

TEKULIMA

NENTUTHUKO

ISSUE 18



GRADUATES END THEIR PRACTICALS ON A HIGH NOTE

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FIRE SEASON NEEDS PROPER PLANNING

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agriculture, rural development,
land & environmental affairs

MPUMALANGA PROVINCE
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



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EDITOR'S NOTE

For the past few months, we embarked upon a journey of bringing to the fore initiatives which deal with the upliftment and prolonged celebration of women, their achievements but most importantly the strides that government has made in ensuring that the rights of women become a reality. Celebrating women must not wait for Women's Month in August. It should be an everyday thing, in all spheres. In our case, we celebrate all women in agriculture and the environmental space, regardless of their positions in society, because we believe that there are omnipotent reasons why our most viable resources have been naturally placed in their hands, for nurturing.

It is with hopes and aspirations of building a better tomorrow for our farming communities both small scale and commercial, that I invite our readers to share in our triumphs and in doing so, call upon those who share our view to share in our key moments and ensure we continue to put our communities first.

The Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Land and Environmental Affairs, is an essential service Department, a key player in closing economical gaps, and ensuring food security. Working together with our farmers, in the majority being women in subsistence and smallholder, we are confident that whatever challenges lie ahead, we have the capacity to come up with solutions and forge a way forward, and women have proven that they are equally fit to make that possible.

I Thank You.

THE SMART AGRIC BOX SCOOPS AFRICAN TROPHY



The DARDLEA's Smart Agriculture Box (SAB) innovation scooped 2nd place during the recently held Africa Public Service Day Awards in Victoria Falls in Zimbabwe. The Box is a Climate Change-friendly innovation of doing agriculture and producing food, and has since triggered a lot of interest both within and outside the country.

two years. One of the objectives of the continental APSD is to create a platform for Public Service to showcase and recognise good initiatives and innovations in the public sector. The DARDLEA exhibited two innovative programmes, Zonda Insila Programme, and the Smart Agriculture Box. Out of the 7 South African projects that were exhibited by Departments from different provinces, only our SMART Agriculture Box managed to scoop an Innovation Category trophy.

Africa Public Service Day is the Premier Public Service event in the Africa Union Calendar, held once in every



MARAPYANE BAKGATLA COOP SETS THE TONE



Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development Minister Ms Thoko Didiza has called on local people in Marapyane to support the 6-member Marapyane Bakgatla Primary Coop, a DRADLEA-supported grain producing project. Premier Ms Refilwe Mtshweni-Tsipane, MEC Busi Shiba, Dr JS Moroka Local Municipality Executive Mayor and the local Bakgatla Ba Mocha Traditional Council were part of the official handover of the project to its beneficiaries on Monday, 19 June 2023.



The project members had approached the DARDLEA for assistance in establishing a grain project that will enable them to generate income, improve their livelihoods while creating job opportunities for the local community. This, after they acquired 145 ha from the Bakgatla Ba Mocha Traditional Council, through Permission to Occupy.

After the project was approved last year, the Department started supporting the 6 beneficiaries with infrastructure development, production inputs, mechanization support, training, extension and advisory support, and market linkages. This included over 5km boundary fence, 74ha of Maize and 53ha of sunflower planted. With 40 jobs created so far, the Grain Corridor Project's primary market for the 74ha yellow maize is Raks Milling Project, in the near-by Seabe village.



GRADUATES END THEIR PRACTICALS ON A HIGH NOTE



MEC Busi Shiba handed over completion certificates to 58 Agricultural Graduates who had been placed in smallholder and commercial farms across the province in the past two years. The programme, spearheaded by the national Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development, aims at encouraging agricultural graduates to venture into entrepreneurial projects related to agricultural production and value chain. The national Department appointed the first cohort of 120 graduates in the August 2018, who finished their two year contract in August 2020.

MEC Shiba told the Graduates about many opportunities that await them out there, saying they have to knock on the right doors. She also applauded the farmers who willingly accommodated the graduates in their farms for the purpose of skilling and training them as part of this programme. The group that finished their 24-months training started in June 2021.

“ Many opportunities await you out there, you have to knock on the right doors. ”



EC DELEGATION ON A BENCHMARKING MISSION IN MP

The DARDLEA successfully hosted a delegation from the Eastern Cape in a two-day visit to Ehlanzeni District from June 22nd. The delegation visited the Mkhulu Agrihub in Mkhuhlu, Nkomazi Red Meat Abattoir in Mzinti and Mpumalanga International Fresh Produce Market in Mbombela.

They were on a mission to explore and benchmark on our procurement of agricultural products programmes, especially the whole Government Nutrition Programme value chain, which they applauded and promised that lessons learnt will be implemented back home.



LAND REFORM

BENEFICIARIES PRIORITIZED IN 2023/24 BUDGET



Among her priorities, MEC Shiba announced that the DARDLEA will continue to provide land reform beneficiaries & vulnerable households with mechanisation; water efficient and Climate Change-friendly SMART Agriculture Boxes, pest-resistant production inputs, extension and advisory services; packhouses and agro-processing infrastructure, including public markets such as the Government Nutrition Programs (GNP).

The DARDLEA led the pack in the tabling of the 2023/24 Budget Votes during a special sitting of the Provincial Legislature in Mbombela on June 08th, co-presenting with the Department of Health's MEC Sasekani Manzini. In her speech, MEC Busi Shiba announced a budget of just over One Billion, five hundred and fifty nine million Rand.





FAITH PROVES THAT FAITH CAN TAKE YOU PLACES

A commitment to return to Africa and apply leadership skills and training to benefit her community, the country and the African continent at large, is one of the many reasons why Ms Faith Mdluli took the bull by the horns when she applied for the Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders program.

This 6-weeks long flagship program of the US Government's Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI), focuses on Fellows between the ages of 25 and 35, who are considered accomplished leaders from Sub-Saharan Africa and have established records of promoting innovation and positive impact in their communities and countries.

The program is funded by the U.S Department of State and administered by IREX. The Fellowship provides an opportunity for Fellows to hone their skills at U.S educational institutions during the programme, as well as continued support for professional development after their return home. Faith is currently in the US, and at the end of the 6-weeks educational program, she will join her peers and attend a leadership summit in Washington DC.

Faith says the Mandela Washington Fellowship selection process is a daunting merit-based open competition. After the deadline, all eligible applications are reviewed by independent readers, who would then choose semi-finalists to

be interviewed by the U.S. embassies or consulates in their home countries. Selected semi-finalists are grilled some more during in-person interviews. It is then that selected finalists are required to attend the mandatory Pre-Fellowship Orientation in their home country.

WHO IS FAITH?

Ms Faith Mdluli is a Director for Sustainable Resource Management at the DARDLEA, focusing on engineering services, disaster risk management, land care, and land use management. With just over a decade of experience in the public service, Faith is passionate about enriching the lives of young girls, especially orphans in rural areas through education and mentorship. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Agricultural Engineering from UKZN, a Master's degree in Chemical Engineering from Wits University, and a Master of Business Administration (MBA) from UEL in the UK.

Faith is a PMI-registered Project Management Professional and a member of the Golden Key Honor Society. She advocates for sound decision-making in governance structures to change the face of public service in South Africa, and of course other countries, to create an environment in which Africans will lead socio-economic development, and advance Africa in the global economy. The mother of three boys values family, and is uniquely powerful in giving and building relationships.

PLASTIC POLLUTION THE FOCUS OF THIS YEAR WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY



DARDLEA's Environmental Services, Pollution and Waste unit collaborated with the City of Mbombela, Ehlanzeni District Municipality, DFFE, Waste Pickers and other stakeholders during a clean-up and awareness programme held at Emgwenya in Kanyamazane on Monday, 5th of June 2023.

The aim of the clean-up was to create awareness and educate communities about illegal dumping sites, and on the importance of preserving water sources while protecting the environment. World Environment Day is celebrated annually on June 5th, and this year's Theme: "Beat Plastic Pollution", was a clear message that plastics pose on our water sources and the environment in general. DFFE handed over recycling bags to encourage waste pickers to separate and sort waste for recycling purposes.

Meanwhile, the Department collaborated with the Mkhondo Local Municipality in commemorating the 8th Environmental Summit and World Environmental Day, to effectively find solutions to beat plastic pollution. The summit was held at Skeyfani Community Hall in Mkhondo on June 14th, highlighting environmental issues and discussing possible solutions.

PUBLIC HEARINGS ON AGRIC PRODUCTS STANDARDS AMENDMENT BILL



The Agricultural Products Act 119 of 1990, was aimed to provide for control over the sale and export of certain agricultural products and other related products. The Bill is intended to amend the 1990 Act, a move that is overwhelmingly supported by members of the public who attended the public hearings. They also called for urgent intervention on issues of agricultural support, farm workers and farm dwellers.

The Legislature's Portfolio Committee on Agriculture continued with Public Hearings on the Agriculture Products Standards Amendment Bill during the month of June in Volkrust, Dr Pixley Ka Isaka Seme Local Municipality. Similar hearings were held in Middleburg in the Steve Tshwete Local Municipality on June 6th, and in Ehlanzeni. They were on drive to obtain support & views from the public on the amendment of the Section 1 of Act 119 of 1990.



TELA MAIZE PROJECT TAKING SHAPE

The Agricultural Research Council, working with the African Agriculture Technology Foundation, hosted affiliates of the TELA Maize Project in Mbombela, for a 3-day Annual Review and Planning of the TELA Maize Project in mid-April. The affiliates, some coming from as far as Kenya, Mozambique, Ethiopia and Nigeria, also presented on their respective countries' status quo and challenges on TELA Maize.

The TELA Maize Project is aiming towards initiating the commercialisation of transgenic drought-tolerant and insect-protected maize varieties, to enhance food security in Sub-Saharan Africa. Delegates also visited the Kgomo Gorogo Cooperative - a TELA Maize Project in Matibidi. TELA is from a Latin word "Tutela", which means Protection.



CLIMATE CHANGE FORUM RACING AGAINST TIME



Representatives from over 20 organizations including government departments gathered in Middleburg to continue mapping out and figuring how best to contribute to the global effort to move towards net-zero carbon emissions, or a decarbonized economy. The delegates, many from environmental advocacy organizations, met under the umbrella of the Provincial Climate Change Forum on May 16th, in Middleburg at the Nkangala District Municipality banquet.

They explored adaptation measures on topics such as Health, Mining, Agriculture, Forestry, Biodiversity, Rural & Urban Settlements, Tourism and Disaster Management. Arts and Culture should also be prioritized, as suggested, because the sector forms part of major “consumers of waste” and recyclable material.

The delegates agreed that more needs to be done to spread the Just Energy Transition gospel to grass root level, and that the youth in particular, who can be Climate Change Champions, needs to take part in programmes and projects that align with the fight against the impact and effects of Climate Change. Once presented, those community programmes & projects have an opportunity to be scaled up and supported. Currently the Forum meets quarterly.

CHALLENGES AT CPAs NEED TO BE TACKLED HEAD ON – says MEC

MEC Busi Shiba's intervention at the Masiphula CPA in Manzana has paved a way forward that will see all rightful CPA beneficiaries working together. The MEC had been requested by members of the CPA to zoom into what seemed like an infighting between two Zulu and Nkosi families, who are all rightful beneficiaries of the IDA Farm 144, acquired through land restitution. She met them in Manzana, on April 21st.

The Zulu family was aggrieved over a piece of land which they accused the Nkosis of leasing it to outsiders, thereby affecting and reducing the size of their grazing land. MEC Shiba's intervention saw decisions, supported by all the families involved, that they will work together in updating the list of beneficiaries, and for a date for an AGM to be set, to elect a new Executive Committee.

MEC Shiba further met the leadership and some beneficiaries of the Ndwandwe Community Trust. With a lot of complicated challenges, it was decided at the meeting that Land Reform officials will pen down a report that will detail the status quo regarding the Ndwandwe Trust, which



appeared complicated to all at the time. The MEC believed the report can help in paving a way forward towards a solution to the Ndwandwe Trust challenges.

SCHOOLS COMPETE ON DISASTER AND RISK MANAGEMENT



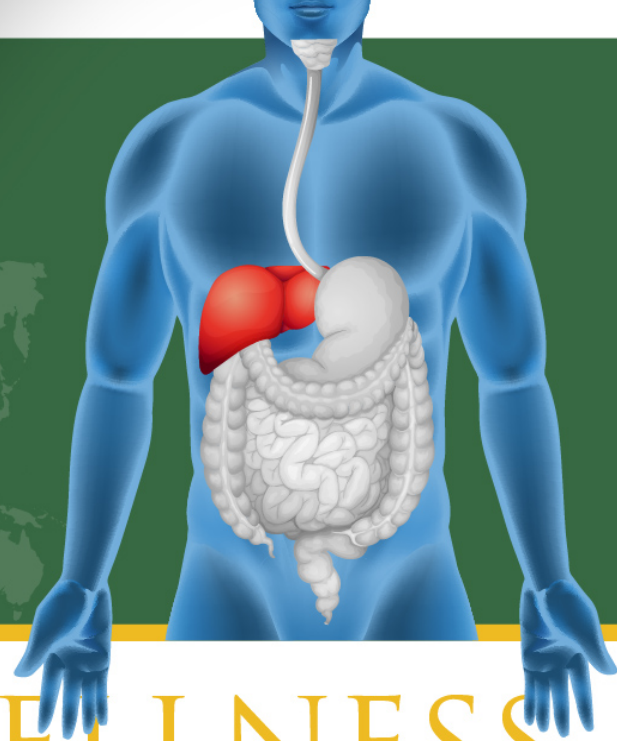
Ehlanzeni District Municipality in collaboration with DARDLEA, DOE, COGTA, Santam, Sassol, South African Weather Services (SAWS) South African Red Cross Society and other stakeholders hosted a Disaster Risk Management Schools Speech Competition at Ehlanzeni's Disaster Management Centre on Wednesday, June 21st. This is the first competition which saw

12 schools from Ehlanzeni District, which in part was in commemoration of Youth Day, held under the theme: *"Disaster Management is Everybody's Business"*. The competition aims at educating and also raise awareness on issues pertaining to disaster management and risk reduction. Speeches ranged from veld fires, floods, water crisis and finding resolutions

in mitigating such challenges, exacerbated by Climate Change. The awarding ceremony saw top achievers receiving trophies and gadgets to encourage them to continue with their research in finding possible solutions to environmental challenges, for the sake of the next generation.

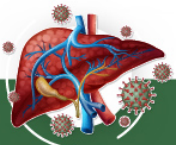
Hepatitis

THEME: "WE'RE NOT WAITING"



HEALTH & WELLNESS

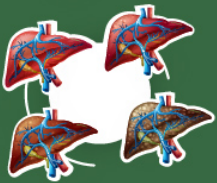
WHD 2023 call to action is to *"accelerate elimination efforts of viral hepatitis now and the urgent need for testing and treatment for the real people who need it"*.



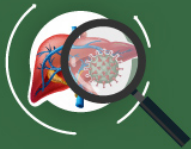
Hepatitis is an **inflammation of the liver** that is caused by a variety of infectious viruses and noninfectious agents leading to a range of health problems, some of which can be fatal.



The liver is a vital organ that processes nutrients, filters the blood, and fights infections. When the liver is inflamed or damaged, its function can be affected. **Heavy alcohol** use, toxins, some medications, and certain **medical conditions** can **cause hepatitis**.



There are **five main strains of the hepatitis virus**, referred to as types A, B, C, D and E. While they all cause liver disease, they differ in important ways including modes of transmission, severity of the illness, geographical distribution and prevention methods. In particular, types B and C lead to chronic disease in hundreds of millions of people and together are the most common cause of liver cirrhosis, **liver cancer and viral hepatitis-related deaths**.



Many people with hepatitis do not have symptoms and do not know they are infected. If symptoms occur with an acute infection, they can appear anytime from **2 weeks to 6 months after exposure**. Symptoms of acute hepatitis can include fever, fatigue, loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, dark urine, light-colored stools, joint pain, and jaundice. Symptoms of chronic viral hepatitis **can take decades to develop**.



Treatment options will vary from bed rest to antiviral drug therapy depending on the type of hepatitis you have and whether the **infection is acute or chronic**. Vaccination remains the best option to prevent infection. (World Health Organisation, 2023)

NEMOATODES – FARMERS MUST BE ON THE LOOKOUT



Vegetable farmers need to be vigilant and be on the lookout for any damage on their produce that might be caused by Nematodes - a microscopic worm-like creature that inhabits the soil and attacks the roots of plants like Tomatoes, Sweet Potatoes, Bambara ground nuts, including cabbage.

Our Extension & Advisory Services and the Research Unit, the UMP's Nematology Society and the ARC, hosted local farmers and other stakeholders during

a Nematodes Farmers' Information Day held at Mr Joseph Masuku's Magezangesonto Coop in Peebles Farm outside White River.

The idea was to create awareness to fresh produce farmers to constantly monitor the leaves of their plants, to see if there's any change in colour, or damage, which they must report if spotted. Farmers are also encouraged to take soil sampling, rotate crops, and consider Agro Processing to increase profit.

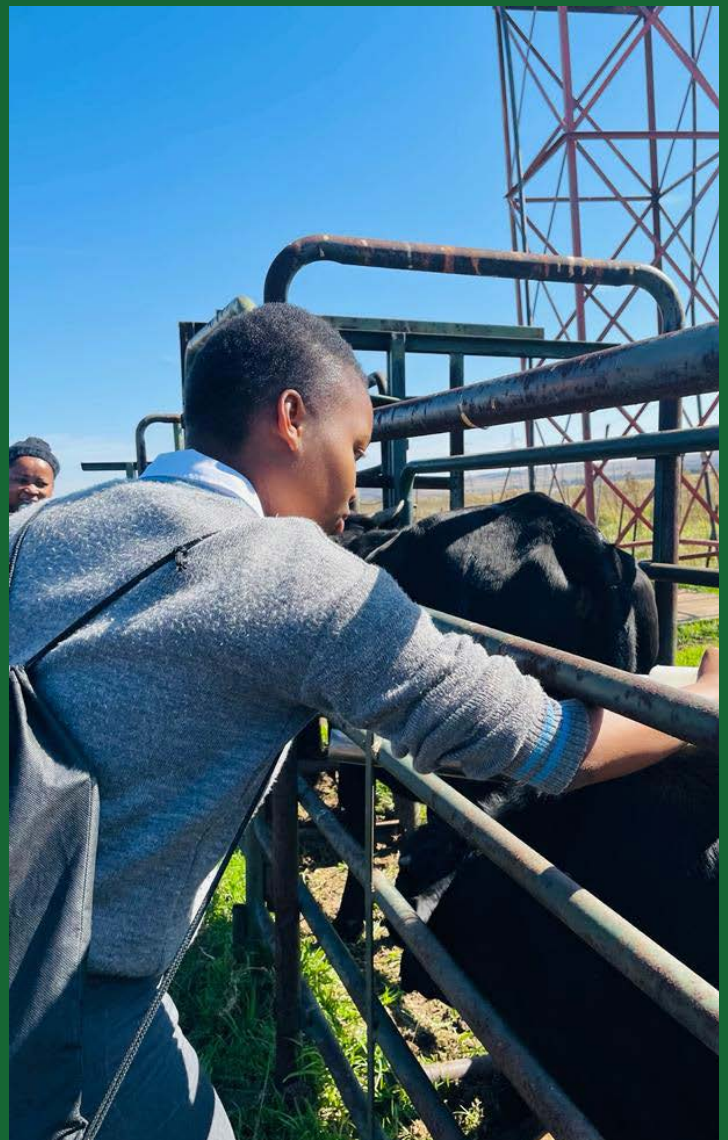


TAKE A GIRL CHILD TO WORK WORK EMPOWERS GIRL LEARNERS



The DARDLEA's 2023 "Taking A Girl Child to Work" Programme was on another level, robustly hosting hundreds of Grade 9 to 11 Girl learners from different schools throughout the Districts during the month of May.

The Veterinary Services team, for example, spent many hours demonstrating the use of treatment room instruments and equipment used on patients, and engaged robustly with the interactive learners. This year's "Take a Girl Child To Work" aimed to empower and encourage girls to consider taking up agriculture as a career choice, and to consider choosing it when progressing to tertiary. Save the Children and the SAPS, who partnered with DARDLEA, were empowering the learners on children's rights and issues of GBV.



FARMERS GATHER TO SHARE BEST EXPERIENCES



The DARDLEA ferried farmers around Manzana, Elukwatini and some from as far as Middleburg, to a Harvesting Information Day event organised by LTSL & Farmsol Harvesting, held at Mr David Lesesa's Klipfontein Farm outside Carolina on May 25th.

The gathering was aimed at developing and exposing farmers to Opportunities and Operations of Commercial Farming. Smallholder and commercial farmers alike attended the event in numbers. Transparency, collaboration and trust are reportedly some of the pillars and secret to becoming commercial. Challenges, and possible solutions, were also highlighted.

The harvesting day was sponsored by key stakeholders in the farming sector like BAYER, UNITED SEEDS, and Midveld Plant & Plaag.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE VISITS RCL FOODS

DARDLEA's Pollution and Waste Management and the Environmental Compliance & Enforcement Directorates, with Nkomazi Local Municipality conducted an oversight visit to RCL Foods, Komati Mill and Malelane Mill Landfill sites in Nkomazi, during a Permit to License Review Meeting.

The Department is in the process of reviewing old waste management licenses in ensuring that big companies such as RCL Foods are operating in line with the National Environmental Management Waste Act.

Part of the visit was to examine compliance with the disposal of waste after the production process, and the usage of the landfill. Air Pollution was also discussed, including the possibility of installing Air Quality Monitoring Systems in the Malelane area, with the ultimate aim of protecting the environment and humans against air pollution.





TREES **PREVENT FLOODING** DURING HEAVY RAINS

TREES **CLEAN THE AIR** BY TRAPPING DUST & POLLUTANTS

TREES **REMOVE CARBON DIOXIDE** FROM THE AIR

SHADE FOR BUILDINGS MEANS LESS AIR CONDITIONING

TREES **PROVIDE HABITAT** FOR LIFE

TREES **IMPROVE AIR QUALITY** AND PRODUCE OXYGEN

TREES
&
CLIMATE CHANGE

FIRE SEASON NEEDS PROPER PLANNING



The Fire Season may be fast approaching, and farmers need to be prepared to determine the best ways to avert risks that may affect their farming operation. The DARDLEA and Working on Fire (WoF), the Provincial Disaster Management Committee and FPA worked together with local and District Municipalities in hosting informative sessions with farmers throughout the province, during which tips on fire safety were shared. In many instances, fire beaters were donated to farmers in attendance.

1. It was tips on how they can prepare for safety from and during veld fires.
2. Demonstrations on how to use fire beaters, hoe rakes, skid unit and on how to stop the spread of fires on the farm.
3. Farmers are urged to use the weather forecast so they can plan on when to make fire breaks
4. Farmers in attendance received fire beaters and hoe rakes, an ammunition against running veld fires.



MAIN REASONS WHY HYGIENE IS IMPORTANT

Staying clean and fresh does a lot more for your health than just make you look good.

1. Protect you from developing infections
2. Prevent you from having health complications
3. Keep you from being uncomfortable

Loo etiquette

1. Close the door
2. Wipe from front to back with toilet paper
3. Avoid pee splash
4. Clean the toilet seat of necessary with toilet seat sanitizer
5. Don't forget to flush
6. Clean with the toilet brush if necessary
7. Put the toilet seat down
8. Wash your hands
9. Replace the toilet roll if necessary

Remember

- If you lift it, *Put it down*
- If it run out, *Replace it*
- If you miss, *Clean it up*
- If you're finished, *Flush it*
- If it smells, *Spray it*



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