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Seed Update ²⁰⁰⁷

SEED

Whew – this year has been busy! Our most exciting news includes our recent provisional accreditation for the Permaculture Facilitator Training. The course covers three unit standards and concentrated on applied knowledge in Permaculture design and implementation as well as facilitation practice. The next steps are to find a sponsor to support the development of the draft manual as well as a pilot; SEED will then integrate this training with the National Program. We have also just received confirmation of our status as a **Public Benefits Organization**, this means that we are VAT exempt and our funders will benefit from tax exemption.

On the **staff front**, we welcome Wendy Crawford on as SEED Facilitator for the Cape Flats as well as Tina De Waal, Philippa Mallac and Alex Kruger as National Facilitators. We have never had such a high ratio of woman at SEED which can only be a good thing. SEED is busy working on redeveloping our **website** to be more educational – please have a look and we welcome your feedback.

We welcome the first funders of SEEDs 2008 Organic Classroom Program – the Solstice Foundation has stepped forward to fund one school over two years.

BOOK REVIEW:

Ally Ashwell on SEEDs new Intermediate Phase text book



“SEED may be a small NGO, but its core team has the vision and energy to make big things happen. Their most recent teachers’ guide is one of those big things. Based on six years of on-ground experience, this book seamlessly integrates Permaculture and practices into the life of the school. In *Growing the Living Laboratory* we learn about Permaculture, we learn how to do Permaculture in a South African context, and we find many curriculum-based activities that enable children to learn actively through Permaculture. Permaculture epitomises the notion of “education with production”.

The authors skillfully combine the requirements of the Intermediate Phase curriculum with step-by-step instructions on how to create productive school Permaculture gardens. The information provided is both detailed and locally relevant. It outlines and advises on all stages of the process: from the initial stakeholder planning meetings, to choosing plants that will thrive in the local climate, to selecting indigenous plants for your food forest. The ten chapters are full of useful information and worksheets covering topics such as soil, nutrient cycles, water, ecosystems and pest management. A section on Notes for the teacher advises on how to teach these topics in the classroom and school grounds. Finally, a table summarises the characteristics and uses of nearly 140 suitable plants. This resource is beautifully presented - from the colorful cover design to the excellent line drawings and the clear, fresh layout. Although it has been developed as a teachers’ guide, it appeals to a far wider market. In fact, I reckon that every home should have one! *Growing the Living Laboratory*, with its clear, accessible, locally relevant information is a wonderful tool to help South Africans transform the precious ground around us into productive and healthy edible gardens.”



SEED CLOTHING

Show your support by wearing SEED clothing.

100% cotton Tshirts R80
Fruit of the loom hoodies R160

All funds support SEED’s continued work.

Please contact
021 371 3180 for payment details

SEED kick starts National Program

SEED recently held the first strategy workshop for the National Program. Three new SEED Facilitators (Alex Kruger, Tina De Waal and Philippa Mallac) worked with SEED Coordinator, Leigh Brown in Stanford for three intense days in August. The time was spent redesigning the Five Day Manual – after facilitating 12 Trainings we incorporated a lot of learning, the new manual is now being out together and promises to really focus on NCS delivery so that the work we are doing truly supports teachers. We also got the timeframes over the next years into place. Tina De Waal plans to facilitate the first Five Day training in the Limpopo’s Soutpansberg – the contract with the National Lottery Board supports Six Five-Day Trainings and the delivery of SEEDs Organic Classroom Program at three Primary Schools for a full year. The program will operate out of the Southern Cape (Karoo), Gauteng (Mamelodi), Free State (Bethlehem) and Limpopo (Soutpansberg.) Leigh Brown recently went up to the Soutpansberg to work at a Permaculture Expo run by Afristar. It was great to really get a feel for the area and to meet teachers who will be participating in the next Five Day Training.



Tina De Waal (SEED Facilitator, Gauteng), Paul Barker, Leigh Brown (SEED Coordinator) and Nicholas Heinemann (Afristar) during Afristar’s Permaculture Expo in Limpopo.



transforming learning through permaculture
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Arbor Week – Cape Flats’ style.

The first week of September is Arbor Week, and once again the cry goes out; “Why don’t we celebrate Arbor Week at the BEGINNING of our rainy season?”

Tree people agree that June/July is the best time to plant trees in the Western Cape, as it ensures that the root system establishes during the rainy. If trees are to thrive on the Cape Flats, they need to be adapted to strong winds, dry summers, infertile sandy soils and high winter water table. While digging at some schools, SEED observed with Learners that about one metre down water starts seeping into the hole-the top of the water table. Many tree species will not thrive under these conditions. This is because most trees need air around their roots so that they can take up oxygen. Areas such as Grassy Park were historically “grassy” because the water table was very high; it was basically a wetland where trees did not grow.



Rocklands Principal, Kevin Pretorius, working with learners to celebrate their graduation from SEEDs Sustainable Schools Program which was held on Arbor Day.

SEED has had good results with the white Karee (*Rhus viminalis*), Umduon Waterberry (*Syzygium cordatum*) and fever tree (*Acacia xanthophloea*). Palms, including the indigenous Wild Date Palm (*Phoenix reclinata*) also do well. Palms also cope with wind, and clumping palms like the Wild Date are also impenetrable spiny security barriers. They also produce abundant edible fruit and are used for making baskets and brooms. With so many Permaculture functions we should be planting them rather than the exotic fan palms along the roads!

The true date palm (*Phoenix dactylifera*), which has more flesh than the wild date palm should also do well on the Cape Flats, as they like wet feet. Dates are very nutritious and are used for this reason by Muslims on the “Flats when ending their daily fast during Ramadaan. The nutritional value of dates is alluded to in this saying by the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.A.S.): “Never go without supper, even if it is a handful of dates, for going without it ages a man”.

SEED is planning plantings of dates at SEED schools in 2008, and hopes to cooperate with DWAF on their “Trees for Food” program. Other fruit trees which do well on the ‘Flats include loquats, mulberries and figs. Apples and pears do not do well as it is not cold enough, and apricots, plums and peaches will only bear fruit if protected from the wind. Poles with shade cloth can be used to screen fruit trees, as well as windbreaks of nitrogen-fixing trees such as the horsetail tree/beefwood (*Casuarina equisetifolia*).

Support SEEDs ongoing work at schools:

We are delighted about any donation, i.e. your support need not cover the full costs of our activities – you can give whatever is possible for you.

Herewith a cheque/postal order/bank deposit slip for (amount) _____ to:

- Plant a tree (R125) – with training and follow-up 1 tree at R100
- Implement a culinary and medicinal herb garden at a school (R1000)
- Implement a Rain tank with drip irrigation system at a school food garden (R3000).
- General costs (Other amount)

Banking details for direct deposits

SEED
First National Bank Lansdowne Branch 203209
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- I require a receipt by post
- I would like to take out a stop order towards the work you do
- I would like to include SEED in my will ensuring the good work continues in the future.

Feedback: _____

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NEW TEXT BOOK

SEEDs new text book for the Intermediate Phase, is out.

“Growing the Living Laboratory” is available through SEED, Sharnet or on our website: www.seed.org.za