To all parents, learners and interested parties

Exciting new project for the school – and everybody can join in!

The young and not-so-young can become involved in this project. It means that parents and their children (learners from our school) and even smaller children can come and help with our own herb garden whilst enjoying the open-air experience. We also do not expect you to buy something this time (at least not yet), but we want your physical participation.

We have decided, after many hours of deliberation and meetings (almost like the G8 seminars on global warming and an environmentally responsible way of life), to create a herb garden located on that small piece of land next to the netball courts at the back of the school.

This small piece of land will be ideal for this purpose as it has full sun and is close to a water supply point that can be used for irrigation. It will also be out of the way of busy feet and children playing during breaks. All the classrooms on the second floor will have a brilliant view of the spectacular end product!

We are planning to sell our herb plants at a reasonable price to the public and nurseries. We can use our herbs for our hotel-and-catering course and any catered event that our school may present. The herbs can be dried and processed to be supplied to markets in our vicinity.

It is a wonderful idea to do something positive when we are criticised from all directions for our lifestyles which contribute to global warming due to the carbon dioxide footprint of the food we consume. What can be better than to use fresh herbs, cultivated by our own community?

The herbs that we have decided to progagate were selected because they are popular and will make sense from a marketing perspective, but also because they will grow easily. The following herbs were selected for our wonder garden: Sweet Basil, Rosemary, Lavender, Thyme and Parsley.

**Sweet Basil** – Used in pastas and salads. Grows into a beautiful green shrub with small white flowers. You also get a peach-coloured variety that makes a nice contrast. Plant in full sun and soil rich in compost.

**Rosemary** – Used in many dishes. Dark green shrub with small blue flowers. Plant in full sun and soil rich in compost. The Spanish variety has straight twigs which people use to make kebabs.

**Lavender** – Many different uses. It smells divine, and is used in potpourri. You can bake lavender shortbread biscuits, use it in bath water for a calming bath at the end of a day. Use it in a herbal pillow for wonderful night’s sleep. Some varieties have different leaf shapes, and flowers range from grey to lilac. Plant in full sun and soil rich in compost.

**Thyme** – Excellent in meat dishes. It is a small groundcover type plant. Plant in full sun and soil rich in compost. Different varieties offer different fragrances and leaf colours.

**Parsley** – This very popular herb must be newly planted every year, in a pot or sown in its own bed.

In our meeting our first questions were obviously the following:

Who will be our potential customers? Our answer? As our community, we hope and rely on you to fulfil this role!

How do we start a herb garden like this? This is certainly more than just a few plants stuck in the ground! Our answer? We asked a few of our neighbourhood nurseries to help us with their brilliant knowledge and advice. Any parent who can offer more assistance in this regard, please contact the school.

A few sponsors have already offered their help for the rental of machinery to do the initial groundwork and to supply us with seedlings and seeds for the herbs. We want to thank the following plant suppliers: New Life Nurseries, Plants For Pleasure Nursery, Van Rensburg Kwekerye, Hodgen Plant Hire and Great Garden Compost Depot.

How will it benefit your child? On a basic level it will bring our children back to the fresh air and it will also, hopefully, ignite a small spark of interest in how the earth works and where our food comes from. This can be seen as a fundraising project, but think WIDER than the obvious and see it as a community education project and in-service training for our teenagers for their lives ahead.

Please contact me if you want to be involved!

Susan Pienaar  
[suz@mweb.co.za](mailto:suz@mweb.co.za)  
0877728711