



Reasons to choose organic

Our choices make a huge difference to the quality of our lives. What we eat builds and maintains our body and our mind. By supporting organic, you help to improve the quality of water, soil, and the air. Animals, plants, birds, worms, and other living beings also benefit when we choose organic foods.

Love your body, love your family, love the earth, be organic.

Organic food is more nutritious. Good nutrition is vital for maintaining health and preventing disease. Organic food contains higher levels of vitamin C, a higher mineral content and more phytonutrients – plant compounds which can be effective against cancer and other diseases.

Organic food tastes great. Organic produce has consistently been rated to have better flavour and texture than non-organic produce with the added benefit of longer shelf life. Organic farmers rely on developing a healthy, fertile soil to grow a mixture of crops that are bursting with flavour and life supporting energy.

Organic food is safe. Organic food is produced without harmful pesticides (insecticides, herbicides and fungicides) and does not contain any residues of these agro-chemicals. Many insecticides cannot be washed from fresh produce

because it is distributed through all the cells of a plant to be effective.

Organic food supports the healthy development of babies and children's brains and bodies.

Children's growing brains and bodies are far more susceptible to toxins than adults. Choosing organic helps feed their bodies without the exposure to pesticides and genetically-modified organisms. Mothers who eat organic and breast-feed, do not pass any poisons to the baby.

Organic food is free of harmful additives.

Health problems as diverse as heart disease, osteoporosis, migraines and hyperactivity, Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease have been linked to food additives whose use is banned in organic production. For example, tartrazine and other additives have been linked to allergic reactions, headaches, asthma, growth retardation and hyperactivity in children. Other additives not allowed in organic food are monosodium glutamate, aspartame, phosphoric acid and hydrogenated fats, because of evidence that they can be damaging to health. Hydrogenated fats, also known as trans fats, found in some margarines and biscuits, causes heart disease, cancer and skin disease.

Organic meat and milk contains higher levels of Omega 3, and is free of antibiotics and hormones.

Choosing organic meat and milk reduces your exposure to antibiotics, synthetic growth hormones and drugs that are fed to the animals and ultimately passed onto you. These products contain higher levels of essential fatty acids, omega 3 and Conjugated Linoleic Acid, as production systems are based on animals with access to forage. The fatty acids play an essential role in metabolism and it reduces the risk of neurological disorders, including depression and hyperactivity in children.

Organic food is free of GMO (Genetically Modified Organisms).

Organic food comes without untested, unlabeled foreign genetic material such as antibiotic-resistant genes, and other genes that may cause allergenic and immune system reactions. With organic, you know what you eat, and it is not experimental food.

Organic farms offer better conditions for farmers and farm workers.

By choosing organic food, more people will be able to work on farms without the regular exposure to pesticides and the associated health risks. Exposure to these chemicals has been linked to brain/central nervous system

(CNS), breast, colon, lung, ovarian, pancreatic, kidney, testicular, and stomach cancers, as well as Hodgkin and non-Hodgkin lymphoma, multiple myeloma, and soft tissue sarcoma.

Organic farms supports greater biodiversity.

Biodiversity, the variety of life on earth, is the foundation of all agriculture. Organic systems have the potential to conserve and improve ecosystem biodiversity which is much needed to support life on earth as we know it.

Organic farming protects pollinators.

Pollinators, such as birds, bees and animals, are critical to fruit and seed production. Yet worldwide, we are facing a pollination crisis, in which pollinators are disappearing at alarming rates as a result of habitat loss, diseases, and pesticide poisoning.

Organic farming improves adaptability to climate change by improving drought and flood resistance.

Organic agriculture makes farms more resilient to climate change, mainly due to its water efficiency, resilience to extreme weather events and lower risk of complete crop failure. High levels of organic matter and permanent soil cover, improves the soil's water infiltration and retention capacity.



Organic farming mitigates climate change.

Organic agriculture has well established practices that simultaneously mitigate climate change, build resilient farming systems, reduce poverty and improve food security. Organic agriculture emits much lower levels of greenhouse gases, and quickly and effectively sequesters carbon in the soil.

Organic production promotes animal welfare.

Organic livestock operations aim to optimise the health and welfare of the animals by ensuring a high quality, balanced diet and an environment that meets their behavioural

and physiological needs. Animals are given plenty of space and fresh air to thrive and grow naturally, guaranteeing a truly free-range life. This means fewer drugs or antibiotics.

Certified organic food carries a guarantee.

Food products that bear an organic certification label is your guarantee that it has been grown and handled according to strict organic production standards, and that the farms are inspected to ensure compliance with these standards. Look out for the Namibian Organic Association Mark, and other international marks such as Afrisco, Ecocert and the EU marks.



love yourself...

love your family...

love the planet...

...be organic

A peak into the chicken and eggs on our tables



But at what cost to animal welfare, human health and environmental health?

Chickens are kept in large flocks, and disease can spread very quickly on intensive farms. This leads to the overuse of antibiotics, which causes a dangerous situation. Antibiotics are often routinely used in factory farming systems as growth promoters and to prevent disease. Low doses of antibiotics, given in feed and water, are a form of insurance against disease for the farmer, which makes economical sense. However, antibiotics are only good when used properly. When they're frequently used, bacteria can build resistance to them over time. Because of this, not only do we need to be concerned about bacterial infection now, but we also need to be concerned that food borne bacteria are becoming increasingly resistant to antibiotics.

Unless the meat is produced for export to areas such as the European Union, which restrict dietary additives and/or the use of animal protein in feed, birds may be given antibiotics and other growth promoters that can enter the human food chain. There is widespread concern about this practice, as resistance to antibiotics is an increasing public health problem worldwide and the extensive use of antibiotics in industrial chicken production could exacerbate the problem. The British Medical Association is concerned that the "risk to human health from antibiotic resistance is one of the major health threats that could be faced in the 21st century". Intensive poultry

production systems are proved unsustainable and from 2012, battery cages are banned throughout the EU. Anticipating the eradication of battery cages, alternative, more humane and sustainable methods of egg production have been and are being developed.

So what are the alternative systems?

Free Range stems from improved animal welfare conditions, and denotes a method of animal husbandry where the animals are allowed to roam freely instead of being contained in any manner. Legal standards defining "free range" can be different or even non-existent depending on the country. For example, the U.S. Department of Agriculture requires only that the bird spends part of its time outside, and allows egg producers to freely label these eggs as free-range. According to South African legislation, "free range eggs" means eggs which are produced by poultry which are not caged and have daily access to an outdoor range area accessible through openings in the side of a barn". There is no specification of quality or size of the outside range nor the length of time an animal must have access to the outside. Feed and medications are also not specified which is often the same as with conventional 'factory farming'.

Pastured chicken is allowed to forage for food, e.g. seeds, grass, worms and insects that form part of a chicken's natural (omnivore) diet. The richer and diverse diet can lead to enhanced quality of meat and eggs with chickens producing eggs with a darker yolk and the

meat of broilers have more flavour. In pastured raised systems, chickens are kept at a much lower stocking density and have ample opportunity to show normal chicken behaviour such as dust bathing, scratching, running after a tasty morsel etc. As in the case with 'free range', there are no production standards.

Organic chicken

production is subject to regulation as stipulated in the standards of the certifying body the farm adheres to. Flock size is controlled as well as the square metre pasture available per chicken, perching space etc.

Organic livestock farmers can manage their animals without the routine use of antibiotics and other drugs because they run a healthy, balanced system. This means not keeping too many animals in a given area, minimising stress, keeping a mixture of species wherever possible and providing a diet that is as natural as possible.

The routine use of antibiotics to promote growth or to treat the whole herd or flock as a preventative measure is banned under organic standards. Antibiotics can

only be used to treat sick animals. Homeopathy and herbal remedies are used widely in organic animal husbandry. However, if antibiotics are needed to prevent the suffering of a sick animal then that treatment must be used.

All feed, whether pasture or supplementary, should be organically certified. No genetically modified food is allowed. While intensively reared chickens live for around 42 days in cramped and stressful conditions, chickens raised according to the Namibian Organic Standards, cannot be slaughtered until they are at least 81 days old.

It would be very difficult to state all medical, environmental and animal welfare concerns and facts in one article, but the fact of the matter remains that there is a world of difference in the various production systems of broiler chickens and eggs – and each of those production systems has an effect on the health of the animals, consumers as well as the environment. If you are uncertain what the producer offers, call the farm or better - visit the farm - so that you can make the best possible choice.



The moment we decide to buy 'healthy' chicken for our families we find ourselves the victims of a sometimes very unscrupulous market. Sellers put words like 'farm fresh' and 'country choice' on labels, giving consumers very little information on the true nature of the product they are buying.

According to the Worldwatch Institute, 74% of the world's poultry meat, and 68 percent of eggs are produced in ways that are described as 'intensive' or 'factory farms' where livestock is raised in confinement at high stocking density.

Chickens raised for meat, or broilers, are selected for high growth rates to reach a slaughter weight of 2.5 kg in just 39-41 days – less than half the time a normal bird would take to reach the same slaughter weight. Technological advancements in breeding have resulted in ever-increasing growth rates which, coupled with high density, severely compromise the health and welfare of billions of meat

chickens. Rapid weight gain exceeds their body's ability to grow strong enough bones, and leads to skeletal disorders and painful lameness. Such discomfort and pain means the birds spend much of their time lying down in the litter resulting in foot pad, hock and breast sores. Often, their hearts and lungs cannot cope, leading to sudden death syndrome.

Beak trimming is a common practice for both layer hens and broilers to prevent pecking and cannibalism. Layer hens are often kept up to nine per cage, meaning they can't all be laying at once since the size of the cages do not allow for it. Some hens spend their entire lives in a wire cage with less space than an A4 page. In these conditions, many of their natural behaviours cannot be expressed. Their ability to exercise, forage for food, dust bathe and perch is restricted.

The benefit of factory farming systems, is that food can be produced quickly and cheaply, and who can deny that the world needs cheap food?

Organic skin care

The assortment of creams, gels and lotions we can choose from for beauty is endless and often confusing. The little pot in your hand promises to lift, rejuvenate and restore beauty. It claims to nourish, nurture and turn back time.

The label proudly states that this product contains organic or natural plant extracts...even if it is only 1%. What a shame though, that they fail to mention the dangers of the chemical ingredients in their wonder-cream.

The skin absorbs between 60 and 80% of all substances applied to it. This is great news when

you're using a product containing only natural and organic ingredients.

The body cannot effectively process and eliminate all harmful chemicals, causing a build-up of toxic waste in the lymph nodes which could lead to life-threatening conditions.

At **Root to Health** you can be assured of finding only

the highest quality of pure, natural skin and body care products.

Dr Hauschka Skincare Founded in 1960 in Germany, this exceptional skin care range is 100% certified organic and truly lives up to its reputation as the best in the world. Changing over to Dr. Hauschka involves a lot more than simply swapping brands. Your whole attitude towards, and the understanding of your skin, must change. The first surprise is usually the news that there is not one single night cream in the whole range.

Dr. Hauschka preparations focus on restoring and maintaining the harmony and balance of the skin. It encourages and fortifies the natural function of the skin, while protecting it from external influences.

Besides face care preparations, Dr. Hauschka also offers body, hair and bath care products, changing every beauty and hygiene routine into a unique and holistic experience.

Jane Iredale – the skin care makeup

"The most beautiful cosmetic you can wear is a healthy skin." With this philosophy in mind, Jane Iredale, a well-known American make-up artist, has created an all-natural, mineral-based make-up range that will leave your skin radiant and flawless. This award-winning range of products takes care of the skin while doing all and more than you would expect of your make-up. None of the products contain any FD&C dyes, chemical preservatives, fillers or synthetic fragrances. It is endorsed

by plastic surgeons, dermatologists and skin care professionals worldwide.

As soon as you apply any of the foundations, you will be amazed by its cover, its silky feel and weightlessness. The powder foundations offer a high SPF rating and are water-resistant, making them ideal for any outdoor activity. The lipsticks also boast a SPF 18, leaving your lips soft, moisturised and protected against our harsh climate.

Jane Iredale offers a wide variety of innovative products to enhance your natural beauty and care for your skin.

Visit us at Root to Health, 35 Cheateau Str, Windhoek.

Tel: 061 245677 or 245845



35 Cheateau Str.
Tel: 061 - 245677

For a healthy lifestyle

We stock a wide variety of

- High quality vitamins and mineral supplements
- Standardized herbal extracts
- Natural nutritional supplements
- Homeopathic remedy ranges
- Organic skin care products
- Chemical-free make-up
- Bio-degradable cleaning products
- Eco-friendly baby products
- Organic cotton sanitary ware
- Health magazines
- Organic honey and propolis products
- Certified organic aroma oils
- Specialised body candles
- Orthopaedic shoe inserts

Pioneer organic farmers in Namibia



Ulf-Dieter Voigts on Farm Krumhuk

- the dairy cows
- Game management with venison processing
- Trophy hunting
- Tourism with 14 beds (Sarima Krumhuk)
- Events with full catering
- Bee keeping

Most of the products are certified organic through the Namibian Organic Association's PGS system. Products are sold directly to the consumer every Saturday at the Green Market in Umland Street in Windhoek. We also supply some supermarkets and restaurants with our products.

Other projects on Farm Krumhuk are a Kindergarten, a Primary School (Grundschule Aris) and an Agricultural Training Centre (Agricultural Training Centre Krumhuk).

Krumhuk is also a member of the Auas Oanob Conservancy.

Farm Eichenbach: Farm Eichenbach is a 400 ha farm with 230 ha crop production where the previous owner, Werner Hanke, lives with 3 permanent staff members. The crop farm produces maize, sunflowers, sorghum

and different types of green manure which can also be used as fodder. Other cultivars like wheat are in an experimenting process. As a certified organic crop farm, products are for sale to consumers interested in organic produce. We also hope to sell cold pressed sunflower oil by the end of this year.

Why are we farming organically?

We want to heal the earth – mother earth – to maintain sustainable production for the future and to produce high quality and healthy food for our customers.

Working organically not only brings new challenges but also exciting new results. What can you do about pests like locusts in your vegetable garden or parasites in your cattle? How can we produce a high quality compost to improve our soil and reduce the water consumption of the plants? These are only some questions we are confronted with in organic and bio-dynamic farming.

An undeniable fact is that you get your best quality food from bio-dynamic and organic farms.



Sunflowers on Farm Eichenbach

Farm Krumhuk

- more than 20 years of experience in organic and bio-dynamic production -

Farm Krumhuk is an organisation with different enterprises and social projects situated 20 km south of Windhoek next to the B1.

The main farming enterprise has been producing organic products for the past 20 years and also uses the bio-dynamic method of production. Almost a year ago, a second enterprise was established at Grootfontein on Farm Eichenbach which has been producing organic crops for the past

20 years with its previous owner.

The entrepreneurs of these two farming units are Christiane and Ralph Ahlenstorf and Ulf-Dieter Voigts.

Farm Krumhuk:

A community of about 70 people lives on this farm of 8000 ha in size, including 15 staff members.

The different production lines are:

- Beef production and processing
- Milk production and processing
- Vegetable production and processing
- Fodder production for

ECOSO DYNAMICS
Devil's claw

Treatment for joint inflammation, stiffness, arthritis and rheumatism

A product of Namibia • www.ecoso.net

Show your support for sustainable farming

At Fruit & Veg City and Food Lover's Market we're serious about conserving the environment, which is why we support sustainable farming practices in Namibia.



One of the ways in which we show our support is by stocking organic herbs and vegetables, grown by our local farmers, on our shelves.

In a country like Namibia, that is more susceptible to the effects of climate change than most other regions in the world, it is especially important to make sure that farming is done in a responsible manner. Research has shown that organic agriculture improves soil structures, helps to conserve water, lessens the effects of climate change, and guarantees sustained biodiversity. Thus, our organic farmers are helping to ensure the future of our country's environment through their holistic farming methods. We ask you to help us support their efforts by buying locally produced organic herbs and vegetables the next time you visit your nearest Fruit & Veg City or Food Lover's Market store. It's the right thing to do, and it's good for you too!

FOOD LOVER'S MARKET



Pioneer farmer – Greenspot Organics



Manjo Smith

September 1, 2004. We left the city behind to start our life on the farm. Despite the fact that our knowledge was limited to the fact that plants grow towards the sun, and that roosters do not lay eggs, the move was motivated by our desire to produce organic, healthy food, to improve life on this planet and to offer the best possible environment in which to raise children. Here are extracts of our story through my eyes; Francois Smith - husband, non-farmer, technical advisor, occasional assistant farmer and sometimes too-close-for-comfort observer.

Manjo left the corporate world to become a full time farmer. I kept my day job and gave her the necessary support when needed. When we arrived on the farm, our first harvest was our inherited, conventionally farmed strawberry crop and flowers which contributed well to the perception that farming is very profitable. But expanding and converting the farm from the conventional high external input to a living organic farm, left Manjo faced with various challenges.

A lack of knowledge of the basics was quite a steep learning curve. Irrigation, layout of the lands, soil tests and planning for continuous and successive crops was like walking onto a different planet. We tried many things, and the best results were achieved through trial and error. Sometimes it was just error.

She started experimenting with various vegetables and herbs, which seemed to grow very well, and all the porcupines of the Okahandja district thought so too. And they still think so. It is amazing how they keep coming out of the mountains behind the plot.

The winter growing season is severely cold, with temperatures occasionally dropping to -8°C. That is the disadvantage of farming right next to the river where

all the cold settles at night. The first frost usually hits somewhere in mid May and last frost in late September or October. This reduces the summer growing season substantially, and therefore only seasonal vegetables and herbs are cultivated.

We decided to focus on a mixed farming system right from the beginning, so that the soil could benefit from the manure coming from the various animals. Chickens and muscovy ducks were our first farm animals. We decided to use a locally adapted chicken breed which could respond well to a tough environment, and boy was it tough when we ate them!

We quickly had to learn about their needs, their welfare and the specifications of the Namibian Organic Standards. We realised that the local breed does not produce well in a commercial setup, and now we have a flock of Boschveld chickens which are really performing well. They are fed on a combination of the best organic food available from farm Eigenbach in Grootfontein. They also have access to pasture, which adds to the quality of the eggs. We now know the basics of chicken rearing and will continue to grow the business, so that we can increase the number of healthy, happy chickens that produce certified organic eggs (our eggs are currently the only certified organic eggs in Namibia).

The poultry manure is composted and used to improve the soil for the vegetables and lucerne fields. The addition of dairy cows was a highlight for everybody living and working on the farm. The cattle graze in the extended municipal areas around the plot, and contribute much needed manure for the compost and earthworms. Manjo learned how to process the milk into yogurt and cottage cheese and is experimenting with making feta cheese. I have to say here that it is definitely the best cottage cheese and drinking yoghurt around. Our boys, aged 5 & 7 have also been lucky to observe the birth of 2 calves on the farm which created much excitement.

In the last few years, we focused substantially on developing and improving production cycles where the output of the one system, gives an input into the next system. For instance, the chickens produce meat, eggs and manure and they are used as a pest control tool in the gardens and to control the ticks in the cattle 'kraal'. The rabbits produce meat and manure, and they live on all the excess products coming from the pack shed, as well as weeds

or any other greens on the farm. The dairy cattle produce milk and manure, and we use their animal hoof action to trample down the material we use in the compost heaps. We pull the weeds, or uninvited plants, from the soil and leave it as mulch between the plants to protect the soil from drying out. We grow certain trap crops which attract worms in the rainy season and protect our income generating crops, and we (actually the kids and their friends) collect buckets full of worms and give it to the chickens and ducks.

All the animals, especially the cattle, seem to bring positive energy to the farm. Even though the rooster flies over the chicken fence and wakes you up at some ridiculous hour, the animal noises are like the laughter of children – refreshing - it is a symbol of life.

We also started using effective, micro-organisms (EM) in all our production areas. We compost our household waste with it, and it also improves our farm composting process. We add it through the irrigation system to the soil

to protect the plants from diseases, and to improve the levels of active micro organisms in the soil which improves the plants' ability to take up nutrients in the soil. All the farm animals and pets receive it in their drinking water, where it serves as a probiotic which improves their digestive system, their immune system and fight disease-causing bacteria. We use it to clean our pack shed, all the animal housing, in the laundry, and it is an excellent odour control product.

Today we know organic farming, or organic living, is a school of thought which is more than just embracing nature.....

Manjo sells at retail stores such as Swakopmund Spar, Ocean View Spar and Maerua Superspar, Food Lover's Market, the Saturday Bio Market in Windhoek, as well as to selected restaurants and lodges.

Contact Manjo on 0811295575 or preferably via e-mail: info@greenspot.com.na

FOR A CLEAN AND HEALTHY Home & Garden CHOOSE SCD PROBIOTICS



Harnessing nature's ability to restore personal health & the environment™

Probiotics are live microorganisms which, when applied in adequate amounts, deliver a health benefit to the host. While the traditional meaning of the word "probiotic" is applied to human and animal digestive microorganisms, SCD Probiotics has transferred the technology to a line of products that help keep your home and garden clean and healthy.

SCD Probiotics products are made from a liquid blend of powerful, beneficial microorganisms. They are all natural, biodegradable, not chemically engineered or genetically modified. Safe for use around children and pets, SCD Probiotics are products made for a sustainable future – for your family and for our planet.

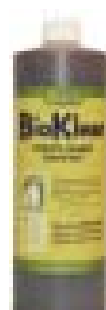


SCD Bio Ag®

A Probiotic Additive for Farm and Garden

An all-natural, environmentally-safe solution for use in organic farming and garden applications.

- Spray on the compost pile for accelerated composting
- Include in your watering system to help control pests
- Dilute and use as a non-chemical fertiliser for your flower boxes and indoor plants



SCD Bio Klean™

A Probiotic Cleaning Concentrate

An all-natural, probiotic cleaner containing powerful microbes which break down grease, grime and dirt. It reduces toxic substances and controls pathogens that cause disease.

- Use it in your kitchen and bathroom sinks and counters instead of chemical cleaners
- Pour it undiluted down your drains to keep them free of sludge
- Pour it in your fish ponds or water features to keep the water clear

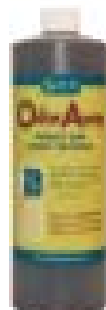


SCD Bio Livestock®

A Probiotic Livestock and Pet Supplement

An all-natural, probiotic feed and water additive that improves the underlying microbial ecology of your pets to one that is balanced and healthy

- Add to your pet's water bowl to help strengthen their immune system
- Spray on their food supply to help reduce waste odors and build their natural defences
- Use topically to help improve your pet's skin/coats

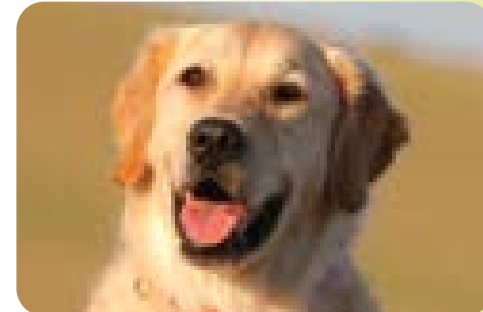


SCD Odor Away™

Probiotic Odor Control Concentrate

An all-natural, environmentally-friendly non-toxic odor reducer containing powerful microbes which inhibit odors commonly found around the house.

- Spray it in and around your compost area to reduce bad odors
- Spray it directly on your pets or on their sleeping areas
- Great for reducing odors in the house caused by smoke, bad smelling shoes etc
- Ideal to remove the bad odors at restaurant 'fat-traps', around waste bins etc



All Seasons Indoor Composter™ Kit

The perfect starter kit for composting food waste right in your home. Includes both a conveniently-sized composting bucket and an initial supply of **All Seasons Bokashi™** - creating a fermentation process and reducing foul odours.

- Add the composted materials to your garden or lawn for enriched, healthy soil.
- Use the super concentrated "tea" from the bucket to help fertilise plants
- Sprinkle **All Seasons Bokashi™** directly on your vegetable garden for extra bit of nutrients

GREENSPOT
organics

Distributed in Namibia by: Greenspot Organics, info@greenspot.com.na

Contact us for more details for the various application in Agricultural and Industrial sectors.

Windhoek stockists include: Maerua Superspar, Wilde Eend Nursery, Fereira's Nursery

Pioneer farmer: Farm Rogers

Ina & Ernst-Ludwig Cramer

At Farm Rogers, we applied natural management practices since the early 90s by keeping adapted cattle, doing low-stress livestock handling and avoiding the routine use of drugs, dipping and dosing.

During 2010, we made contact with NOA, became familiar with the NOA standards and realised, that our applied farming management was already quite close to the standards. Obviously, some minor changes were necessary, like abolishing South African imported fodder grains and commonly used lick components, like urea, to pave the way for organic production.

As a family, we like to eat food that is not only healthy and nutritious, but also produced in harmony with nature and is free of pesticides, artificial hormones and GMOs. Consequently, our farming philosophy has to be in line with our own values and demands.

Farm Rogers is our family farm and is situated in the Steinhausen Area of the Omaheke region. Our farming operation is diversified into three production pillars, namely beef production, dairy production and small scale dryland agriculture.

Most of the cattle on the farm belong to the beef herd; here we keep breeding cows, belonging to adapted maternal lines to produce our own young stock. The best heifers (young females) are kept to become part of the cow herd themselves, while the oxen, as well as the inferior females, are kept as slaughter animals.

Currently, most of the slaughter cattle are sold to an export abattoir and only very few are slaughtered on the farm. However, as Namibian abattoirs are currently not prepared to pay a premium for organic beef, we started processing our own beef and want to extend this over time.

The second main pillar is the dairy herd, consisting of Jersey and Brown Swiss dairy cows as well as their offspring. Although low in number, they are by far the most work-intensive cattle on the farm. A group of three men take care of the dairy herd, with the daily routine starting early in the morning by herding the cows together and bringing them in from the veld.

Feeding and milking is done simultaneously afterwards. Just after milking, the cows go out into the veld again, where they stay until coming back to the farmstead for the evening milking time. All the milk produced is processed on the farm.

The chicken flock form an integral part of the dairy herd. The chickens keep the tick-load on the cows at bay and also prevent an outbreak of flies by spreading the cattle manure.

The third and smallest pillar is the dryland agriculture. On about 60 ha fodder beans, sunflowers, oats and bloubuffel grass are cultivated. These crops are used to feed the dairy herd, chicken and beef cattle, when they have to be kept in the kraal or it is used as green manure to fertilise the fields.

Our goal for now and the future is to optimise production by doing more value adding on the farm.

We would like to increase the size of our beef herd, but due to the unpredictability of the rainy season, their numbers fluctuate.

Building the dairy herd was totally different. We couldn't use our own stock but had to buy in dairy cattle. This proved to be very difficult because slightly adapted dairy animals are not easy to find in Namibia. Large commercial dairy farms use only very fragile breeds.

The first phase of building the dairy herd was concluded with the arrival of 10 Jersey cows in the middle of May 2012. Now, we will try to cross our 21 dairy cows with more adapted, indigenous cattle, hopefully resulting in an animal better utilising the naturally available resources while still producing a fair amount of milk.

As there is very little organic feed available locally, we try to produce as much feed as possible on the farm. While the beef cattle make use of the naturally available veld or rangeland to satisfy almost all their needs, we just offer them an additional mineral lick, consisting of salt and phosphate as well as some organic maize during winter.

Feeding dairy cattle is difficult in Namibian conditions. Dairy cattle require large amounts of protein and energy feed for milk production, which are not naturally available even during the rainy season. For this reason, we feed them a mixture of fodder beans (protein) and maize (energy). While the average rainfall received in our part of the country permits the cultivation of fodder beans, it usually is not enough for the successful cultivation of maize. We buy maize from farm Eichenbach near Grootfontein, the only locally available organic source.

The lack of knowledge about organic livestock farming in our harsh, Namibian circumstances makes things difficult. In this field, we are truly pioneers. Our local circumstances can only be compared with Australia.

Organic farmers there work in a far more developed organic sector, where remedies, methods and tools are available that we simply don't have access to locally.

We produce:

- Yoghurt (sugar free, plain, sugar free low fat and vanilla low fat)
- Cottage Cheese (smooth, chunky and with different herbs)
- Cream Cheese (plain and with different herbs / spices)
- Mozzarella Cheese
- Feta Cheese
- Halloumi Cheese
- Cream (fresh and sour cream)
- Beef
- Smoked beef
- Droë wors

Cafes and restaurants use our products, and we sell our produce direct to consumers.

For more information visit www.organic-box.com



ATCK students preparing a compost heap

Agricultural Training Centre Namibia

The Agricultural Training Centre Krumhuk (ATCK) is Namibia's first training centre in agricultural production and farm household management that engages all faculties of young people so that they may master the challenges of practical farming and household management.

The Training Centre was established in response to the growing demand from the agricultural sector for young, passionate and self motivated Namibians, who are trained and well equipped for living and working on the land. The ACTK is the only agricultural institution in Namibia geared to offer academic and practical training in various aspects of sustainable agriculture and farm household management that is both appropriate and relevant to the Namibian agricultural environment.

Established in 2008 as a non-profit trust, the ATCK campus is situated on farm Krumhuk 25km south of Windhoek and comprises 8540 ha. The Training Centre is a fully functional farm including the homestead, complete with livestock, croplands and vegetable production areas, giving students the opportunity to fully immerse themselves in agricultural and housekeeping operations.

The aims of the Course in Sustainable Agriculture are to improve the farming skills of emerging young farmers, farm workers and farm managers; to teach farmers sustainable agricultural practices relevant to the Namibian ecology and to prepare them for the effects of climate change. The students learn that the farm is a living organism, so they get exposure to animal husbandry with cattle and sheep, grazing management, water management, financial planning and record keeping, farm technology, crop and feed production, horticulture and processing of milk products and meat products.

The aims of the Course in Farm Household Management are to equip household managers to run and coordinate a farm household wisely, taking into consideration the environment, the natural and financial resources at their disposal and health of the family in their care; to teach household managers to produce, preserve and market farm products to generate an income; to gain and improve needlework skills, producing their own clothes and decorating the home, and to understand the importance of tourism in Namibia and providing customer care for guests.

The Training Centre produces organic vegetables, fruit and dairy products, and is certified organic-in-conversion according to the Namibian Organic Association's PGS system. Most of the products are sold at the Saturday Bio market in Windhoek and directly to consumers.

Contact details:
atck@iway.na
061 400 677

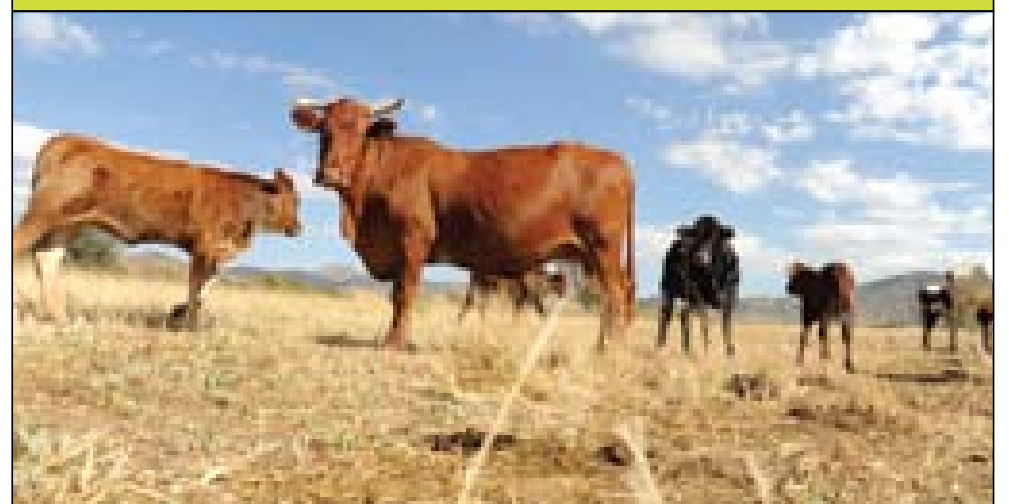


ATCK blackboard diagram



Compost preparation

Organic production promotes animal welfare



Organic livestock operations aim to optimise the health and welfare of animals by ensuring a high quality, balanced diet and an environment that meets their behavioral and physiological needs. Animals are given plenty of space and fresh air to thrive and grow naturally, guaranteeing a truly free-range life. This means fewer drugs and antibiotics.

Namibian Organic Association

www.noa.org.na



Milking at Farm Rogers



Ina & Ernst-Ludwig Cramer

Pioneer Farmer – Farm Belissima



Suzette van Vuuren

My name is Suzette van Vuuren and my husband Thys and I farm with vegetables and chickens on a small holding just outside Okahandja. I grew up in a family that likes to grow stuff and raise anything we could lay our hands on. When growing up and seeing snakes and birds feeding on their natural diet, slipping into 'organics' was more like recognising a state of mind than having a paradigm shift.

I am passionate that we should be able to buy or grow healthy, nutritious crops without having to think about chemical residue and genetic tampering. I joined the Namibian Organic Association (NOA) to add my voice to the growing

number of farmers and consumers standing up for what we believe in and to do our best to inform consumers about what is truly happening in conventional, chemical farming today.

I am not certified by NOA yet, but I am planning to apply this year if everything works according to plan. The reason for the delay - though it may sound strange - is that I am not fond of record keeping, and certification requires record keeping. There are very good reasons for all this paperwork. Every year when NOA come to do an inspection, they need to establish that I am in fact producing food according to the NOA production standards, and the proof is in... the paperwork. These strict measures are the only way to ensure that consumers can trust a product that carries the NOA mark - and is therefore very important for both me and the consumers of my produce.

Being part of NOA gives me a much appreciated opportunity to share my life, beliefs and knowledge with friends and associates - people who understand that even though we have the same destination in mind, the roads we take to get there might differ.

I grow fancy lettuce together with herbs and edible flowers in combined beds. The greatest thing

is to walk between the beds and see how plants benefit from the proximity of others - and the aromas of the various herbs follow you as you move from field to field, blending into one great experience. I love the fact that children can take anything that is growing and eat it from the plant without concerns about poison or fertilizer residue. And seeing a little bug in a packed salad makes me smile - we are truly bringing nature to our customers.

During the summer growing season of 2012, I had great success interplanting corn with baby marrows and patty pans. The combination is a good deterrent for fruit flies that can decimate a harvest if not managed properly. In the new summer growing season I will also include beans into the combination - the classic 'three sisters' as grown by the Inca's long before mono cropping became a standard in western agriculture.

We've found that tomatoes grown on small scale and interplanted with an abundance of basil, thyme, oregano and parsley have very good flavour and few problems from pests. The 'last of the season' tomatoes serve very well to protect new pea plants against the still very hot afternoon sun. Once the winter gets to the tomatoes, it will turn

to mulch and the peas will take over the beds.

For the moment I find it a bit difficult to find the balance between continuity of produce and land used to ensure quantities. As long as I'm still harvesting from one field it cannot be planted with follow-up crops - and my available planting space is just so much, or should I say, just so small! And taking care to nurture the soil takes some production time too.

Our compost is made from horse manure, plant rests and herbs (comfrey, yarrow etc), and applied on the beds before sowing or planting. Worm compost and vermi-wash (liquid strained from the earthworm compost) is also used and is applied through the irrigation system. Since we do constant crop rotation, every second or third crop in the sequence is herbs and / or green manure such as oats, cowpeas and canola. The great advantage of this is that the green material is cut once or twice for chicken feed before it is worked into the soil.

I've rarely had to deal with huge pest or disease problems. For downy mildew on the cucurbits (pumpkin, squash, baby marrows and patty pans), I use a spray of 50g Bicarbonate of Soda to 10 l of water. I did have a bad stint with an army of locusts descending on the lettuce and swiss chard, but 4 cocks (as in chickens) sorted it out within a week and had to be removed when they started moving into the 'pest' slot.

The markets I focus on at the moment in Windhoek are the weekly Bio Market, retailers such as Food

Lovers Market, and a box scheme where I deliver a box of vegetables and herbs to home customers. Finding my differentiating position in the market was a bit of a challenge at first but everything turned out very well once I focussed on building personal relationships with as many customers as possible. Looking new customers in the eye can be an extremely scary experience for me knowing that I'm offering the best of my dreams and passions, but how to convince them...

This year for the first time I have a few broilers (I have fewer than I started out with, because the dog found these continuous eaters a challenge to his reputation and...). The great thing about my broilers is that they are not conventional, factory farmed, dumb broilers. They are inquisitive and adventurous - not afraid to run into the tall grass when they are let out.

The one debilitating factor in the lives of my chickens and me, is the fact that no matter how much lush green pasture we plant for them, now matter how free they range and how often I visit with them, I have no choice but to buy whatever feed I find commercially available. There is only one grower of organic feed in the country and from him I can buy only at the end of the harvest - once a year, and they currently don't have enough to supply all the Namibian Organic Producers. Buying feed from regular commercial outlets means that I know it was grown with all the pesky and most probably contain genetically modified maize.

I don't want to eat the stuff, I don't want my family to eat it, I don't want to



Lettuce seedlings

feed my chickens with it and I don't want to eat chickens that were fed on it. And believe me, once we start to read books by people like Gene Logsdon, Michael Pollan and Joel Salatin (to name a few), we realise there are many more people in the world who feel this way. And NOA feel this way too - before I can have my chickens certified organic, I have to change their diet. Becoming a vegan is not an option for me, but I can and do make choices about my life and so are others.

We choose what we grow and how we grow it. We choose what we eat and how we eat it. And finally, but extremely important, we choose what we sell to the consumers - the people we want to come back again and again because they know we sell them the best food they can share with their families.

And yes, you may find a bug in a salad pack or spinach pack but put it gently into your garden. It is good for biodiversity - the stuff of life.

Contact Suzette on **0811270681** or suzette@organicnamibia.com



AQUA

CONSERVATION SERVICES cc

"Inspired by our future"





1. Heated air and bad odours rise, gather in the dome and escape through the ventilation shaft.
2. The black plastic dome absorbs the rays of the sun. The heat causes circulation of air that improves the evaporation of the liquid content of the excrement and speeds up the drying process of the solid matter.
3. The toilet pan with divided urinal that leads to soak-away, reduces the liquid contents can therefore dry more quickly.
4. Urinal outlet soak-away pipes.
5. Durable non-corrosive black plastic tank forms a closed system. Natural elements like rain do not influence the efficiency of the facility.

• Dry toilet systems

• Grey water recycle is not a new phenomenon and has been in use in the United States and Australia for many years. Grey water is wastewater generated from domestic activities such as dish washing, laundry and bathing. Grey water comprises 50-80% of residential wastewater generated from all of the house's sanitation equipment except for the toilets. Grey water gets its name from its cloudy appearance and from its status as being neither fresh (white water from groundwater or potable water), nor polluted (sewage).

• Enzymes vs Microbial Products Commercial enzyme preparations contain a very low concentration of active enzymes when compared to those produced by our microbial products in a biological treatment plant. The enzymes used in such preparations are generally those which are produced by fungi. Thus these 'commercial' enzymes will not work optimally.

Natural Products

- Dish wash liquid
- Shampoo
- Laundry liquid
- Conditioner
- Herbal Sanitiser
- Shower Gel
- All Purpose cleaner
- Bar Soap
- Liquid hand soap

• Green Power Solar Systems:

1. Have an average return on investment of approximately 4 years for a family of 4 at current electricity prices.
2. Our collectors have a life expectancy of 20 years.
3. Our systems have been independently tested by the SABS and the German equivalent DIN Certco.
4. Green Power Systems are split systems, meaning that only the solar collector and not the unsightly geyser is visible on your roof i.e. - they look good!
5. You can use your existing geysers.

Manfred Förtsch - Tel: +264-81-3666441 • P.O. Box 6915 - Ausspannplatz - Windhoek - Namibia
info@aqua-conservation.com - www.aqua-conservation.com

Bloublommetjieskloof Products

Bloublommetjieskloof body care and household products, distributed in Namibia by Aqua Conservation Services, is the ideal product range for those who want to go natural.

The products are produced and processed on the Bloublommetjieskloof Farm in Wellington, South Africa. The farm was converted to organic and biodynamic in the late 60's by Jeanne Malherbe. A true pioneer, Jeanne managed to bring about a strong awareness of healthy food and natural farming. The farm's produce quickly became quite famous and sought after, and is now certified biodynamic with Demeter International.

Biodynamic farming is an initiative arising out of Anthroposophy, as defined by Rudolf Steiner, the initiator of the movement.

Because biodynamic farming requires consciously working with the spiritual world, natural farming is a pre-requisite and Demeter certification therefore accepts only 100% natural and organic inputs. Central to biodynamic farming is the use of the special biodynamic preparations, made from various herbs and cow manure. These preparations are inserted into compost heaps or diluted and sprayed over crops and pastures. The preparations serve to enliven the soil. This in turn imparts a unique quality to the produce.

The Bloublommetjieskloof body care product range available in Namibia includes Sage & Rosemary Shampoo, Baby Wash, Sage Leaf Conditioner, Hair & Body Wash, Hand Soap liquid, Organic Skin Food, Facial Cleanser,

Toothpaste pad, Tooth powder /whitener, Honey & Calendula Balm, Fynbos & Lavender Bar Soaps, Anti-perspirant Powder, and a Pet Shampoo. Products such as Herbal Sanitiser, Basil All Purpose Cleaner with Scourer, Fewerfew Dishwashing liquid, Soapwort Laundry Liquid & Fabric Softener, Paw Paw Wash Brightener & Air Freshener takes care of your household needs.

About 95% or more of the ingredients are grown on the farm to gain the Demeter certification. 5% or less of the ingredients may be bought from other Demeter certified farms.

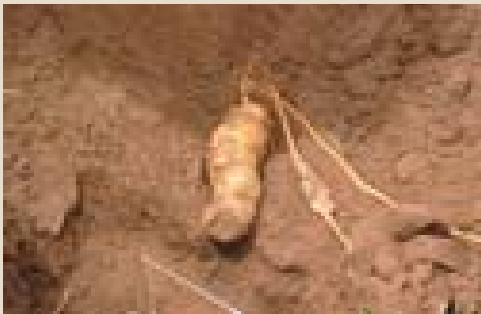
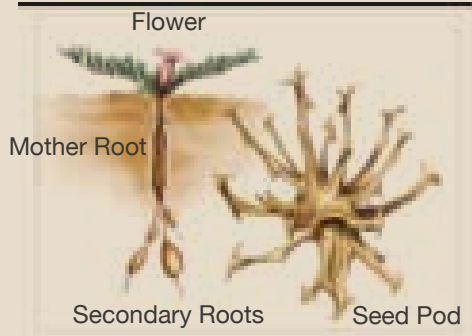
The products are available each Saturday at the Green Market in Umland street, Windhoek. Other outlets include Maerua Superspar Windhoek and Gaia Health & Wellness in Gobabis.

Wild Harvesting – Devil's Claw

Devil's Claw has been traditionally used in Africa for hundreds of years. It is only around the turn of the 20th century that its healing properties were discovered by western medicine.

Today Devil's Claw is one of the most researched plants and is widely used to support the treatment of joint inflammation, stiffness, arthritis and rheumatism.

ECOSO
DYNAMICS



EcoSo Dynamics does not only trade with the raw material of Devil's Claw but also sells tea and tablets for human consumption as well as tablets for dogs and powder for horses. All products are made from pure plant material consisting of the dried secondary root of the plant.

It is important to ensure sustainable harvesting and EcoSo Dynamics has signed long term contracts with disadvantaged communities, providing the necessary training and equipment to harvesters. To date EcoSo Dynamics

sources from over 2000 trained and registered harvesters who are frequently monitored on sustainable harvesting. The beneficiaries are mainly the San in the Tsumkwe and Caprivi regions.

This not only improves the livelihood of the suppliers, but also ensures the traceability of the raw material.

In order to be competitive and in line with rules and regulations internationally, over 2.7 mil hectares of harvesting grounds are certified organic by Ecocert SA with an annual trade volume of 60t of organic-

ally certified Devil's Claw. EcoSo Dynamics is also in the process of obtaining GMP (Good Manufacturing Practices) certification.

The processing plant of EcoSo Dynamics is on Farm Otjekongo in the Okahandja district, some 350 km north of Windhoek with a staff complement of 17 Namibians.

EcoSo's products are available at most pharmacies and Health Shops in Windhoek.

For further information please send an e-mail to dero@mweb.com.na

Pioneer Farmer – Humulus Horticulture

Dirk & Belinda Wölbling

Humulus Horticultural CC is a diverse vegetable farm on the river banks of the Okahandja River. The business was founded in 2006 by Belinda and Dirk Wölbling after we bought Plot B 13 in the Okahandja Municipal Area.

Over 20 types of garden vegetables and culinary herbs are currently cultivated. We employ approximately 30 people, who are mainly engaged in the vegetable garden. Currently, our vegetable cultivation area is just under 3 ha. We are planning to extend the area under production this year with an additional 4ha of lucerne.

Our farm is managed according to Namibia Organic Association (NOA) standards. We are currently streamlining our business for certification so that we can offer our clients a guarantee that our produce is indeed organic.

The reason we farm organically, is because of the importance of soil fertility. Soil is a living entity, and a fertile soil can only be achieved through a balanced mineral and organic content. We follow

the Albrecht system which helps us to create a soil with the right nutrients in the correct proportions. The nutrients are held on the soil colloid, a gel-like state of matter that is a mixture of clay and humus (the organic matter). That is also the reason that I called the business "Humulus" – it refers to the importance of humus in the soil.

Our soil fertilization management practices are based on producing our own compost and by doing green manuring. Green manuring is when a farmer grows a type of cover crop that primarily adds nutrients and organic matter to the soil. We grow crops such as cow peas and oats for a specific period and then incorporate it into the soil. We will use perennial lucerne in the long term.

We have experienced great results with this approach. Problem areas are now basically resolved with an increase in production, a decrease in weeds and problem insects by interrupting the pest development cycle through green manuring.

Challenges that we face are largely due to pests such as locusts, pumpkin flies and stink bugs, but we experiment with different approaches. Unfortunately things do not work in a supermarket fashion - where you get products for all your needs. Nature is complex in its biodiversity and we need to try and



Dirk Wölbling in his cauliflower field

understand it so that we can use it to our benefit.

Irrigation takes place according to the needs of the crop, and is either done through drip irrigation or micro-irrigation.

Marketing is essentially done through wholesale and retail trading. Supply to restaurants in and around Windhoek, as well as farmer-to-customer direct marketing is becoming an increasingly important marketing positioning activity for the business.

Future plans include putting a part of the land under shade nets and green houses. The main objective is to ensure continuous production especially in the farmer-to-customer market. In addition we would like to expand on specialised produce such as asparagus and strawberries.

Contact details:
humulus@iway.na
0812366369

Organic farming is good for nature



We depend on the health of nature – soil, water, animals, plants and their various ecosystem services. Organic agriculture is sustainable agriculture that respects natural life-cycle systems which aims to conserve and improve our environment.

Namibian
Organic
Association

www.noa.org.na

The Health Nut

'The Health Nut' at Maerua SUPERSPAR stocks a large variety of organic & special dietary needs products.



Just some of the brands you will find at 'The Health Nut'
Rapunzel • Glutagon • Health Connection • Good Life products

Maerua

SUPERSPAR

Maerua Lifestyle Centre • Centaurus Road • Windhoek • Namibia
Tel. (+264) 61 - 383 000, Fax. (+264) 61 - 383 0009

Facing the challenges of organic livestock production in Namibia



Cattle in kraal on Farm Springbockvley

Pioneer Farm – Farm Springbockvley

Judith Isele

Farm Springbockvley, a cattle and sheep farm situated in the Kalahari near Blumfelde, is run by Judith Isele and by spirit and in memory of Ekkehard Külbs. Together with four employees and their families, we live and work with indigenous livestock; 600 – 700 Nguni cattle and 4000 – 5000 Damara sheep.

While trying to satisfy the nutritional needs of the animals, we also aim to meet the needs of people, soil and grasses. We want to generate *healthy meat* from *happy animals* produced on *healthy land* managed by *happy people*. In our daily life, we love being with our animals and exploring the mysteries of

our veld. The essence of our life is to share our work, experience and life.

Towards Organic production

With an average yearly rainfall of 260 mm, Springbockvley is situated in an area of average production capacity which supplies appropriate fodder for cattle and sheep alike. Since 1990, the farm is managed according to the Holistic Management™ decision making framework. This generally includes a high level of awareness for sustainable use of resources and improvement of biodiversity while at the same time managing toward profitability and the wellbeing of the people

involved. For this reason, farms run according to Holistic Management™ principles and procedures present themselves well for the conversion to organic production.

When it comes to organic livestock production, a rangeland based system is not about animal husbandry only. Being uniquely able to convert plant material into animal produce, ruminants are simultaneously 'gardeners of their own food'. Animals, the plants they eat and the soil in which these grow, are irrevocably linked and interdependent. Sound management of rangelands, soils included, needs as much attention as the wellbeing of the animals.

Well adapted small frame cattle and sheep are run in a few combined herds of up to 300 head of cattle and 2000 sheep. With the practice of Holistic Management™ Planned Grazing on Farm Springbockvley, it is possible to continually increase stocking rates. This has been achieved in spite of the erratic rainfall which varied between 60 and 680mm since 1989. Stocking rates culminated in more than 40kg live-animal-mass per hectare by the end of 2011 which is significantly higher than on most farms in the region. Simultaneously since 1995, a remarkable ratio in meat production per hectare of more than one third of the stocking rate was - and is - maintained and compares well with those of areas with higher production capacities. By 2012, animal numbers on the farm have increased to 800 Nguni-cattle from just 540 about 15 years ago, a stocking rate which was never achieved before.

The number of Damara sheep remains consistent at between 4300 and 4500 to 5000. Treated with low stress livestock handling techniques, these animals provide for high efficiency of production.

Challenges for organic certification

Farm Springbockvley showcases the typical Namibian circumstances of livestock farming and the challenges and constraints of converting to organic agriculture. Management changes to maintain the animal and plant health within the conversion process can be challenging, depending on each farm's specific circumstances and characteristics. The conversion process will differ in time and different problems could arise, depending on:

- the farms unique situation,
- varying weather throughout the conversion process,
- the current degree of intensity of the conventional livestock system,
- financial bottlenecks in especially cash flow due to the certification costs, and
- a possible reduction of the productivity of the

livestock herd, depending on the nutritional management plan.

One of the main challenges, also experienced by Australian farmers, is the fact that the usage of urea and other synthetic nitrogen compounds is prohibited in organic farming. It is common practice in Namibia to supply urea during the dry season as a low cost protein supplement to safeguard the productivity of cattle that are destined to compete in the export market requirements. In order to get the best price per kg and carcass, most farmers aim to sell their slaughter animals below the age of 36 months at minimum slaughter weights of 215 to 230 kg. To achieve this most farmers feed a urea lick mix during the dry season. The use of sound grazing planning allows for the optimal supply of all nutrients for the animal's needs. To a certain degree this can eliminate the need for urea.

Farm Springbockvley is watching with great interest the developments on farm Oasis just to the other side of the Namibian border with Botswana in the Ghanzi area. Here the Barnes family are practicing Holistic Management™ planned grazing for over 10 years, running very large herds of cattle (up to 2000 cows in one herd). Although the soil (Kalahari sandveld) is similar, the average rainfall is higher and the vegetation composition also different from Springbockvley. On Oasis a higher animal density is achieved by combining 2000 LSU in camps between 188 and 558 hectares with most around 300 hectares and an average density of 6.5 animals per hectare on a given day in a camp.

This higher animal density and herd effect may well have led to improving the growing conditions and with it, the remarkable spread of brachiaria negropedata, arguably the most nutritious and palatable perennial grass found in Southern Africa. Brachiaria tufts, if managed well, produce some green shoots nearly the all year round on farm Oasis. Together with the diversity

of browse from nitrogen rich shrub leaves, livestock have access to a carbohydrate-protein balanced diet and can grow muscle and produce more milk even during the dry months. This led to the Barnes' decision to stop supplementing their animals with urea three years after starting with Holistic Management™ planned grazing.

Nevertheless on farm Springbockvley, with its lowest rainfall in many years, the optimal digestion qualities of the "standing hay" for its high fibre content and low nutritional density, may not be given during the dry season. In the absence of organically produced protein feeds, GMO-free oil cakes from non-organic sources may well be used but are still expensive and not widely accessible. Given that most parts of the dry country are unsuitable for crop production (soybeans or else), further market research on alternative protein sources might be crucial to sustain healthy and well fed organic animals. In 2011 we decided to replace urea with milled acacia erioloba pods which are mixed with the mineral lick.

Organic certification

Our farm is not yet certified organic, but we are ready for it, once there is a real market demand. NOA's Participatory Guarantee System can be used for certification if there is a local demand for organic meat, but to export, we need to incur the expense of third party certification. In order for Namibia to export organic meat to South Africa or other international destinations, an abattoir also needs to be certified to be able to slaughter and process organic meat. The main requirement here is the guaranteed separation between organic and non-organic meat, which does not pose a major problem for abattoirs.

In the mean time, our farm products are available from us directly, such as carcasses of sheep, cattle, springbuck, and oryx as well as home-made cheese.

Contact us on 062 – 581 606 or iselkuel@iway.na



Since 2004 Windhoek has its very own weekly

Green Market / Bio-Markt

* for freshly picked organically grown vegetables - partly certified by NOA

* other products made without artificial chemicals or colourants:

dairy products, meat products, home baked bread and biscuits, honey, jams and juices, eggs, herbs, chutneys etc.

* crafts, hand made from natural materials such as cotton, wool, seeds, leather, wire, wood etc.

* pot plants and flowers in season.

The pulse of the **Green Market** is the *Market Café* with its delicious cakes, quiches and 'Brötchen' with tasty toppings. Where else can you still get a mug of coffee for N\$ 5.00? Every week a different school or welfare organisation takes turns to host the popular Café in order to raise funds for their social projects.

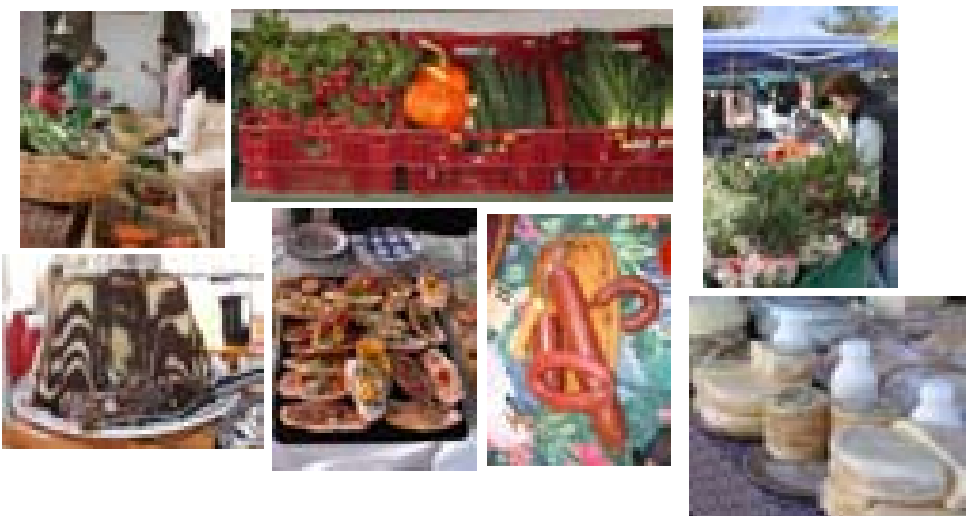
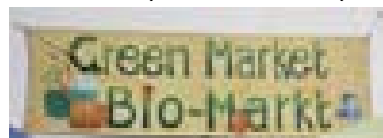
When? Every Saturday 8:30 to 12:00 - except Easter Saturday and between Christmas and the first two weeks of the new year

Where? Klein Windhoek, 3 Uhland Street

Parking: Ample guarded parking on the Stephanus Church premises, and off-street parking in Uhland St. and Berg St.

Entry is free.

For further details and registration of stalls call the Market Care Group: Inge Glaue (Tel 061- 239 555 / 081 127 4495) or Heidi Herbert (Tel 061 -22 39 59) or Almute Möller (Tel 061-234 702).





Organic Box

local organic food delivered to you in Windhoek & Okahandja

- choose from our extensive list of dairy, vegetables & meat
- get your order delivered to your home or office or pick it up at our central delivery point every Thursday

Ina Cramer & Dirk Wölbling order@organic-box.com

www.organic-box.com



!Nara Products

The !Nara is a thorny shrub that is endemic to the Namib Desert. The harsh desert conditions have formed a desert adapted plant that grows on dune hammocks with root systems up to 100 metres long, no leaves, small flowers but very nutritious fruit with seeds full of valuable oil...

The fruit are harvested as a valuable food source by the Topnaar (#Aonin) living along the Kuiseb river. They move seasonally into the !Nara "fields" between the dunes, on their donkey carts to harvest these valuable !Nara fruits. The handpicked fruit are cut in half and the flesh scraped into a large drum. The pulp-filled drum is heated over a low burning fire and is constantly stirred to slowly separate the seeds from the liquid fruit pulp. The peels are fed to the donkeys.

The fruit pulp is a valuable food resource and the seeds are sold to create important income for some 300 rural Topnaar who live along the dry river bed and depend on small stock farming and !Nara harvesting for their livelihoods. This 8000-year old tradition of hand picking and preparing the fruit is kept alive as a valuable heritage passed from generation to generation.

The seeds are sold as snacks to the local community or fairly traded with desert hills, a Swakopmund based company that was initiated in 2008 by Volker & Stefanie Huemmer. desert hills adds value to the seed sales by pressing a fine virgin oil that is used in a variety of food and natural cosmetic products sold under the name "desert hills -food" and "BODYfoodNAMIBIA".

The !Nara seeds are cold-pressed in a special, patented spiral press without the use of solvents, chemicals or additives. The press technique allows

the oil to keep its valuable healthy vitamins, pigments and flavours. Tests have shown that the oil has over 80% unsaturated fatty acids, with 58% being poly unsaturated and that it has an acidity of 0.5.

desert hills processes the !Nara oil into a range of food oil products such as !Nara oil natural, !Nara oil with organic espresso beans and !Nara oil with fresh vanilla. The !Nara oil spice rubs are made with dehydrated garden herbs, Namibian sea salt herbs and spices and !Nara oil. The natural ingredients can be sprinkled or rubbed onto your food just before preparing. The !Nara salad dressing is a popular convenient salad sauce also made with lots of dried herbs and spices and the fruity nutty !Nara oil.

The pure cold-pressed oil has a high content of Omega-6-fatty acids, and together with natural products like shea butter, lanolin, beeswax, jojoba, aloe vera, cocoa butter, vitamin E and a variety of essential oils, these !Nara oil cosmetics have a soft, replenishing effect on dry and irritated skin conditions. The BODYfoodNAMIBIA cosmetic range includes hand & body cream, face cream, after shave balm, sun cream, bath salts, body peelings, tissue oil, and foot butter.

The !Nara oil products are all available at the desert hills farm stall and farm bistro on plot 103, Swakop River, which is open every Saturday between 11h00 – 16h00. Selected !Nara products are also available at the following shops: Maerua Superspar, Mewiliko Gift Shop Windhoek Craft Centre; Duty Free Shop International Airport; Kubatsirana Helping Hands in Swakopmund; Klein Aus Vista, Canyon Lodge, Images of Africa in Outjo; Naankuse Lodge; Onjala Lodge and selected pharmacies. Contact us on 0811290375 or visit www.nara.com.na for more details.



Can organic feed the world?

Not only can organic agriculture feed the world, according to the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) in a recently released report, it may be the only way we can solve the growing problem of hunger in developing countries.

UNEP states in its extensive study "challenges the popular myth that organic agriculture cannot increase agricultural productivity." UNEP reported that organic practices in Africa outperformed industrial, chemical-intensive conventional farming and also provided environmental benefits such as improved soil fertility, better retention of water and resistance to drought. This analysis of 114 farming projects in 24 African countries found that organic or near-organic practices resulted in a yield increase of more than 100 percent.

Some of the conclusions from the October 2008 UNEP report:

- Organic practices resulted in per hectare food **crop productivity increases**.
- Organic production **allows farmers access to markets**, enabling them to obtain premium prices for their produce, as well as **increased access to good quality, organic food** for the entire community.
- Organic and near-organic agricultural methods and technologies are **ideally suited for many poor, marginalised smallholder farmers** in Africa or other developing nations.
- Recent food price hikes and rising fuel prices have highlighted the importance of making agriculture **less energy and external input dependent**.
- Certified organic production for the export market, with its premium prices, can undoubtedly **reduce poverty** among farmers.
- Organic agricultural systems are making a significant contribution to the **reduction of food insecurity and poverty** and improvement in rural livelihoods in areas of Africa.



These conclusions also confirmed findings and recommendations of the recently released report of the International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development (IAASTD) panel, an intergovernmental process supported by over 400 experts under the co-sponsorship of the FAO, GEF, UNDP, UNEP, UNESCO, the World Bank and WHO (issued on 14 April 2008).

The IAASTD report states that "the way the world grows its food will have to change radically to better serve the poor and hungry if the world is to cope with growing population and climate change while avoiding social breakdown and environmental collapse." The authors found that progress in agriculture has reaped unequal benefits and has come at a high social and environmental cost and food producers should try using "natural processes" like crop rotation and organic fertilisers. The authors call for more attention to small-scale farmers and utilisation of sustainable agricultural practices, specifically mentioning organic farming as an option several times.

In contrast to organic farming systems, chemically-based



degenerative farming systems lead to declines in resource abundance and environmental quality, leaving natural systems in worse shape than they were originally by depleting soils and damaging the environment.

Practices using petroleum based and chemical inputs have been shown to cause continual loss of soil nutrients, soil organic matter and food nutrient content. These practices consume vast quantities of natural resources to prepare, distribute, and apply fossil fuel inputs, and can justly be defined as degenerative farming.

With increased population pressures and declining ecological support systems of healthy soil and water, the only sustainable and restorative option available is one based on the biologically enhancing production models of organic farming.

The industrial Green Revolution has not, and cannot, feed the world. Instead of helping people feed themselves, it has created a cycle of dependency.

In a world of 6.5 billion people, some 923 million people are seriously undernourished (FAO SOFI Report 2007) with more than two billion people suffering from

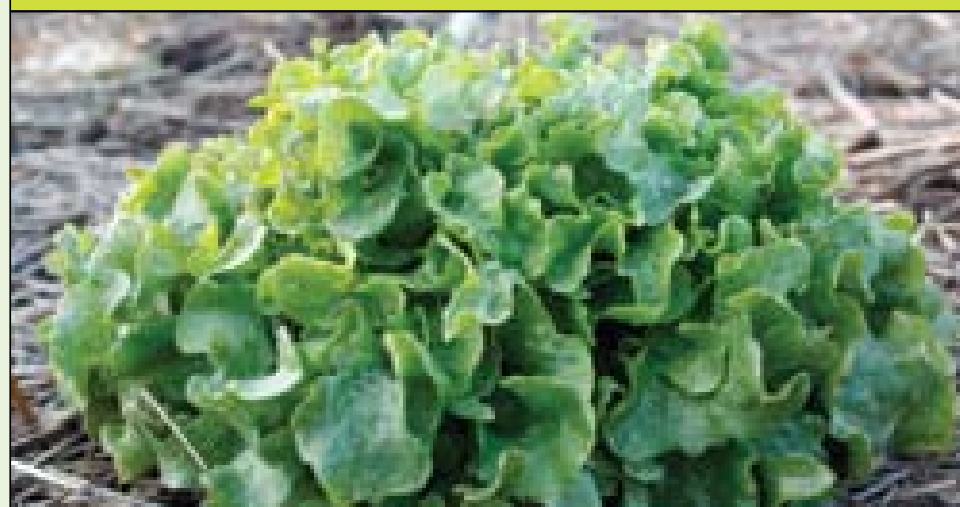
micronutrient malnutrition, or 'hidden hunger' caused by inadequate and non-diversified diets (FAO SOFI Report 2002). 25,000 men, women and children die each day from starvation (World Health Report 2000). Experts project that the world food supply will need to double again over the next 40 years to feed our planet's population.

Based upon the heavy use of chemical fertilisers and irrigation, the industrial Green Revolution worked only as long as fuel was cheap and water was abundant.

The transitory benefits of increased short-term food production have come at too great an ecological price as carbon is extracted from the soil and emitted as global warming carbon dioxide in our air instead of remaining in the soil to nurture crops. Petroleum based fertilisers and chemical pesticides have also polluted our water and poisoned our environment, food, and people.

Fortunately, the latest scientific approaches in organic agriculture, supported by a body of replicated research data and economic analyses, offer affordable and quickly adaptable ways to implement farming systems that can quickly move us out of our current crisis.

Organic food is more nutritious, it is safe, it tastes great



Organic food typically contains higher levels of vitamin C, a higher mineral content and more phytonutrients - plant compounds which can be effective against cancer and other diseases. It is not produced with any harmful additives or pesticides and it is bursting with flavour and life supporting energy.

Namibian Organic Association

www.noa.org.na

What is Genetic Engineering (GE)?

Genetic engineering is a technology that can transfer genes from one species to another, unrelated species of plants, animals and microorganism (bacteria, virus, fungus). It is possible to break down the species' boundaries set up over millions of years of evolution. Never before was it possible to transfer genes from animals to plants or from bacteria to humans. By combining the genes of unrelated species, permanently altering their genetic codes, new organisms are created that will pass the genetic changes onto their offspring.

Is Genetic Modification (GM) an extension of natural plant breeding?

Proponents of genetic engineering often claim that they are doing the same work as conventional breeding, just faster and with more precision. It is true that gene transfers also occur in conventional plant and animal breeding, but these only take place between individuals of the same species, or in some cases, between closely related species. However, genetic engineering is not bound by these limitations. So, for example, a genetically modified gene in the most common herbicide resistant soya beans was pieced together from a plant virus, a soil bacterium and a petunia plant. As a result, a new form of life has been artificially created.

Why is it important to know about GM?

It is important to know about GM because we are eating genetically modified food and additives, without knowing about it and because it is mostly not labelled. To be able to make the right choices, we need to have the right information.

Do GM Crops have benefits?

Proponents claim that genetically modified (GM) crops:

- are safe to eat and more nutritious
- increase crop yields, thereby helping farmers and solving the food crisis
- reduce use of herbicides and insecticides

- are just extensions of natural breeding, and have no risks different from naturally bred crops.

However, a large and growing body of scientific research and on-the-ground experience indicates that Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) fail to live up to these claims.

Instead, GM crops:

- can be toxic, allergenic or less nutritious than their natural counterparts
- can disrupt the ecosystem, damage vulnerable wild plant and animal populations and harm biodiversity
- increase chemical inputs (pesticides, herbicides) over the long term
- are laboratory-made and, once released, harmful GMOs cannot be recalled from the environment.

Are GM foods safe to eat?

Maybe. Maybe not. Contrary to industry claims, GM foods are not properly tested for human safety before they are released for sale. In fact, the only published study directly testing the safety of a GM food on humans found potential problems, and according to scientists, GM food might have the following harmful effects:

- Allergenic and immune system reactions to the new substances contained in GMOs.
- Antibiotic-resistant genes, often used in genetic engineering, could be transferred to pathogens in the gut. Disease triggered by these pathogens could no longer be treated with these antibiotics.
- New genes could alter the expression of native genes which may have unexpected secondary effects.

Animal studies on GM foods give cause for concern

Scientists are reporting a growing number of studies that examine the effects of GM foods on laboratory animals. These studies, summarised below, raise serious concerns regarding the safety of GM foods for

humans as well as animals.

- Rats fed GM tomatoes developed stomach ulcerations
- Liver, pancreas and testes function was disturbed in mice fed GM soya
- GM potatoes fed to rats caused excessive growth of the lining of the gut similar to a pre-cancerous condition
- Rats fed insecticide-producing GM maize grew more slowly, suffered problems with liver and kidney function and showed higher levels of certain fats in their blood
- Mice fed GM insecticide producing maize over four generations showed a build up of abnormal structural changes in various organs (liver, spleen, pancreas), major changes in the pattern of gene function in the gut, most significantly, reduced fertility
- Mice of varying ages fed with GM maize showed a marked disturbance in immune system cell function and biochemical activity

Where do patents come in?

In former times, nobody thought of patenting plants, animals or human genes and cells. But in the developing age of genetic engineering, life is equated with patentable commodities. Now farmers have to pay royalties for every patented seed. But is it right to patent a tomato plant in the same way as a chemical or a vacuum cleaner? If there is no longer a difference between a living being and a non-living thing, it will dramatically change our relationship to animals, plants, each other and to ourselves.

Are GM crops environmentally friendly?

Genetically modified organisms can spread through nature and interbreed with natural organisms, contaminating non 'GE' environments and future generations in an uncontrollable way. For instance, genetically

engineered cereals may cross with various grasses. Their release is 'genetic pollution' and is a major threat because GMOs cannot be recalled once released into the environment.

GE companies threaten farmers' livelihoods

When farmers buy GM seed, they sign a technology agreement promising not to save and replant seed. They have to buy new seed each year from the biotech company, thus transferring control of food production from farmers to seed companies. Consolidation of the seed industry increasingly means that farmers have little choice but to buy GM seed. Centuries of farmer knowledge that went into creating locally adapted and varied seed stocks are wiped out. Many critics regard this as a major threat to world-wide food security and biodiversity.

The well documented uncontrollability of GM crops, also impact on farmers who have a right to grow non-GMO and their own pure strains of plants without fear of such contamination.

For instance, Percy Schmeiser from Canada, has grown and improved canola seeds for 40 years. His fields got contaminated with Monsanto's herbicide-resistant Roundup Ready Canola Genes, and Monsanto accused him of patent infringement. Not only did he lose his locally adapted seed bank, he also suffered significant financial damages by fighting the extended court case. The reality is that it does not matter how GM gets into a farmer's field - by wind or cross-pollination - it remains the property of the bio-tech company, and farmers have to pay for the right to "use" it.

Who benefits from GMO?

The real beneficiaries of the biotech revolution have been the developers of the technology themselves, the seed and agro-chemical companies. The transgenes used in creating GM crops are patented and owned by biotech companies such as Monsanto.

Product Labelling

The Namibian Organic Association insists that Namibian consumers have the right to know what is in their food, equipping them to choose safe and healthy food! GMO is not allowed in certified organic products, so the choice is easy. But what about the rest of our food?

To date, cotton, maize and soybean are the main GM crops commercially grown in South Africa. South African farmers planted a total area of 2.3 million ha of GM crops in 2011. Statistics from the South African National Seed Organisation (SANSOR) indicate that presently, 77% of seed sales for maize, 100% for cotton and 78% for soybean are now genetically modified.

In Namibia, GMO crops are not allowed to be planted because the Biosafety Act and the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety is not yet implemented.

These products find their way to the Namibian market. From 1 October 2011, food producers, importers and packagers are required by law, in terms of the South African Consumer Protection Act and its Regulations, to label GM foods and marketing materials where the genetically modified (GM) content is at least 5%. In other words, the trigger for labelling is where the GM content is 5% or more.

Despite legislation requiring that GM foods be labelled properly, tests conducted at the University of the Free State by the African Centre for Biosafety (ACB) found that the following products were not labelled as GMO food according to the new consumer protection act:

Nestle's infant cereal, Cerelac Honey was found to contain 77.65% of GM maize DNA in relation to the total maize DNA.

Bokomo's Wheat Free Pronutro was found to contain: 90.36% GM maize and 71.42% GM soya. "This despite verbal assurances given to us telephonically by Bokomo staff that the product was non-GM" said Zakiyya Ismail, from the ACB who has been investigating GM labelling in South Africa.

Impala maize meal was found to contain 66.18% GM maize. This maize is consumed daily by millions of South Africans and Namibians as an integral part of their staple diet.

"Consumers are wilfully being deceived and deprived of their right to know and to make informed choices," said Mariam Mayet, Director of the ACB. The ACB is taking legal advice on the matter and intends to fully utilise the remedies contained in the Consumer Protection Act, to ensure that the rights of consumers are fully enforced.

What is NOA's position on GM in agriculture?

The Namibian Organic Association (NOA) is in agreement with the International Federation of Organic Agricultural Movement's (IFOAM) position opposing genetic engineering in agriculture, in view of the unprecedented danger it represents for the entire biosphere and for the particular economic and environmental risks it poses for organic producers.

IFOAM believes that genetic engineering in agriculture causes, or may cause:

- Negative and irreversible environmental impacts
- Release of organisms which have never before existed in nature and which cannot be recalled
- Pollution of the gene-pool of cultivated crops, micro-organisms and animals
- Denial of free choice, both for farmers and consumers
- Violation of farmers' fundamental property rights and endangerment of their economic independence
- Unacceptable threats to human health

The Namibian Organic Association calls for a ban on GMOs in all agriculture and urges the introduction of mandatory and comprehensive labelling for genetically engineered agricultural products in order to secure the right of consumer choice.

Contact the Namibian Organic Association (NOA) for scientific references for this article.





Organic outperforms conventional chemical farming in 30 year research trials

It's official: Organic farming outperforms conventional, chemical farming when it comes to crop yields, sustainability and profit. The evidence is found in the US-based Rodale Institute's Farming Systems Trial - the longest running side by side research study of organic and conventional methods.

Researchers have found that organically grown corn and soybeans are more resistant to drought, outperforming conventional crops by 30% and 50% -100% respectively.

Under organic farming, the soil organic matter captures and retains more water in the crop root zone. Water capture in organic fields can also be 100% higher than in conventional fields during torrential rains. The resilience of organic fields in both extremely wet and extremely dry weather conditions speaks to its capability to create more food security in a climate crisis of erratic and extreme weather.

The study targets large scale grain growers and includes three crops: corn, soybean and wheat. (As of 2008, genetically modified corn and soybean were introduced into the study to better assess the landscape of American agriculture.) "Robert Rodale's vision was to assess high acreage crops to make growers aware that they were being led down the pathway to less money by using pesticides", said Elaine Ingham, chief scientist for Rodale Institute.

The Farming System Trial is scientifically rigorous to ensure an accurate representation of farming practices. The study includes four replications (repeating the study using the same methods but with different researchers) for each of the four different management

systems: organic manure, organic legume, conventional synthetic (the majority of the grain farms in the U.S.) and no-till systems.

The study's conventional plots are immediately adjacent to the organic plots, so both experience the same soil types and weather patterns. Also, the now organic plots began as conventional and have been remediated over time. To dispel any organic bias, Ingham said the farmers involved in the study are veterans of farming with chemicals and the study's advisory committee comprises members who are strongly entrenched in chemical agriculture.

Over three decades, the study has yielded eye opening results for conventional farmers:

- An organic farmer can expect to earn double (on less land) than a chemical farmer, whose money goes mostly into the pocket of the chemical companies upon which he or she is dependent. "That divergence is only going to get bigger," Ingham said, as the demand for organic grows. Plus, it's a myth that Genetically Modified (GM) crops means using fewer pesticides she said. The study showed GM crop farmers typically ended up using more herbicides, making it more expensive to go GM than if they had stayed with heritage crops.

- Organic and conventional crop yields were equivalent throughout the trial, except organic corn yields were 31 percent higher than conventional in years of drought. Ironically, the GM "drought-tolerant" corn only increased 7 percent to 13 percent over its conventional

(non-drought resistant) varieties.

- Organic farming uses 45 percent less energy than conventional systems, while conventional systems produce 40 percent more greenhouse gases. The largest contributors to greenhouse gas emissions on conventional systems are nitrogen fertiliser production and fuel use, while organic systems that build—rather than deplete—soil quality are more efficient to manage, leading to less fuel use.

Charles Benbrook, PhD, chief scientist at The Organic Center in Boulder, Colorado, said the study "already has a big impact on what scientists think about sustainable and organic cropping systems".

"It is simply not a question any more if organic farming can produce yields comparable to conventional agricultural methods," says Manjo Smith from the Namibian Organic Association. "Progressive farmers that want to farm profitably and be able to respond to climate change risks, need to consider these findings critically. In my view, large scale crop farmers in Namibia need technical advice and support in order to change production systems to benefit from the latest research in this area," she adds.

Chemical crop fertility inputs, pest protection, and weed control which increased toxicity in the environment is an unintended consequence. However, with credible, well-documented research, farmers now have a choice, and do not have to travel the degenerative chemical route.

www.rodaleinstitute.org/fst30years



How do you know its organic?

The only way to ensure that a product is truly organic, is to look for the certification mark. Organic certification is the process whereby a farmer or processor applies for verification that their production is in compliance with a given set of organic standards and provides the end consumer with the guarantee that production has been in compliance with those standards.

Third party, ISO accredited certification, is a method of organic assurance for export markets. Typical third party certification marks include the Afrisco, EU, Soil Association, Demeter, Naturland and the USDA Organic marks.

For local markets, alternative systems such as the IFOAM Participatory Guarantee Systems (PGS) can be used, which is currently used by thousands of farmers and consumers around the world as an authoritative mark for certification. In Namibia, look out for the NOA PGS certification mark.

PGS provides a credible, relevant and cost effective mechanism through which producers can provide an organic guarantee to consumers. It embodies the active participation of producers and other stakeholders such as consumers or traders in their peer-reviewed organic guarantee process.

The elements of the NOA PGS are:

NOA Standards:
The NOA standards are

based on the Afrisco standards, equivalent to the international IFOAM standards. The standards can be downloaded from www.noa.org

Certification Mark:
NOA producers either receive the "PGS Organically Certified" or "PGS Organic-in-Conversion" mark when producers are in the 2 or 3 year conversion period before becoming fully organic.

Documented Management systems and procedures:
For an organic guarantee system to be transparent and to be able to deliver on a consistent and equitable basis, the NOA PGS is well documented with the NOA Organic Standards, Producers Database, PGS Operations Manual and Individual Farm Assessment notes, recommendations and requirements for future assessments.

Pledge:
During each assessment, the producer needs to provide a pledge that all statements made in the application are true and correct and that no chemical products have been applied to any of the organically managed fields, crops and livestock. The producer also commits him/herself to unannounced assessment visits, and will provide right of access to all appropriate facilities.

Defined consequences for non-compliance:
Non-compliance to the Standards are dealt with

individually and depends on the severity of each case. NOA will institute corrective and/or preventative actions required to bring the operation back to organic integrity, whether the contravention with the Standards was intentional or not. Actions may include immediate cancellation of the organic status, withdrawal of specific product lines from the market and whether the farm, or sections of the farm remain, are subject to a conversion process. The application of penalties due to non-compliance is transparent, and the outcomes are publicly available on the NOA website.

Transparency:
The NOA PGS system is based on a complete transparent, formal, and systemised decision making process. Participation embodies the principle of a collective responsibility for ensuring the organic integrity of the PGS. This collective responsibility is reflected through shared ownership of the PGS, stakeholder engagement, and direct communication between producers, consumers and other stakeholders.

In addition to the appointed assessment team, any fellow organic farmer, consumer, retailer or trader are welcome to attend an organic assessment as an observer. NOA is keen to increase the number of qualified assessors, so let us know if you are interested in joining this process.

Organic products meet stringent standards



Food products that bear an organic certification label is your guarantee that it has been grown and handled according to strict organic production standards, and that the farms are inspected to ensure compliance with these standards. Look out for the Namibian Organic Association Mark, and other international marks such as Afrisco, Demeter, Soil Association, Ecocert and the EU and marks.

Namibian Organic Association

www.noa.org.na

Namibians make an active contribution at the 2nd African Organic Conference in Zambia



Six members of the Namibia Organics Association attended and did presentations at the 2nd African Organic Conference, held in Zambia from 2 – 4 May 2012. The purpose of the Conference was to highlight the importance of organic agriculture in Africa and to set an agenda whereby organic agriculture takes centre stage and gets its rightful recognition as a tool for inclusive and sustainable development on the continent.

The theme of this year's Conference was "Mainstreaming Organic agriculture in the African Development Agenda." It focused on the economical, social

and environmental contribution that organic practice makes toward the development and sustainability of food production and food security on the African continent.

Honourable Emmanuel T. Chenda, MP, Minister of agriculture and livestock in Zambia said in his address, "Organic agriculture is one of the best practices in ensuring environmental sustainability. It sustains the fertility of soils, ecosystems and sustains the health of people. It relies on locally adapted, improved ecological processes and cycles, and natural biodiversity rather than the use of synthetic inputs and genetically modified materials. It

is therefore important that our farmers are encouraged to practice organic farming. I have no doubt that organic agriculture has the potential to contribute to food security, increased incomes and generation of employment for our people."

In support of the Minister's comments, Mr Petko Draganov, Deputy Secretary General of UNCTAD said, "UNCTAD research has shown that worldwide - and in Africa - organic farmers generally earn better incomes. Revenues are higher because of rapidly growing markets, as well as frequent price and quality premiums. For most African organic products, there is not enough supply to meet the demand."

This is indeed good news for the organic community in Africa. He went on to say, "(The) combination of higher net incomes and varied nutritious food means that organic agriculture is good for food security. It is also more likely to be sustainable in the long term because the shift to organic farming serves to build human, social, natural, financial and physical capital in farming communities". Major role players in

the organic movement in Africa were present and included the African Union, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM) and the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO). Dr Kenneth Kuanda, first President of the Republic of Zambia serves as the patron of the organic movement in Zambia and the rest of the region at a time when organic production takes centre stage in the agricultural sector.

Namibians who addressed the Conference were:

- Mrs Manjo Smith who delivered a paper on *Organic agriculture as a strategy for biodiversity and adaptation and mitigation to climate change*. Smith is the first Namibian elected to the World Board of the IFOAM in 2011 and is Chairperson of the Namibian Organic Association,
- Wiebke Volkmann from the Namibian Centre for Holistic Management did two presentations; *"Principles and*

practices of holistic management and how these can and do support organic production Namibia" and *"Community based rangeland and livestock management as a multiple-benefit strategy for improving meat production with low external inputs"*, and

- Judith Isele, Vice Chair of the Namibian Organic Association, who gave a presentation on *"Facing the challenges of organic livestock production in Namibia with the help of holistic management"*

Other Namibians who attended are Edith Kalka, Christiane Hilbert and Suzette Janse van Vuuren.

During his opening address, Draganov said, "We should all work together to increase awareness about organic agriculture and develop supportive policies and programmes to help it spread."

A vital outcome of this conference is the establishment of the Southern African Network for Organic Development (SANOD), made up of the organic sectors from the Southern African countries for the purpose of working

together at a regional level with the outcome of interacting at CAADP (The Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme) level. SANOD's objective "is to lead and support the organic agriculture movement in the region, in order to promote trade, harmonizing organic production standards, to address challenges and opportunities of mutual concern, and to facilitate organic production research".

Manjo Smith of the Namibia Organic Association was elected as Chairperson. The rest of the steering committee are: Stanley Chidaya, Malawi Organic Growers Association (Vice-Chair), Munshimbwe Chitalu, Organic Producers and Processors Association of Zambia (Secretary); Heinrich Schultz South African Organic Sector Organisation (Treasurer), Fortunate Nyakanda, Zimbabwe Organic Producers and Promoters Association (Additional Member).

300 delegates from 35 countries around the world attended the conference. For more information about the 2nd African Organic Conference in Zambia, visit www.africanorganicconference.com

Organic agriculture practice more accessible for Namibian farmers



African Organic Agriculture Training Manual Developed: Implementation begins

In November 2011, Switzerland's Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL) presented its African Organic Agriculture Training Manual at the International Conference on Ecological Organic Agriculture in Nairobi, Kenya.

This illustrated manual and comprehensive online directory of organic agriculture for Africa supports smallholders in implementing organic farming techniques, improving sustainability of agricultural production and increasing market opportunities. The partners include the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM), the African National Organic Agriculture Movement (NOAMs) and agricultural

experts from across Africa.

"Experts from our institute worked with African specialists to produce a manual of agricultural best practices for growers, farmer groups and extension workers", explains FiBL project leader Lukas Kilcher. "The training materials will strengthen communication between extension staff and smallholders. The aim is to promote high-quality training and encourage application of sustainable soil management, resource-efficient farming and modern marketing techniques," he explained.

Thorough validation process to begin

After intensive work, a first draft set of training materials is now available for download at www.organic-africa.net at no cost. A two-year field validation process of the training materials

is currently underway to ensure that the training materials provide the most useful information and best practices in tandem with materials provided online. Additional modules will be completed over the coming months.

All organisations working in extension and training of sustainable and organic agriculture in Africa are invited to test the training materials in their local context and are encouraged to provide feedback.

A feedback form is available on the website for this purpose. A final, consolidated version will be available by 2015. "Critical, but enthusiastic teachers, advisors and farmers are today's prime movers of agricultural development in Africa", says FiBL Director Urs Niggli. "We are delighted to contribute our expertise to their efforts to promote sustainable farming practices with a growing number of research and extension activities."

A contribution to food security in Africa

"This publication's goal is to increase the sustainable agriculture options for African smallholders, and to help them become

more successful farmers", adds Niggli. "Our project contributes to food security in Africa by promoting improved production methods and strengthening market-driven farming systems."

Namibia's agricultural community all have access to the training manual. Through the Namibian Organics Association, all organic producers will be encouraged to make use of the training manual and provide feedback to the FiBL from

a Namibian perspective. "Namibian agricultural practice is seeing a steady conversion to include organic principles because it supports food security, climate change adaptation and biodiversity conservation," says Manjo Smith, Chairperson of the Namibian Organics Association. "Other advantages of organic agricultural practice also become evident, such as the improvement of soil quality and water holding capability and capacity," comments Smith.

"Just over three million hectares in Namibia is certified as organic and there is a growing demand for organic produce from consumers, making the case for organic a very strong one indeed. This emphasises the relevance of having access to the training manuals so that Namibians have added resources and support for increasing organic practice," she adds.

For more information, contact Manjo Smith at info@noa.org.na

organic farming mitigates climate change



Organic Agriculture has well established practices that simultaneously mitigate climate change, reduce poverty and improve food security. Organic Agriculture emits much lower levels of greenhouse gases and quickly, affordably and effectively sequesters carbon in the soil. It makes farms more resilient to climate change, mainly due to its water efficiency, resilience to extreme weather events and lower risk of complete crop failure.

Namibian Organic Association
www.noa.org.na