

Career Opportunity

Horticulturalist

Wolwedans | NamibRand Nature Reserve



Wolwedans Horticulture Class 2023 - Level 3. Apart from overseeing all garden production, the job entails practical facilitation, training and supervision for the on-site trainees at Desert Academy and other gardens in the region where trainees do their apprenticeship.

Wolwedans – imbedded in ‘The AridEden Project’ and driven by our 5C sustainability strategy - Conservation | Community | Commerce | Culture | Consciousness - prides itself on productive organic and healthy vegetable gardens in the desert. Growing your own food makes so much sense in every respect; it improves the culinary experience of guests and team alike, adds quality of life to the Wolwedans village, improves physical health and reduces our carbon footprint considerably through the reduction of food miles.

With the above in mind, we are looking to expand our vegetable gardens as well as crop variety in the years to come, both at Wolwedans, Maltahöhe and surrounds. More importantly we want to turn all our gardens into commercial, self-sustaining enterprises - under the umbrella and to the benefit of the Wolwedans Foundation.

Therefore we need an experienced horticulturist (or perhaps two) with “green fingers”, who can manage a number of productive gardens and respective teams ranging from of 6-12 gardeners per site. Some experience with animal husbandry (i.e. chicken, ducks, pigs, rabbits and horses) would be an added advantage.

KEY PERFORMANCE AREAS

- Supervision of gardens and gardeners in 3 and ultimately 5 different locations
- Planning of sowing/planting cycles (bearing in mind companion planting) and harvest plans (demand driven)
- Plan and maintain continuous supply of greatest variety of vegetables, herbs and fruit (pending season) for our lodges and canteens
- Avoid over-production with fresh produce ending up back in the compost
- Supervising composting and soil preparation in different locations
- Planning and managing earth worm farms in different locations
- Plumbing knowledge (irrigation systems) including programming of irrigation computers

- Maintaining NOA (Namibia Organic Association) certification for certified gardens
- Planning and production management of a Wolwedans based nursery producing indigenous plants (trees, shrubs, Euphorbias and Succulents) for selling in Windhoek and to other lodges. Once experience has been gained on a small scale, this nursery concept will be scaled at Maltahöhe.
- Rearing of decorative plants (i.e. Hoodia, Succulents and Aloe's) for Wolwedans lodges and markets to be explored
- Planning larger scale production of herbs which can be converted into Pesto's (value add) mainly at Maltahöhe.
- Practical training (as part of a new qualification) to gardeners and trainees according to NTA unit standards
- Supervise and coordinate volunteers and trainees (both local and international) from technical colleges and universities.

EXPERIENCE/KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

- You need to be 30+, and not older than 70 years of age
- 5-10 years of practical experience in gardening (preferably organic, bio-dynamic or permaculture) is a must
- As gardening involves a lot of physical labor, you should be strong and in good physical health, it is not essential though as there are juniors who can do the hard physical work
- What counts is experience (mind) and a thorough understanding of how these things work best
- Sober habits with an efficient, orderly disposition
- English literate (read and write)
- Good communication skills in English (to teach gardeners and trainees)
- Willing to study further and broaden your knowledge base (through internet research, books, courses and self-teaching) on organic farming
- Willingness to pass on and share knowledge to gardeners and trainees
- "Pledge" to abide by the Wolwedans Compass and the companies' values
- Prepared to offer in-house and external training courses

QUALIFICATIONS

Whilst a Level 5 (or higher) qualification would be very advantageous, esp. with regards to vocational training facilitation, it is not a key requirement. What counts is a solid practical track record and a thorough intellectual and practical understanding of organic farming and/or Permaculture.

This position requires flexibility, as you will be travelling between Wolwedans and Maltahöhe on a monthly basis, setting up temporary residence at Wolwedans (in the heart of NamibRand Nature Reserve) from 2 – 6 weeks, pending season. Hence, applicants need to enjoy living out in nature and ideally have a 'home' base somewhere during off-days (2 weeks every 8 weeks).

Contactable references must be supplied, and a probation period is applicable. Only short-listed candidates will be contacted. CV's will not be returned. Please do not apply for this position if you don't have the required experience.

We offer employment with purpose as well as a competitive package (including medical and pension), a wonderful working environment, a healthy lifestyle, free board and lodging at Wolwedans, training support and the commitment to look after you to the best of our abilities, and help you grow. That is, if you commit to give your best to Wolwedans too!

Interested applicants who meet the above criteria may email their CV, together with a covering letter, and a recent head & shoulders photograph to: hr@wolwedans.com. Only short-listed candidates will be contacted. This position is available as of 01 February 2024