



LUCERNE FODDER

Vanrhynsdorp

Project objectives:

- Prepare land for sowing.
- Design, purchase and install the irrigation system.
- Cultivate, harvest and bale lucerne.

Project Timeframe:

12 months

Long term goals:

- Self-sufficiency in terms of fodder production.
- Generate income from sale of excess fodder to commercial farmers.
- Build capacity of members through training.
- Create permanent employment.
- Purchase land

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The small town of Vanrhynsdorp, known as the “Gateway to the Namaqualand”, is located on the dry plains at the foot of the spectacular Matzikama Mountains. It is here that the 20 members of the Vanrhynsdorp Emerging Farmers Association

Andreas Jantjies, the chairman of the Vanrhynsdorp Emerging Farmers Association, “but it is becoming increasingly expensive to raise livestock on the available land.” Jantjies explains: “We need to grow our own fodder to supplement the food the sheep and goats get from the veld.”



The group was formed in 1998 when local emerging farmers were granted access to 14 hectares of commonage by the Matzikama Municipality.

“There is a good market for lucerne”, says Jantjies. “We plan to sell the fodder not only to our own members, but also to commercial stock farmers who currently pay up to R50 for a bale of lucerne.”

“We produce meat,” says





Water for Resource Limited Farmers and Reform



The farmers have plans to expand and were recently given access to an additional 14 hectares of quality grazing on the Vanrhynsdorp abandoned airfield and to another five hectares adjacent to the town's waste water treatment works. "We also managed to secure funds to drill a borehole," says Jantjies with a smile. "We were successful and the borehole yields large quantities of fresh water!" The group plans to use the fresh water for their livestock and possibly grow a cash crop of vegetables. "The treated waste water will be reused on the lucerne crops," says Jantjies.

The emerging farmers work closely with their neighbours, the LamatziCare Women's Food Gardens project, and often help out or give advice when needed. They also have a good relationship with the Matzikama Municipality. "We are negotiating with the municipality to extend our lease from five year to just under 10 years," says Jantjies.

Our project enjoys support from both the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry. "The Department of Agriculture funded fencing and our sheep "kraals" (pens) and the local extension officers are always ready with advice," says Jantjies. "We were also successful in securing funds from the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry's (DWAF) Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) programme. In the first IWRM programme DWAF assisted us with irrigation and water tanks. This time we have submitted a business plan to cover needs such as irrigation, pipelines, seed, fertiliser and some farming equipment."

