



# TEKULIMA

NENTFUTHUKO

ISSUE 19



**SMART AGRICULTURE BOX  
INNOVATION WINS CONTINENTAL AWARD**

**MORE YOUTH SHOW INTEREST  
IN WASTE MANAGEMENT AND RECYCLING**

**MEC STRENGTHENS RELATIONS WITH NAFU**



agriculture, rural development,  
land & environmental affairs

MPUMALANGA PROVINCE  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



**MPUMALANGA**  
THE PLACE OF THE RISING SUN





# Table of Contents

- 05 SMART AGRICULTURE BOX INNOVATION WINS CONTINENTAL AWARD
- 06 PROGRESS MADE WITH THE MP CLIMATE CHANGE RESPONSE STRATEGY
- 07 A SOD-TURNING FOR EGGSELLENT BY LEBO PROJECT
- 08 SMART BOXES DISTRIBUTED AHEAD OF 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM LAUNCH
- 09 MPLs NOTE PROGRESS AT DARDLEA-SUPPORTED PROJECTS
- 10 DARDLEA ABSORBS AGRIC GRADUATES TO BE PLACED ON PROJECTS
- 11 MEC STRENGTHENS RELATIONS WITH NAFU
- 12 THE EXTENSION COORDINATING FORUM MEETS IN BOHLABELA
- 12 TRIALS FOR THE BEST POTATO CULTIVAR IN NKANGALA MUNICIPALITIES
- 13 INAUGURAL NATIONAL WOMEN RECOGNITION AWARDS HELD IN MP
- 14 ENVIRONMENTALLY-FRIENDLY TOILETS FOR RURAL SCHOOLS
- 15 A DISASTER MANAGEMENT PLAN IN THE PIPELINE
- 16 FINANCIAL HEALTH
- 17 THE CANNABIS SECTOR IN MPUMALANGA IS GAINING MOMENTUM
- 18 DARDLEA COLLABORATES WITH PECTO, POLYCO AND PLASTIC SA
- 19 HOW TO SURVIVE THE HEATWAVE
- 20 RESEARCH CORNER

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# EDITORS NOTE



**Ms. Zanele Shabangu**

## Welcome to this Edition

It gives us a great pleasure as a team that is responsible for putting together the newsletter to share insightful and informative information to the Department's Stakeholders. We are presenting the third quarter publication in the special year 2024 as the quarter ended in December. The year is a special year as we are heading to the much-anticipated polls since the dawn of democracy, while ushering in the seventh administration. Some political pundits have termed this year's election "the new 1994".

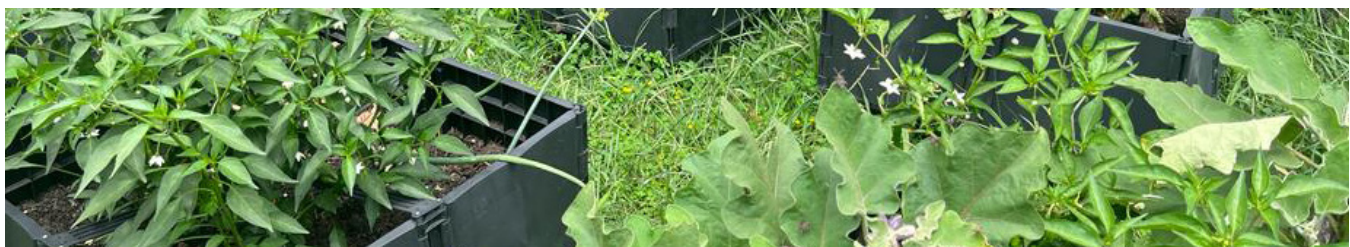
Without dwelling much on how we envisage the year to be: The Tekulima Nentfuthuko publication seeks to enlighten readers about the work the Department has been doing for the past quarter in the entire province of Mpumalanga and beyond.

The DARDLEA MEC, Ms Busisiwe Shiba together with the HOD, Mr Cain Chunda led a Sod turning ceremony which signalled the start of a construction of two layer houses that will accommodate

15-thousand egg-producing layers in the Thembisile Hani Municipality. Without withstanding, the Smart Agriculture Box (SAB) initiative scooped a prestigious continental awarding at the 14<sup>th</sup> African Association for Public Administration and Management's Innovative Management Award (IMA) held in Zambia, on December 07<sup>th</sup>.

This is just a few of many projects and programmes that DARDLEA has undertaken in the third quarter and we shall continue to report to you as our key stakeholders on what DARDLEA is doing and has done. As you enjoy reading this edition, we wish to thank you immensely for the contribution you always make to Tekulima Nentfuthuko Publication.

#PhezukomkhonoMlimi  
#MasibuyeleEsibayeni  
#GreeningMpumalanga







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# SMART AGRICULTURE BOX INNOVATION WINS CONTINENTAL AWARD



Ms Radhah Srinivasan, Ms Nonhlanhla Dooka and Dr Maanda Dagada

The Climate Change-friendly Smart Agriculture Box (SAB) innovation introduced by the DARDLEA has won yet another prestigious continental award, this time at the 14<sup>th</sup> African Association for Public Administration and Management's Innovative Management Award (IMA) held in Livingstone, Zambia, on December 7<sup>th</sup>. The IMA is a continent-wide award programme, designed to encourage, promote and recognize creativity and innovations in public sector institutions, organizations and ministries at national and local levels.

The SAB scooped 1<sup>st</sup> Prize, the Gold AAPAM Award, over the other five countries that included Egypt, Mauritius and Namibia. "This recognition is an indication that we are on the right track, doing something that impacts the lives of our ordinary people. We obviously did not come with the Smart Box idea to win awards, but with Climate Change being the centre of attention today, ours was to come up with ways and means to sustain food security, and the Box is proving to be a perfect initiative", said DARDLEA MEC, Ms Busisiwe Shiba.

The Department introduced the SAB innovation as part of its farmers support programmes to alleviate poverty and unemployment within rural communities in Mpumalanga. The Boxes

are made from recycled polypropylene, suitable for both indoor and outdoor use; it is water efficient, easy to assemble and to move around.

A month earlier, the Smart Agriculture Box innovation won a Centre for Public Service Innovation (CPSI) Award, taking First Prize in the category for "Citizen-focused Innovation Harnessing non-ICT Solutions". Meanwhile in June, the SAB got 2nd Runner Up in the Africa Public Service Day Awards held in the Victoria Falls in Zimbabwe, after competing with 24 other projects from Africa.



Smart Agriculture Box



# PROGRESS MADE WITH THE MP CLIMATE CHANGE RESPONSE STRATEGY



**M**ore stakeholder consultations to validate the Mpumalanga Climate Change Response Strategy and Implementation Plan took place in different Districts during the month of November 2023.

Urban Earth, whose responsibility is to facilitate sustainable and liveable communities by building capacity and developing innovative solutions to environmental problems, is facilitating and leading the process. Urban Earth's Zizo Stimela said a lot of work has so far been done regarding the Mpumalanga Climate Change Strategy.





# A SOD-TURNING FOR EGGSELLENT BY LEBO PROJECT



**M**EC Busisiwe Shiba led a sod-turning ceremony on Monday 27 November, which signalled the start of the construction of two layer houses that will accommodate 15-thousand egg-producing layers, an office with ablution facilities, a packaging area, fencing and boreholes for sustained water supply. The construction will take place on a 2ha plot donated through a PTO by the Ndundza-Somphalali Traditional Council in Kwaggafontien, in the Thembisile Hani Local Municipality.

MEC Shiba was joined by Executive Mayor Cllr Dikgale, HOD Cain Chunda with his Treasury counterpart Ms Gugu Mashiteng, Ikosi Mahlangu and Ward 31 Local Councillor, organised Agriculture and farmers, and community members. EggSellent by Lebo Project owner, 33-year-old Lebo Mashigo, a former Fortune 40 learner, could not hold her tears as she narrated some of the challenges she encountered in the past few years, while knocking on doors for assistance without any luck. The contractor has ten months to complete the work. MEC Shiba pleaded with Lebo to ensure that the project creates the necessary job opportunities, without fail.



L- R: HOD Mr Cain Chunda, Lebo Mashigo, Mr RB Mahlangu and MEC Ms Busisiwe Shiba



# SMART BOXES DISTRIBUTED AHEAD OF 16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM LAUNCH



MEC Ms Busisiwe Shiba and DARDLEA Officials Donating Gardening tools to stakeholders

**M**EC Busisiwe Shiba visited two projects in Diepdale in the Chief Albert Luthuli Municipality on November 22<sup>nd</sup>, as part of DARDLEA's build up event towards the launch of the 16 Days of Activism Against the Abuse of Women and Children on November 27<sup>th</sup>. She visited Phendukani Disability Centre and Bakery Vegetable Project, including a child-headed household.

near Kabokweni by Deputy President Paul Mashatile, who was joined by Ministers Dr Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma and Lindiwe Zulu, Deputy Minister Dr Regina Mhaule, Premier Ms Refilwe Mtshweni-Tsipane, MEC Busisiwe Shiba with some of her counterparts, other dignitaries and of course the community. The global 16 Days Campaign runs 25 November until 10 December annually.

The MEC and her entourage donated 27 Smart Agriculture Boxes, food garden tools and bags of compost, including establishing vegetable gardens. The event preceded the 25th of November, which was International Day for the elimination of Violence Against Women and Children that was launched in Khumbula







# MPLs NOTE PROGRESS AT DARDLEA-SUPPORTED PROJECTS



Raaks Milling owner Mr Thabang Marakalla with HOD Mr Cain Chunda

The Portfolio Committee on Agriculture is generally impressed with the interventions by the DARDLEA in projects like the Marapyane Bakgatla Primary Coop and Raks Milling in Seabe, both in the Dr JS Moroka Local Municipality, and the Phakeme Milling Coop on the outskirts of KwaMhlanga, in Thembisile Hani Local Municipality.

The Committee was on an oversight visit to the three projects on October 10<sup>th</sup>, and they committed to return to Phakeme Milling outside KwaMhlanga, due to some unsatisfactory progress report they received. They raised a few concerns that the Department needed to do in completing some outstanding issues at these projects. The beneficiaries however lauded the Department for its commitment in uplifting their lives, while giving them an opportunity to play a role in the fight against hunger, poverty and unemployment in their areas.





# DARDLEA ABSORBS AGRIC GRADUATES TO BE PLACED ON PROJECTS



The DARDLEA has absorbed about 160 young Agriculture graduates on a two-year contract, to be placed on farms and enterprises within the agricultural value chain for them to acquire relevant experience. Nkangala, Ehlanzeni, Bohlabela and Gert Sibande Districts all held induction with the Graduates shortly before the December Christmas holidays.

The inductions included sharing with the graduates the organizational culture, policies, procedures, rules and regulations, duties and responsibilities, including the Code of Conduct in a workplace. The main aim of this programme is to equip them with the first-hand on-the-field experience.



Photographs taken during the induction of newly appointed graduates



# MEC STRENGTHENS RELATIONS WITH NAFU



Nafu President Mr JL Mahlangu and MEC Ms Busisiwe Shiba

**M**EC Busisiwe Shiba met the Provincial leadership of the National African Farmers' Union (NAFU) in Emalahleni on October 12, to listen to their plans, concerns and inputs, including strengthening working relations. This, with an aim to help benefit the entire agriculture sector in the province.

Led by their President Mr Jabu Mahlangu, the NAFCOC Sector farmer organisation presented their plans and vision, including their willingness to meet government halfway in ensuring that its programmes benefit the entire sector. They also shared commendable

strides made since they took office two years ago.

MEC Shiba encouraged the sharing of ideas and plans to avert parallel programmes. She also called for continued engagements after this inaugural meeting. She was accompanied by two Chief Directors and a senior official from the national Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development.







## THE EXTENSION COORDINATING FORUM MEETS IN BOHLABELA



The Provincial Extension Coordinating Forum held its quarterly meeting in Thulamahashe on November 22<sup>nd</sup>, among others to discuss issues that can help improve the level of extension service rendered to farmers. The Forum comprises of representatives from National DALRRD, and they were joined by the South African Sugarcane Research Institute, National

Development Agency, Grain-SA, SANParks, Cotton SA, Agricultural Research Council and Tropical and Subtropical Crops, and AgriSeta. For this meeting, stakeholders in Extension Services discussed issues that also help to align their work and most importantly improve on communication, to avoid a double dipping. The team also went on an excursion, visiting Bennica Farm in Rooibok.

## TRIALS FOR THE BEST POTATO CULTIVAR IN NKANGALA MUNICIPALITIES

The Rumba and Jelly cultivars were planted at JMB Trading farm in Middelburg, and another at the Kgabaganyang Mawatle Project in the Moloto area in the Thembisile Hani Local Municipality, to help local farmers to evaluate which cultivar will perform best, under specific conditions, on their soil. The best performing cultivar between the two will be known as soon as harvest takes place, and the results will be made known to farmers and all potential potato producers in the area.

The trials are conducted in collaboration with Potatoes SA. Similar demonstrations took place in Groenfontein Farm in Delmas. Potatoes South Africa collaborates with the DARDLEA every year to test cultivars. At the Groenfontein Farm, the Foxy and Valor cultivars were planted, and the best cultivar will be presented to local farmers during harvest around January 2024.





# INAUGURAL NATIONAL WOMEN RECOGNITION AWARDS HELD IN MP



Minister Ms Thokozile Didiza along with MEC Ms Busisiwe Shiba and invited guests

Minister of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD), Ms Thoko Didiza presented recognition awards to 45 outstanding women from all nine provinces for their contribution towards hunger eradication and job creation. This, during the inaugural Women in Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development Annual Recognition Awards held on 30 October 2023 at Emnotweni Arena in Mbombela.

These prestigious awards were held under the theme: *“Recognizing the role of women in improving rural development, food security and increasing production and employment”*. The ceremony was also attended by the DALRRD Deputy Minister Mr. Mcebisi Skwatsha, MEC Busisiwe Shiba and her Free State, Gauteng and Northern Cape counterparts, DARDLEA HOD Mr Cain Chunda, including farmers.

The province was represented by Ms Constance Mashaba, Ms Lebogang Dhludhlu, Ms Angel Mbatha, Ms Phumzile Nhlapho, Ms Thandi Annah Masilela, Likhuleni Evah Thembeni, Selwane Hilda Nthabe.

Meanwhile earlier on the day the Minister visited DARDLEA-supported projects to monitor progress. Minister Didiza was also led to Siphumelele Secondary School near Hazyview, where Smart Agriculture Boxes were donated on Mandela Day in July. The school has since realized over-production of vegetables on the SABs, such that it now sells its produce to retail shops and local community. The entourage also went to Ajuri Broiler Chicken Farm and to the International Fresh Produce Market.



National Women Recognition Award winners



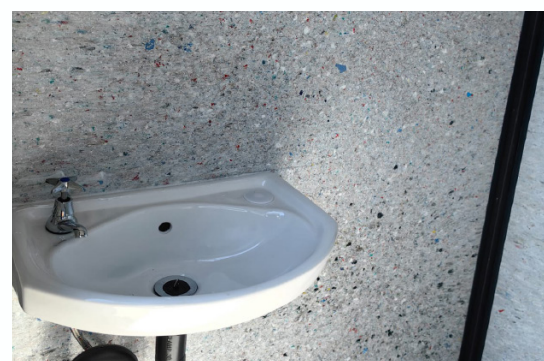
# ENVIRONMENTALLY-FRIENDLY TOILETS FOR RURAL SCHOOLS



The DARDLEA in partnership with Fibre Circle, Infinite Industries, Food and Trees for Africa launched a pilot project for the Zithande Mzansi programme on 19<sup>th</sup> October 2023, at Sizimisele Primary School in Masibekela village in Nkomazi Local Municipality. This pilot project was also extended to the other neighboring schools like Ntuyi Secondary and Mtfunyelwa pre- Primary schools.

Speaking on behalf of MEC Busi Shiba, Ehlanzeni District Municipality MMC Cllr MJ Mavuso said the launch of the dignity sanitation toilets was the culmination of efforts to continuously use research and utilize the available resources, including waste, to clean the environment while creating job and economic opportunities. The Zithande Mzansi programme is aimed at eradicating pit toilets in schools across the province, while also educating communities and schools about the benefits of the circular economy.

Fibre Circle's Ms. Dima Mashele said the Environment-friendly Dignity Loos cubicles, roofs, walls and doors were made from compressed poly-aluminium (poly-alu). This poly-alu is derived from the foil layers of liquid beverage cartons used for products like fruit juice, milk and wine, as well as that from used toothpaste tubes.





# A DISASTER MANAGEMENT PLAN IN THE PIPELINE



Delegates from the DARDLEA, the National Disaster Management Committee, Ehlanzeni District Municipality and the National Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development held a two-day consultative workshop in Mbombela on December 12-13, that focused on developing a comprehensive Disaster Management Plan.

It is envisaged that the plan will ensure effective and appropriate preparedness planning by implementing a uniform approach to the dissemination of early warning information, averting or reducing the potential impact in

respect of crop, animal and infrastructure damage.

Climate Resilient Infrastructure, Response and recovery, effects of Climate Change, Mitigation and Adaptation and Agricultural Risk Assessment, were other topics discussed during the two-day engagement. The plan will address methods of implementing immediate integrated and appropriate response measures when a significant event or disasters occurred or are threatening to occur.



Mr Henry Ndlovu



Dr Lucas Cele



# HEALTH & WELLNESS

## THINGS YOU CAN DO FOR YOUR FINANCIAL HEALTH

As a nation, South Africans typically save less than many other countries, we have high levels of debt and many of us are simply not sufficiently prepared for retirement. There may be many causes of this, and poor financial choices and behaviours are contributing to this situation.

Behavioural theory shows that we humans don't always make the most rational choices that serve us well in future. In uncertain times, we may also take more risks or make hasty decisions. Stop, take a moment and look at these behaviours and how you rate. It can have a lasting positive impact to strengthen your financial health in any circumstance.

### Reasons why people are typically not able to meet their financial obligations shows these behaviours include:

Spending more than we earn,



Not saving regularly,



Not having proper insurance in Place for adverse events,



Not paying off property and Not investing for the long term.



The risks of our financial behaviours and not changing them are significant. Over time, these behaviours result in unaffordable levels of debt, being exposed to unexpected expenses or loss of income, and having insufficient income in retirement. These behaviours leave individuals vulnerable and unable to meet all their financial obligations, and they are far less financially resilient.

### WHY WE SHOULD FOCUS TODAY ON BECOMING FINANCIALLY HEALTHY IN FUTURE

Financial health seems to be far less about how much you earn, and more about what you do with your money daily, monthly and yearly. Lower-earning individuals who engage across the five controllable financial behaviours are significantly better off in terms of their financial health.

In the current situation, it could seem impossible to change or that it will even make a difference.

Remember, earning a high income does not necessarily equate to being financially resilient or healthy, or even financially free. Whether we are high earners or average earners, financial health is determined by our behaviour and how we manage our money on a daily basis. Being aware of how our actions around money can impact our financial future, helps protect us against serious financial pitfalls down the line. Now, for example, putting some money aside and making sure you have adequate protection products in place are important.

Research shows that people who save at the start of the month, and use a budget on a regular basis, generally achieve better financial outcomes.

People who are saving at the start of every month, tend to have larger emergency savings balances to cope with the financial challenges of unforeseen life events, than individuals who save what is left over at the end of every month. Similarly, people who are in the habit of budgeting tend to have more money left; are more in control of their finances and have a better understanding of financial services and products.

### All of this boils down to three things:

have some form of financial protection,



live on a budget to manage your spending and debt



and save regularly.



But how do we change? The challenge lies in understanding how our financial behaviour today can impact our financial health over time.

\*Discovery Bank, Discovery Ltd 2023



# THE CANNABIS SECTOR IN MPUMALANGA IS GAINING MOMENTUM



The Mpumalanga Dacha Bosberaad had an event at the Nootgedacht Research Farm in Ermelo and Mbombela during November 2023, where they discussed opportunities in the cannabis production sector. This, after the National Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development officially declared the Cannabis Sativa (Hemp) as an agricultural crop.

The events were supported by Cannabis Association of Mpumalanga, DARDLEA, Sativa Cannabis Worldwide and River Spice. Presentation were on the dacha value chain, international standards of Marijuana, role of Marijuana, Solidarity of farmers, economic

positioning of Mpumalanga, Social club and Dacha Steering Committee.

Farmers were taken through different fields of Cannabis producing, like supply, import or processing. Cannabis can be used for medicinal purposes, consumption, cultural, commercial and recreational, like relaxation and meditation. Those in attendance were encouraged to register and have the necessary permits. Interestingly, many groups have voiced their interest in growing and producing cannabis. Like the Lekwa Growers, Amsterdam Amanzi and FFS.





# DARDLEA COLLABORATES WITH PECTO, POLYCO & PLASTIC SA FOR RECYCLING WORKSHOP



The DARDLEA collaborated with PETCO, Polyco, and Plastic SA to organize a recycling workshop for participants of the ZIP program and informal waste collectors. The main objective of the workshop was to encourage them to maintain a clean environment in their neighbourhoods, including the rivers, wetlands, and streams.

was held in Ehlanzeni under the City of Mbombela Local Municipality. The second workshop was hosted on December 13, 2023, at the Piet Koornhof building in Emalahleni Local Municipality, Nkangala District. The last workshop took place at Lillian Ngoyi Hall in Secunda under Govan Mbeki Local Municipality in Gert Sibande District.

During the workshop, the participants were informed about the potential income that can be generated from waste. It was also emphasized that a clean environment is a basic human right, and that the municipality will benefit from it. Additionally, landfill sites will have a longer lifespan as tons of waste will be diverted to recycling and reuse programs.



Three workshops were conducted in December 12-13, 2023. The first workshop





# HEALTH & WELLNESS

## HOW TO SURVIVE THE HEATWAVE



### DO

Stay hydrated even when you are not thirsty

Eat small meals and eat more often

Avoid extreme temperature changes

Wear loose-fitting, lightweight, lightcolored clothing

Postpone outdoor games and activities

Take frequent breaks when working outdoors



### DO

### DON'T

Leave children or pets alone in enclosed vehicles

Have drinks with too much alcohol or caffeine

Do strenuous exercise during the hot parts of the day

Venture out in high temperature





# TEN GROUNDNUT GENOTYPES IN MPUMALANGA MIDDLE VELD

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## Introduction

Groundnut (*Arachis hypogaea L.*) is a major food as well as cash crop for smallholder farmers in Mpumalanga Province of South Africa, where it is grown mainly under rain-fed conditions (Mathews et al., 2007).



The best soil for groundnut production is well-drained, light textured sandy or sandy loam which facilitates easy penetration of pegs and pod development (Arya et al., 2016). Local sales are made at substantially high price and accounts for a significant part of farmer's income. With the recently experiment the aim was to promote the best medium growth groundnuts genotypes for the smallholder farmers of Mpumalanga middle veld.

## Materials and Methods

The field experiments were conducted at the Steynsdorp Farm (26° 8' 9"S, 30° 59' 2" E & 26° 9' 6"S, 30° 59' 51" E) during 2022 to 2023 cropping season. The varieties were statistically laid out in Randomized Complete Block Design (RCBD) with 3 replications of 5 metres long and 2 rows per plot. The Inter row spacing of 70 cm and Intra spacing of 10 cm and the seed were placed at 5-7 cm deep. The observations were the stand establishment, hundred seeds mass, shelling percentage and grain yields in kilograms per hectares. The data collected were subjected to analysis of variance (ANOVA) and mean separation using statistix 10.0 software package.

## Results and Discussion

The field experiment shown that four varieties recorded higher yield at Steynsdorp viz; Akwa (1612 kg/ha), Kwarts (1334 kg/ha), PC 435-K6 (939 kg/ha) and Anel (937 kg/ha) (Figure 1). Although the yield were large enough to be significant amongst the genotypes tested. Furthermore the lowest shelling percentage range from 45% (PC474-K9) to the highest of 72% (ARC Oleic) (Figure 2).

## Conclusions

Based on the current study carried out at Steynsdorp results shown that four outstanding (Akwa, Kwarts, PC 435-K6 and Anel) yielders during 2022 to 2023 cropping season.

## Recommendations

The Researcher recommended that the outstanding four genotypes should be further evaluated in the upcoming cropping season under the same environmental conditions of the middle veld region of Mpumalanga Province.

## Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank the Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Land and Environmental Affairs (DARDLEA) for the unwavering support towards the implementation of the field experiment. Also gratitude goes to Mr Marius Van Rensburg for his co-ordination of the seeds & soil samples pre to planting of the experiment and extended gratitude goes to the Agricultural Research Council-Grain Crop Institute and Protein Research Fund for partially providing the study with the seeds.

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2. Mathews, C and Lengwati, M D and Smith, M F and Nigam, S N (2007) .*New groundnut varieties for smallholder farmers in Mpumalanga, South Africa*. African Crop Science Conference Proceedings, 8. pp. 251-257.



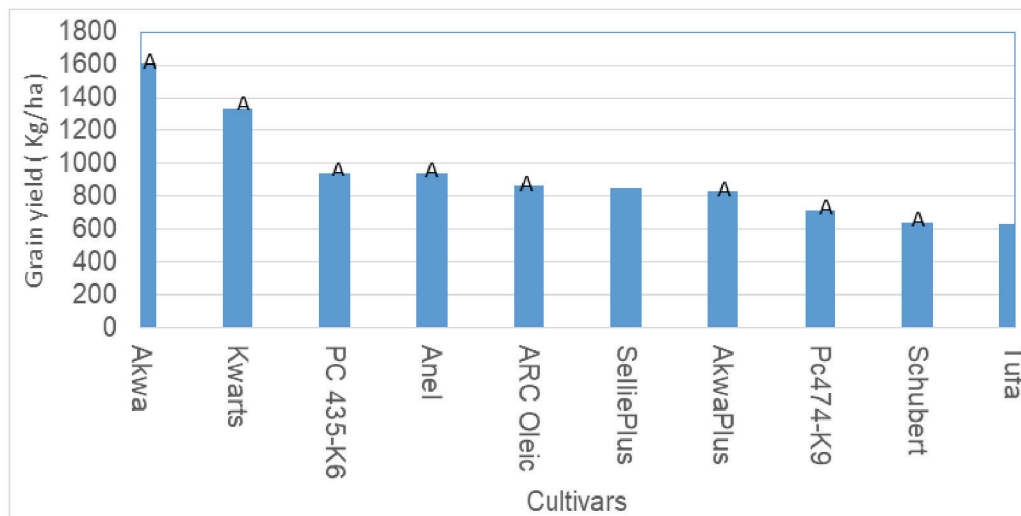


# TEN GROUNDNUT GENOTYPES IN MPUMALANGA MIDDLE VELD

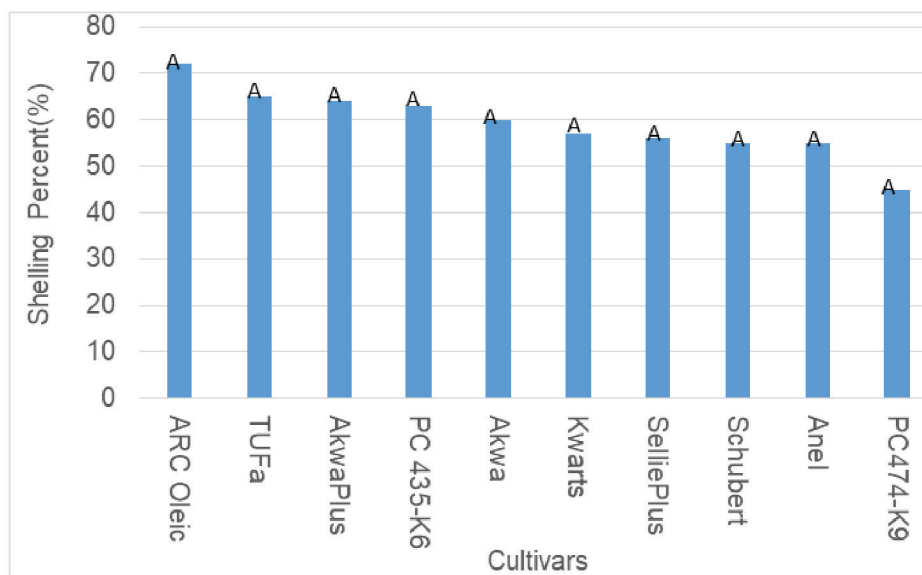
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## Figures



**Figure 1.** The grain yield of ten groundnut cultivars at Steynsdorp during the 2022 to 2023 season



**Figure 2.** The shelling percentage of ten cultivars at Steynsdorp during the 2022 to 2023 season





# RABBIT HAEMORRHAGIC DISEASE VIRUS –



*A current threat to all rabbits and hares*

## PROTECTING YOUR RABBIT FROM RHDV

Fortunately, you can take many biosecurity measures to help reduce the risk of your rabbit becoming infected with RHDV, including the following

- Keep your rabbit indoors with **no outdoor playtime and no playtime with other rabbits** from outside your home.
- Wash your hands thoroughly **before and after handling** rabbits.
- Change your clothes and **wash them twice** after contact with other rabbits.
- **Leave shoes outside** your home.
- Disinfect objects that may be contaminated. **Use 10% Sodium hydroxide, 1-2% formalin, citric acid, 1% solution potassium peroxymonosulfate and 10% household bleach.** Contact time for proper disinfection is 5 minutes, but 10 minutes for peroxymonosulfate. Rinse surfaces with fresh water following treatment with bleach solutions.
- **Keep mosquitoes and flies out** of your home with window and door screens.
- Know your hay and feed sources, and whether they are **located in outbreak areas.**
- Do not feed **foraged plants, grasses, or tree branches.**
- Quarantine any new rabbit for at least **14 days.**
- For multi-pet households, keep dogs on-leash outside so they do not directly interact with wild rabbits, alive or dead, and wash their paws before going inside. Block dog access to areas where your rabbit lives or exercises. Keep cats indoors to prevent the virus from getting inside.
- Use a monthly flea treatment for rabbits, cats and dogs.
- If you live in an **outbreak area**, contact your veterinarian to ask about **vaccination.**





# *“Phezukomkhono Mlimi”*  
*“Masibuyele Esibayeni”*  
*“Greening Mpumalanga”*



## VISION

Vibrant, equitable and sustainable communities with a united and transformed agricultural and environmental sector.

## MISSION

To facilitate an integrated, comprehensive, sustainable environmental and agricultural development in communities through ensuring social cohesion and collaboration by all sectors of society.

## VALUES

Guided by the principles of Batho Pele, we will render services particularly based on the following values:

- Result oriented, diligent and professional staff
- Responsive to the needs of all citizens, particularly the poor, women, youth, elderly and persons with disabilities.
- Driven by community-based development.
- A learning organization that is participatory in its approach and grows from its experiences and new knowledge and innovations.
- Promote and improve effective, efficient and responsive Departmental systems and use of resources
- Act with honesty, ethical, impartial and with integrity.



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