

- **Diversified production**

We plant different types of crops throughout the year. It is possible to grow vegetables, medicinal plants, herbs, flowers and fruit trees in a homestead garden. In this way we can have fresh food throughout the year. Our garden can sustain and balance itself and we can practise natural pest and disease control.



- **Value adding and income generation**

We can sell our produce and store any extra for later use. We can dry and or bottle our produce to add value to it. We can produce seedlings and seed. These products can also be sold.



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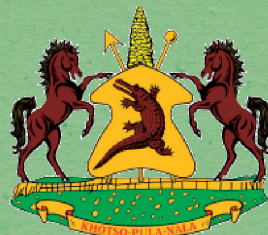
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GOVERNMENT OF LESOTHO



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LIRAPA:

HOW TO GET THE BEST
FROM YOUR GARDEN

Second Edition



MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY

2008

A HANDBOOK FOR INTENSIVE FOOD PRODUCTION IN LESOTHO

A collaborative effort between the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security and Partners

Produced with the assistance of many people in Lesotho, including farmers and staff from Non Government Organisations and Government Departments

Who is it for?

The manual is written in seSotho and English in easy to read format with many photos and drawings. It is meant for farmers and householders and those facilitators that support them.



Content of the manual

- Living and eating well
- Case study; Mainstreaming of HIV/AIDs
- Farmer experimentation
- Mulching
- Seedling production
- Improving your soil
- Bed design
- Planting vegetables
- Pest and disease management
- Saving and using water
- Homestead irrigation techniques
- Fruit production
- Seed saving
- Conservation farming; a case study of an integrated farming system

Specific gardening techniques that can increase soil fertility, water holding in the soil (rain water harvesting) and production capacity are promoted.

These include:

• Keyhole gardens:

Keyhole gardens are small built up gardens that are easy to maintain and are very fertile. They catch rain water through the “key” where run off is caught. The basket of decaying organic matter in the middle of the garden provides food to the soil and plants and assists with water holding. Mulching of the vegetables planted further assists with



using water efficiently, as does the use of grey water (recycled or previously used water) on the bed. These gardens have been introduced in many regions of Lesotho and work very well!

• Conservation farming:

Furrows and mounds are created on the contour to catch and save rain water. Erosion is controlled and organic matter is incorporated into the mounds where the crops are grown. A mixed system of continuous cropping is possible using the



space on the mounds and in the furrows. Crops such as maize, beans, pumpkins and tomatoes can all be grown together. Winter crops such as wheat, cabbages, rape and kale can also be planted.



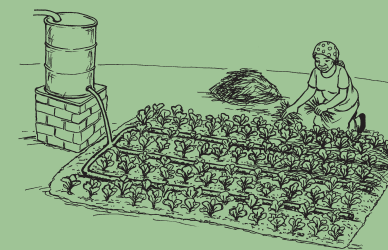
MR MATLERE SAYS, 'ASK ME ABOUT FURROWS!'

• Rainwater harvesting and storage



Rain water is collected from roofs or other surfaces and is stored to be used for irrigation.

It is possible to collect water in a tank from the roof of a house. This water is quite clean and can also be used for household purposes.



Water collected from the ground is stored in underground tanks. This water can be pumped into an elevated tank and then used for the garden through taps or drip irrigation.

