



This edition



Empower a woman and better the nation

1

Tips and Tools: Trellising

2

Tech Tips: Improving your computer

2

National ESO Top User: Dumisani Nzama

Empower a woman and better the nation

Zandisiwe Manyathela

Women play a fundamental role in the development of rural and national economies. Empowering women to participate fully in economic life across all sectors is essential to building stronger economies and improving the quality of life for women, their families and communities. Michelle Bachelet stated, "When women are empowered and can claim their rights and access to land, leadership, opportunities and choices, economies grow, food security is enhanced, and prospects are improved for current and future generations."

In the agricultural sector, the participation of women in all aspects of farming is increasing. Through their involvement in the sector, the growing number of women farmers is helping to fight poverty through amongst other things, job creation. Against all odds, South African women have risen to the challenges that exist in what was, and still is, a male-dominated sector. For a very long time, livestock farming was considered to be the sole responsibility of men. However, times have changed, and today women make up a significant percentage of the agricultural livestock workforce worldwide. Many rural women are also small and medium business entrepreneurs, and owners of small and large livestock farms.

Despite the increased number of women farmers, many rural women still struggle. Since livestock production is perceived as a man's industry, women face more obstacles in accessing resources. Women need to be empowered by acquiring the necessary skills that will enable them to manage livestock production systems. Skills such as day-to-day management of livestock, record keeping, human resource management and financial management will assist women in playing a bigger role this sector.

The South African government, together with numerous stakeholders, have taken the initiative in the empowerment of female farmers. In 1999, the former Department of Agriculture initiated the Female Farmer Award Programme (now the Female Entrepreneur Awards), which aims at rewarding, encouraging and increasing the participation of women in agricultural activities. This programme has been identified as a tool that will help new entrants of farmers and further assist women to expand their farming skills.

Manstrat Agricultural Intelligent Solutions has over the years supported the initiative of The Female Entrepreneur Award Programme as a sponsor of eight Tablets, giving winners free access to our comprehensive online agricultural decision-making tool AgriSuite Online®.

Empowering and investing in women has proven to significantly increase productivity in agriculture, reduce hunger and malnutrition, and improve rural livelihoods. As we celebrate woman's month, let us congratulate and honour women for the role they play in food security, job creation and contributing towards the economy of the country.



Zandisiwe Manyathela

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Tips and tools for advisors

Trellising

Portia Phahlane

Fruits and vegetable trellising is a technique used by farmers to keep plants off the ground through support structures. Also called "vertical farming", the practice has evolved into a sophisticated method of producing high-value crops, using limited space. For the average farmer, it improves production by utilising vertical space. The technique is useful for especially vines and climbing crops, including tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, beans, grapes, eggplants, and others.

Advantages of trellising include:

- Easy harvesting as fruits are clearly visible;
- More effective pest and disease control;
- Being off the ground, fruits are less susceptible to soil-borne diseases and pests;
- Trellising allows for better airflow keeping the canopy drier and less susceptible to fungal diseases;
- The system uses less space than conventional practices; and
- Properly erected trellising enables vines and other climbing crops to produce optimal yields of quality fruit.

National ESO Top User

Portia Phahlane

Congratulates to Dumisani Nzama, the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development in KwaZulu Natal's **first** time national top user, with a user rating score of 11 047.

Dumisani is a trained Animal scientist, working with non-ruminant and ruminant animals. He explains that an important part of his duties entails advising farmers on conducting animal production, as a business activity. Our top user enjoys advising and teaching his clients to farm with different animal breeds along the coastal area, where he is stationed. His advice includes providing farmers with specific information related to the coastal weather and how the different breeds adjust to that environment. Other information Dumisani shares with his farmers include nutritional and vaccination programmes - encouraging farmers to adhere to the vaccination programmes, as prevention (vaccination), is better than cure (treatment).

For his work, advice and training of farmers, Dumisani uses the animal production section on ESO. Due to his work he uses ESO plant production mostly when he wants information on pastures. He related an example where his farmers needed information on prices for baconers and porkers. He was able to obtain this information in a short space of time on commodity prices under the economics section of ESO. With this information, farmers are able to make informed decision in terms of their production plans and getting higher returns. He further explained that, with the help of the gross margin budgets on ESO, he creates budgets to guide farmers on viable farming.

When asked about the strengths of ESO, Dumisani said that to be able to access a wide spectrum of information that is relevant and portable, in a short space of time, is what makes the system a winner. He says prior to using ESO, he used to refer to textbooks which consumed a lot of time to get information resulting in longer response times. Dumisani is now able to access information on his laptop and able to answer questions right there on the farm.



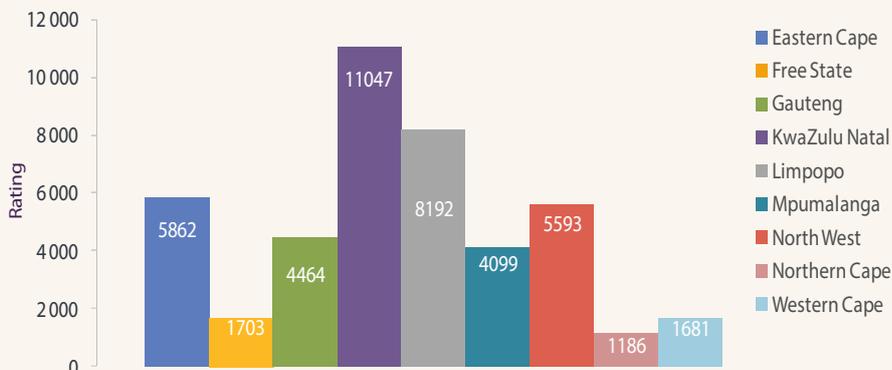
Dumisani Nzama

EXTENSION SUITE ONLINE® UTILISATION:

July 2016

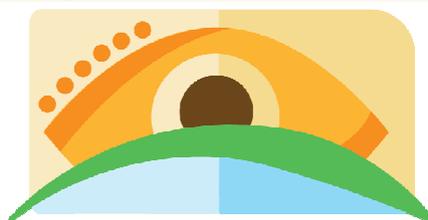
Extension Suite Online® (ESO) utilisation is determined through monitoring user utilisation in the nine provinces and by attaching values to Visits, Pages Visited and Duration of Visits; a rating is calculated to establish the ESO National Top User of the Month.

ESO PROVINCIAL TOP USER GRAPH



ESO PROVINCIAL TOP USERS

Province	Name
Eastern Cape	Sindile Magoda
Free State	Isaac Teboho Moneo
Gauteng	Sizwe Nzuza
KwaZulu Natal	Dumisani Nzama
Limpopo	Louis Khomola
Mpumalanga	Lucas Shabangu
North West	Mompati Gabanakgosi
Northern Cape	Kagiso Olifant
Western Cape	Pieter Burger



CLIMATE WATCH

Issue #7

July started with an intense cold front that moved from the Western Cape towards the north-east of the country bringing new record low temperatures. Temperatures in parts of Gauteng dropped to below 0 for the first time this winter...

Read the full article on the Manstrat AIS website.

www.manstrat.co.za - Climate Watch

TIPS:

Improve your computer

Mary Mavengere

We live in a fast-paced world that requires completion of tasks in the shortest possible space of time. It's imperative that our computers are up to the expected and much-needed performance standards – critical for survival today. To help, here are some computer tips and tricks for improving your computer's performance:

Clean your computer's Windows registry

Slow, sluggish PC performance is often the result of errors and problems within its Windows registry. Adware, spyware, and other threats target the registry, damaging or misplacing important files. Acquire a good Windows registry clean-up program, and configure it to run once a day.

Remove files not needed

Every time a user logs onto the Internet or uses a computer, temporary files are generated. These files

accumulate over time until they clutter up the computer's file system, affecting its performance. Using a PC cleaning tool designed for this purpose is a quick and easy solution. Do this once per week to keep your computer humming with happiness.

Remove Unneeded Programs

A good habit to develop, is to uninstall unused and unneeded programs daily, to keep your computer's file system less cluttered. Uninstalling unneeded and unused programs will dramatically improve a PC's performance. You can optimize your computer by using its Add/Remove Programs feature.

Empty the Recycle Bin

Sluggish start-ups and crashes occurring with increasing frequency, could be an indication of an overloaded Recycle Bin. This may mean that you need to "take the garbage out" so to speak. Develop the habit of emptying your Recycle Bin regularly - it will make a huge difference.

Do you have any technology related questions? Send them to newsletter@esuite.co.za, with your name, province and the question and we will answer them in a following newsletter edition.

Monthly national ESO users receive the following prizes: First time National ESO User 2016: **4 Gig USB memory stick**, second time National ESO User 2016: **Digital Camera**, third time National ESO User 2016 **Nokia Lumia 520**, fourth time National ESO User 2016: **Samsung Galaxy Tab**.



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