

Love for Green in Goreangab

Lucia Haitembu wins “Food Circle Prize” for the best little garden in Windhoek

Windhoek, 29 August 2024. Growing food in Windhoek is not easy and the informal settlements are an especially challenging part of town to excel at it. Lucia Haitembu from Goreangab and 20 other nominees for the “Food Circle Prize” show how it can be done.

A food circle is a small garden based on a Permaculture pit bed – a planting bed around a compost pit. People can grow trees and vegetables using their grey water: Water from washing vegetables is used to water vegetables. Water from the bucket shower is used to water trees. The very soapy water from washing clothes is used to make compost. This compost helps build up healthy, living soil which can handle soapy water better.

Lucia Haitembu (53) from Goreangab took home the Food Circle Prize in Gold this week. She has embedded her circle in a little food forest around her house. “I love to give my plants attention,” she explains her success. “I greet them in the morning and in the evening and even talk to them. We have something for the kitchen all the time: spinach and carrots at the moment, beans, even fruit like strawberries, lemon and grapes later in the year.”

21 food circle growers from Goreangab, Havanna, Kilimansharo, Mix, Okahandja Park, Ongulumbashe and Wanaheda were nominated for the prize by the trainers of the Kambashu Institute. Jury member Temapo Johannes Negongo, who teaches horticulture at the Waldorf School and is a board member of the Namibian Organic Association (NOA), visited all nominated food circles and was impressed: “Clearly, it’s not what you have what counts but what you do with it. These people have been growing kale, spinach, onions and trees all through the winter with very limited resources. “

The Kambashu Institute is a Permaculture learning centre by and for shack dwellers in Windhoek. All 7 trainers live in the settlements and run courses on food circles. Every course participant also receives compost and seeds. Only those who have grown their own food circle for half a year become members of the Star Club. Their food circles are logged with satellite data. This enables the trainers to reach out to food circle growers regularly. Currently, the Kambashu Institute has 235 food circles in Windhoek on the map. The Institute can be reached on facebook @GrowingFoodinWindhoek.

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