

Delheim communiqué

From: Nora Sperling

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Life and work on the Delheim farm: a factual account

The recent press reports about farm worker abuse have caused international indignation and widespread condemnation of those committing such abuses: and rightly so. Concerns have been raised by the law-abiding majority who condemn any such activity on any producer's farm. Ours is not to dispute these reports; or the findings contained in the recently released 'Ripe with Abuse' report. Our aim here is to demonstrate our views on the rights of our employees, by way of examples to be found on the Delheim farm.

Housing and living standards

- Well-maintained housing is provided to all those employees and their immediate families who reside on the farm. There is no charge for water, and electricity is subsidised at 62%. Each house is allocated a piece of land for growing vegetables, either for own use, or to sell to the Delheim Restaurant as form of additional income. Free transport to school, church, hospital, clinic, doctor, etc is provided on request.
- Delheim has assisted four families to buy homes of their own choosing elsewhere.
- Pensioners' medical expenses are fully paid.
- Medical aid for employees and their direct dependents is subsidised at 50%.
- A pension fund has been created for farm employees, and membership is compulsory for all new employees.
- Subsidised public transport to Delheim is available to those who need to commute to the farm.

Upliftment and education

It is our belief that learning is a life-long upliftment initiative that contributes to independence, self-worth and dignity.

- Delheim's crèche provides fully-qualified teachers at a high teacher-child ratio. Delheim sponsors ongoing training for the crèche teachers under professional guidance from accredited organizations.
- Delheim's after-school club enjoys the support of Pebbles, a program that aims to enrich the lives of farm children in the Western Cape. Activities include homework supervision and educational, sports and life skills training for all of the children living on the farm.
- A full bursary towards a medical degree and a clothing allowance has been given to Lwando Lenga, the son of a Delheim farm worker. Lwando was named the top black learner in the Western Cape; achieving 100% for maths and 6 A's in matric.
- A well-stocked community library has been established with the support of Pebbles and is open to the wider community.
- Continued adult education and life skill tutoring is offered under the principles of Life Long Learning.
- Under the principles of black economic empowerment, Delheim has partnered with a local contractor to provide ongoing mentorship in managing an enterprise that provides much-needed employment to others in the community.
- Delheim sponsors continued skills development and training courses to enable employees to reach their full potential in the workplace environment.

Health, safety and representation

- Delheim complies with the Occupational Health and Safety Act (No. 85 of 1993) and Amendments, and is audited biennially under the auspices of the Integrated Production of Wine initiative (IPW).
- The employee representative team, whose members are elected by their colleagues, meets with management regularly.
- While no single union represents all of our employees, our workers are free to join a union of their choice at any time.

Community-wide activities

While our top priority resides with the thirteen families who live with us on the farm, we have a strong commitment to our extended community.

- Delheim regularly donates food to the Stellenbosch Night Shelter, raises funds for Stellenbosch Child Welfare, contributes to Life Line and collects donations for the local Hospice.
- Many worthwhile causes are supported on an ad hoc basis throughout the year.

Independent auditing

Delheim remains committed to treating its employees with fairness, respect and dignity. We welcome the opportunity to work with credible agencies whose mandate is for fair trade and ethical excellence.

- **The Wine Industry Ethical Trade Association**

Delheim is a long-standing member of this ethical trading initiative. WIETA began in the wine industry, and now spans the wider agricultural industry.

- **International Britannia ERM**

As a supplier to retailer Woolworths, Delheim is required to submit to rigorous requirements. As part of this, an ethical audit is conducted annually by International Britannia ERM (Pty) Ltd.

- **Integrated Production of Wine (IPW) Biodiversity & Wine (BWI) Champion**

Integrated Production of Wine (IPW) is a voluntary environmental sustainability scheme established by the South African wine industry in 1998. As a Champion member of the IPW Biodiversity & Wine initiative (BWI), Delheim is audited biennially across its operations. Employee health and safety is among the audited areas, and the standards applied are among the strictest internationally.

Your continued support is invaluable in supporting these initiatives, and the efforts of many others in the industry who, like us, will continue to work towards the highest attainable ethical standards. We trust that 'Ripe for Abuse' and other indicting reports will only serve to encourage a shared vision by all producers in this regards.

Sincerely,

Nora Sperling-Thiel

Reg. No. 1963/003130/07

WINES OF ORIGIN SIMONSBURG STELLENBOSCH

KNORHOEK ROAD · P.O. BOX 210 · STELLENBOSCH 7599 · SOUTH AFRICA
TEL: 021 – 888 4600 · FAX: 021 – 888 4601 · E-mail: delheim@delheim.com · Website: www.delheim.com
DIRECTORS: MH SPERLING, VH SPERLING & NV SPERLING-THIEL