



# SPEKBOOM PROJECT



Compuscan employees reduce their carbon footprint



**T**his Winter, a handful of staff sacrificed their lunch breaks to get down and dirty in giving back to our local community.

Friday the 1<sup>st</sup> of August was the first Friday in about four weeks that it didn't pour with rain. This meant that we could finally visit Kayamandi High School to join forces with the Heart Capital Foundation. Their Wonder Plant project offered the perfect opportunity to make a difference by planting Spekboom trees that will help fight air pollution and make the local school grounds look more attractive.

The Call Centre represented in large numbers, with Marketing and System Admins also keen to help. We set off to the Heart Capital offices at the Kayamandi Tourism Corridor (to your left as you pass the first robot out of Stellenbosch towards the R304) where Caryn Huisamen introduced us to the Wonder Plant.

With more than 99% of the world's natural forests being destroyed and climate change posing a major threat to our future on the planet, this initiative aims to reduce carbon emissions and create jobs through the planting and distributions of Spekboom plants in townships. Through setting up micro-tree nurseries, Wonder Plant enables anyone to become an entrepreneur as community members are encouraged to care for and nurture seedlings until the trees are big enough to sell for a small profit.

Upon arrival at the High School, we were challenged to first enjoy this "delicacy" as the plant is edible – but we soon found out that it's preferred by elephants and for good reason not particularly enjoyed by humans!

Some of the ladies from Call Centre had not dressed for the occasion (except for Renate who had a wardrobe change) but that didn't keep them from grabbing a spade. The earth wasn't very forgiving despite the heavy

rains that had stopped just a day before our ceremonial planting. Needless to say some of us were very stiff the next day.

Compuscan made history in being the first group of volunteers to donate and plant trees at this location. The school grounds are being used as a site where ten food tunnels were recently erected. This will become a local food pod growing site, where growers can plant and produce fresh vegetables that they can sell to the local community at a low cost.

Starting with a backyard solution, each plant reduces the amount of carbon in the air and in larger numbers can have a great impact on the amount of CO2 emissions that South Africa is releasing. Even though Compuscan only planted 15 trees, our motto is: Elke bietjie help!

We would like to thank staff members who generously donated from their own pockets to help this cause. Thank you to all the staff members who braved a little sweat and soil under their nails!

**Did you know?**

- Each Spekboom reduces the amount of carbon in the air ten times faster than most plants
- 10 hectares of Spekboom = 26 cars off the road for 1 year

**We made a difference:**

**Carbon Reduction:** Improves air quality by effectively reducing carbon in the air

**Environmental Benefits:** Reduces soil erosion, improves water retention, and increases biodiversity

**Job Creation & Poverty Reduction:** Grown by entrepreneurs in Kayamandi

**Stability and Crime Reduction:** Plants are linked to reduce crime in an area

**Education:** Planting at Kayamandi High School teaches the students about environmental problems and solutions and also contributes to the general upkeep of their school grounds



### Heart Capital

Heart Capital is a social enterprise that focuses on sustainable food development as well as environmental and social empowerment. The organisation operates in five locations in the Cape Town region and has a number of projects that include sustainable food pods, building sandbag houses and creating Hubsaces that offers support for SMEs. Heart's portfolio of social enterprises was selected to be the flagship social innovation project for the World Design Capital 2014 in Stellenbosch.

- [www.heartcapital.co.za](http://www.heartcapital.co.za)
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