

Horse and organic farm project

Peas on Earth Info sheet



Project Overview

Project Duration: 2 – 4 weeks

Project Costs: R350 per day

Location of project: Near Haga Haga & Kei Mouth, Eastern Cape

Getting there: We will collect on Tuesdays from East London Airport or a backpackers in or around East London

Activities: Volunteers will have the opportunity to develop new skills and experience life on a South African small-holding in one of the most beautiful, untouched areas of this diverse country. The farm is located on the Wild Coast, in the Eastern Cape Province, which is malaria and Ebola free. The project aims to farm holistically, applying techniques of biodynamic and astrological farming to rehabilitate Mpetukop Farm, its soil and its unique ecosystem.

Working Hours: 7am – 4pm Mon - Fri

Getting to the project daily: The project is on the farm where volunteers are accommodated

Requirements: Energetic, playful and ready to participate actively. Volunteers on the horse project need to be able to control a horse at all paces in an open environment and school a horse without assistance or instruction.

Project description

Horse Project

Volunteers on the horse project will be involved in the daily feeding and care of the horses, as well as exercising and assisting with traction work on the farm. They will also have the opportunity to learn about barefoot trimming; preparing and using natural remedies; basic treatments for injury and/or illness and injections; using natural horsemanship techniques in training horses for work on the farm and under saddle. They will also assist with care, maintenance and repair of equipment; improving grazing and repair and maintenance of horse-related infrastructure (i.e. stalls, fencing, jumps, lunge ring etc.)

Volunteers on the horse project will get the opportunity to ride several times a week, if not daily, but will need to be of a certain standard in terms of riding ability. Volunteers will only be accepted onto this project if they are experienced enough riders that they can control a horse at all paces in an open environment, and can school a horse without assistance or instruction.

As the main emphasis is the production of vegetables, herbs and fruits according to the natural rhythms of the earth, even the volunteers on the horse project will have some involvement with fruit, herb and vegetable production on the farm. Volunteers will experience everything from growing seed to packaging and selling the final product.

Volunteers will get to learn a lot about caring for horses that live as naturally as possible, so are not stabled, rugged or shod. They will also be exposed to natural horsemanship techniques and have the opportunity to herd cattle from horseback and to work with horses on the ground, using traction to assist with the farming process.

Permaculture

Volunteers will be involved in learning traditional growing methods, as well as Permaculture, the concept of food forests, companion planting and many other techniques. Volunteers will learn enough to enable them to create their own productive gardens, whether they live in the city or the country. The main emphasis is the production of vegetables, herbs and fruits according to the natural rhythms of the earth. All volunteers will have some involvement with fruit, herb and vegetable production on the farm as this is the largest aspect of life on Mpetukop. Volunteers will experience everything from growing seed to packaging and selling the final product. Volunteers can also learn how to make their own dairy produce from hormone-free milk from the local dairy, as well as how to make butter, jams & preserves from home-grown produce; and herbal remedies.

Volunteers also assist in raising money to uplift the local community and help at the local school on a weekly basis, cultivating a vegetable garden and working alongside pupils to improve their understanding of small-scale, self-sustainable agriculture. During an average stay of four weeks, a volunteer will be exposed to all facets of growing and selling vegetables, fruits & herbs - from seed and soil to packaging and selling.

Volunteers on the Permaculture programme will be involved in all aspects of vegetable production on the farm, including:

- Planting using the astrological calendar
- Making and using homemade fertilisers and pesticides
- Companion planting
- Making compost
- Weeding and mulching
- Picking, preparing and packaging for retail
- Worm farm, bees and other useful creatures

Volunteers committing to a stay of four weeks or more will also have the opportunity to attend the local farmers' market; have the option to visit a local game reserve (cost not included in project fees) and the chance to explore the Wild Coast with experienced guides.

What's included?

Accommodation: Accommodation is provided in the main farmhouse on Mpetukop Farm where volunteers will be working. This small-holding overlooks a private game reserve and extensive views into the Old Transkei. The volunteer rooms sleep one to two people only so most volunteers will have their own room or share with one other.



Orientation: On your first day of arrival you will be met by Colin and Nicky who run the farm. They will show you to your accommodation and talk you through your duties and opportunities.

This will include

- Welcome and introduction to the project
- Tour of the farm
- Meet the team
- What to expect

Support: Hosts Colin and Nicky are on-hand at any time, night or day, to deal with any issues and provide support to the volunteers in terms of shopping, facilities, organizing trips etc.

Donation: Over and above your daily rate, donations are welcome but NOT expected. Donations go directly to the local school with whom volunteers work as part of both projects. A recommended amount is USD 150 but you can also choose to donate clothes or specific amounts for materials etc.

Food: Breakfast, lunch and dinner are included in the daily rate, including weekends when volunteers do not need to work. While Colin or Nicky usually do the cooking, we hope that volunteers will assist with preparation and/or washing up.

Optional extra

As Colin and Nicky are both qualified guides, they will offer you the opportunity to visit local game reserves; take a guided walk or horse ride along the Wild Coast as well as guided trips to areas of specific historical interest or beauty.

What's not included?

The working routine

7.00 We begin the day with feeding all the animals on the farm. Volunteers on the horse project will also assist with the feeding and grooming horses, checking temperatures, treating any injuries or illness, assisting with hoof trimming and other weekly horse-related tasks.

Volunteers on the horse project use this time to ride or train the horses under Nicky's supervision.

Volunteers on the permaculture project will work alongside Colin or one of the other staff members on assigned tasks such as digging, planting, picking, spraying, preparing beds, mulching etc.

10.00 – 10.30 Breakfast

10.30 – 13.00 Volunteers on the horse project will assist with further horse-related work, be it riding, assisting with harnessing and working with the traction horses, either training or working with them on the fields. They will then assist with cleaning the equipment used during the course of the day, including brushes, saddle cloths, tack and implements. Volunteers may also be asked to assist on other non-horse-related projects. Volunteers on the permaculture project will either continue with tasks from the morning or may be asked to work on specific projects, some of which may be projects started by previous volunteers. Examples of projects are: building a solar shower,

improving and developing volunteer accommodation, constructing fences, painting etc.

13.00 – 14.00 Lunch

14.00 – 16.30 All volunteers will spend some time in the garden or working on specific projects during the afternoons. These may include preparing herbal remedies, helping with preserve making, through to planting and alien vegetation control.

Your role as a volunteer

Your role as a volunteer is to assist on the farm, put all your energy and love into its plants and animals and take as much from it as you put in!

Project rules

Our only rules, really, are to be an energetic member of the team, focused on the work and the well-being of others.

Weather

We enjoy a wonderful climate all year round. Our summer season (November to February) is also our rainy season but is equally the warmest time of the year, with temperatures rising to around 30⁰C. Our winters are cooler but sunny and dry. We do not have frost here!

What to pack

Passport, tickets and visas

Insurance details

ATM cards

Mobile phones, if you are bringing your mobile please unblock the code BEFORE you leave your country.

Charger

Universal adapter plug for South Africa (you can buy these in SA)

Toiletries, soap, shampoo, razors etc.

Sun Block

Hat

Swim wear

Towels

Medicines & mosquito repellent

Torch

Comfortable shoes/boots e.g. Trainers and sandals

Clothes, jeans, t-shirts, underwear, shorts, dresses ect.

Wind proof jacket

Water proof jacket

Gum boots (can be purchased on arrival)

Water bottle

Laptop is also advisable, although we have a computer on which volunteers can work or watch movies

Horse volunteers also need to bring:

Riding clothes, jodphurs, chaps, helmet

Other activities after volunteering?

The farm is fairly remote, situated 30km from the nearest facilities. During the week, volunteers can go walking or running as the area is very safe. There is lots to do in the surrounding area at weekends, including braais, abseiling, kayaking, game viewing etc.

Health

Volunteers need to be fit enough to cope with a full day working outside