



GROWING TOGETHER

DECEMBER 2016 NEWSLETTER

Dear Sir / Madam

## NEWSLETTER – DECEMBER 2016

*“It’s not about perfect. It’s about effort, and when you implement that effort into your life ... every single day, that’s where transformation happens. That’s how change occurs. Keep going. Remember why you started.”*

- Jillian Michaels

In this newsletter:

1. Restructuring of the PALS centre
2. Projects: Already implemented and ready for implementation
3. Challenges
4. Training and investment in people
5. PALS promotes economic upliftment for all
6. CEO’s report
7. Vision for the future

---

Mpy Reg Nr / Co Reg No: 2015/164704/08

Telefoon / Telephone: 023 316 1191

E-pos / E-mail: [lennox@wpals.co.za](mailto:lennox@wpals.co.za)

Posbus / P O Box: 79 CERES, 6835

Voortrekkerstraat / Voortrekker Street 84

CERES 6835

**Direkteure / Directors:** Pieter du Toit (Chair), Raymond Koopstad (Vice Chair), Francois Malan ( Member Executive Committee), Tommy Mona, Petri Fourie, Inus Oosthuizen, Jaffie Galant, Nicholas Dicey, Peter Wolfaardt, Robert Graaff

---

**Openbare Weldaadsorganisasie Nr / Public Benefit Organisation No: 930 049 981**

**PALS: PARTNERS IN AGRI LAND SOLUTIONS**

## 1. Restructuring of the PALS Centre

The Board has decided to broaden and enhance the capacity of the PALS office. For this purpose, Lennox Plaatjies has been promoted to the position of Chief Executive Officer and Izak Strauss has been promoted to the post of Project Manager. In addition, Fezeka Majiki has been appointed as project assistant and administrative officer. Fezeka is originally from the Eastern Cape. She obtained her Master's degree in Agricultural Management from the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University.

The resignation of Gerrit van Vuuren as project leader has been accepted. In future Joubert Van Vuuren Inc. will only act as a service provider to the PALS centre, participating producers and project beneficiaries.

The PALS centre has designed and refined various monitoring systems, operational plans and strategies. This was done with the invaluable input and support of Nicole Maten and Gary Conway of the Land and Agricultural Development Bank as well as its CEO, Mr. TP Nchocho.

With the above personnel and support services the PALS centre is ready to take the initiative to the next level with regards to projects, project related applications, mentoring, coordination, monitoring and facilitation of all aspects of the initiative.

## 2. Projects: Already implemented and ready for implementation

**Implemented Projects** – These are projects where ownership has already been transferred to the new PALS entity:

1. TSR (Koue Bokkeveld)
2. Van der Merwe Mpho (Theronsberg)
3. La Vouere Stonefruit (Ceres)
4. Kleinberg (Tulbagh)
5. Eyethu Intaba (Koue Bokkeveld)
6. Bestwill (Ceres)

**Projects earmarked for implementation within the next 3 to 6 months –** These projects are just waiting for final approval regarding subdivision or water permits or financing:

7. Bambisane (Theronsberg)
8. Kaja Farming (Ceres)
9. Korhaanhoogte (Robertson)
10. De Heuwel & Middelpoos (Ceres)
11. Twee Fonteynen CFG (Ceres)
12. Dasberg (Riviersonderend)
13. Ceres Fonteintjie (Koue Bokkeveld)
14. De Hoop en Môreson (Wolseley)
15. CFG Skaaprivier & Plankies (Ceres)
16. Sunkist land and value chain projek (Ceres)
17. Ceres Cider (Ceres)
18. Agri Park 3 projects (Ceres)

**Further projects which can be implemented in 2017:**

These are a further 20 projects and include (amongst others): Mooiuitsig (Bonnievale), Odessa, Libland (3), Elandsrivier (land, value chain, and housing project), De Trap Stargrow, Ceres Tierberg Boerdery, Clackmannen Farms (Tulbagh), Lankgewag (Wolseley), Kluitjieskraal (Wolseley), Daytona, Morceaux housing and ministerial pilot project, Kleinbegin housing project, Boplaas, CFG (2), Verdun second project, Patrick De Wet and Jacobs value chain project and Harmony Trust.

**3. Challenges**

PALS, as a private initiative, successfully implemented numerous projects with its own water, water rights and resources. We trust that these successes will convince Government agencies and departments that much more can be achieved with timeous and expeditious departmental approval processes.

There are numerous projects where PALS is entirely dependent on the cooperation and approvals of the various governmental departments.

Delays with subdivisions and water permits, unfortunately, sometimes result in lost opportunities in as far as the conclusion of land reform transactions or the acceleration of production on PALS farms are concerned. The frustration as a result of these delays and the lack of response from the relevant departments, have now led to the cancellation of certain projects.

The cooperation between agriculture and governmental agencies is part of the National Development Plan's proposed partnership. We hope that in the future, the various departments will realize that we can accelerate land reform, economic growth and job creation and that PALS projects can be made successful much sooner, if a sense of urgency exist and is acted upon by all involved.

#### **4. Training and investment in people**

In cooperation with our training partner, the Koue Bokkeveld Training Centre, as well as the sponsorship of AECI, 383 beneficiaries have already received training. This include the training of black directors, trustees, shareholders/beneficiaries in PALS and LRAD projects.

More intensive training of directors and shareholders had been identified as a current need. In this regard PALS is planning a further training phase in which specific financial knowledge, management skills, as well as the duties and responsibilities of directors and trustees, are to be addressed.

*"Invest in human capital, because an investment in human capital creates other capital"*

- Prof M Karaan

#### **5. PALS is going to benefit everyone**

The PALS framework is based on principles that will give black farmers the best possible chance of success.

The employee's trust share of the profits of the project will also benefit the socio-economic status of the larger group of employees.

In the Witzenberg area, there are numerous projects where large groups of employees received substantial shares in agricultural properties in accordance with government's previous LRAD program. The criticism against this model, was that it failed to create a class of black commercial farmers.

The PALS' framework and the focus on specific training and mentorship will hopefully lead to the establishment of more successful black farmers.

The principles that make PALS unique and better are the following:

1. Individual black farmers as well as the larger group of employees will benefit.
2. Black shareholders will have the option from the outset to purchase the rest of the shares. This is in line with the objective of establishing more black farmers on their own farms and to ensure their sustainability and success.
3. Mentorship and protection of the black farmer against financial and/or other risks by implementing a long-term business plans in co-operation with the commercial farmer.
4. Black farmers get access to the best plant materials, markets and other resources as a result of the PALS partnership.
5. The PALS centre provides a physical address for coordinating, facilitating and training as well as other functions such as liaison with government departments.
6. The development of new production units and the establishment of orchards contribute to economic growth, job creation and food security.
7. PALS is the best use of resources and commercial farmers' intellectual capital. It also helps build investor confidence amongst potential financiers.

## **6. CEO's report**

The PALS office is open to everyone and aims to bring about a spirit of cooperation with regards to all aspects of the initiative so that the shared goal can be achieved.

Events that occurred over the last few months include the following:

1. Obtaining approval to proceed with a PALS project on Kluitjieskraal. DAFF's approval has already led to soil analysis and further discussions.
2. Green Valley Golden Crops' small farmers' project has obtained water for their vegetable farming.
3. Delays with water permits are continuously followed up on and a call was made to the government's technical committee to address this issue with urgency. New strategies, in collaboration with PALS beneficiaries, will be launched in 2017 to help improve future liaisons with Water Affairs.
4. The addition of Landbank as a member of PALS has led to a dramatic improvement with regards to our systems of monitoring, communications, marketing and project financing.
5. Submissions on the promotion of job creation, learnership and incentives that will benefit PALS projects such as tax exemptions, were made to National Treasury's Parliamentary Committee.
6. The PALS centre made two submissions to the government's Operation Phakisa Lab in Johannesburg. The proposals will hopefully be incorporated into the final policy documents.

7. Fezeka Majiki's appointment as project assistant and administrative officer strengthens the PALS office's capacity. Her qualifications make her the ideal candidate to support the PALS centre's operations.
8. The interim training report to AECI (our training sponsor) confirmed that 383 beneficiaries received training and that a good foundation for future training has been laid.
9. Most of the PALS members that have joined PALS in 2015 have paid their membership fees for 2016. We accordingly thank all members for their support and cooperation and invite all producers to join as members to help build a better future for all.

## 7. Vision for the future

Our frustration with the slow progress of certain project implementation approvals will not prevent us from proceeding with great determination in pursuing the goals of the project.

We have no other choice but to work towards the development of a region that will be an example for the whole of South Africa.

There is no doubt that PALS is the winning formula that will make the National Development Plan's 2030 vision for a thriving, prosperous rural economy that works together in harmony, a reality.

We wish you all a Merry Christmas and hope that the current harvest period will be a successful one.

Friendly PALS wishes  
PALS Centre





**WITZENBERG PALS (PARTNERS IN AGRI LAND SOLUTIONS)**

Telefoon / Telephone: 023 316 1191

E-pos / E-mail: [lennox@wpals.co.za](mailto:lennox@wpals.co.za) / [gerrit@jvanvuuren.co.za](mailto:gerrit@jvanvuuren.co.za)

Posbus / P O Box: 79 CERES, 6835

Voortrekkerstraat / Voortrekker Street 84

CERES 6835

*Neem kennis dat hierdie kantore vanaf 13:00 op Donderdag, 22 Desember 2016 gesluit sal wees en weer heropen Maandag, 9 Januarie 2017. Ons wens u 'n Geseënde Feestyd en Voorspoedige Nuwejaar toe.*

*Kindly note that these offices will be closed from 13:00 on Thursday, 22 December 2016 and will re-open for business on Monday, 9 January 2017. May you have a Blessed Festive Season and Prosperous New Year.*