Another year, we are well into the season and I came across an article that gives the mind a bit of reflection. This is what could and maybe a great approach to farming in Africa and a global perspective – a transition if you may – welcome to autumn in Africa.

A foundational principle of the landscape approach is that all relevant stakeholders are involved in planning processes to negotiate priorities, recognizing legitimate local, regional, national, and business interests. These processes can provide the opportunity for landscape planning, program implementation and progress monitoring for climate-smart objectives, as well as others. Additionally, a multi-stakeholder process serves as a means to develop partnerships, consolidate resources, share knowledge, build coalitions, and pool investments.

Multiple sectors, including water, agriculture, livestock, energy, and lands, will need to be involved in climate-smart landscape planning, and stakeholders from environmental finance, planning authorities, producer groups, civil society business, and private investors must be engaged. These planning processes should be informed by rigorous, multidisciplinary climate risk and vulnerability assessments tailored to specific landscapes and addressing scientific, economic, and social considerations.

As rainfall and temperatures are modified by climate change, the geographic conditions of production systems and protected areas will shift, often requiring institutional responses, such as new zoning, protected area boundaries, or markets shifting to new suppliers. Such changes can be facilitated by landscape planning processes Cross-border platforms, such as the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program (CAADP) and territorial development initiatives, can also aid in policy and program coordination to support climate-smart landscapes. Regional development programs can be utilized as dialogue platforms to coordinate small local projects. Farmer groups and local civil society organizations must fully participate in these processes, but may require capacity building and support to do so. To conclude – farming is a right and privilege – to do so requires passion. – Just a thought!

Green Forum
Cape Green Forum Expo, 27th February at the Paul Roos Centre, Stellenbosch from 9am – 3pm

Rehabilitation
When a mine closes the effects on the environment can be debilitating. But this needn't be the case, says Neils Harmuth from Advance Seed, who guides us through a map for the effective rehabilitation of the natural environment, following a mine closure.
If your retail store were arranged to reflect the different stages of human life, there would be a Pouyoukas Foods product to optimise health at every stage. So what are these stages and products, and what do consumers know about them?

“Consumers often have so much going on in their lives that they don’t ever really stop to think about their eating habits and question whether their diet is optimising or even harming their health. Our goal is to encourage people to revisit their diet, measure it against where they are at in their lives, then regenerate and renew their eating habits to get the most out of their menus and their lives,” says Justine Pearl, brand manager of Pouyoukas Foods.

The human body requires a prescribed formula of essential amino acids, carbohydrates, essential fatty acids and 28 vitamins and minerals, to sustain life and promote health throughout all the stages of life. As the body enters different stages and becomes engaged in processes unique to that stage, it still requires all of these basic building blocks, but also has increased requirements of several of the nutrients in that formula.

Here's a look at how Pouyoukas Foods products can support growth, development and optimal health at every stage of life.

During the rapid growth and development of early childhood, the body needs more energy, protein and essential fatty acids than an average healthy adult. A product like Pouyoukas Soya Beans provides consumers with an excellent means to help their children meet those increased requirements, because it has all the nutrients that their teenage children need more have, and then incorporate the seeds into the existing menu by introducing them into salads, stir-fries and casseroles or lightly roast them to be eaten as a snack.

Adult men and women, aged 19 to 50, have divergent needs. Men require more of Vitamin C, Vitamin K, B1, B2, B3, choline, magnesium, zinc, chromium and manganese, while women require more iron.

“Can be hard enough to get teenagers to take in just their basic requirements, so getting more of certain nutrients can be an uphill struggle for parents,” says Pearl. She suggests consumers look to a food source like Pouyoukas Pumpkin Seeds, which contain all the nutrients that their teenage children need more have, and then incorporate the seeds into the existing menu by introducing them into salads, stir-fries and casseroles or lightly roast them to be eaten as a snack.

Here again Pouyoukas has a product that makes it easy for consumers to regenerate their eating habits by adding just one new food to their already balanced diet. This time it’s Chick Peas. By adding these to stews, roasts, croquettes, patties, spreads and falafel or making hummus from them, adults will get extra quantities of all the nutrients they need more of, barring chromium which can be obtained from whole wheat products.

From age 51 to 70, or middle age, the body requires increased amounts of Vitamins B6 and D. B6 supports the nervous system, formation of red blood cells and niacin, prevents atherosclerosis, produces antibodies to support the immune system and improves memory retention and cognitive function. Vitamin D, in turn, plays an important role in bone health - preventing osteomalacia and osteoporosis, and reducing the risk of bone fractures. Vitamin D is also the key nutrient the body requires more of in old age, from 70 years onward.

Pearl says Pouyoukas Black Eyed Beans are a ready source of Vitamin B6 and are delicious in aromatic curries, can be blended into a spicy bean dip or added to rice for extra flavour and nutritional benefit.

She concludes, “When consumers are encouraged to think of themselves and the members of their household in terms of the life stage they are at, it makes it easier for them to understand the importance of revisiting, regenerating and renewing their eating habits to achieve not just good but optimal health at every stage of life.”
Once a mine reaches the end of its lifecycle, the environment around it left to its own devices, but instead should be carefully rehabilitated in order to support the natural environment.

“A major problem with the soil in the area of a closed mine is that it lacks nutritional value, which immediately hinders the rejuvenation of plant life.

Coated seeds from Advance Seed, other than nutrients also have a range of fungicides, insecticides and growth stimulants, within the coating. This provides germinating seedlings with a better chance of gaining a foothold in nutrition starved landscapes, such as in old mining areas. It is however important to note that the benefits to the seedlings provided by the coating in itself, is not sufficient to sustain continued growth of young seedlings without soil amelioration forming part of the whole rehabilitation process.

Harmuth says that coated seeds have proven their effectiveness in the agricultural sector. Their use in rehabilitative environments is therefore a logical step.

Many grass seeds tend to be light, difficult to plant and can easily blow away, as well as be eaten by birds or insects. Coated seeds, on the other hand, have added weight that improves plant ability and flow within the planter mechanism. In some cases research has shown that the colour of the coating acts as a deterrent to some bird species.

Much of the success of the seeds taking root is that we have complete control over the formulation used in the coating, which we can tailor to the unique demands of the environment. Typically when working in rehabilitating an ex mining environment we tend to place the emphasis on a coat that can assist with both growth as well as soil management aspects related to particular grass species.

A fair amount of science needs to be applied in the rehabilitation process and the Advance Seed team have invested significantly into research, from both the University of the North West and Pretoria, to determine which species as well as which coatings will work best for each individual environment. The application of this, and the success of the reintroduction of vegetation, will then aid in bringing soil in an area back to what it was prior to mining operations.

But how does Advance Seed achieve this? According to Harmuth: “We start by providing commercial indigenous grass species to the mine sites, enabling them to establish plant life in the area. Once the plant life is properly established, the overall ecology slowly comes back into balance, as insects, microbes and natural chemicals assist in ameliorating the soil,” he says. “By providing the natural habitat with a ‘leg up’ we short circuit a process that if left to its own devices may take decades to reach its former equilibrium.”

Rehabilitation is not just in place to beautify an area; government itself is taking the process incredibly seriously and is pushing mining companies to speed up the process of rejuvenating the land where they once mined. Harmuth says that Agricote seeds go a long way in helping kick start successful environmental rehabilitation.

But with all projects there are barriers to entry and Harmuth says that a lack of education amongst many mining officials means that not everyone understands firstly the benefits of faster rehabilitation and secondly the benefits of coated seeds.

“The whole nature of rehabilitation goes far beyond just the seed and I believe that there needs to be a fair amount of education around the entire process of rehabilitation, which includes the proper preparation of the seedbed beforehand, as well as the geographic layout of the land. For example, planting on a slope brings up an entirely new set of challenges, such as soil run-off (erosion) when it rains,” he mentions.

“Rehabilitation does not happen overnight, it is a long and diverse process, what is truly amazing however is how once the seeds have established themselves – Mother Nature quickly takes over our job and does it all on her own,” ends Harmuth.
NEW ADVANCE SEED & POUYOUKAS CAMPAIGNS
Cape Green Forum Expo

27th February at the Paul Roos Centre, Stellenbosch from 9am – 3pm.

This event is held annually and this year celebrated its 21 years of doing this show. The participants were amongst others, Stark Ayres, Mayfords, Relianz and Effeko. Visitors to the show were landscapers, municipalities, nurseries and some students from CPUT.

It was Advance Seeds first appearance and it was a good show in that I had the opportunity to market all our products and meet with all participants across the board.

A Division of

Alliance

G R A I N  T R A D E R S

RECIPE IDEAS

MUESLI BARS

INGREDIENTS

✓ 1 Cup unsalted butter
✓ ½ cup honey
✓ 2 cups Pouyoukas whole rolled oats
✓ 1 cup All Bran Flakes finely crushed
✓ ½ cup desiccated coconut
✓ 1 cup almonds
✓ ½ cup dried pears and apples finely chopped
✓ ½ cup sultanas roughly chopped
✓ ½ cup dried cranberries roughly chopped

METHOD

✓ Preheat oven to 160 C
✓ Line a small baking tray with baking paper and spray with non-stick spray
✓ Microwave butter and honey together until butter has melted
✓ Pour over the rest of the ingredients and mix well
✓ Spread mixture onto the tray and bake for 25 to 30 minutes until golden brown
✓ Cut into squares or bars
✓ Cool in the tray, break and store in an airtight container.