

# REGENERATIVE FARMING AFRICA 2021

Understanding the impact of COVID-19 on Regenerative Farming Practices....

25th & 26th of November 2021

Virtual Conference

Healthy Soil

Dust

## Transforming Agriculture to Unleash the Regenerative Power of Nature

The Regenerative Agriculture Conference 2021 will bring together a cross section of our food industry stakeholders, including regenerative agriculture practitioners, researchers, government agencies and the investment sector with the specific goal of progressing a food secure future of Africa

Regenerative agriculture has demonstrated remarkable results in eliminating toxic inputs, increasing fertility, regenerating soil life and strengthening on-farm resilience against climate extremes. Scientists, and regenerative farmers and ranchers share their knowledge and experience on how to transform agriculture.

Agricultural Practitioners, Research and Scientific Agricultural institutions are proactively working to combine local and scientific knowledge as a way to strategise on to feeding growing populations and cope with climate change, water scarcity, market volatility, and many more. The soil is the answer and there are ways that the Agricultural sector can act to promote sustainable farming in order to ensure the health of our communities for generations to come.

*If you follow the soil health revolution, you'll notice that the drivers of this revolution are farmers—not industry and certainly not researchers. Many of our supporters are*

*farmers, and it's doubtful that we would have found any of this funding through the regular channels. -Buz Kloot, ENHS/ CENR Research Associate Professor*

Empire Events, provides a platform that is aimed at equipping farmers and organisations looking to restore the land they work and make it carbon positive evolve towards more ecologically sustainable practices through the high-level presentations by renowned agricultural experts and professionals.

The event also brings together leading farmers, researchers, practitioners and educators to debate and discuss the most recent innovations, trends, and concerns as well as practical challenges encountered and solutions adopted in the fields of Regenerative Agriculture and natural Restoration

*"A large segment of the scientific community now acknowledges the positive impacts of agro ecology on food production, poverty alleviation and climate change mitigation – and this is what is needed in a world of limited resources". - Olivier De Schutter*

## Speakers:



**Dr Lennox Xolile Mtshaki**  
President  
BFASA CPT



**Andrew Ardington,**  
CEO Regenerative  
Association SA



**Dr Johann Strauss**  
Senior Scientist: Sustainable  
Cropping Western Cape  
Department of Agriculture



**Dr Pieter Swanepoel,**  
Chair: Department of Agronomy,  
Senior Lecturer, University of  
Stellenbosch



**Dr Naude Malan,**  
Senior Lecturer in  
Development Studies,  
University of Johannesburg



**Peter Searll**  
CEO Managing Director  
Transformus -Cape Town



**Fanie Brink**  
Independent Agricultural  
Economist



**Dr. Elmarie Kotzé**  
Senior Lecturer: Soil Crop and  
Climate Sciences Faculty: Natural  
and Agricultural Sciences,  
University of the Free State



**Karina Roodt**  
Soil Biologist  
Soil Health Lab



**Eddie Vienings**  
Blue North



**Dr. Gary Paterson,**  
Research Team Manager,  
Soil Science, ARC



**Rijk Danckwerts**  
Founder, Member  
Vitroplant  
South Africa (PTY) Ltd.



**Murray Moxham**  
Managing Director  
VitaSoil



**Mandla Nkomo,**  
Regional Managing  
Director Southern Africa,  
Solidaridad



**Dr. Brian Mantlana,**  
Impact Area Manager:  
Holistic Climate Change,  
(CSIR)

## Speakers from:



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## Highlights includes case studies, practical discussions and real-life stories with a focus on:

- Learning the benefits of Regenerative agriculture as a system of agricultural practice
- Understanding ways and methods and principles that support biodiversity, enrich soils, and increase the capacity of the soil to capture carbon, contributing to the reversal of global warming
- Improving productivity and managing plant health by the lowering of pesticide use
- Discussing manageable strategies through reduced input costs, improved profitability and increased income, while reducing their exposure to harmful agricultural chemicals.
- Discovering how Regenerative agriculture can help ensure a climate-resilient and food-secure future.
- Implementing strategies for farmers to support the growth of regenerative agriculture systems, creating a food system that has profound benefits for both human and environmental health
- Plant Biotech for future regenerative farming practices
- Analysing the COVID -19 Pandemic and Market Disruptions for Farmers and Ranchers - What Role Can Regenerative Agriculture Play
- Establish ways that promote Physical stability limit loss of soils and nutrients and it retains the soil floor
- Implementable techniques to manage nutrient cycling and retention: It improves nutrient recycling and limits water loss.
- Actionable techniques of handling and increasing biodiversity (above and below the soil as a way of improving biological control and balances soil biology
- Develop a strategic approach for investing in our food and planetary future.

## Who Should Attend

- Emerging Farmers
- Commercial Farmers
- Crop Farmers
- Youth Agriculturist
- Conservation agric
- Environmental Managers
- Government depts.
- Climatologist
- Agricultural Researchers and consultants
- Horticulturist
- Agriculture finance and funding business units
- Professors and Heads from Universities Agricultural and Agronomy Department
- Soil Scientist /Plant Scientist
- Ecologist
- Animal Husbandry
- Biotechnology companies
- Fertilizer and seed companies
- Extension Officers

## Panelist Biographies

**Dr Lennox Xolile Mshaki President BFSA CPT**  
Xolile is an impressive and imposing leader who is comfortable within himself and easily takes control and encourages team work from his peers and subordinates. 2 As a member of the Black Business Forum and having travelled extensively in pursuit of opportunities, his skills have been perfected and used in Xolile's emergence as a leading businessman and entrepreneur.

**Andrew Ardington, CEO Regenerative Association SA**  
RegenAg SA is concerned with educating farmers and consumers about the true cost of Industrial Agriculture - the depletion of soils, the destruction of the carbon cycles, the dependency on fossil fuels, the high greenhouse gas emissions and human health implications - and showing how Regenerative Agriculture is the solution to most of these problems.

**Dr Johann Strauss holds a PhD in Agronomy from the University of Stellenbosch**  
His main research interests are on sustainable dry land cropping systems based on Conservation Agriculture practices. The body of the research comes from 4 large long-term trials (Langgewens and Tygerhoek Research farms) and 2 smaller on-farm trials with producers in the Napky, Riversdale and Hopefield. Following several foreign visits focusing on Conservation Agriculture, Dr. Straus was determined to initiate a CA forum for the Western Cape where producers, researchers and industry role players could come together to talk about CA issues within the province.

**Dr Naude Malan, Senior Lecturer in Development Studies, University of Johannesburg**  
Dr. Naudé Malan is Senior Lecturer in Development Studies at the University of Johannesburg. He is the convener of the multi-stakeholder engagement project Izindaba Zokudla that aims to create opportunities for urban agriculture in a sustainable food system in Soweto. The project engages with and links urban farmers, entrepreneurs, academics, civil servants and other stakeholders and aims at participatory technology and enterprise development. Naudé has published on the South African social welfare system, agriculture and human rights and recently has developed social methodologies for agricultural development, institutional innovation and technology design for urban and small-farmers.

**Peter Searll CEO Managing Director Transformus -Cape Town**

Peter spent the first 25 years of his career as an innovative market researcher in South Africa, evidenced by being a two time industry award winner. He established Transformus in 2017 with an amazing team of agri experts and lovers of the earth. He has realised how important the soil is as a living treasure that sustains all life on this planet, and is saddened by how badly we look after this.

It's all about the microbes and working with nature, not against her, and we can make a huge difference with a little care. Using the latest regenerative thinking and Ormus (an alchemical extract), Peter is committed to healing our soils while providing nutrient dense food for environmental resilience and healthy people.

**Fanie Brink - Independent Agricultural Economist**

Fanie Brink is an independent agricultural economist, advisor and mentor with more than 40 years of experience in the agricultural industry in South Africa. He was for more 20 years a Senior Agricultural Economist with Agri SA and Deputy General Manager: Research and Development with Grain South Africa. He was most of his career directly involved in the profitability and sustainability of grain and oilseeds production, food security and the development of a bio-fuels strategy for the country. He is a member of a group of 38 economists who monthly evaluate and predict the state of the economy in South Africa. He obtained a BSc-Agric degree from the University of the Free State in 1974 and a MSc-Agric degree from the University of Pretoria in 1978.

**Dr. Gary Paterson, Research Team Manager, Soil Science, ARC**

Garry Paterson was born in Scotland, where he obtained his BSc (Hons) degree in Geography from the University of Strathclyde, Glasgow. He is currently a Research Team Manager with the ARC-Institute for Soil, Climate and Water in Pretoria, where he has worked since 1981, obtaining his MSc degree (cum laude) in Soil Science from the University of Pretoria in 1998 and his PhD degree (in soil erosion control using geotextiles) through the same University in 2014. He is the past President of the Soil Science Society of South Africa (SSSSA), as well as the previous Convener of the South African Soil Classification Working Group. He is the author of several research articles, and was the recipient of the SSSSA award for the best soil science article in the SA Journal of Plant and Soil for 2011.

**Dr Pieter Swanepoel, Chair: Department of Agronomy, Senior Lecturer, University of Stellenbosch**

Dr Pieter A. Swanepoel is an Agronomist who undertakes advanced research for the development of new and adaptation of existing technology in the field of soil quality for agronomical crops and pasture production. Soil quality encompass physical, chemical and biological processes in soil, which directly influence plant productivity. His research focus is to understand how soil quality affects plant production, and in doing so, aims to improve farming efficiency whilst the natural resources are sustained.

**Karina Roodt, Soil Biologist Soil Health Lab**

Karina studied BSc Molecular Biology and Biotechnology at Stellenbosch University. She started working at Nemlab in 2018 in the Soil Health Support Centre where she was responsible for the Mycorrhizal Colonization tests and the Nematode Community Profile analyses. Over the last few months she has helped out at Soil Health Solutions. She recently took over the soil health tests that have now been added to the battery of tests that fall under the Soil Health Support Centre.

**Eddie Vienings Blue North**

Eddie Vienings is a Sustainability Consultant with substantial management and project management experience in production, FMCG and agricultural business environments. His current consulting engagements focus on life-cycle analysis of waste, carbon and costs in export supply-chains. He is interested in environmental sustainability from a supply-chain wide point of view. His specialties include: Carbon foot printing, Life-cycle analysis, Environmental supply-chain analysis and modelling, Project management, Agricultural biochar systems

**Dr. Brian Mantlana, Impact Area Manager: Holistic**

Climate Change, Smart Places Cluster Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) Brian Mantlana leads the Holistic Climate Change Impact Area at the CSIR. He joined CSIR in 2017 to lead the work on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services. From 2011 to 2017 he was a Chief Director at the Department of Environmental Affairs where he led the work on climate change monitoring and evaluation. From 2005 until 2011, he worked at the South African National Biodiversity Institute, first as a researcher and later as a Director. He completed his Ph.D on terrestrial ecosystem functioning at the Wageningen University in the Netherlands while based at the Max Planck Institute for Biogeochemistry in Jena, Germany. His M.Sc degree was done at the then University of Natal, while his Honours and B.Sc degrees were done at Westville University

**Mandla Nkomo, Regional Managing Director Southern Africa, Solidaridad**

With over 19 years' experience establishing agribusinesses and facilitating market linkages between established commercial entities and rural communities, Mandla Nkomo took on the role of managing director of Solidaridad Southern Africa on 1 May 2017. Nkomo brings a deep understanding of the complexities facing the Southern Africa region, as well as practical and technical expertise to propel the newly established regional office forward as a leader in the sustainable development of the region

**Rijk Danckwerts Managing Director Vitroplant SA**

Rijk Danckwerst remains managing director of Vitroplant South Africa (previously known as Ruvalabs) in which the multinational group of companies have become joint shareholders. The company propagates a wide variety of crops through tissue culture, and according to the joint press release, the new partnership will allow mass imports of in vitro plant material, such as Malus and Prunus plant material from Vitroplant Italia and blueberry varieties from the USA for Topfruit's new range of low and high chill blueberry varieties.

**Murray Moxham Managing Director VitaSoil**

Murray and his son Nicholas have developed a new Microbial Carbon product and registered it under the name VitaSoil. VitaSoil is a dynamic soil enhancer which is producing incredible results in the agricultural sector. VitaSoil is currently developing and installing a new biochar plant. Murray served on the Board of Governors at Hilton College and is a South African citizen and holds a Diploma in Agriculture

**Dr. Elmarie Kotzé, Senior Lecturer: Soil Crop and Climate**

Sciences Faculty: Natural and Agricultural Sciences, University of the Free State

# AGENDA



**COVID-19 implications on Agriculture – The COVID Pandemic and Market Disruptions for Farmers and Ranchers; What role can regenerative Agriculture play?**

Presenter: Andrew Ardington, CEO, Regenerative Association

## **Opportunities for Transformation**

**Detailing the broad impact of Regenerative Agriculture**

Presenter: Dr Lennox Xolile Mtshaki President, BFASA CPT

## **Soil Health and Nutrients: Foundation of Regenerative Agriculture and Land Restoration**

Presenter: Peter Searll CEO Managing Director Transformus -Cape Town

## **Introducing and supporting Regenerative Agriculture among small holder farmers**

Presenter: Dr Naude Malan, Senior Lecturer in Development Studies, University of Johannesburg

## **Financing initiatives for regenerative agriculture; Models for investment in regenerative agriculture**

Presenter: Eddie Vienings Blue North

## **Moving Conservation Agriculture forward**

**Background of Conservation Agriculture (CA) with a brief history that led to a revolution in cereal production in the Western Cape Province**

Presenter: Dr Johann Strauss Senior Scientist: Sustainable cropping systems Directorate Plant Sciences CPT Western Cape Department of Agriculture

## **Understanding the basics of Regenerative agriculture as a system of agricultural practice**

Presenter: Fanie Brink Independent Agricultural Economist

## **Regenerative Farming - how healthy is your soil?**

Presenter: Dr. Elmarie Kotzé, Senior Lecturer: Soil Crop and Climate Sciences Faculty: Natural and Agricultural Sciences, University of the Free State

## **Healthy Soil**

Presenter: Dr. Gary Paterson, Research Team Manager, Soil Science, ARC

## **Healthy soils can mitigate climate change**

Presenter: Dr. Brian Mantlana, Impact Area Manager: Holistic Climate Change, Smart Places Cluster

Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)

## **Microbial life in the soil (How do you use the biology to your advantage when farming)**

Presenter: Karina Roodt, Soil Biologist, Soil Health Lab

## **Tissue Culture and Vitro Propagation**

Presenter: Rijk Danckwerts Managing Director Vitroplant SA

## **Views on no-till farming in Regenerative Agriculture**

Presenter: Murray Moxham Managing Director VitaSoil

## **Regenerative Agriculture: From Pasture to our Plate**

Presenter: Dr Pieter Swanepoel, Chair: Department of Agronomy, Senior Lecturer, University of Stellenbosch

## **Preparing SA Agriculture for the future – regenerative practices and strategies**

Presenter: Mandla Nkomo, Managing Director Southern Africa, Solidaridad

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25th & 26th of November 2021

Virtual Conference

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We hope to see you there.