improvements in efficiency of beef production are vital and necessary to sustain the cattle industry.

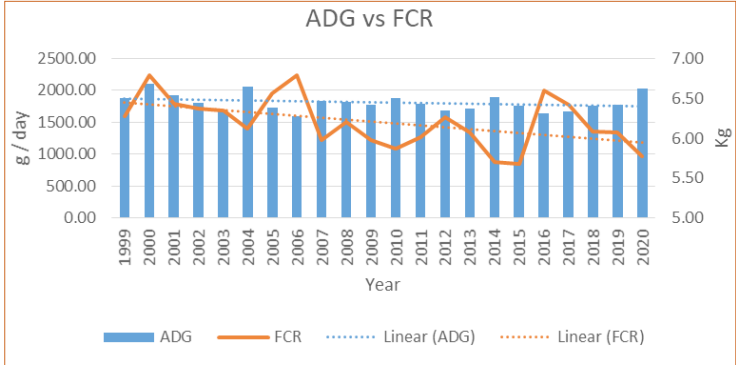
**Research on bulls in feedlot-conditions**

Performance data from four ARC centralized testing stations were analysed by the ARC in a recent study and Braunvieh bulls tested during 1999 – 2020 were included. Bulls were grouped according to the year within which their adaptation period of 28 days started. The reason why the bulls were grouped according to year are that the most of them were not tested in groups but alone. Data of 397 Braunvieh bulls was analysed. The data were obtained from the SA Studbook database. After the adaptation period, bulls entered the intensive growth test stage for an 84-day period.

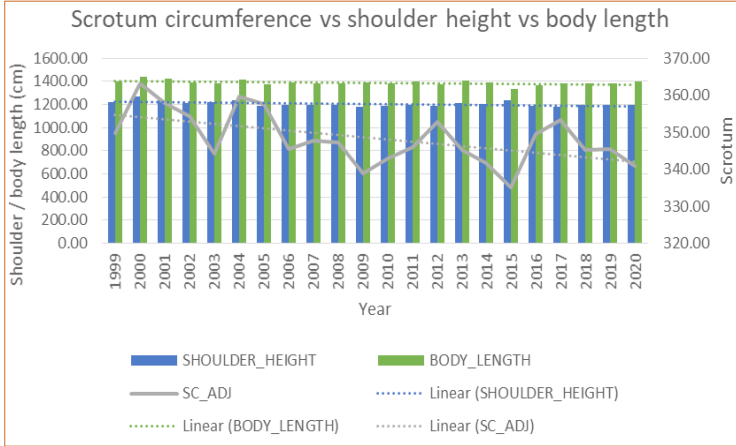
By completion of the test, the results were compared to the 10-year rolling average for ADG and FCR per station and per breed. The 10-year rolling average, is the average of the performance of bulls (within a breed) tested within the previous 10-years. This gives an indication of how an animal performed compared to the breed. In addition, the



management and feed ration are standardized at all the central ARC test centres. In graph 1 it can be noted that ADG remained relative unchanged and FCR improved. A reduction in FCR is favourable, since less feed is consumed to reach a certain level of growth.



**Graph 1: The relationship between ADG and FCR is illustrated** In graph 2 it should be mentioned that shoulder height and body length remained constant, however scrotum circumference decreased in size. Between the largest scrotum circumference and the smallest there is a 28mm difference. The decrease in scrotum circumference is not desirable, scrotum circumference is correlated to fertility.



**Graph 2: The relationship between scrotum circumference, shoulder height and body length are illustrated.**





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**Summary**

Presently the global trend is to select for RFI (residual feed intake) as means of improving feed efficiency since it is a moderately heritable trait. RFI is phenotypically independent from growth and body weight, meaning that selection for RFI should not affect growth or mature size. On the other hand, strict selection for FCR can lead to an increase in growth rate and thus an increase in mature weight which might not always be desirable. Body length and shoulder height remained relatively constant through the years, ADG showed a slight decrease whereas the trend for FCR showed quite a significant decrease, with close to a 0.5kg reduction in the amount of feed needed to gain 1kg of body weight. Frame size did thus not change, however the reduction in the amount of feed consumed to grow indicates that through phase C testing breeders were able to select animals that are more feed efficient and thus more profitable.

**Acknowledgement**

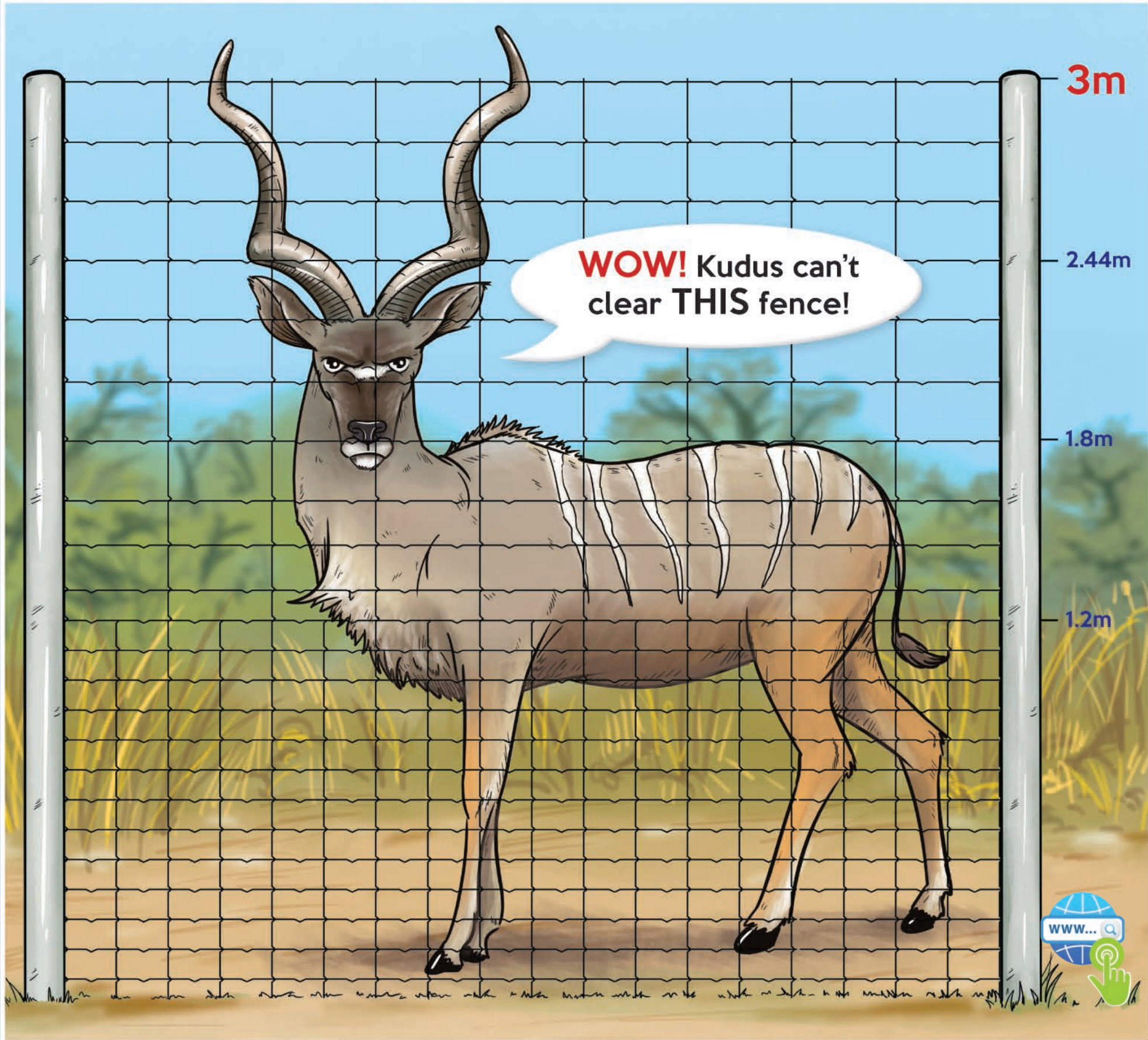
Thanks to M.N. Ferreira and J. Hendriks from ARC - Animal Production, Armoedsvlakte, Vryburg, Senior Research Technician, E-mail [ferreiram@arc.agric.za](mailto:ferreiram@arc.agric.za) for the contribution. M.N Ferreira would like to thank the Braunvieh SA cattle breeders` society of South Africa and SA Studbook for releasing the data for this study.







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Janien Strauss van Das Grün in die restaurant, slag gereed om 'n uithalerdis voor te berei.

Das Grün is geleë in Schröderstraat 49 Upington. Dit is 'n baie gesellige restaurant met buite- en binne sitplekke, afhange van die die weer. Die restaurant het 'n regte "straat café" atmosfeer met plante oral om die sitplekke.

# Das Grün Café se Rocco Chicken Pizza

Janien Strauss van Das Grün Café, 'n restaurant op Upington, het hierdie maand haar resep vir hul heerlike Rocco Chicken Pizza met ons lesers gedeel.

Janien het Das Grün Café se deure in Julie 2021 geopen. Sy besit ook drie kweekhuise, Strauss Herbs & Veggies, en dis waar haar passie vir bak en kook saamsmelt met haar passie vir vars plante.

Janien sê sy kan aan niks lekkerder dink as om vars groente in haar tuin te pluk en na haar tafel te bring nie. "Ek meen mens kan dit nie varser kry as wat dit is, direk van die tuin tot op die bord. So het Das Grün (Die Groen) sy naam gekry, met die liefde en passie van my ouers met Duitse en Oostenrykse herkoms."

"Ons het 'n ryk geskiedenis in die land. Ieder en elk van ons bou aan iets in die lewe – en al is dit slegs om te sien ek kon iemand se dag beter maak met 'n vars gebakte koekie of brood, 'n lekker heerlike ete of vars groente – dit

maak die wêreld se verskil," sê Janien. In Junie 2018 het sy Strauss Herbs & Veggies gestig, die begin van haar kweekhuis. Hoofsaaklik was dit slegs die plant van saailinge wat op aanvraag was, die liefde vir plante het geleidelik tot die aankoop van saaitjies en maak van saailinge vir die plaaslike mense van Upington en omgewing – gemengde slaai-blare (lettuce), roket, eetbare blomme, beet, worteltjies, seldery, spinasie en nog vele meer.

Sy sê die "mikrogreens" was 'n groot leerproses met verskeidenheid plantmateriaal en mediums, wat die mees gepaste en kliëntvriendelike is na smaak, asook die kleure wat 'n groot rol speel. Die kruiegedeelte van die Strauss Herbs & Veggies is groot en hul plant steeds aan om die nodige hoeveelhede weekliks te verskaf. Tans verskaf hulle aan alle groot restaurante in Upington en aan privaat kliënte met twee weeklikse afleverings. Strauss Herbs & Veggies is ten volle organies, geen spuit van enige gifstowwe. Sy sê: "Ons maak ten volle van natuurlike plaagbeheer gebruik en plant, "vriende plante" bymekaar, wat help met die natuurlike beheer en die gesondheid van die plante. Ons is ook nie in 'n temperatuurbeheerde kweekhuis nie, so daar is die natuurlike elemente van wind, hitte, asook koue wat in gedagte gehou moet word. Ons maak ook ons eie organiese kompos vir die gebruik in ons kweekhuise.



Janien se pizza's is nie rond nie, sy hou van die natuurlike vorm wanneer sy die deeg uitrol.



Al die smaaklike bestandele is op die deeg gesit, nou is dit reguit oond toe.

**Bestanddele:**

**Deeg:**

- 1 koppie loutwarm water
- 1 eetlepel suiker
- 1 eetlepel aktiewe gis
- 1 eetlepel olyfolie
- 2 tot 2½ koppies veeldoelige koekmeel
- 1 teelepel sout
- 1 teelepel Italiaanse speserye (Italian Spice)
- Maizena

**Bolaag:**

- BBQ "Base"
- 1 Fillet – hoenderborsie (Rocco-Grilled Chicken - vars gemaak)
- Gekarameliseerde rooi-ueie Pynappel
- Mozzarella-kaas

**Metode en bou:**

Meng saam en laat staan vir 5 min totdat borreltjies vorm die volgende: 1 koppie loutwarm water/1 eetlepel suiker/1 eetlepel aktiewe gis.

Meng die volgende: 2 tot 2½ koppies koekmeel/1 teelepel sout/1 teelepel Italian Spice. Voeg gismengesel by koekmeelmengsel en voeg olyfolie by. Meng deeg tot baie glad en verdeel in vier kwarte. Druk/rol die pizza-basis uit op 'n bietjie Maizena – rek en rol mooi op pan uit tot 'n rowwe voorkoms. Sny hoenderfillet in dun skyfies. Doop in eierwit en Maizena – dan weer in eierwit en rol dan in panko crummels. NS: Onthou om die Maizena met 'n tutseltjie sout, peper en rooipeper te geur. Diepbraai tot goudkleurig. Smeer basis van pizza met BBQ "Base" en 'n goeie klompie gekarameliseerde rooi-ueie. Strooi Rocco Chicken oor die hele pizza en bedek dan met pynappelringe – onthou eweredige spasiering. Bedek met goeie lagie Mozzarella. Nou reguit oond toe en bak tot die kaas gesmelt is en pizza van kleur verander. Haal uit, laat effe afkoel en bedien.

Die Rocco Chicken Pizza, vars uit die oond – net reg om vir gaste voorgesit te word.



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# Back with a bang

AGRI-PULSE – Nampo is a showcase of the newest trends and technology innovations and they promise a 55th presentation of the Harvest Day not to forget!

This year’s event will take place from May 16-19.

Since its inception, the Nampo Harvest Day has been the leader in showcasing agricultural innovation and providing that one stop platform to agricultural enthusiasts in South Africa. After an extremely successful and long-awaited return to the agricultural calendar last year, the 2023 Nampo Harvest Day promises to exceed all expectations once again!

The theme “Agriculture Innovated” confirm the positive role attributed to the Harvest Day and its contribution to the future of agriculture. It will showcase agriculture’s latest technology, machinery, innovations, and productivity solutions.

In its efforts to ensure that Nampo is the agricultural sector’s most relevant platform and marketplace for innovation, technology, information exchange and discussion, Grain SA has stepped up to have expansions and improvements on the grounds and to the programme, ready for the 2023 Nampo Harvest Day.

“Nampo plays an important role in developing the agricultural sector by providing a successful environment for business and producers to interact and do business. It gathers all Agri-role players which present their products and services in the areas of production, machinery, food-processing, inputs as well as other products and services related to the sector. Nampo is also the place where producers meet and the only trade show that bring together agricultural solutions for all types of farms and crops,” said Dr Dirk Strydom, Grain SA’s Nampo, Marketing & Research Development Lead.

What’s new

Many exhibitors have upgraded and expanded their Nampo offering and newly paved roads will improve the distribution of feet on the park. The new weapons and outdoor apparel offering has been added with the inclusion of new exhibitors. New outside exhibition spaces on the southern side of the grounds bring the total number of exhibitors to more than 800.

A new coffee bar will satisfy any coffee-lover’s appetite offering a relaxed lounge atmosphere situated on the southern side at Gate 2.

The delicatessen stalls have been moved to the Nampo Padstal offering visitors the freshest and tastiest treats on offer. Nampo’s food stalls have also expanded, still benefitting non-profit organisations such as schools, churches, and community organisations. An exclusive restaurant, which will offer exhibitors the opportunity to reserve tables for client discussions, has been added to the Fanie Ferreira Hall.

The AFGRI Ladies’ programme has been moved to ensure better visibility and promises fun-packed mornings with well-known personalities like singer Chris Else performing, Mynhardt Joubert showcasing the ability to prepare and present a meal in colour, and Willem Botha who will ensure magic transformations with make-overs.

Old Favourites

The traditional Nampo favourites still part of the programme, include the popular 4x4 vehicle demonstrations on the Standard Bank 4x4-track and the Adventure Track for side-by-side, motorcycle and quad trails. The well-known Farmer’s Patent Competition boasts different divisions for entry and is an exhibition not to be missed. The seed plots on the eastern side of the park, offer a view of grain and feed crops and grass varieties of SA’s leading seed companies.

The Nation in Conversation popular discussion forum bring together role players in the agricultural sector to reflect on issues, locally and internationally. Filmed during Nampo and accommodating approximately 80 guests in the audience, the discussions are streamed live on various platforms.

The livestock division, include cattle, sheep, pig, and goats, representing almost 100% of the large- and small-stock breeds, as well as miniature horses. Daily livestock exhibitions are also scheduled at the TAU Livestock arena where all standard foot & mouth disease protocols will be followed.

Getting around

Getting around the vastness of the Nampo Park grounds are covered in more ways than one. The “Mieliehop” shuttle service will be running between Nampo & Bothaville daily and offer long distance shuttles from the OR Tambo airport as well as the surrounding towns. For the air traffic, the Absolute Aviation airport lounge welcome visitors to the northern side of the park with a shuttle service available to Gate 3. Visitors on the park can use some of the nine tractor trailers that follow different routes across the grounds, to ease the burden on the feet.

Agricultural highlight

This year, Nampo Harvest Day aims to really realize the Nampo dream of old. The 2023 Nampo Harvest Day is definitely a highlight on the agricultural calendar and offer visitors the ideal platform to network with the agricultural industry’s top players and suppliers, strengthen friendships and above all, come and enjoy what this unique and ever-growing agricultural show has to offer, all in one place.



Tickets are available from TicketPro with discounted entry fees when purchasing online. Gates open at 07:00 and close at 17:00. Route directions as well as details on the private air strip appear on the website and the Nampo App. No pets, bicycles, self-propelled carts or motorcycles will be permitted on the premises. Visitors can use the transport carts moving along three different routes on the grounds throughout the day at no charge.

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50 stoet- & kudde-oioe

220 kommersiële vroulike diere

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• Wit Dorper-, Suffolk- & SA Vleismerino-kruise (IN ALLE PRODUKSIE-STADIUMS)

40 stoet- & kudderamme

50 stoet- & kudde-oioe

220 kommersiële vroulike diere

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Gerrit Erasmus – 082 553 9881

Willie Oosthuizen – 082 452 1520

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# What makes a tree a tree?



AGRI-PULSE – NORTH WEST - In the common language, everyone understands what is meant when talking about a tree. There is however no collectively accepted recognised definition in botany to define a tree. The general acknowledged definition of a tree in its broadest sense is any perennial woody plant with an erect trunk that supports the branches and leaves. The minimum height is loosely defined as 1,4m. In contrast to a tree, a shrub can be defined as a woody plant that is smaller than a tree and generally has a rounded shape. But again, there is no scientific distinction between trees and shrubs, so the debate over if something is a tree or a shrub, is therefore mostly a linguistic and aesthetic issue.

We are however all in agreement that plants basically support all forms of life on earth and that they are primary sequestrators of carbon-dioxide and release oxygen, through the various processes of photosynthesis.

Like all living organisms, trees have undergone a very long evolutionary process of change and development. It is impossible to say at which exact point in the earth's history trees came into being. We understand from scientific research that the first colonisers of land are microbes, then lichens and mosses, then herbaceous plants, shrubs, and trees appeared in the middle of a 45-million-year-long geologic period known as the Ordovician, about 460 million years ago. The earliest-known trees, from the Devonian Period, spanning between about 419.2 million and 358.9 million years ago, are the Progymnosperms. These tree-like plants had an extensive root system, produced leaves, grew to a height of 30 metres or more, and had laterally growing branches. Through the journey of geological time start to recognise plants familiar to us: conifers, ginkgo and cycad seed bearing gymnosperm plants. These early seed-bearing plants dominated the landscape, survived mass extinctions on earth and diversified their production of seed giving rise to the many taxa we know today. Today, we all

recognize angiosperms by their colourful flowers, that botanically separates them from the gymnosperms. During the last 66 million years these angiosperms shown an amazing ability to adapt to a changing climate and keep surviving as the most diverse group of plants on earth.

There are at least 60 000 identified tree species on earth. Long before any written records of civilizations were kept, humans collected plants, mainly for food and medicinal reasons. According to historical records, the establishment of the first botanical garden is attributed to Theophrastus (c. 371 – 287VHT) during the rise of the Greek Empire. This then also explains the Greek origin of many of the scientific plant names. This intense sense of curiosity and his ability to communicate are two of the characteristics that distinguish man from other animals. So, when we learn or discover something new, we create new words to define that which enables us to share the newfound knowledge with others. For this ingenuity, no rules exist, except that they must be acceptable. Today, most plants described have a botanical name and a common name. The suffix 'tree' in common language, viz. leadwood tree, weeping boer-beantree, etc, actually adds no value in reference to the name of the plant in question. The reference to tree / trees actually refers to the collective name for trees as opposed to, for example, 'shrub' or 'bush'. Big tree / small tree obviously refers to the size of the tree. Thus, the suffix 'tree' can be used with any tree name without adding any more value to the name of that tree. In standardizing of recommended common English names, the dendrological Society of South Africa's Tree Names Committee largely did away with the prefix / suffix 'tree'. There are exceptions to the rule such as tree aloe and tree fern which rather refers to the growth form of these plants to distinguish them for other taxa in the two genera with completely different growth forms. So it would be perfectly acceptable to also refer to a leadwood tree or a baobab tree, with or without the suffix 'tree', both refer to the same plants.



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**BEDERF JOU VROU MET HAAR DROOMKOMBUIS**

Oryx Projects is in 2014 gestig en sedertdien het ons van krag tot krag gegaan om uiteindelik n markleier in die NoordWes provinsie te word. Ons spesialiteit is skrynwerk, binnehuise installasies en ontwerp.

Oryx Projects het sy ontstaan uit Western Cupboards wat in 1985 deur my pa begin is. Sedert 2014 het ons meer as 2600 projekte voltooi waaronder George Lughawe, Glen Eden Estate, Woodpecker Estate, Tusk Rio Casino en Hotel en behuisings projekte in Kathu insluit. Ons werk ook buite die grense van Suid Afrika waaronder Xai Xai Luxury Lodge in Mosambiek 'n voorbeeld is.

Ons vervaardig alle produkte in ons volledig toegeruste fabriek wat uiteindelik ons die vermoë gee om groot projekte suksesvol te benader en af te handel. Goeie kommunikasie, etiese werk gedrag en wedersydse respek is vir Oryx Projects van uiterse belang.

