



## NEWSLETTER

Issue 1

2021

With 2020 behind us and Covid19 still a huge part of our reality, we would like to wish all of you a very happy and blessed 2021.

May 2021 be the year of gratitude, peace, patience with one another as well as prosperity.

With so many challenges ahead of us, while maintaining Covid19 protocol and social distancing, it can be difficult to stay positive and to note the little acts of kindness and happiness around us.

We want to challenge our clients, subscribers and even our own employees to commit to a daily act of kindness, be it kind words, a smile, a good deed or just support where needed. Let us take hands and make this world a better place.

We are excited about all the challenges and new projects during 2021 and promise our valued clients to continue with exceptional service delivery, to keep working on faster lead times, high quality and durable products.

Your success is our success!

We are looking forward to walking alongside you, being your go-to company for advice, assistance and quality product delivery on time, every time.





## A WORD FROM OUR EXECUTIVE MANAGER

To every person that is involved with Agriplas, I would like to thank you for the role you play in our company - it is because of you, that we will continue to grow and support our clients, by providing Perfect Water Management Solutions.

There is a saying, "When the going gets tough, the tough get going"... and that certainly proved true for the team at Agriplas, as they showed incredible resilience and commitment during a challenging 2020.

It has been an absolute privilege to be part of the team and witness first-hand the determination and teamwork that drives this business.

Our mens-mense culture, will always make you feel welcome.

2021...The Agriplas team is ready for you!

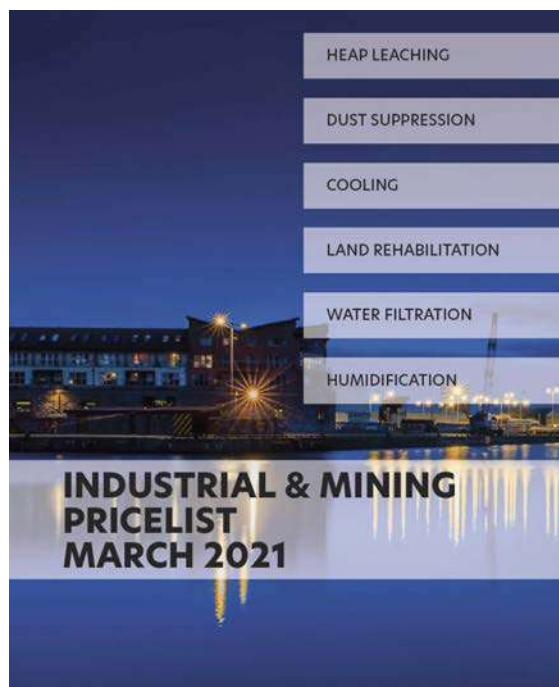
Best wishes to you, your family and friends.

Warm Regards,

Craig Matthew

Be on the lookout for  
our  
latest price list, valid  
from  
1 March 2021 -  
31 August 2021

also available at  
[sales@agriplas.co.za](mailto:sales@agriplas.co.za)





## THE ESSENCE OF OUR FARMER DAYS AND THE ACCESSIBILITY OF AN AGRONOMIST



### CHRIS BARNARD - FARMER AND AGRONOMIST

Chris is a farmer and agronomist in the North West Province, near Koster and he believes we are not farming with plants or crops - ***we farm with roots!***

The root system is the engine and the above-ground growth or leaf canopy is the factory. The engine (root system) feeds the factory (canopy) - thus the stronger the root system, the larger the factory can be.

The ideal is to maintain high yields and to achieve longevity of the crop; therefore, root health is critically important.

Chris places a lot of emphasis on soil health. Soil consists of three separate components, i.e. a physical-, chemical-, and a biological component. Soil health is therefore determined and influenced by these three components. (The closer they are together, or overlap each other, the healthier your soil is within the overlap).

Chris has gained a lot of experience nationally and internationally through the years and is also involved in training in African countries such as Egypt. He is available to assist with all your plant & soil related needs.

Please ask your nearest Agriplas Technical Advisor for more information.



# NEW PRODUCTS IN OUR RANGE



## Plastic Valves

The Raphael **80S** handles a much larger flow rate than the standard 80mm, 85m<sup>3</sup>/hr at 20kpa head loss.

We have also added the plastic mechanical throttle to the Raphael range



[sales@agriplas.co.za](mailto:sales@agriplas.co.za) / [www.agriplas.co.za](http://www.agriplas.co.za)

The Senninger 70 series big gun full circle impact sprinklers distributes water at higher flows over diameters up to 51m

**Senninger**



## AGRIPLAS FARM SPRINKLERS 1" AF260S Impact Sprinkler



Flow ranges 950 l/h - 4200 l/h  
Radius 13.5m - 15.5m



## FROM OUR PC (AUTOMATION) BRANCH IN CENTURION, GAUTENG:

Johann and his team : Hein, Philip, Jan & Dawie



With the long history and involvement of Agriplas as a supplier of quality products and effective solutions to the Agricultural Sector, the Automation range of products is also constantly expanded by means of in-house development or securing of products that enable Agriplas to offer tailor-made, practical and cost-effective solutions for the farmers' needs.

Due to changing needs and legislation over the past few years and also the cost of electricity, fertilizer, labour and scarce water resources, Agriplas explored new options to accommodate and support the farmer with these challenges. By doing this we intend to not only supply products but also become a vital partner in the business of farming.

During the past two years our range of controllers were expanded drastically to accommodate every farmer's immediate needs in terms of automated irrigation, fertigation, EC + pH control as well as fertilizer batch controllers and flow meter controllers.

Our focus offers a solution for small to large applications so that the farmer has the option of spreading his or her capital expenditure over a period of time with the option of upgrading systems without replacement.

The modular (building block) concept is followed.

The flagship range of controllers from Agriplas is split into 7 new models to accommodate the farmer in terms of specific needs and cost effectiveness.

All of these controllers are Cloud (Internet) based and this enables farmers to be in control and monitor operations 24/7 from wherever they are.

Together with this, Agriplas has also expanded their support structure in terms of highly skilled Technical personnel for recommendations, installations and after-sales support to ensure and maintain high service levels to the dealer network for these products.





## A ROADTRIP TO PORTERVILLE, WESTERN CAPE TO MEET LEN AND HIS TEAM



In Porterville the climate is very hot during summer, some days the temperature is up to 45°C.

Thus, Len and his team needed to think outside the box regarding scheduling and decided to also irrigate at night during harsh climate spells. His normal irrigation consists of short pulses of 10-12 minutes up to 5 times per day during day hours. The bag size as well as the size of the root system make it possible for the plant to handle stress caused by heat during hot and dry spells. This further ensures there is enough oxygen in the bags, which promotes root growth and healthy plants.

Len uses button drippers connected to arrow outlets ("spider effect") to irrigate the blueberries. They are really happy with this way of irrigation and do regular preventative maintenance on the system, by regular cleaning of the arrow emitters and flushing of laterals, at least once a week. This reduces the possibility of clogging and ensures even distribution of water and fertilizer into every bag.







Pollination is mainly done by bees here and 25 beehives per hectare are used during the flowering stage. For every 25 hives inside the shade structure for pollination, 25 hives are placed outside in the fynbos area to rest, feed-, and to be energized for the next round of pollination. Len's team take good care of the bees and make sure the Queen is fed and cared for.

Interestingly, the pollination process has a direct influence on the number of pips in a blueberry fruit. The pip is also related to the berry's sugar content, shelf life and skin thickness, while the number of pips is linked to berry size.

The team plants different varieties, stretching the blueberry season to at least six months of the year.



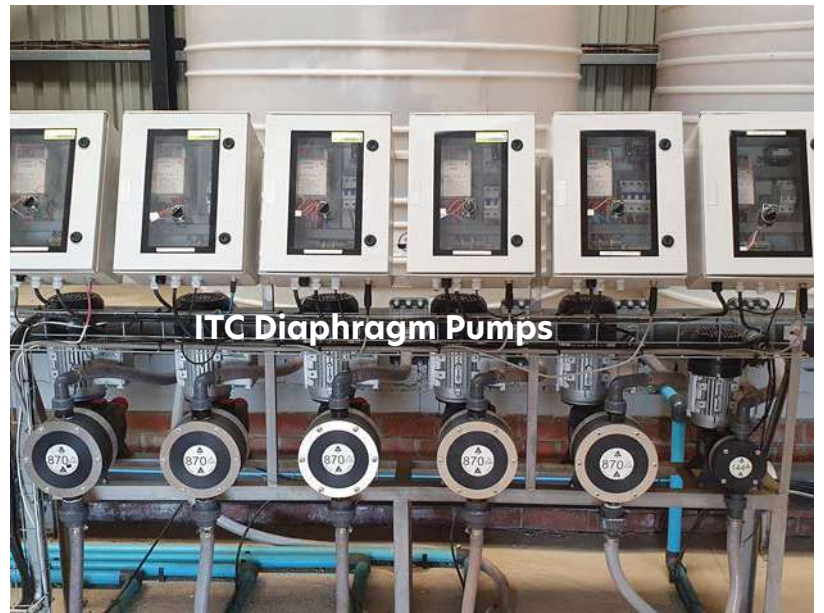
They use a coco-fibre mix in the bags that slowly breaks down over time and can last up to 15 years, instead of a soil and bark mixture with limited longevity.

The varieties cultivated include a range of sweet, hard-skin, medium to large size fruit, with excellent shelf life making the blueberries suitable for the export market. As soon as the berries are picked, they are placed into a cooling facility at 5 degrees C and remain at the same temperature all the way from the farm, through to the packhouse, into a container and onto the ship, until its journey ends internationally on the shelves for the consumer. Technology that keeps track of the climate conditions inside the container make it easy to monitor the produce during the transportation and delivery process, thus creating peace of mind for the farmer.





Perfect root system



ITC Diaphragm Pumps

The **ITC Dostec AC pumps** are available in 2 ranges: Piston pumps & Diaphragm pumps.

Piston pumps can work on a minimum of 5.5 bar pressure to a maximum of 15 bar pressure and are available in the following sizes: 50-, 100-, 200-, 300-, 500-, 750- & 1000l/h while diaphragm pumps are available in the following sizes: 144-174, 301-340, 415-535, 870-1045l/h with working pressure of 7 bar on the bigger pumps and 15 bar on the smaller pumps.

Your piston pump would be your most accurate pump, but can break down when running out of fertilizer while the diaphragm pump is not as accurate but can handle "running dry". A diaphragm pump runs more quietly and softer than a piston pump and needs less maintenance.

Len and his team decided to make use of diaphragm pumps which are controlled by inverters with hertz control that is directly connected to flow. Due to direct feedback from probe sensors the pump motor can ramp up or down; thereby adjusting the fertigation flow rate.

**Blowers** work with air. A central pipe in the tank with a manifold or spider assembly (8 arms connected to the pipe) with holes. Air spreads in the tank via the holes, it bubbles up from the bottom to the top. The manifold stirs the liquid while air blows through it. It is a very effective way of stirring; everything is dissolved in the tanks and held in suspension.

A few tanks can be stirred equally at the same time due to the large volume of air provided to the tanks. A 4kw blower can stir 4x5000 litre tanks while a 2.2kw blower can stir 3x5000 litre tanks.



Blowers



OUR TECHNICAL ADVISORS have excellent product knowledge and are ready to assist you with advice.

Meet them:

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## WE SERVE THE FOLLOWING SECTORS:

AGRICULTURE

MINING & INDUSTRIAL

TURF & LANDSCAPING





## Praktiese oorsig oor Besproeiing Skedulering.

Die oogmerk van effektiewe besproeiing skedulering is om stremmings op groei en produksie van gewasse te voorkom, deur oor- (versuip) of onder- (te droog) besproeiing tot 'n minimum te beperk.

Slegs twee vrae moet beantwoord kan word vir effektiewe skedulering naamlik:

1. Wanneer moet besproeiing 'n aanvang neem?
2. Hoe lank moet daar besproei word (mm/toediening)?

Om bogenoemde vrae sinvol te kan antwoord moet daar eestens bepaal word waar ten minste 80% waterontrekking in die grondprofiel plaasvind. Hierdie area staan as die voedingswortelsone bekend en beslaan gewoonlik die eerste 200- tot 300mm van die grondprofiel.

Daarna moet die area waar steeds wortelontwikkeling aanwesig is bepaal word, wat die buffersone of reservoir bekend staan. Afhangend van die gewas, gronddiepte en beperkte lae aanwesig, word hierdie diepte normaalweg tussen 400- tot 800mm gevind.

Gedurende die groeiseisoen van die gewas moet die voedingswortelsone deurgans so na as moontlik aan veldwaterkapasiteit bestuur word. Die tydperk tussen besproeiings word grootliks deur die waterhouvermoë van die grond, die grootte van die blaaroppervlakte (transpirasie oppervlakte) van die gewas tesame met die heersende klimaats toestande, bepaal. Die vraag "wanneer om te besproei" word hiermee beantwoord.

Die reservoir daarenteen moet volgens die verwagde langtermyn klimaatdata bestuur word. Indien die data toon dat hittegolf toestande gedurende 'n spesifieke periode verwag word, moet die reservoir gereeld aangevul word om as buffer te dien. In teenstelling, moet die reservoir effe droër bestuur word indien reën verwag word. Deur voorsiening vir reën te maak, word moontlike versuiptoestande beperk. Hier word die vraag "hoe lank om te besproei" ondervang.

Vanuit bogenoemde stellings is dit duidelik dat besproeiingskedulering nie op 'n vaste program (tye en hoeveelhede) berus nie. Gereelde kwantifisering van die waterstatus van die grondprofiel op verskillende dieptes word vereis, asook 'n pro-aktiewe benadering waar verwagde seisoenale klimaatsverandering, deurentyd in berekening gebring word. #



# #FLASHBACK TO OUR CLOUD NINE CUSTOMERS

## New generation farmers definitely not afraid to think out of the box

by Sanette Carrick

## Vandag se generasie boere is nie bang om uit die boks te dink nie

deur Sanette Carrick



**S**outh Africa is the world's leading exporter and producer of high-value, highly nutritious macadamia nuts. Macadamias are produced in Limpopo, Mpumalanga and KwaZulu-Natal.

The beautiful South Coast of KwaZulu-Natal is climatically like the commercial home of the macadamia, Hawaii. Interestingly, Hawaii started planting Australian-sourced macs many years ago to reduce the island's dependence on sugar crops.

In some ways you could even be in Hawaii in these Macadamia fields so close to Margate. The laid-back calm of the residents, the endless summer days and the surfing – the South Coast is a pretty special area

of South Africa.

Once predominantly mostly sugar cane, KwaZulu-Natal is also now host to more diverse crops, like macadamias, blueberries, gooseberries, granadillas and many more interesting crops besides.

On our Durban visit with Nick von Barga, our Technical Advisor for the area, it was clearly visible to us that today's farmers are not afraid to think out of the box.

Innovation seems a hallmark of the KwaZulu-Natal farmers it

**T**ydens ons Durbanse besoek aan Nick von Barga, ons Tegnieuse Adviseur vir die area, was dit duidelik sigbaar dat hedendaagse boere nie bang is om uit die boks te dink nie! Alle moontlike grond spasie word benut, hoe onmoontlik dit ook al mag lyk of klink! En natuurlik haal ek my hoed af vir ons Tegnieuse Adviseurs, wat met planne vorendag moet kom om die spasie benutting te ondersteun en te maak werk! Dis sy doelwit om alle besproeiingsprojekte to foutloos en glad as moontlik te laat verloop.

Dis opmerklik hoe die oorhoofse suikerriet area stadig besig is om te transformeer na n meer diverse area, macadamias, appelliefies, grenadellas, en vele meer is besig om hul verskyning te maak.

Een van Nick se kliente, Liam Highcock, het vir my uitgestaan met sy besproeiing metodes op sy macadamia uitleg. In plaas

van drip besproeiing of mikro besproeiing, het Liam besluit om 4 x 5.2l/h "button" drippers per boom te gebruik. Hy maak dus gebruik van "pulse-irrigation" – kort siklusse meer gereeld. Liam het ook besluit om sy plante op heuwels te plant om dreinerings te bevorder, veral tydens vloede of groot reën neerslae. Nog voordele van die heuwels







seems, with brilliant space utilisation and design all-round.

Indeed, I take my hat off to our Technical Advisors, who assist to support the brilliant space utilisation and help to ensure the crops flourish in all terrains. Agriplas Technical Advisors' goal with their clients, the farmers, is to ensure irrigation projects run as smoothly and as productively as possible.

One of Nick's clients, Liam Highcock is the epitome of the modern, tech-savvy and innovative young farmer. His expanse of macadamia trees looks great.

Liam uses precision agriculture technologies such as drones and probes on his own farm and uses these technologies in his consultancy to other farms in the area. He started macadamia farming after using drones for drone mapping and land scouting, to assist other farmers to design and set-up their enterprises.

### Button drippers

Liam's innovative approach to farming is immediately apparent with his irrigation methodology on his macadamias. Instead of drip Irrigation or micro irrigation, Liam chose to use 4x5.2l / h

is groter blootgestelde areas vir verhoogde grond temperature wat natuurlik help met wortel ontwikkeling, groter spasie vir die boom se wortel stelsel. Die heuwels se grond bly ook losser en word nie vasgetrap.

### Indrukwekkende pompkamer

Liam se gekose besproeiingsstelsel is arbeid intensief en met my vraag aan hom rakende sy grootste uitdagings rondom die installering van die drip stelsel,







button drippers per tree. He therefore uses pulse irrigation with short cycles more frequently.

Liam also decided to plant his macadamias on gently sloping beds to promote water drainage, especially during floods or heavy rainfall. Other advantages of the slopes are that there are larger exposed areas leading to elevated soil temperatures, which naturally help with root development and thus facilitate greater space for the tree's root system. The small hills' soil also remains looser and is not trampled.

### Impressive pump house

Liam is rightly proud of his impressive pump house. Liam puts a lot of thought into every action on the farm. For example, he tests the pH of the water before it reaches the plant, using an ITC Dositec electromagnetic dosing pump. Liam also uses a Galcon web-based irrigation controller to handle his irrigation scheduling. "If any problems arise I receive a notification and can act immediately to take

action and prevent any damage from happening," said Liam.

Next project for this innovative and friendly farmer is to switch his entire farm to solar.

Liam is passionate about his macadamias, and I look forward to visiting him again to see how his healthy Macs are growing. His plantation is going to look spectacular in a few years' time when the Macs are larger trees. Liam is a big proponent of Agriplas products (his impressive pump house tells the story) and he is very pleased with Nick's support and advice. It is a great business relationship, and heartwarming to be a part of.

Thank you Liam, we really enjoyed visiting your farm!

**Please feel free to contact Nick von Bargaen at Agriplas for further information, or any of our Technical Advisors in your area. Alternatively visit [www.agriplas.co.za](http://www.agriplas.co.za) or [sales@agriplas.co.za](mailto:sales@agriplas.co.za)**

was sy antwoord: "Om drippers met 'n "toolpunch" op n warm heuwel in Februarie maand in te sit!" Die "punch" het bly glip te danke aan al die sweet aan sy hande, en die grond was baie warm."

Liam se trots is sy indrukwekkende pompkamer. Nog iets wat hy verkies om anders te doen, is om die water se PH te toets voor dit by die plant kom, hy maak gebruik van 'n "ITC Dositec electromagnetic dosing pump" daarvoor. Hy maak ook gebruik van 'n "Galcon web based irrigation controller" om sy besproeiing skedulering te hanteer, indien daar enige probleme ontstaan kry hy onmiddellik n kennisgewing op sy foon en kan hy dadelik optree

om skade te voorkom. Die volgende stap vir Liam is om oor te skakel na sonkrag! Liam is passievol oor macadamias en ek sien uit na ons volgende besoek aan hom. Liam is n groot voorstander van Agriplas produkte (sy pomp kamer vertel sommer self die verhaal) en is hy baie tevrede met Nick se ondersteuning en advies. Dis n lekker warm gevoel om die hart! Dankie Liam, ons het die kuiertjie baie geniet!

**Kontak gerus vir Nick von Bargaen by Agriplas , of enige van ons ander Tegniese Adviseurs in jou omgewing. Alternatiewelik besoek ons by [www.agriplas.co.za](http://www.agriplas.co.za) of [sales@agriplas.co.za](mailto:sales@agriplas.co.za)**





# Hilton's abundant blueberry and gooseberry fields forever

By Carol Posthumus - Photographs supplied by BerryGrow SA

We recently went on an inspiring and informative whistle-stop irrigation tour of KwaZulu-Natal with Agriplas, a SABI Company Member and one of the leading suppliers of irrigation equipment and water management solutions. Our thanks to the Agriplas team of Sanette Carrick and Nick von Bargaen as well all the terrific KwaZulu-Natal farmers and their teams for giving us excellent insights into what is happening in the farming arenas of KwaZulu-Natal. It was enlightening to experience what an irrigation adviser's occupation involves on a day-to-day basis – usually media travel with marketing crews, so to accompany a technical team is interesting. It is a privilege to visit so many beautiful farms in South Africa in a day's work.

I must just say the on-road and off-road driving skills of the SABI members like Nick are excellent – it takes some doing concentrating on driving the incredibly hilly farm roads in a 4X4 while keeping up a constant good-natured chat on the mobile to customers giving in-depth and friendly technical advice and support about drip, filters, emitters, sprinklers, pumps, electronic systems and much more with customers! Utmost respect.

**B**efore embarking on our KwaZulu-Natal tour from Cape Town we were of course aware the sugar cane industry, for long so definitive of KZN, is going through change. These days even the Uber drivers in Durban keep up a steady commentary about how the sugar cane fields are a-changing and making way for new developments.

The BFAP Baseline (2019-2028) puts it like this: "The South African sugar industry is in a deep crisis. Tariff-free imports from mainly Eswatini, together with the wider imposition of the Health Promotions Levy (HPL) has had a major impact on local production and market demand and has reduced sugar industry revenue by approximately R1.5 billion."

"In total, more than 70 000 hectares of sugar-cane have been lost over the past decade and

due to the dwindling profit margins over the last number of years, the trend of farmers moving away from sugarcane and diversifying into other long-term crops (macadamias, avocados, citrus etc) is continuing at a rapid rate. These farmers will not switch back to cane, as establishment of these high value crops is extremely capital intensive. Under the 2019 Baseline projections, given implemented current protection allowance levels, a further 17 000 ha will be lost over the next decade."







GOOSEBERRIES against the slopes @ Mount Verde.







are the owners of BerryGrow. Gary is Warren's uncle and together they have brought their vision into reality. Warren is quick to mention that none of this would have been possible without Gary's hugely knowledgeable farming experience and input.

To meet the demands of the export and local market, BerryGrow has planted 70 000 blueberry shrubs and 30 000 gooseberry shrubs. This farm was previously a sugar cane and wattle farm – and with the berries (16ha for blueberries and 7ha to gooseberries), these farmers are truly breaking new ground.

#### Water saving, bees

The farm is utilising the best water saving and optimum irrigation

equipment, and are making use of imported peat and mulch on their crops. The peat has great water retention and water saving qualities, says Warren. They are fortunate in that water quality here is excellent. For sustainability and growth, BerryGrow are installing approximately 50 beehives this year on the farm and will ramp that up to about 160 hives over the next four years.

The farm is using the Agriplas range, and SABI member Rob Pottow's firm – Rob Pottow Irrigation - is the irrigation supplier here. BerryGrow, for their blueberries, are using pressure compensated dripper line Vardit – (Pressure compensating dripper with expanded inlet filter, uniform flow-rate, suitable for different water sources) or Vered (Flat

heavy-duty Pressure compensating dripper with unique and accurate pressure compensating labyrinth mechanism) with a 0,3m spacing and a 3.5 l/hour delivery. They are utilising short pulse irrigation cycles of 15 minutes twice daily, one of which consists of fertigation. Dosetec pumps and Gulf Hydraulic valves are part of this ultra-modern system.

The gooseberry fields are thriving on the slopes of a hill – very steep slopes they are too. The crop is flourishing, using Agriplas' pressure compensating dripper line (0,3m spacing and 3.5l/hour delivery). Warren told us that gooseberries actually grow wild in this area. It was on this premise that they decided to plant the crop, to help generate immediate cash flow. They took a calculated risk

when planting them on such steep slopes with drip lines says Vincent – this definitely was a good idea, as, at the time of writing a few months later, BerryGrow was harvesting fabulous looking juicy gooseberries and shipping the berries to retailers nationwide.

Perhaps by the time you read this article you will have purchased some deliciously healthy BerryGrow berries from your local store, whether you are locally based or in London or Dubai!

**Please visit  
BerryGrow SA's  
Facebook page.  
Or contact Warren on  
071 4942652 or  
warren@berrYGrowsa.co.za**





## MACADAMIAS AGAINST THE SLOPES

KZN is truly a magical place where farmers constantly have to think outside the box to get the most out of their land.



**AGRIPLAS - Amiad Mini Sigma with a view!**



## WATERMELONS IN LIMPOPO by Paul van den Berg



### Lephalale Watermelon Project - Lephalale - Limpopo Province - 2020

The year 2020 was an eventful year, with positive results for agriculture. We look forward to 2021 with another strong performance for Agriculture. I feel very fortunate to be working in an agricultural environment and to continue working during the Lockdown periods, due to the essential products and services-, Agriplas provides.

Agriplas supplied a dynamic new project here in Limpopo during 2020. An 18-hectare watermelon project, the first of its kind for this game farmer.

With the sad collapse of the market for exotic game, this Game Farmer needed to look for alternative ways to secure financial stability and to generate alternative income. The start of this venture is an 18-hectare watermelon project under drip irrigation, as this was a viable low risk option.

We appreciate the support and the trust this dealer has shown in Agriplas products, investing in the purchasing of a **Filtomat automatic self-cleaning filter, IDIT drip line** (16mm, 2.1 l/h & 0.6m dripper spacing) and **Tagline disc filters** for secondary filtration. Also, the anti-vacuum valves and **Gulf control valves** for valve clusters, from Agriplas. This venture was a good investment for the farmer and is a huge success, with good returns.

What a privilege to have worked closely with the Designer, existing neighboring irrigation farmers and the farmer, ensuring the success of the project. This is an excellent achievement considering the high average yield per hectare for watermelons in the Lephalale area, thereby setting new standards. Congratulations to all!





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agriplas  
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**Thank you** for your continuous trust in our business.

It brings us great joy to serve you. I hope we can continue to earn your business and if you have any comments or concerns, please let us know so we can help you better.

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*We would like to hear from you, please send your suggestions to  
sales@agriplas.co.za*

