

south african
urban food and
farming trust

annual 2024 report



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The SA Urban Food and Farming Trust envisions resilient urban communities flourishing through food and farming.



In South Africa, extreme inequality, the legacy of apartheid and the climate crisis make most residents socially, ecologically and economically fragile.

OUR MISSION is to strengthen vulnerable urban communities through food and farming, supporting communities in arriving at their own form of negotiated resilience.

OUR GOALS are to increase social cohesion within and between communities, improve household food and nutrition security, conserve and protect urban natural ecosystems, empower communities with collective agency, and humanise and enrich built urban environments.

We are on track to strengthen the resilience and improve the well-being of over one million vulnerable urban residents in South Africa in the next ten years.



TRUSTEE'S REPORT



Reflecting on the past ten years, I am filled with pride and admiration for how far we have come. When we first embarked on this journey, it wasn't about a grand moment but countless small steps, ideas nurtured, and relationships built.

Each interaction, each challenge faced, and each milestone reached contributed to the organisation SA Urban Food & Farming Trust is today. What began with the Oranjezicht City Farm (OZCF) has grown far beyond those initial ambitions. We were never building a garden, we were nurturing a vision – a vision of community, food security, and opportunity.

It's inspiring to see how this vision has flourished, not just in one place but in many, as we sought to bring change to areas that needed it most. We focused on more than just creating beautiful green spaces. We aimed to offer something deeper: food, income, and learning opportunities. And that focus has multiplied.

As our reach has expanded, so too has our incredible team. We have welcomed a growing number of dedicated staff members, each bringing unique skills and perspectives.

They are the heart of what we do, empowering communities while also growing their careers.Looking ahead, I'm excited about the future.

We are committed to building a board that truly reflects the diversity of the communities we serve. This will allow us to bring fresh perspectives, deep local understanding, and a broader range of expertise.

As we recruit new board members, we remain focused on staying deeply connected to our mission and grounded in our values. The work continues, and with it, our hope for even greater impact.



CEO'S REPORT



Dear Friends

This year was another one of growth in impact, geographic reach and capacity for our organisation.

However, it was also one of increased challenges to vulnerable communities like the ones we work with every day: the cost of everyday goods grew at twice the inflation rate[1], flooding in vulnerable communities was widespread during historically high rainfall in March, June and September[2], unemployment worsened[3], and nearly two-thirds of households remain food insecure[4].

The need for our work has never been greater.

I am pleased there is a great deal of positive data on the outcomes of that work to share in this Annual Report. At the end of the 2024 financial year, the SA Urban Food & Farming Trust supports nearly 1000 farmers in vulnerable urban communities, hosts the annual Food Indaba reaching an audience of over 50 million, operates the Oranjezicht City Farm as a recognised leader in in urban organic market gardening, accelerates innovative social enterprises, develops grassroots leaders with catalytic potential, and works through pan-African collaborations in food systems transformation across 15 African cities.

Our mission to strengthen vulnerable urban communities through food and farming is being achieved through our programmes, which:

- **Form** grassroots cooperatives
- **Shift** mainstream narratives and understanding among elites to affect policy, funding and priorities
- **Showcase** good practice, developing innovations relevant to urban farming, and disseminating the resulting skills and knowledge
- **Mentor** and accelerate high-potential innovative social enterprises
- **Develop** grassroots leaders
- **Make** direct experimental interventions in informal food markets and related food environments

We are on track to strengthen the resilience and improve the well-being of over 1 000 000 vulnerable urban residents in South Africa in the next 10 years. Thanks to our experience, capacity, partnerships and internal systems, we can say with confidence that unrestricted funding of R20 million (US$1 million) could accelerate this timeline and increase the scale of impact substantially, so if you or someone you know is in a position to provide support at this level or greater, let's talk as soon as possible.

Thanks to our funders who have already made significant multi-year commitments, we have been able to attract and retain exceptional staff and to engage with a range of partners at a more strategic level.

All of this will drive our expanded work in the coming year, including:

- Increased focus on nutrition and well-being in our work with farmers and their households, especially those with children age 5 and under
- Establishing a fourth Agrihub
- Opening new geographies for Food Dialogues events
- Working at the informal retail and waste parts of the food value chain
- Looking for impact philanthropy partners who can help us scale the Agrihub Initiative from 2025-26 and beyond.

You are invited to get involved, subscribe to our newsletter, follow us on social media, reach out to us by email, visit us at our offices, or attend the Food Indaba!



1. https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2024-07-14-cost-of-living-crisis-takes-toll-on-burdened-sa-consumers/
2. https://theconversation.com/cape-of-storms-climate-researchers-explain-cape-towns-recent-extreme-weather-229012
3. https://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/P0211/P02111stQuarter2024.pdf
4. https://foodsecurity.ac.za/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/National-Report-compressed.pdf

highlights of our achievement so far

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- 10 years old with a staff complement of 14 and income of R6.5m
- Supporting nearly 1000 farmers in vulnerable urban communities across the Cape Flats
- Hosted the 6th annual Food Indaba (Dialogues) reaching an audience of over 50 million with 14 event partners and nearly 500 in-person attendees
- Continued a 4-year trajectory of post-Covid growth marking nearly 9-fold income increase over the period
- Completed the third cycle of developing grassroots leaders with catalytic potential from vulnerable communities through both a cohort model (GrowSA) and a direct mentoring model (EESI), a total of 29 individuals
- Working through pan-African collaborations in food systems transformation across 15 African cities (Anglophone and Francophone)
- Providing thought leadership across research publications and multi-stakeholder platforms for "supporting transformations to a more sustainable and equitable future", demonstrating "sustainable steps we can take to address South Africa's hunger crisis", among others

LINK to the SAUFFT 2024 Infographic

- The Oranjezicht City Farm was recognised as "one of South Africa's top environmental organisations"
- Sitting with leading policy makers and academic researchers on the City of Cape Town/Western Cape Government's Food Systems Working Group and Food Systems Research Community of Practice
- Collaborating with leading civil society, NGO and research partners across a range of work, including
  - The South African national DSI-NRF Centre of Excellence in Food Security (South Africa)
  - The African Centre for Cities and the Global Risk Governance Programme at the University of Cape Town (South Africa)
  - UNESCO Chair in Science and Education for African Food Systems (South Africa)
  - Milan Urban Food Policy Pact (Italy)
  - UNESCO Chair in World Food Systems (France)
  - As well as partners in Uganda, Kenya, Ghana, Burkina Faso, Tunisia, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands and Belgium.

Or scan here to download the SAUFFT 2024 Infographic

how we work



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SUPPORT

We partner with existing organisations and social entrepreneurs to strengthen households, community food gardens, and food hubs. We offer training, mentoring, networking, market access, fundraising, and other support

ADVOCACY

We raise awareness, facilitate conversations, and advocate for policy changes and social norm shifts through communications programs, events, workshops, networking, and stakeholder engagement.

INNOVATION

We work with our partners to conceptualise, design, test, research, and pilot innovative programs and methods that improve outcomes and scale impacts, backed by reliable data.



SUMMARY

The Agrihub Initiative Theory of Change:

Because extreme inequality, the legacy of apartheid and the climate crisis make most South Africans socially, ecologically and economically fragile, we work in under-developed urban communities to help community food gardens become more resilient through the establishment of grassroots farmer cooperatives that provide material, skills and market access support, while also building collective social capital as well as community assets, the knowledge to use them and the capacity to govern their use – called Agrihubs – in order to improve the resilience of 1 000 000 people within 10 years.



The SAUFFT Agrihub Initiative addresses the challenges faced by vulnerable urban communities by providing essential infrastructure, training programs, agricultural inputs, and market access. This comprehensive approach has greatly improved the resilience of informal urban micro-farms and food gardens, resulting in increased availability of locally grown produce, enhanced nutrition security,and strengthened community well-being.

Beyond financial gains, the initiative has improved mental and physical health, safety, civic engagement, and environmental quality. Looking ahead, the SA Urban Food & Farming Trust plans to create an open-source guide to help other communities establish Agrihubs, aiming to build a global network of sustainable urban agriculture initiatives. This ambitious vision is transforming local food systems and inspiring resilient urban communities worldwide.

We couldn't have achieved this without the support of the following partners: *Masakhe Foundation, Abalimi Bezekhaya, DG Murray Trust, Joint Distribution Committee, Western Cape Government, Ikhaya le Langa, Siyazama Community Allotment Gardening Association (SCAGA), Jacob's Garden, Harvest of Hope.*

JDC

DG MT

THE MASAKHE FOUNDATION

THE SOUTH AFRICAN RED CROSS SOCIETY SARCS

ABALIMI BEZEKHAYA

The Spring Foundation

HARVEST OF HOPE

Jacobs Garden Grow your own Food

MENSCH



KEY FACTS 2023

Jan 2022
First Agrihub launched

Up to 67%
reduction in input costs



217%
increase in farmer income

Tenfold ROI
for farmers



160+ sites
in Cape Town's Cape Flats region

Goal by end of 2025
1,500 farmers reached



STORIES OF CHANGE

Mavis Mngupane, originally from Butterworth in the Eastern Cape, brought her passion for small-scale agriculture to Langa. She started farming young, tending to cattle and crops daily. Though she initially saw it as a chore, she now appreciates the life lessons it taught her.

After moving to Johannesburg in 1975, Mavis and her family left farming behind. She moved to Langa in 2006, and despite job setbacks, the pandemic inspired her to transform a nearby dumping site into a productive farm in 2021.

- Mavis Mngupane

“I want to keep beautifying spaces”

Starting with spinach and cabbage, she invested her own money in farming tools and soon began producing food for her community.

Initially, the community was sceptical, and the farm faced challenges like the lack of fencing. Mavis used old mattresses as makeshift barriers, gradually changing perceptions. Her dedication to feeding her community and promoting healthy eating helped shift views, reducing dumping and fostering community pride.

Mavis addresses local health issues, such as high diabetes rates, by sharing nutrition tips and offering fresh produce. She is a member of the Langa Agrihub project, an initiative that allows her to access services, resources, and knowledge sharing to grow her operations.

Mavis currently has three farm sites in Langa and her goals include expanding her farms, enhancing their aesthetics, and providing nutritious food to her community. Through her efforts, Mavis demonstrates the land’s potential to nourish and sustain, inspiring a mindful approach to consumption and waste.





SUMMARY



Launched in December 2022, AfriFOODlinks is a four-year, €12 million EU-funded initiative aimed at enhancing food security and urban sustainability in over 65 cities across Africa and Europe. The SA Urban Food & Farming Trust (SAUFFT) is at the forefront of this project, leading socio-technical experiments in Cape Town's informal food markets in Langa and Bellville.

These experiments encompass innovations such as improving engagement between local authorities and communities, managing and processing organic waste streams, and co-designing infrastructure like mobile and temporary facilities.

Key components also include food safety, environmental health programs, placemaking, and nutrition initiatives.

In addition to its work in Cape Town, SAUFFT spearheads Food Dialogues in four other African cities: Tunis (Tunisia), Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso), Kisumu (Kenya), and Mbale (Uganda). Partnering with local Cape Town organisations, the African Centre for Cities at the University of Cape Town, Oribi, and ICLEI Africa, SAUFFT plays a crucial role in research, entrepreneurial development, innovative financing for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMMEs) in the food system, and the development of policy briefs.

Through these comprehensive efforts, AfriFOODlinks prioritises the interests and benefits of African cities, aiming to drive significant improvements in food security and urban sustainability, and fostering inclusive and resilient food systems across the continent.

Project partners

AfriFOODlinks

Funded by the European Union

Coordinated by ICLEI Africa

environmental entrepreneur support initiative (EESI)

south african urban food and farming trust

SUMMARY



Since 2019, the SA Urban Food & Farming Trust has been at the forefront of the Environmental Entrepreneur Support Initiative (EESI) program, a key component of the Global Risk Governance Programme at the University of Cape Town. In partnership with the Mauerberger Foundation, EESI supports young leaders in environmental sustainability, focusing on urban agriculture. This initiative not only amplifies their impact but also enhances their leadership skills.

We were pleased to be part of the EESI Festival in 2023, featuring four of the farmers who have benefitted from the work of our EESI entrepreneur, Chuma Mgcoyi, along with the Beyond Expectation Environmental Programme, Hillwood Primary School, and the Global Risk Governance Programme. The Festival gave us the opportunity to reflect on the shared achievements to date, identify opportunities for closer linkages among the participants, and plan for future activities.

Our 2024-2025 project cycle is especially exciting. It aims to boost nutrition security and well-being for urban food gardeners and their families by cultivating select herb crops. This effort not only enriches diets but also creates new income opportunities and fosters economic sustainability.

Moreover, the EESI program is exploring innovative ways to help vulnerable urban communities adapt to climate change, such as introducing a ‘siesta club’ that provides access to cooling centres during extreme heat periods. Through these comprehensive efforts, the SA Urban Food & Farming Trust continues to champion urban agriculture and environmental sustainability, inspiring a vision of sustainable and resilient urban communities.

GLOBAL RISK GOVERNANCE PROGRAMME

University of Cape Town • iYunivesithi yaseKapa • Universiteit van Kaapstad

SPES BONA



environmental entrepreneur support initiative (EESI)

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STORIES OF CHANGE

In 2021-22, the Environmental Entrepreneurs Support Initiative (EESI) backed Chuma Mgcoyi, a permaculturist and social entrepreneur, in her mission to promote indigenous perennial food and medicinal crops among urban food gardeners in Langa.

Drawing from nearly a decade of farming experience, Chuma founded Tyisa Nabanye ("Growing Together" in Xhosa) to aid vulnerable communities in urban food growing. Through EESI, she expanded her outreach, relocating to Langa to deepen her impact.

Despite challenges like break-ins and personal loss, Chuma found solace and strength in the farming community.

She facilitated the addition of 1100m² of biodiversity across 31 gardens, fostering pest management and crop pollination while reshaping perceptions of biodiversity's importance.

"Sometimes farming is therapy because it takes you out, maybe you left your house with no food on the table. By being in that garden it's your therapy. It's powerful to see women farmers who are trying to balance that," said Chuma.

Chuma's efforts extended to early childhood development centres (ECDs) in Langa, where she introduced food gardening and biodiversity education. Inspired by permaculture ethics, she seeks to instil in children a profound connection to food and nature, fuelling her unwavering commitment to further action.

"Sometimes farming is therapy"

- chuma mgcoyi





SUMMARY



The SA Urban Food & Farming Trust is an integral part of GrowSA, a pioneering green economy partnership dedicated to unlocking the vast human potential within South Africa's grassroots green economy by investing in transformative individuals and projects.

GrowSA's multifaceted approach encompasses comprehensive training, education, mentoring, and support for those working in gardens, kitchens, hubs, and markets, ensuring these vital community spaces thrive and evolve.

By establishing, upgrading, and supporting these areas and enhancing the connections between them, GrowSA fosters a synergistic environment where sustainable practices and innovation flourish. Furthermore, GrowSA actively cultivates partnerships, networks, and engagements with like-minded organisations, amplifying the impact of their collective efforts.

A testament to their success is a recent six-month mentorship program, which provided invaluable guidance and support to participants from community kitchens and food gardens, showcasing the profound and positive influence of their initiatives on local communities.

The programme is on track to launch its fourth cohort in the 2024-25 financial year, expanding the partnership to comprise seven members: *the Oranjezicht City Farm Market, Den Anker Restaurant, Eco-Brick Trading, Margolite Williams, Marianthe Dickie, SA Harvest, and the SA Urban Food & Farming Trust.*

GROW SA



kenilworth rooftop farm

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SUMMARY

The SA Urban Food & Farming Trust continued to mentor and accelerate a hydroponic training farm on the roof of the Kenilworth Shopping Centre, established in November 2022, and constructed using the African Grower hydroponic vertical growing system housed within 192m2 of constructed greenhouse tunnels.

The project is funded by the Mr Price Foundation as part of their HandPicked Initiative, and implemented locally by our direct partner, Fresh Life Produce. The SA Urban Food & Farming Trust employed the managing farmer and advised the project on agricultural and operational procedures, assisted with market access, and provided training on the use of the growing system to interns linked to the Langa Agrihub through Black City Farm. After their internships, trained farmers received small growing tunnels with the hydroponic system for their personal use, and The SA Urban Food & Farming Trust assisted them in finding suitable, secure locations to place their tunnels as well as ongoing mentoring and support. The success of the project has resulted in the managing farmer being offered a position directly with the Mr Price Foundation, where she will take on a larger role from April 2024, overseeing a number of similar projects being established in 2024 and 2025.

The SA Urban Food & Farming Trust will continue to advise on agricultural issues, and is working with researchers from the University of the Western Cape on a comparative study to evaluate this kind of hydroponic farming as a way to help address food insecurity and optimise resource utilisation in densely populated vulnerable and under-resourced communities in Cape Town, targeted for completion by the end of 2025.

FRESH LIFE PRODUCE

HandPicked CityFarms





STORIES OF CHANGE

Akhona joined the SA Urban Food & Farming Trust in 2022 as the lead farmer and manager of the innovative Kenilworth rooftop farm.

She sees farming as vital for national food security. “If more people could farm, we wouldn’t have to buy from other countries,” she argues, highlighting South Africa’s vast farming land. Her work at the rooftop farm isn’t just about business; it’s about transforming lives as the farm employs two interns a month from Langa, equipping them with hydroponic systems to grow and sell their own crops, fostering local entrepreneurship.

Akhona aims to change the perception of agriculture as a career for the uneducated or poor. “Agriculture is a normal career,” she asserts, emphasising youth involvement to drive change. She’s breaking gender norms and setting an example for future generations, delivering thousands of crops and training youth to start their own agricultural businesses.

Akhona’s innovative approach ensures the farm’s resilience. “Everything relies on agriculture,” she states, underscoring its fundamental role in society.

Akhona has since been promoted to operations manager of the farm and according to her, being part of this project has brought significant growth to her life.

“Not only have I gained valuable experience in crop management, but I have also developed leadership skills. Additionally, the success of the project has improved my life by providing better networking opportunities and opening doors for further growth,” she concluded.

“Everything relies on agriculture”

- akhona gxuluwe





SUMMARY

Cultivating the very first crop in 2013



The Oranjezicht City Farm (OZCF) is a shining example of community engagement and sustainable urban agriculture on the slopes of Table Mountain. Spanning 0.25 hectares on a heritage site, OZCF is the flagship project of the SA Urban Food & Farming Trust (SAUFFT).

The farm has earned widespread recognition for its educational programs, which cater to all ages through workshops, internships, and hands-on learning experiences. OZCF is a hub for innovation, developing initiatives such as volunteer programs, produce box schemes, household food waste composting, and water-wise gardening practices, which are shared and implemented at other sites to amplify their impact.

OZCF also supports and amplifies the work of other SAUFFT programmes, providing training and mentoring, farming inputs, venue space, logistical support and more. It also supports communities in establishing food gardens, including the Kloof Street Allotment Garden, which opened in 2024.

A close relationship is maintained with the OZCF Market, which is an independent privately owned company that licences the use of the OZCF brand and shares use of branded communications platforms and channels.

OZCF maintains its organic certification through the Participatory Guarantee System (PGS). OZCF has become a leading voice in the urban farming movement in South Africa, influencing urban agroecological agriculture practices and shaping the strategic direction of SAUFFT.

oranjezicht
city farm



KEY FACTS 2023-2024

19
Contributing Volunteers

463
Learners and Tours hosted

9
Workshops hosted

8
Interns Trained

36m³
Organic Waste Composted

877,220
Audience Reached for April 2023 - March 2024

“one of South Africa’s top environmental organisations”

by Treeshake

Cultivating our 11th crop in 2024





SUMMARY

food dialogues

Food Dialogues is an annual programme dedicated to exploring and improving our local food system through a series of talks and events.

This initiative gathers a diverse group of speakers who are actively involved in shaping the food landscape, offering a platform for food growers, academics, activists, writers, nutritionists, policymakers, and food enthusiasts to come together. The Food Dialogues provides a unique opportunity for these stakeholders to engage deeply with crucial issues related to the food we consume.

Through this collaborative environment, participants discuss sustainable approaches and innovative solutions, working collectively to create a more equitable and sustainable food future. The programme fosters meaningful connections and partnerships, inspiring collective action and driving significant progress in our food systems.

We couldn't have achieved this without the support of our sponsors and partners:

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SOLVE
A V&A Waterfront initiative to solve for better futures.

DG MT

DSI-NRF Centre of Excellence in Food Security

AfriFOODlinks

Funded by the European Union

Bertha House

CITY OF CAPE TOWN ISIXEKO SASEKAPA STAD KAAPSTAD

SOUTHERN AFRICA FOOD LAB

EDP

16 ON LEROTHOLI

CAPE TOWN TV

PHILIPPI VILLAGE

ICLEI Local Governments for Sustainability AFRICA

Western Cape Government





KEY FACTS 2023

Total Hours of Engagement:

1610

SMMEs Supported: 25

Total Social Media Reach:

94 712

Event Partners:

16

Featured Contributors:

41

Total Registered Attendees:

487

Total Audience Coverage:

50 408 878





food dialogues

south african urban food and farming trust

STORIES OF CHANGE

“My internship at the South African Urban Food and Farming Trust (SAUFFT) and working on the Food Dialogues project has also contributed to my transformed perspective of Cape Town. I have had the opportunity to interview and interact with several Cape Town chefs and food system professionals.

I met with people who work with the informal sector hands-on, acting as economic advisors for those who sell fruits and vegetables on the street, as well as people who pool their money together to purchase large quantities of groceries directly from farmers in the townships in an effort to support the marginalised community as well as feed their families good, healthy food.

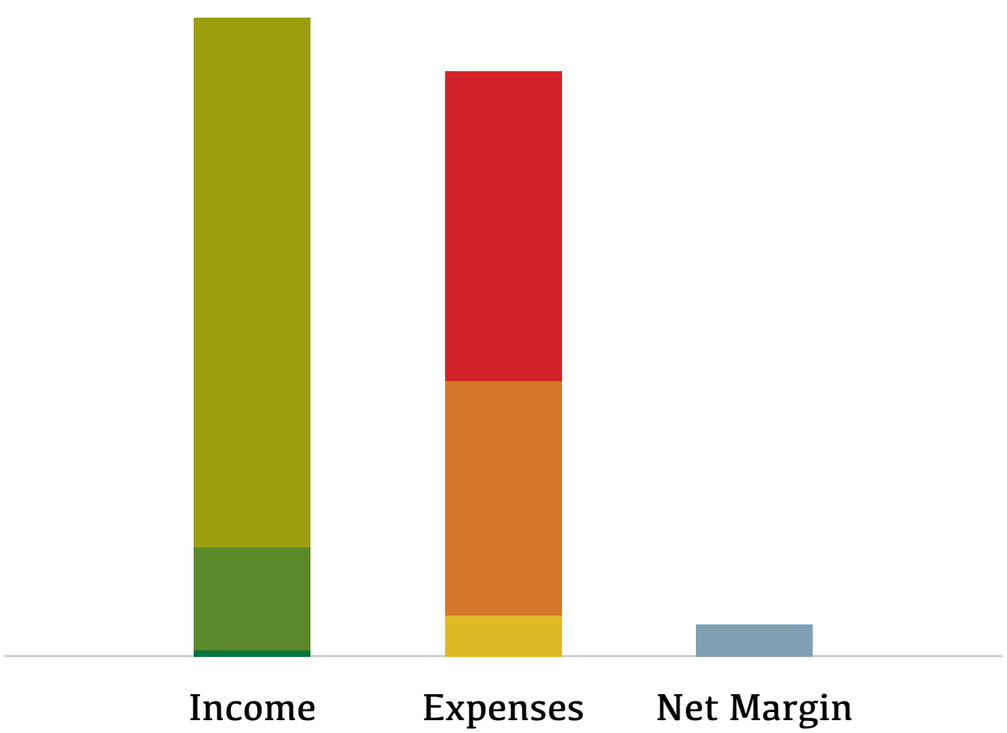
I even had the opportunity to speak with some individual informal traders on the streets of the Central Business District (CBD) in order to gain a more holistic understanding of how Cape Town’s food system operates.”

“feed their families good, healthy food”

- arti patel



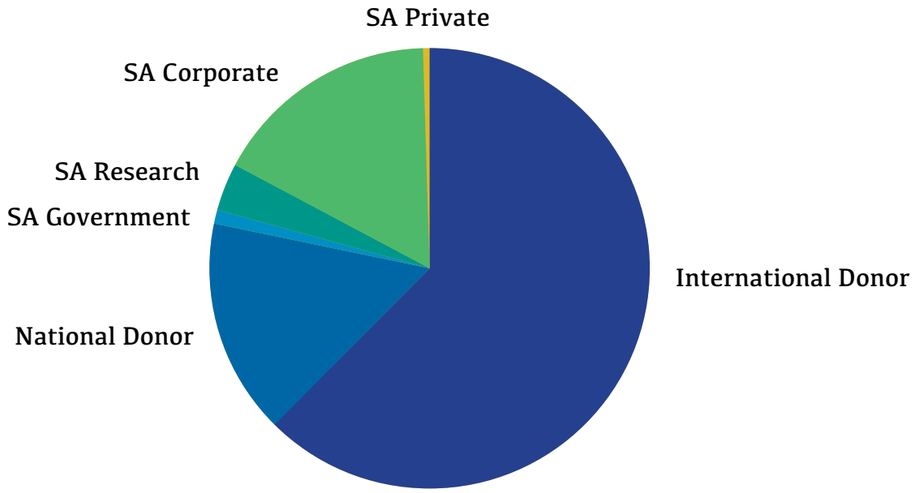




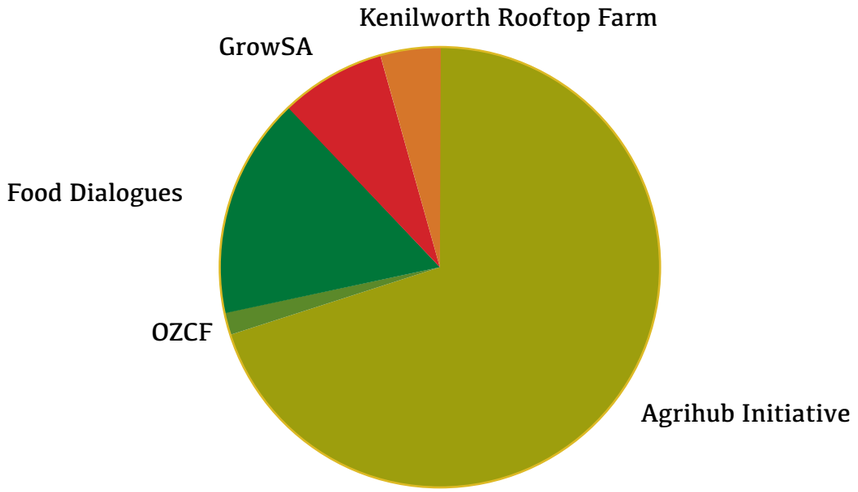
		ZAR	%
INCOME			
	Donations and Grants	5 678 109	83%
	Own earned income	1 122 385	16%
	Other income	50 911	1%
		6 851 405	
EXPENSES			
	Project and farm direct expenses	3 290 909	53%
	Employee costs	2 527 109	40%
	Overhead costs	471 660	7%
		6 289 678	
	Net margin for the financial year	343 051	5%

FINANCIAL SUMMARY





GRANTS AND DANATIONS BY SOURCE	ZAR	%
International Donor	3 556 320,84	63%
National Donur	883 000,00	16%
SA Government	64 000,00	1%
SA Research	200 000,00	4%
SA Corporate	941 509,56	17%
SA Private	32 278,60	1%
TOTAL	5 678 108,64	100%



GRANTS AND DONATIONS BY PROJECT	ZAR	%
Agrihub Initiative	3 975 462,08	70%
OZCF	86 137,00	2%
Food Dialogues	925 000,00	16%
GrowSA	439 509,56	8%
Kenilworth Rooftop Farm	252 000,00	4%
EESI	0,00	0%
AfriFOODlinks	0,00	0%
TOTAL	5 678 108,64	100%

meet the team

south african urban food and farming trust





1.



2.



3.



4.



5.



6.

1. **Kurt Ackermann**
Chief Executve Officer,
South African Urban Food
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2. **Rirhandzu Marivate**
Programme Manager,
South African Urban Food
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Food Indaba and
Food Dialogues

4. **Melanie Stewart**
Farm Manager,
Oranjezicht City Farm

5 **Thando Qabaka**
Project Manager,
Agrihub Initiative

6. **Ian Summers**
Innovation Officer,
South African Urban Food
& Farming Trust



7.



8.



9.



10.



11.

7. **Lwando Sawule**
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8. **Wilweena Fortune**
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10. **Josh Harding**
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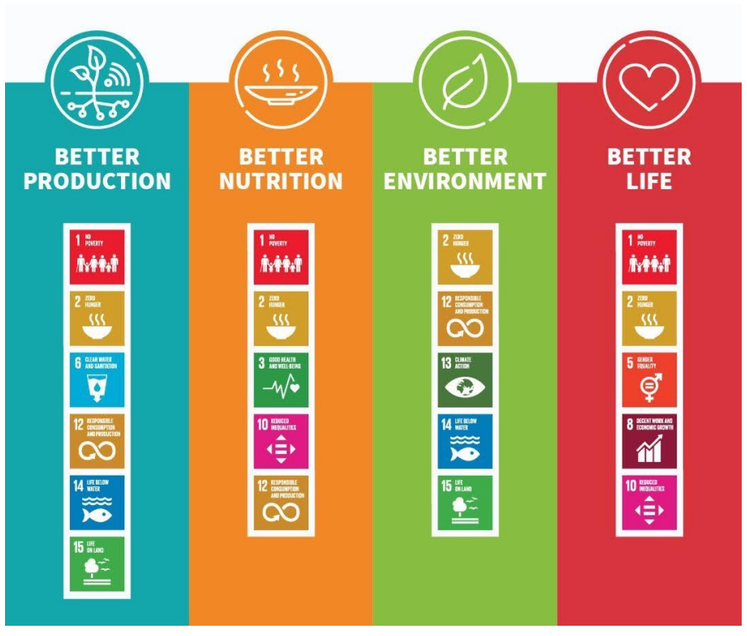
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Established in August 2014, the SAUFF Trust (Registered Trust IT20812/2014) is a non-profit public benefit organisation (PBO 930052666) with Section 18a status from the SA Revenue Service (SARS), allowing it to issue certificates for tax deductions in return for donations received.









The power of working through food and farming to make a major impact, which drives the work of the SA Urban Food and Farming Trust, is also recognised by the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations, which sees four key impact areas achieved through food systems work, encompassing 11 of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

“our economic approach to food and its distribution reflects our basic moral values”

— Nelson Mandela


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