

Biodynamic Agricultural
Association of
Southern Africa



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BIO DYNAMIGHT

SOUTH AFRICA



TRANSFORMING BIODYNAMICS INTO A FORCE FOR ECOLOGICAL, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL RENEWAL IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

BDAASA CHAIRPERSON – SIZO NSIMANDE SHARES THE NEW BOARD'S VISION FOR 2026 AND BEYOND.



EXPANDING BIODYNAMICS ACROSS SOUTHERN AFRICA

My core intention for this term is simple: **bring biodynamics to the rest of the country** - and to our broader Southern African region. Biodynamic agriculture cannot remain concentrated in only a few pockets. Real transformation happens when knowledge, training, and support reach farmers where they are.

In 2026, BDAASA will **extend meaningful presence into at least seven provinces** - especially Mpumalanga, Polokwane, Limpopo, the Free State, and others where agricultural revival is already underway. I have already begun engaging individuals and communities practicing permaculture, regenerative agriculture, and other ecologically aligned methods who are highly receptive to BD principles.

Our longer-term goal is clear: **BDAASA must become truly Southern African**, strengthening relationships not only across South Africa, but also with Lesotho, Mozambique, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Namibia, and our GreenSouth partners.



BUILDING LOCAL ECONOMIES THROUGH BD-GROWN FOOD

Biodynamics is not only a farming method - it is a means of **community upliftment and economic liberation**.

2026 will focus on connecting **BD growers directly with consumers who understand the value of biodynamic produce** and are willing to pay fair prices. This alignment is what unlocks rural economies, reduces poverty, and strengthens community resilience.



WE WILL SUPPORT FARMERS BY:

- 🌱 helping them identify viable markets;
- 🌱 equipping them with practical knowledge on soil, water, and crop planning;
- 🌱 offering field-based mentorship by experienced BD practitioners.

🌱 **EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES THROUGH PRACTICAL SUPPORT**

People want to work, and communities have land - what is missing are **targeted interventions** that turn potential into productivity. Many support needs are small, simple, and immediately transformative.

BDAASA WILL FOCUS ON:

- 🌱 field visits and water-flow guidance;
- 🌱 crop selection advice based on local conditions;
- 🌱 advising on solutions for infrastructure bottlenecks;
- 🌱 mobilising local assets and knowledge.

These are not abstract development ideas - they are **immediately actionable**, deeply human, and aligned with biodynamic principles of place-based wisdom.

🌱 **GROWING A MOVEMENT: ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP, VISIBLE IMPACT**

I aim to be what I call an **"avalanche creator"** - not merely maintaining momentum, but unleashing it.

THIS YEAR, BDAASA WILL VIGOROUSLY ENCOURAGE:

- 🌱 **active membership**, not passive participation;
- 🌱 regional clusters and study groups;
- 🌱 workshops that lead to tangible outcomes;
- 🌱 partnerships that multiply reach and capacity.

There is tremendous unused capacity in our network - skilled farmers, enthusiastic youth, experienced mentors, aligned organisations. The task ahead is to **channel this capacity in a deliberate and focused way**, turning isolated activity into a coordinated national movement.

🌱 **A LONG-TERM VISION ROOTED IN BIODYNAMIC VALUES**

WHAT WE BEGIN IN 2026 MUST LAY THE FOUNDATION FOR THE DECADE AHEAD:

- 🌱 A **continent-wide network** of BD farmers, trainers, and markets
- 🌱 A new generation of **young biodynamic practitioners**
- 🌱 Strong partnerships with training institutions like UNISA, land-based initiatives, and regional governments
- 🌱 A clear and valued identity for BDAASA as the **heart of biodynamic activity in Southern Africa**
- 🌱 A movement where food, farms, and communities thrive together

Our future is one where biodynamics is not a niche practice but a **recognised Southern African force for ecological, economic, and social renewal**.



HANDING OVER THE REINS

Sizo Nsimande picks up the reins from Wendy Lilje, who has played a vital role on the board since 2018. BioDynamight chatted to Wendy about the part she has played and how she sees her role in the future.

How many years have you been leading BDAASA?

I joined the board in 2012 so that's 14 years, but hardly 'leading' – just getting things done.

How are you feeling about releasing your baby to a younger generation of leaders?

Long overdue! Though I never saw it as 'my' baby – BDAASA has been around for a long long time with many other important players.

What does it mean to you to have attracted this new generation into the organisation and to see them step forward into leadership roles?

A great relief! They're young, passionate, skilled, representative of the region's demographics and key to our sustainability. It's been in our consciousness for a while and I do believe it is happening now because the time is right.

The Demeter PGS gives more people the opportunity to learn about biodynamic farming which has helped us to become more representative.

Now with Sizo at the helm and a new generation of leaders with connections further afield, we should be able to extend our reach.

How do you see your role in the future?

Sit, drink tea and watch the sunsets... and criticise the new board relentlessly!

No, seriously. For now, I'm letting things unravel and fall into place.

Everyone knows I am passionate about Demeter. It represents biodynamic farming done properly. Biodynamics just does not work if half measures are taken. So I will continue to promote and support Demeter and the PGS growers. It has been very rewarding to see the Demeter PGS take off!

Wendy Lilje 'getting things done' during a prep making workshop.



ACHIEVING OUR VISION THROUGH MEMBERSHIP INVOLVEMENT

Under the new Board, BDAASA's plan is to take biodynamics to the people, especially in regions where the potential is high but exposure is low. That means moving beyond our traditional centres and being deliberately active in provinces such as Mpumalanga, Polokwane, Limpopo, the Free State, and the North West, while strengthening our presence in KZN, the Western Cape, and Gauteng.

We want BDAASA to feel alive in at least seven provinces by year-end. Practically, this looks like:

- 🌱 building regional clusters where members interact regularly;
- 🌱 hosting visits, workshops, field days, and study circles;
- 🌱 developing partnerships with permaculture, regenerative agriculture and ecological farming groups already active on the ground;
- 🌱 and intentionally cultivating links across Southern Africa, including Lesotho, Eswatini, Mozambique, Botswana, Zimbabwe and Namibia.

Our goal is to create a continental biodynamic ecosystem - one that respects place, culture, and local realities.

How members can help

Our strength is in our collective capacity. Members can help by:

- 🌱 Offering their farms or gardens as hosting sites for visits or workshops.
- 🌱 Sharing their skills - composting, beekeeping, livestock, seed saving, water management, herbal preps, etc.
- 🌱 Starting or reviving local study groups or WhatsApp circles.
- 🌱 Helping identify communities or farmers who are searching for ecological methods but have not yet encountered BD.
- 🌱 Actively inviting neighbours, community growers and emerging farmers to join events.

Every BDAASA member is a messenger, a bridge, and a catalyst.

sizo Nsibande - Chairman



Yogisho Mgolombane - Treasurer



Marile de Beer - Secretary



Board support for members willing to host visits and workshops

THE BOARD WILL ENSURE THAT HOSTS ARE NOT LEFT ON THEIR OWN. SUPPORT INCLUDES:

- Help with planning and structuring the visit;
- A BDAASA facilitator or co-host where needed;
- Marketing and communication to the wider membership;
- Assistance with logistics, such as arranging preps, equipment, printing, or materials;
- Guidance on safety, timing, flow of the day, and learning outcomes;
- A small toolkit of templates (agenda, checklists, participant sign-in, feedback forms).

Our aim is to make hosting simple, supported, and deeply rewarding, not overwhelming.

A “blueprint” for hosts

THE BLUEPRINT IS GROUNDED IN THREE PRINCIPLES:

1 KEEP IT SIMPLE.

A good visit doesn't need perfection. It needs authenticity. People want to see real working conditions, not polished exhibitions.

2 SHOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING WELL AND WHAT YOU'RE STRUGGLING WITH.

The most powerful learning happens when a host says:

“This part is working. This part is not. Here's what I'm trying next.”

This vulnerability builds trust and collective intelligence.

3 ALWAYS INCLUDE HANDS-ON ENGAGEMENT.

Whether it's stirring, compost turning, water-flow assessment, pruning, mulching, or bed-preparation, action creates memory, and memory creates adoption.

A SIMPLE FORMAT IS:

- Welcome & story of the farm
- Walkabout (show both the strengths and the challenges)
- Practical session
- Conversation circle
- Closing intentions & next-steps

Anyone can host if the blueprint is light, flexible, and human.

Ideas for visits and workshop themes

Here are themes that consistently spark energy, stimulate participation and conversation:

PRACTICAL & HANDS-ON:

- 🌱 Compost building & soil vitality
- 🌱 Water management (swales, flow redirection, borehole strategy, moisture retention)
- 🌱 Beekeeping (beginner to intermediate)
- 🌱 BD planting calendar in practice
- 🌱 Small-scale livestock integration
- 🌱 Herbal and BD preparations (stirring, spraying, storage)
- 🌱 Market readiness: grading, packaging, consumer education

COMMUNITY-FOCUSED:

- 🌱 “Regenerating a village”: how BD can uplift households and youth
- 🌱 Women’s circles in BD agriculture
- 🌱 Growing food in resource-stretched environments

ADVANCED CONVERSATIONS:

- 🌱 Farm organism design
- 🌱 Social and economic three-folding
- 🌱 Integrating BD with permaculture and agroecology

BUSINESS & MARKETS:

- 🌱 Getting BD produce to people who value it
- 🌱 Building local food economies
- 🌱 Cooperative marketing models
- 🌱 How to price your produce fairly

Switching between practical demonstration and deep conversation makes these workshops both enriching and memorable.

SOME OF THE MOST IMPACTFUL WORKSHOPS IN RECENT YEARS (ACROSS BDAASA CIRCLES) HAVE BEEN:

- 🌱 Compost and soil vitality days
- 🌱 Beekeeping workshops
- 🌱 Calendar interpretation and practical application
- 🌱 Seed saving and propagation
- 🌱 Introduction to BD preps and stirring practice
- 🌱 Study groups that combine Steiner readings with farm walkabouts
- 🌱 Community food-garden workshops where young people participate hands-on

What made them successful was participation, not perfection – the willingness of hosts to open their space, and the curiosity of attendees.

Extending learning opportunities to other provinces and countries

WE PLAN TO SCALE LEARNING BY:

- 🌱 Sending small mobile teams to new provinces to run intro workshops.
- 🌱 Creating short regional circuits where a host in one town invites the next town - creating a chain of visits.
- 🌱 Training members to become regional facilitators who can carry BD basics into their communities.
- 🌱 Documenting workshops (photos, notes, small videos) and sharing them with Zimbabwe, Namibia, Lesotho, Botswana, and Mozambique cooperatives.
- 🌱 Partnering with organisations doing similar work so we can share resources and reduce travel costs.

Our aim is a ripple-effect model: one strong workshop ignites the next, province by province.

What do you have in the pipeline?

FOR 2026 WE ARE PREPARING:

- 🌱 Provincial activation visits in Mpumalanga, Limpopo, Polokwane, Free State, and North West
- 🌱 Hands-on sessions with farmers transitioning from permaculture or agroecology into BD
- 🌱 A Southern Africa regional network of BD-aligned practitioners
- 🌱 Regular monthly workshops and seasonal field days
- 🌱 A BDAASA hosting guide for anyone wanting to host
- 🌱 A structured but flexible BD Introduction Roadshow
- 🌱 Workshops on regenerative economics and market access
- 🌱 An expanded youth and community engagement programme

This is the year we make BDAASA visible, active, and present in more places than ever before.

What would you like participants to come away with?

WE WANT EVERY PARTICIPANT - WHETHER FARMER, GARDENER, TEACHER, OR YOUTH - TO LEAVE WITH:

- 🌱 A sense of possibility: "I can do this on my land."
- 🌱 Practical skills they can apply immediately.
- 🌱 Connection to a growing community of BD practitioners.
- 🌱 Courage to experiment and adapt BD methods to their own context.
- 🌱 Clarity on how BD links soil, people, economy, and spirit.
- 🌱 Inspiration to join or host the next workshop, creating the momentum we need.

Above all, we want them to leave with a feeling that biodynamics belongs to them too, not only to a small circle.



BEEKEEPING WORKSHOP AT SILLERY FARM

A beekeeping workshop led by Gerard Frater took place on Sunday, 1 February on Jo Fuller's piece of heaven in Constantia.

The workshop included a long engagement session where Gerard answered every question from basic to advanced, providing insight into the magic role played by Mother Nature's little helpers.

Participants also had the opportunity to learn from the Master Beekeeper during the demonstration that followed - an adrenaline rush but luckily no stings.

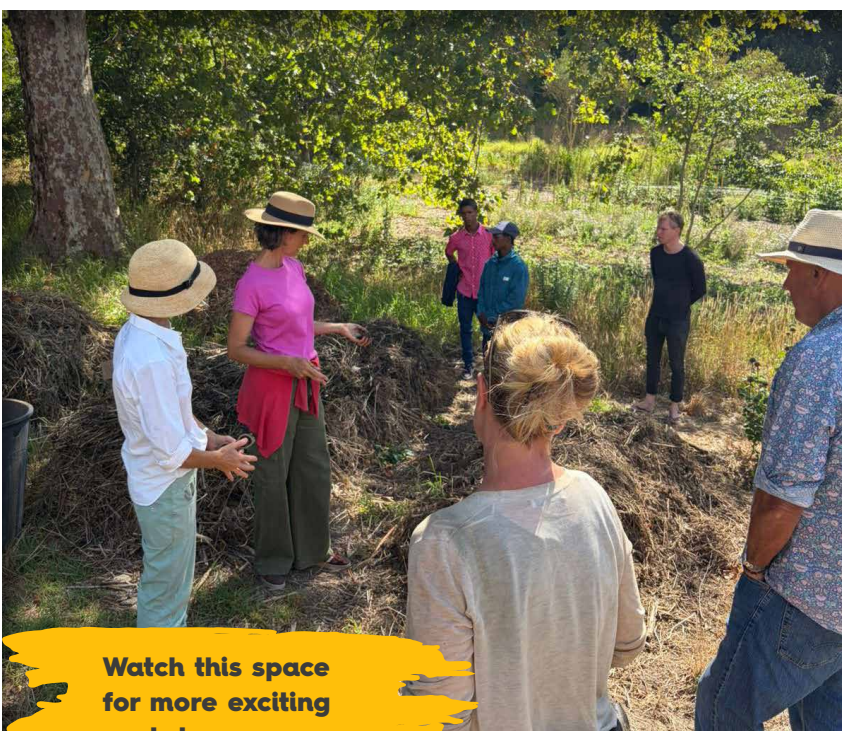
Thanks go to Tanja for her help with organising the event and feeding all with delicious food from our community, and to Jo for hosting the event.



Gerard Frater, Master Apiarist.

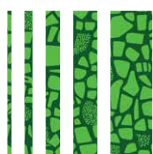


Mother Nature's Master Pollinators.



**Watch this space
for more exciting
workshops.**





GREENSOUTH PRESENTS

THREE APPROACHES TO VET TRAINING IN BD AGRICULTURE

GreenSouth brings together vocational training providers, agricultural practitioners, and business experts to co-create innovative learning pathways that respond to real needs in rural communities. By aligning training with local market realities, supporting trainers, and integrating sustainable land-based practices, the project aims to build resilient agricultural livelihoods and contribute to the wider goals of climate-smart, regenerative development.

Three innovative Vocational Education and Training (VET) approaches addressing current skills needs and skills gaps have been identified through comprehensive public-private dialogue.

These approaches will serve as the foundation for developing job-related, non-formal, country-specific training models, curricula, and training content.

INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED IN 2025 ACROSS THE REGION EMPHASISED THAT TRANSFORMATION OCCURS WHEN LEARNERS:

- ↓ practise skills directly on farms,
- ↓ receive follow-up support and mentorship,
- ↓ participate in community learning circles,
- ↓ work with elders, local innovators, and experienced farmers, and
- ↓ address real-world challenges through experimentation and adaptation

The dialogues held in all three countries revealed the importance of VET providers acting as bridging institutions that connect farmers, communities, market actors, local authorities, and knowledge holders.

VET providers become part of eco-learning systems where the institutions work in collaboration with partners. This calls on VET providers to learn new skills, such as learning to facilitate participatory processes with diverse stakeholders and developing programmes that align training priorities with local labour market needs.

THE THREE VET APPROACHES THE TEAM HAS COME UP WITH ARE:

1 ON-FARM LEARNING AND APPRENTICESHIP PATHWAYS

People learn most effectively when development is rooted in real situations, supported by relationships, practice and continuity.

On-farm learning creates conditions in which deeper capacities can grow such as attentiveness, courage, practical judgment, confidence, and the ability to act coherently within a living system. These capacities arise naturally when learners are immersed in the daily rhythm of a farm, accompanied by someone who helps them interpret what they see and do.

VET partners provide short training to equip farmers as mentors and facilitators.

2 LIGHTHOUSE FARMS AND REGIONAL LEARNING LIBRARY

Farmers and practitioners repeatedly expressed a desire for places where they could see possibilities, be inspired by concrete examples, and learn from farms that demonstrate coherent, well-integrated systems.

Lighthouse farms allow learners to observe whole systems functioning in context and understand how regenerative practices unfold over time.

A small number of farms where regenerative practices are already in place are selected as Lighthouse farms. They host field days, immersion visits, workshops and exchange programmes.

Knowledge from these farms is documented and shared via a multimedia library, which continues to evolve and remains grounded in living examples.

VET partners are the custodians ensuring the learning ecosystem remains vibrant and inclusive. They also facilitate exchange between the farms and the learners.

3 MODULAR PROBLEM-BASED, COMMUNITY ROOTED TRAINING

Many farmers and community groups cannot commit to long-term apprenticeships, yet they face immediate challenges that require accessible, practical, and locally relevant training.

Community organisations also expressed a need for short learning interventions that address urgent issues like drought, soil fertility decline, market access, food processing, youth unemployment, and organisational difficulties.

This approach responds to those needs by offering short, modular training units that are shaped by real problems arising in specific communities. Each module is designed to start from a local situation, allowing learners, facilitators, and community members to co-create solutions rather than receive pre-packaged content.

The approach is particularly suitable for VET providers who work closely with communities, women's groups, youth networks, cooperatives, and individual farmers who require practical tools rather than long-term placements.

VET providers act as facilitators of community-based learning processes rather than as conventional trainers delivering fixed content.

Although each of the three approaches has its own emphasis and structure, they are complementary elements within a wider vocational learning ecosystem.

Way Forward

During 2026 the team will develop concrete training programmes, curriculum frameworks and professional development pathways for trainers, turning the approaches into structured learning offerings that strengthen the capacity of VET providers and enhance the employability of learners.

Thank you to all those involved in GreenSouth for your hard work and to all who were interviewed. Your input enabled the team to work with the lived reality of all role players and come up with relevant approaches.