

## Organic Farming

The project uses holistic, natural techniques such as biodynamic and astrological farming to rehabilitate the land, its soil and its unique ecosystem. In keeping with these goals, there is a wide variety of animals and plants which create a unique and thriving environment.



## Highlights

- Volunteer in the Transkei, also known as the Wild Coast, the most rural Xhosa area in South Africa.
- Experience the amazing beaches of the Wild Coast.
- Learn about life on a South African Smallholding.
- Farm holistically, applying techniques of biodiversity and astrological farming to rehabilitate the farm, its soil and unique ecosystem.
- Join excursions outside of the project.
- Get in contact with the local Xhosa community.
- Make new friends from all over the world.

## Overview

Location	Closest Town: East London South Africa
Duration	from 2 weeks
Dates	all year round
Requirements	upper intermediate level of English Skills: previous experience of farm works helps but not a must
Minimum age	18
Documents	enrollment form, curriculum vitae, letter of motivation, passport copy, proof of medical insurance
Date of arrival	Tuesday
Date of dep.	Tuesday

## Project Information

This project is located on a rural, gravel road, approximately 20km from the Wild Coast towns of Kei Mouth/Komga in the Eastern Cape. The nearest city/airport/bus station is in East London, 60km away. You will have the opportunity to develop new skills and experience life on a South African smallholding 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 free. The project aims to farm holistically, applying techniques of biodynamic and astrological farming to rehabilitate Mpetukop Farm, its soil and its unique ecosystem. In keeping with these goals, there are both animals and plants on the land which are rotated, creating a mutually beneficial ecosystem, which supports a diversity of species, with the aim of improving the soil for future generations.

You will be involved in learning traditional farming methods as well as Permaculture, the concept of food forests, companion planting and many other techniques. You will learn enough to enable you to create your own productive gardens, whether you live in the city or the country. The main emphasis is on 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 main aspect of life on Mpetukop. You will experience everything from growing seeds to packaging and selling the final product. You can also learn how to make your own dairy produce from hormone-free milk from the local dairy as well as how to make butter, jams and preserves from home-grown produce, and herbal remedies.

## Your Role

A possible work schedule could be:

- 07.30 – 08.30 Working on the farm, assisting with daily farm jobs like feeding, watering, checking animals and enclosures, checking on plants and infrastructure.
- 08.30 – 10.00 You will be assigned tasks according to the needs of the farm, depending on your individual interests and expertise. Tasks include digging, planting, picking, spraying, preparing beds, mulching, etc.
- 10.00 – 10.30 Breakfast.
- 10.30 – 13.00 You will be allocated tasks, which will range from working in the fields to clearing alien plants, or preparing preserves and other produce, such as butter and cheese.
- 13.00 – 14.00 Lunch.
- 14.00 – 16.30 You 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.

Sometimes you will go out to harvest poles and droppers for fencing or even go to collect sand or other materials. Additionally, you will participate in the school project next door to the project. Every Thursday you will visit the school and work there in the garden for an hour or two. If you would like to bring a small donation, they always greatly appreciate stationery and sports equipment.

Usually you are given time off on Saturdays and Sundays but activities are arranged if required.

It is important to note that this description serves as an example only. The daily tasks and challenges depend on the volunteer, the time of the year and the work that needs to be done. The final job description can therefore vary substantially from the above.

## Accommodation

Your accommodation is within walking distance of the project. You are housed in the farmhouse, or one of the converted outbuildings on the farm. The outbuildings are situated within a fenced garden 50m from the main farmhouse. One side of the house is dedicated to volunteers while everybody shares the kitchen. The rooms are spacious and comfortable. There are single sex dorms for girls and boys with access to the garden. Up to 6 volunteers share a room. The farmhouse has a living room and is equipped with a kitchen. Bedding and towels (if requested) will be provided. For ZAR 15 per load, you can use the washing machine.

There is no WiFi available but a booster antenna means you can connect to the Internet easily with your phone and pay for your own data. The project also provides Internet at R15 for 30 minutes. Furthermore it is possible to use their computer outside of working hours. A telephone is available – you are charged according to Telkom rates for international calls. If you would like to make a local call, this is free of charge. Long distance and international calls can be arranged in advance.

## Prices

Project fee 2017  
2 weeks: € 752  
4 weeks: € 1.037  
8 weeks: € 1.435  
Additional week: € 190

Included

- Project placement
- Airport transfer on arrival and departure
- Project accommodation (dorm-style rooms, full-board)
- A donation towards the project
- Orientation
- Local transport
- Electronic certificate (printed copy on request)
- Local support including a 24 hour emergency number

Not included

- Drinks & refreshments
- If you arrive in East London late afternoon, you need to stay overnight at a backpackers or hotel - You will be collected the following day
- WiFi