

# JALA PEO NEWSLETTER

## "Plant the Seed"

### News from the National Steering Committee

BY KELLY SHIOHIRA

The Covid 19 pandemic is a historic health crisis which has disrupted business, government systems and our social practices. As a result, South Africa is facing new challenges in ensuring good nutrition and hygiene for all families. Schools and their food gardens are not immune to the effects of these challenges.

In his 2020 Freedom Day Address, President Ramaphosa declared, "In the South Africa that we all want, no man, woman or child will go hungry, because they will have the means to earn an income, and our social assistance programmes will be matched by efforts to enable communities to grow their own food."

In support of this goal, the Jala Peo Initiative creates multistakeholder partnerships called Forums that work to promote health and nutrition. Forums seek to improve school food and nutrition gardens and also reach out to educate communities and advocate the spread of basic agricultural practices such as homestead gardens.

In this newsletter, we invite you to explore the potential of community outreach strategies with the different Forums. In addition, the back page of this newsletter provides hygiene practices and projects to help prevent the spread of Covid 19 and other diseases.

We hope you and your loved ones are well and safe, and thank you for your continued commitment to the health and well-being of learners, their communities and to the future of South Africa. Your support is the fertile soil in which the next generation will grow!



Conversations with community members on starting a household garden (West Coast district)

Gardens and flowers  
have a way of  
bringing people  
together, drawing  
them from their  
homes.

Clare Ansberry

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# News from the Western Cape

SUNET ANDERSON, WEST COAST DISTRICT COORDINATOR

## FOOD GARDENS: SUSTAINING FAMILIES, SCHOOLS, VILLAGES, THE WORLD!

This is the theme for the 2020 poster competition in the West Coast and is aimed at raising awareness amongst learners of the importance of growing your own vegetables. Inroads have also been made to promote and support homestead gardens to make this a reality.

In order to support learners who show an interest in starting homestead gardens and to foster the interest of more learners, gardeners were skilled in community outreach work by practical training at the Goedgedacht Farm. Goedgedacht was instrumental in starting more than 2000 homestead gardens around Riebeeck-Kasteel and shared their knowledge on this model with West Coast gardeners. Upon their return, the gardeners started an outreach initiative in communities around schools and compiled lists of interested households, including learners. Those starting gardens are supported with skills and limited resources, such as seeds. Approximately 60 homestead gardeners are already listed of which 18 are learners from Jala Peo schools.

A weekly slot on the local radio station, Radio Namaqualand, further supports community awareness and promotes homestead gardens with information on topics such as growing vegetables in containers, compost making and the health benefits of eating a variety of vegetables.



Gardeners and community members doing fieldwork in community surrounding Nieuwoudt Primary School



Peer educator training by gardeners in the Klawer cluster

**There are no gardening mistakes, only experiments!**

Janet Killburn Phillips

# News from the Free State

NELLY KOMAPE, FEZILE DABI DISTRICT COORDINATOR

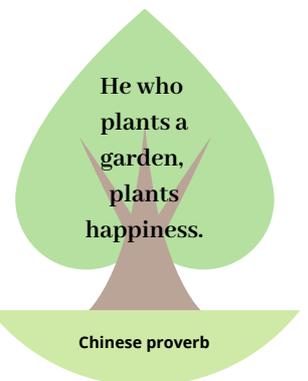
## GROWTH DESPITE CHALLENGES

The Jala Peo Initiative is experiencing some challenges such as garden vandalism and water shortages in the Parys area. Water shortages can last up to three weeks, thus negatively impacting on the quality of the gardens.

Ultimately, political will and the support of local government will be necessary to alleviate these challenges. The Office of the Speaker of the Ngwathe Local Municipality will engage with all ward councillors on issues of vandalism. At the Ngwathe Stakeholder Meeting issues of home based gardens, vandalism in school gardens and the challenge of water shortages were also addressed.

In addition, the Jala Peo Initiative is beginning to grow amongst the community members. The Parys Pastors' Forum is one avenue which the Fezile Dabi Forum has leveraged to introduce the Jala Peo Initiative and specifically advocate for home gardening among the church membership.

Finally, other schools have actively sought to be involved in the Initiative. The Morning Star School for the disabled in Parys requested an information day on the Jala Peo Initiative. Following the presentation, seeds were donated to support the school to begin planting.



 [Search for our Jala Peo Initiative Facebook page: Jala Peo School Food Garden Initiative](#)

# News from Limpopo

DR RONALD MUDIMELI, VHEMBE DISTRICT COORDINATOR

## HOMESTEAD GARDENING APPROACH: RESUSCITATING THE CULTURE OF “PLANTING A SEED” AMONG YOUTH

The level of youth unemployment in South Africa is higher in comparison to countries with similar socioeconomic contexts (Meyer, 2017). Previous research findings reveal that vegetable production provides vast opportunities for unemployed youth in South Africa. However the culture of working in a vegetable garden seems to be deteriorating amongst youth (Fox & Senbet, 2015)\*. It is worrying that few youth have embraced food production as a career pathway (Mukembo et al., 2014)\*. It is expected that the Jala Peo homestead garden programme will be able to resuscitate the youth’s passion for vegetable production.

The extension of the Jala Peo Initiative from school food and nutrition gardens to homestead gardens has earned support from other participating stakeholders in Limpopo. The Seriti Institute and the Vhembe Biosphere Reserve have together contributed resources to more than 140 learners from seven schools in the Vhembe District of Limpopo. Learners who are participating in homestead gardening are assisted with gardening tools and seedlings to extend crop production activities to their backyards gardens.

**\*Read more here:**  
Mukembo, S. C., Edwards, M. C., Ramsey, J. W., & Henneberry, S. R. (2014). Attracting Youth to Agriculture: The Career Interests of Young Farmers Club Members in Uganda. *Journal of Agricultural Education*, 55(5), 155-172. <https://doi.org/10.5032/jae.2014.05155>



**\*Read more here:**  
Fox, L., Senbet, L. W., & Simbanegavi, W. (2016). Youth Employment in Sub-Saharan Africa: Challenges, Constraints and Opportunities. *Journal of African Economies*, 25(suppl 1), i3-15. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jae/eyk027>

**A homestead garden of a learner from Dzingahe Primary in the Vhembe District, Limpopo**

The homestead approach encourages learners to establish backyard gardens as a way to practice what they have learnt at school. A survey conducted with parents of homestead participating learners in Limpopo reveals the following benefits:

- Homestead gardens encourage learners to develop an interest in agriculture as a possible career path.
- Participating communities are empowered to access their “right to food”.
- The practice of homestead gardens ensures household food security and improves nutrition.
- Participating in gardening helps to create jobs in rural economies, which can reduce urban migration.
- Homestead gardening is a positive after-school activity for youth, reducing crime and substance abuse.
- Homestead gardening gives parents an opportunity to transfer indigenous agricultural knowledge to children.



**“Through the homestead programme we can now teach our children indigenous methods of planting, watering, weed removal and pest control. Our children now know when to harvest various crops we grow in our back yards.” (Parent of learner)**



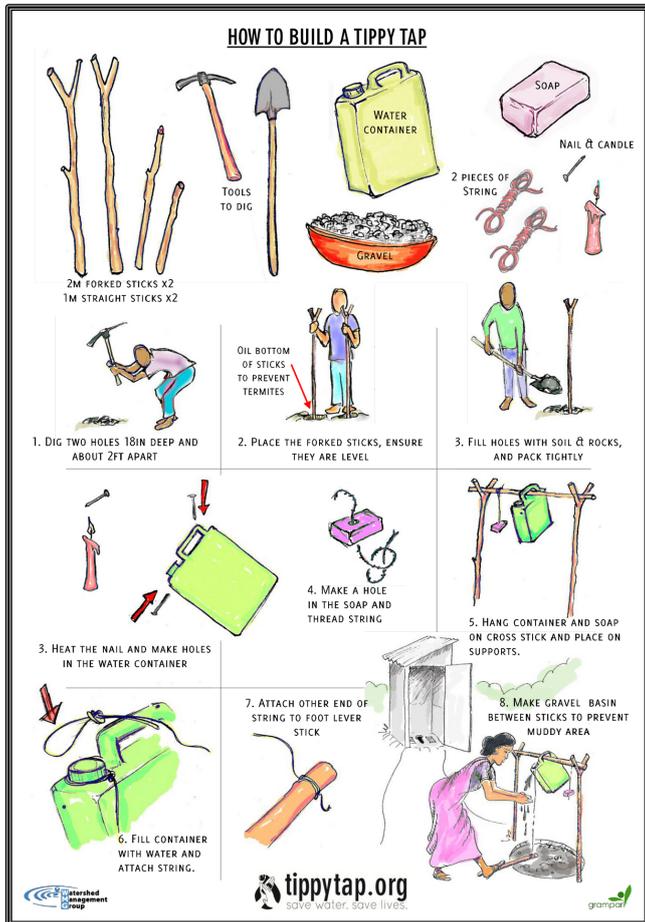
**From lawns to food: Jala Peo Limpopo Provincial Coordinator Dr Ronald Mudimeli (pictured above) is walking the talk after having replaced his front lawn with crops**

# Coronavirus (COVID-19) Awareness

ZAAHEDAH VALLY & ASHLEY MANUELS



Hygiene and cleanliness have always been important, especially when carrying out activities at school or handling food. With the onset of the coronavirus pandemic worldwide, this has become even more important. The resources below outline some measures that can be put in place to help stop the spread of the virus.



Wash your hands often with soap for at least 20 seconds.

Kha vha tambe zwanda tshifhinga tshothe nga tshisimbe mithethe i linganaho 20.

Hlapa matsoho kgafetsa ka metsi le sesepa metsotso e ka bang 20.

Was gereeld jou hande met seep vir ten minste 20 sekondes lank.



Avoid crowded places.

Kha vha tutshele kule na maguvhangano.

Se ka kena tulong tse tletseng batho.

Verm y oorvol plekke.



Avoid visiting markets where live animals are sold.

Kha vha tutshele kule na fhethu hu no rengiswa zwifuwo.

Se ka etela mmaraka o rekisang diphoofole tse phelang.

Verm y marke waar lewende diere verkoop word.



**To prevent COVID-19 it is safest to avoid physical contact when greeting. Safe greetings include a wave, a nod, or a bow.**

**How should I greet another person to avoid catching the new coronavirus?**

World Health Organization #Coronavirus #COVID19 9 March 2020

Jala Peo is an initiative of

