



# FARMSECURE™

SUSTAINABILITY AND PROFITABILITY IN AGRICULTURE



## FARMSECURE PLANTS ROOTS IN THE COMMUNITY



Written by: Louise Brodie  
 Edited by: Chantal Yazbek  
 Designed by: Davida Smith

### **Farmsecure extends its vision of Food Security to supporting vegetable gardens as part of the Group's Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives**

Farmsecure is an innovative participator throughout the agricultural value chain with a vision to contribute towards global food security by the creation of fully optimized agricultural enterprises. Privately owned, Farmsecure has its origins in Bethlehem in South Africa's Free State Province where it heads up its grains and livestock operations today.

The Group believes strongly in contributing to the communities in which it works. Thus there were indeed wise men in Bethlehem and wise women too, when this division of the Group made the decision earlier in 2011 to start an integrated social responsibility plan in Bethlehem and the surrounding area. The town of Bethlehem plays a central role in the region, supporting many surrounding rural communities in need. In less than 12 months the programme which is focussed on food security and overall welfare has grown exponentially.

*"We are thrilled to be able to launch these wonderful projects..."*

**Winifred Staples**  
 Chairperson of the Board of  
 Golden Gateway Hospice

This has also contributed to the decision by the Hoogland Besigheidsforum (Bethlehem's Business Forum) to appoint Farmsecure Capital as the Business of the Year for 2011.

"In awarding the Business of the Year award, the Hoogland Besigheidsforum base their decision on the sustainability of a business, service to and involvement in the community as well as the general impression created by the business within the community," explained Alta Herbst, Secretary of the Hoogland Besigheidsforum. "The judging is done by business people and professionals in Bethlehem and Farmsecure Capital's genuine commitment to community involvement has certainly been noticed in our district." It seems, thus, that the folks at Farmsecure Capital are indeed an inspiration to others and the stars of Bethlehem!

### Golden Gate Hospice Veggie Project and Day Care Centre Launch

On the 8th of November the 2nd phase of the Masechaba Building of the Golden Gateway Hospice Day Care Centre and the Farmsecure Vegetable Garden was launched. Golden Gateway Hospice Day Care Centre is for AIDS orphans and vulnerable children. The buildings belong to the Round Table Club of Bethlehem 60 and Golden Gateway Hospice is responsible for the well being of the children. The project was made possible by the Round Table Club of Bethlehem 60 and their counterpart in Holland Round Table 60. The Golden Gateway Hospice Vegetable Project is one of the charities supported by Farmsecure Capital. At the launch well-groomed, healthy-looking pre-schoolers full of excitement and anticipation entertained visitors with enthusiastic song amid bright balloons and cupcakes.

"The Golden Gateway Hospice is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year and the main function of the Hospice is to provide palliative care to terminally ill patients and this involves home based care by professionals as well as emotional support for the bereaved or affected family



**Elma Wolmarans, Jan Wolmarans, Corana Koopman, Winifred Staples and Gert Venter**

members," explained Elize Willis, General Manager of Golden Gateway Hospice at the launch. "Our original focus was terminally ill cancer patients, but due to the AIDS pandemic we have become involved in caring for people affected by this disease. In 2003 we raised funds to start our own day care centre for children infected and affected by AIDS. Initially this was in Bohlakong but when the Bethlehem Round Table became involved in the project, Golden Gateway Hospice donated land to Round Table Bethlehem 60, who in turn erected the first new building for the day care of orphans between the ages of 3 and 5 years here adjacent to our existing Hospice centre and the project has continued to grow from then. In 2009 we also created a facility for older children and currently we have 100 school children that receive a daily meal at the Hospice, receive assistance with their homework and computer literacy training."



“We are thrilled to be able to launch these two wonderful projects and at the same time we are very grateful to our regular government and NGO donors as their support is what keeps us functioning,” said Winifred Staples, Chairperson of the Board of Golden Gateway Hospice as she welcomed guests on this festive occasion. The preschoolers from the Day Care Centre also cut the ribbon to the second building of the Masechaba buildings of the Golden Gateway Hospice Day Care Centre, the new two-classroom block facility with a therapy room and a sickbay. The first building was completed in 2009 and currently the Centre cares for 75 AIDS orphans, most of which are infected with the HIV Virus. This remarkable Round Table project that has led to the completion of these two buildings worth around a million rand, resulted from selling beaded sunglasses and reading glass strings made by local communities supporting AIDS orphans in Holland and Germany! This simple idea was driven by Dutch Round Tabler Bert Koopman in Europe and locally by Bethlehem Round Tabler Graham Bishop. Their hard work has been recognised in the naming of the new building - the Bishop Koopman Building. The Round Table has provided the buildings, and the trained staff members of the Golden Gateway Hospice provide ongoing care for the children.



The Vegetable Garden was also launched with a ceremonial opening of the taps on the 10 raised vegetable beds by the scholars who attend the Hospice. “The entire veggie project was developed in the past two months starting from when the land for the project was made available to Farmsecure Capital by the Hospice and today there are small spinach plants growing in all the beds,” said Jan Wolmarans, MD of Farmsecure Capital. “The purpose of this vegetable garden would be to provide food for the Golden Gateway Hospice as well as the other feeding programmes run by Farmsecure Capital. Without the support of our community and businesses in Bethlehem the establishment of this Veggie project would not have been possible,” he stressed.



“We are very grateful to the Golden Gateway Hospice and Round Table Bethlehem 60 for making the ground available to us so we would like to thank Elize Willis and Winifred Staples from Golden Gateway Hospice as well as Graham Bishop, Sarel Venter from Bethlehem Round Table 60 for making this possible. The ten beds were built 14 meters long (60cm high and 50cm wide) and constructed from reused and reject bricks. We used 14 000 bricks to do this! When we had run out of old bricks we appealed to Wearne Brickworks and Mecca Brick Works in Bethlehem and they were prepared to provide us with reject bricks.



**Mpho Negovha and Jan Wolmarans**

"AFGRI, a leading agricultural services business in South Africa, donated fertilizer and bone meal while Mashinini Enterprise helped us to clear the site. Bethlehem Sand en Klip provided us with a large truck to transport manure from a farm in the district to the site. Build It supplied the project with cement, reinforcing and other building materials at cost price. Farmsecure agronomist, CD Naudé, provided us with the 4.5 tons of soil that we used. Div Bosman, Manager of Farmsecure Enterprise Development, provided the vegetable plants, plenty of wise advice and arranged for newspaper media coverage so this was indeed a team effort," says Jan.



**Graham Bishop and Bert Koopman**

"We currently have spinach in all the beds and several other vegetable plants growing here. Soon we hope to plant fruit trees here as well and cover the area with shade nets to protect the vegetables." The opening was concluded by a ceremonial planting of three fruit trees by the supporters of the Golden Gateway Hospice and Jan Wolmarans, MD Capital, Trevor Francis, Group Human Resources Manager and Mpho Negovha planted the tree on behalf of Farmsecure Capital. Tea and cupcakes were supplied by the Golden Gateway Hospice.



**Trevor Francis and Jan Wolmarans**



"It certainly has been a big task to get this completed within time," explained Elma Wolmarans, Social Responsibility Co-ordinator for Farmsecure Capital. "Fortunately my right hand with this project has been Mpho Ngovha, a previously disadvantaged young man. Farmsecure Capital has employed him and he has become invaluable in the management of the CSR projects."

### **Rikona Day Care Centre and Vegetable Food Garden**

The second vegetable garden project to receive support from Farmsecure is the Rikona Day Care Centre and Vegetable Food Garden. This vegetable project in Diepkloof is supported by one of Farmsecure's banking partners, Standard Chartered Bank. The project is part of the Rikona Day Care Centre which offers full day care to approximately 30 pre-school children, 75 children in aftercare from the local primary school and street children who do not even go to school at all, as well as food and home-based care to about 150 desperately ill and poor families in the community. This facility was initially run from an old 20 foot container by dedicated volunteers and through the assistance of Standard Chartered Bank and community donations, the facility has been able to build a classroom for the children.

When this vegetable growing project was established during 2010, Farmsecure provided a generous donation

of seeds, fertilizers and agronomic expertise to get this project up and running. Farmsecure's staff in Bethlehem also collected clothes and toys for the children. Standard Chartered Bank employees continued to raise money and collect food to help tie the facility over until the food garden was able to provide sufficient food to feed the children and the homecare community members. Since then the food garden has been extended over the past few months and the fruit trees donated by Farmsecure are growing well. This food garden has proved to be an excellent source of food for the school, and thanks to the recent generosity of Farmsecure who have again donated fertilizer and seed, Rikona will be able to continue to provide food to the school and the extended impoverished community.

As Farmsecure's vision is to contribute to securing the world's food supply, the will and ability to apply this focus in the Group's Corporate Social Responsibility initiatives within communities close to them is the realisation of a heartfelt dream.

