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THE FLOWER INDUSTRY IN SOUTH AFRICA - FLOWERS ON ESO

Dr John Lapham

The *Flower Main Menu Icon*, displayed on the *Plant Navigation Tab* contains information on some thirty flower species described in general, while detailed production information is provided for roses, protea, carnations, chrysanthemums, alstroemeria and anthuriums.

These flowers are cultivated and sold as cut-flowers throughout the country as well as being exported. Although protea are grown in the open-field they are sometimes harvested in a controlled manner, from wild growth while the rest are grown commercially in greenhouses or tunnels.

Production information provided on these six flower species range from, the type of planting material used to fertilisation, harvesting and post-harvest handling. There are also "extension guides" attached to each section of each module, providing further detail. Under the harvesting of these six flower species for instance, there are guides describing best practices required for GlobalGAP and MPS certification, of which both are relevant when exporting cut-flowers. MPS (Milieu Project Sierteelt) is a Dutch based certification scheme to ensure flowers are produced under fair conditions and in a sustainable manner labelling flowers with the MPS certificate when sold on the auctions and again when sold to the consumer. Supermarkets, in particular, favour certified produce because it avoids bad publicity associated with imported goods produced under poor conditions in the country of origin.

Also within the production information is a module on crop health which lists all pest, disease and weed problems in flower crops. Chemicals registered for control of the problem are also displayed.

There are an estimated 1,000 flower growers in South Africa with more than 300 hectares of flowers produced in greenhouses, besides flower production in the open - such as protea. Much of the cut-flower production is sold by farmers on the MultiFlora auction in Johannesburg or directly to supermarket chains, often on contract. MultiFlora is one the biggest flower auctions in the southern hemisphere and sells not only locally grown flowers but also imported produce from other African countries - up to 20% of sales are of imported flowers. Cut-flowers are also exported from South Africa mainly to Europe but also to North America, Eastern Europe, the Far East and elsewhere. Protea are sought-after by importers overseas and are exported as single stems or in prepared bunches of protea and other Cape flora, which adds value to the flowers.



Dr John Lapham

ESO WALLPAPERS

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Liven up your computer's desktop with an ESO wallpaper. Download wallpapers directly from the ESO newsletter e-mail or on the ESO media website: media.esuite.co.za



Tips and tools for advisors

Matsunke Malefane

How to motivate farmers

1. Group **goals** should correspond to individual goals as it will lead to a higher degree of productivity and ability to reach desired goals.
2. Group **goals** should be clearly stated and members should know them. Short-term goals should be included as they energise/revitalise group morale and evoke feelings of accomplishment when achieved.
3. **Goals** must be task **and** relationship orientated. Relationship orientated tasks help in building trust, and group cohesion.
4. **Structure.** A clear group structure, and each member's individual role, should be generally known.
5. **Leadership.** Leaders should always be motivated and enthusiastic. Leaders who lack motivation will have a negative effect on their groups.

NATIONAL ESO USER: JANUARY 2014

The monthly national ESO user will receive the following prizes: First time National ESO User 2013: 4 Gig USB memory stick, second time National ESO User 2013: Digital Camera, third time National ESO User 2013: Nokia Lumia 520, fourth time National ESO User 2013: Samsung Galaxy Tab.

Congratulations to Mr Riaan Nowers (Western Cape Department of Agriculture), who is the ESO Top National User for January 2014.



Mr Riaan Nowers

Congratulations to Riaan Nowers from the Western Cape Department of Agriculture on being the ESO National Top User for January 2014. Riaan was also the national top user during November 2013. We did our customary interview with Riaan to get some tips and to find out a bit more about his usage of ESO.

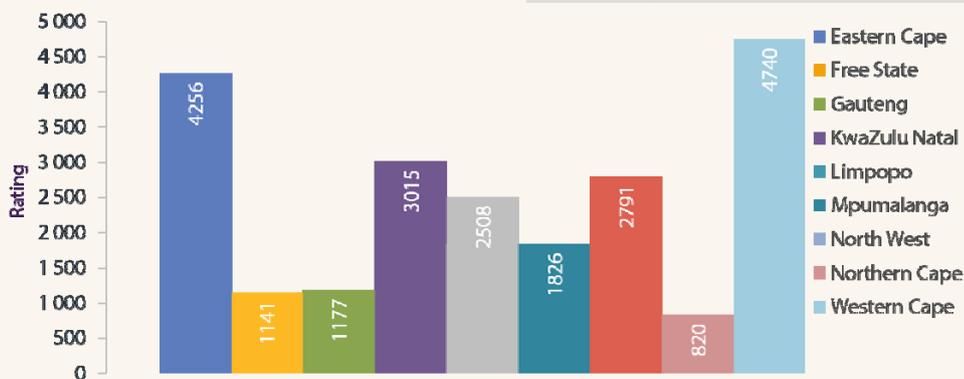
As an economist Riaan visits ESO on a regular basis and uses the system to collect market price data, mostly for vegetables, but has recently started using the animal production market prices module as well. From these prices he develops visual information sheets that are sent off to extension officers. Riaan only started using ESO last year October, but already says that the system saves him a lot of time.

We asked Riaan for a few tips on using ESO. Riaan said that no one should be afraid to use the system. He commented that when he first visited the system it seemed quite daunting, but after a few clicks he realised that it is in actual fact very easy to use. -"The more you use it the easier it gets." Riaan's advice to all users is also to visit and make use of the discussion forum, as it proves to be a very helpful tool. Finally he says that Extension Suite Online provides him with data on a real time basis, it saves time and information is always readily available.

ESO UTILISATION: JANUARY 2014

ESO utilisation is determined through monitoring user utilisation in the nine provinces and by attaching values to Visits, Pages Visited and Duration of Visits; a rating is calculated to establish the National ESO USER of the Month.

PROVINCIAL TOP USER GRAPH



PROVINCIAL TOP USERS

PROVINCE	NAME
Eastern Cape	Mark Shoaipane Makashane
Free State	Griffith Hadebe
Gauteng	Loyiso Sobouza
KwaZulu Natal	Thulile Joyce
Limpopo	Tshivhathi Ndifelani Ivy
Mpumalanga	Lucas Shabangu
North West	Mompoti Gabanakgosi
Northern Cape	George du Preez
Western Cape	Riaan Nowers

DISEASE TALK: FEATURED DISEASE

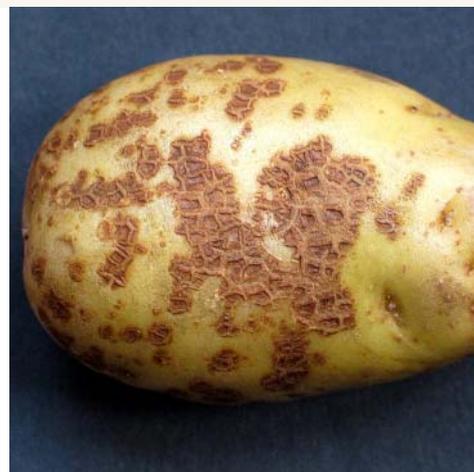
Further information on all featured diseases can be found on ESO.

Common Scab on potatoes

Scientific Name: *Streptomyces scabies*

Popular Name: Common Scab

Rough dark corky slightly raised or sunken spots which can cover all of the tuber substantially, impairing its appearance. Development of the disease is associated with the soil pH.



Common Scab on potato

Send your pest or disease related questions to newsletter@esuite.co.za with your name, province and the question and we will answer you via ESO's Question and Answer module or in the newsletter.

ESO TECH TIP GOOD TECH HABITS

Francois van der Merwe

With life becoming more and more technology driven each day, it is not without reason that users should try to pick up good technology habits. There are several key reasons why good tech habits can make life so much easier for us. Here are a couple to start you off with:

1. **Keep your computer organized** – Take some time to organise your files and folders, thus, making it easier to find items and to save time, such as the ESO shortcut on your desktop.
2. **Use secure passwords** – It is very important to use secure passwords; insecure passwords may lead to

you losing data or someone hacking your ESO account.

3. **Google it** – Hear this a lot? When faced with a tech problem try and Google your problem instead of paying someone to do the fixing for you. Google is filled with loads of guides on how to fix things.
4. **Back-up your files** – Nobody likes losing data. Buy a flash disk and try to back-up important files at least once a week, especially those research documents you have collected from ESO over the years.
5. **Anti-virus** – Viruses, worms and Trojan horses are created on purpose. Some are created to steal sensitive information while others' sole purpose is to break things. Protect your computer by always ensuring that you have the latest anti-virus programs installed, of which many are freely available on the internet.

Do you have any technology related questions? Send them to newsletter@esuite.co.za, with your name, province and the question and we will answer them in a following newsletter edition.



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