



ORGANIC ROOIBOS TEA

Cederberg Suurrug

Project objectives:

- Certify the land organic.
- Secure sufficient water.
- Purchase and install the irrigation system.
- Prepare land for sowing, cultivate and harvest.

Project Timeframe

12 months

Long term goals:

- Develop a sustainable agriculture model based on organic crop production.
- Build capacity of members.
- Create permanent employment, especially for women and unemployed youth.

Contact:

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Suurrug, a small village close to Wupperthal, is located a few kilometres south of the Biedouw Valley, which is famous for its spring flower displays. The village name of Suurrug or “Sour

siblings. The closest high school is in Clanwilliam and many parents are unable to send their children to boarding school. The result is that many young people in Suurrug are uneducated and thus



Ridge” refers to the acidic sandy soils common to the area.

unable to find good jobs.

“There are 35 families living in Suurrug,” says Magrita Oktober, a born and bred Wupperthaler. “Most of the adults work away from home on the surrounding farms and leave their children in the care of grandparents or older

In an attempt to create some opportunities, especially for the youth, the Suurrug Agricultural Development Association launched a project to grow rooibos tea, organic vegetables and indigenous herbal teas. The group, consisting of four men,





Water for Resource Limited Farmers and Reform



four women and four youth, have managed to secure access to 3 hectares of land to grow vegetables. Rooibos tea can produce three consecutive harvests before it needs to be replanted. Working together with other organic farmer associations, Suurrug will plant sweet potatoes, carrots and butternut to supply a supermarket chain and an organic baby food manufacturer.

“Water remains our biggest challenge,” says October. “Although two very strong boreholes were recently drilled and we were able to erect a drip-irrigation system, the Cederberg Municipality have requested us not to use the water for agriculture. I can’t understand this,” says October. “The boreholes were tested and found to be sufficiently strong for both agricultural and domestic needs.”

“The project’s objectives are clear,” October says. “First the local kindergarten crèche will be supplied with the vegetables and then the poorest members of our community. Mothers will be given priority to work in the project. We hope to create a safe and secure environment, while ensuring a better education for our youth.”

