

JALA PEO NEWSLETTER

"Plant the Seed"

News from the National Steering Committee

BY KELLY SHIOHIRA

The Jala Peo ("Plant the Seed") Initiative is a vehicle for the promotion of nutrition education and school food and nutrition gardens active in 67 schools across three Provinces: the Free State, Limpopo and the Western Cape. The Initiative seeks to make sure every school has a thriving school food and nutrition garden and that all learners in South Africa understand how to produce and consume nutritious food. To do this, the Initiative has created Forums – multistakeholder partnerships of government departments, private sector, academia and NGOs to increase and direct investment and resources towards more effective agriculture and nutrition education.

In the last year, Forums led educator and learner excursions, poster competitions, garden clubs, cluster meetings, workshops and training sessions for teachers, learners, gardeners and food handlers. A Jala Peo Initiative Bulletin was produced, and a national review held with stakeholders from Jala Peo Provinces. The efforts of combined stakeholders unlocked more than a million rand in resources, which was used to upskill 256 adult educators and community members and 6 001 learners in topics related to agriculture and nutrition. 60% of Jala Peo Initiative schools show improvement in the quality of their school food and nutrition garden, and the number of Jala Peo Initiative schools with productive school food and nutrition gardens has more than doubled.

We invite you to join us in celebrating the successes of the Jala Peo Initiative, and in supporting us to build on this momentum. Together, we can build a happier, healthier, environmentally sound and successful South Africa – it all starts with an understanding of good food!



Plentiful produce: Thulamela crop production exhibition in Limpopo, April 2019

This issue:

News from the National Steering Committee

Page 01

News from Western Cape: Zero to Hero

Page 02

News from Free State: Selogilwe Primary School

Page 02

News from Limpopo: From School Gardens to Homestead Gardens

Page 03

Curriculum Integration Resources

Page 04



News from the Western Cape

SUNET ANDERSON, WEST COAST DISTRICT COORDINATOR

Zero to Hero

Nieuwoudt Primary School has grown from a school with no food garden at all to having a well-established garden of substantial size in less than a year. Their success can be ascribed to their networking with the community's small farmers to assist with fencing, ploughing the area and providing manure. Tanks provided by the Western Cape Education Department have been installed to collect rainwater to alleviate the cost of municipal water. In addition, Nieuwoudt Primary School has installed a pilot aquaponics project sponsored by the Forum as a learning tool. The garden is being integrated into the curriculum, as well. Classes visit the garden for lessons on soil types, and plant the sprouted beans as part of class projects. They follow the food production cycle by processing the harvested beans in the nutrition programme's kitchen.

The principal, Mr John Cloete, says: "Educators are often caught in a classroom and assume learners have seen, touched and experienced what they only hear about in the lesson. The school food garden provides the opportunity for learners to experience natural sciences hands-on and cultivate a love and respect for the soil and nature."

"If you want to be happy for life, be a gardener"

Chinese Proverb



Learners and caretakers of the school garden at Nieuwoudville Primary School in Vredendal



Learners harvesting produce with an educator at Selogilwe Primary School in Tumahole, Parys

News from the Free State

NELLY KOMAPE, FEZILE DABI DISTRICT COORDINATOR

Tremendous Progress at Selogilwe Primary School at Tumahole in Parys

In September 2018, Selogilwe Primary School had no garden at all, just bare ground. The principal, Mrs Martha Koenane, mentioned that they had a garden ten years ago. After a baseline survey was conducted, the school took the initiative together with their gardener Mr Kasa Molalugi to start a food garden. By January 2019, space had been prepared for planting. The school collected compost from Sungat and Smith company, used tyres from the local tyre fixer and the principal provided money for seeds. In February 2019, the Parys Correctional Services inmates assisted in removing stones from the school garden, and Community Work Programme (CWP) workers were appointed to assist in the garden in April, an arrangement facilitated by the Free State Forum member Mr Tumelo Sello, the coordinator of the CWP. Today, the garden boasts spinach, cabbage, carrots, onion, beetroot, tomato and green pepper, and the school handed over food parcels containing garden produce to 60 learners on 21 June 2019. Appreciation goes to the principal Mrs Koenane, coordinator Mrs Sellwane Sephapo, assistant coordinator Mrs Maletsebele Phumo and gardener Mr Molalugi for their continued support in ensuring the success of the garden at Selogilwe Primary School.



To access a copy of the 2018 Jala Peo JET Bulletin online, go to: <https://www.jet.org.za/resources/bulletin-december-2018.pdf>



News from Limpopo

DR RONALD MUDIMELI, VHEMBE DISTRICT COORDINATOR

From School Gardens to Homestead Gardens

The Jala Peo Initiative seeks to educate learners on how to produce and consume nutritious food while improving their agricultural skills. The 29 participating schools are making significant progress since the inception of the programme in November 2017. As one of the Jala Peo partners, the Seriti Institute is now extending the Jala Peo programme to homestead gardens. This new partnership aims to build sustainable school and homestead food and nutrition gardens in Limpopo.

"To plant a garden is to believe in tomorrow"

Audrey Hepburn



Rangani Mudzanani, a learner from Mamali Sikhwivhilu Primary School, proudly displays his homestead garden produce

The Homestead programme aims to inspire learners to develop an interest in agriculture as a possible career path, and empower communities to access their "right to food". The pilot has already proven its potential towards food security through the participation of 80 learners from four schools who were selected to participate. All the participating learners were assisted with gardening tool-sets and seedlings as a starter kit. During the starter kit handing-over function all involved stakeholders, including learners, parents, educators and community leaders demonstrated their unwavering commitment towards the initiative.

Ward Councillor M.G. Malaka in one of the villages could not hide his excitement, maintaining that the programme will help to solve many of the socio-economic challenges facing the district: "This is one of its kind, we have never witnessed a programme such as this in our area. It will indeed help to get youth from the streets where they participate in drug and substance abuse. In fact, gardening activities come with positive health benefits in a way that it will reduce the burden for the Department of Health."



Learners from Mamali Sikhwivhilu Primary School receiving tool kits as part of the Seriti Homestead Gardens Initiative



Curriculum Integration Resources

Composting of materials such as plant debris, food scraps and paper can help schools in significantly reducing their waste while creating nutrient-rich product that is relatively inexpensive. As a natural phenomena, composting can be linked with topics natural science, life science and agricultural science. Composting is a recycling process where micro-organisms such as bacteria and fungi break down (decompose) complex molecules in plant and animal tissues into simpler substances. The smaller soluble substances (nutrients) are then absorbed by plants through their roots.

"If you have a garden and a library, you have everything."

CICERO

Important ingredients for composting:

Activators

- Comfrey Leaves
- Young Weeds (without seeds)
- Grass Cuttings
- Chicken Manure
- Pigeon Manure

Other Materials you can add to compost

- cardboard, paper bags, egg boxes
- crop remains/straw
- hedge clippings
- perennial weeds

Very Slow to rot

- Autumn Leaves
- Tough hedge clippings
- Wood branches
- Wood shavings
- Sawdust

Do not use the following

- Meat
- Fish
- Diseased plants
- Lemon peels
- Cooked food
- Very soapy water
- Coal ash
- Manure from dogs/cats/pigs

Mix all together, do not compact and turn over often.
Earthworms can also be used to break down raw materials to form composting material!



Jala Peo is an initiative of

