

## **GWK INNOVATION AT THE FOREFRONT OF SUSTAINABLE FOOD PRODUCTION IN SOUTH AFRICA**

*GWK Farm Foods implements best in class development with consideration to the environment*

**April 07, 2016, Johannesburg** – [GWK](#) has opened a new industrial development in Modder River that will achieve business growth, positively impact the environment, and boost development in the surrounding communities.

The farmer-owned South African agri-business operating from its head-office in the Northern Cape, has unveiled the new GWK Farm Foods wheat mill, pasta plant and biscuit factory near Kimberley in the Northern Cape.

“At the new GWK Farm Foods plant where wheat flour, pasta and biscuits are produced under the new Nature’s Farms brand, the latest and best technology was implemented with careful consideration to the environment. The whole site was designed with energy efficiency in mind, ensuring minimum impact on the environment,” says Ueckermann. “For example, we insisted that production design ensured that the water used in the new plant is cleaner when released back into the environment than it was when it enters the factory”.

The new facility boasts the latest and most advanced Buhler mill from Switzerland, while the Pavan pasta and Lazer biscuit plant imported from Italy is one of the best in Africa. The factory was designed to use natural and ecologically safe resources, including white roofs for temperature management and skylights for natural light. The flow of products in the wheat mill is gravitational, all electrical motors installed are the most energy efficient available in the world, and all electrical lights are LED and connected to motion sensors, which collectively reduces the factory’s energy consumption by up to 25%.

A quarry on the site was modified into a dam for the irrigation of the gardens; and grey effluent and rain water, as well as treated sewerage water, are collected in this dam.

Water extracted from the river is cleaned on site for production, while all surface areas inside and outside, as well as the layout of the gardens was implemented to increase and comply with the highest food safety requirements.

“The new factory is one of the most modern and advanced of its kind in Africa, and has already created more than 100 permanent jobs, with the benefits of these new jobs reaching at least a further 600 people and achieving a significant positive impact on the small local community,” says Eddie Ueckermann, Executive Manager at GWK Farm Foods.

[GWK Farm Foods](#), a subsidiary of GWK, sources wheat from farms in the GWK production area where it is involved in sustainable agriculture practices such as production research for optimal natural resource implementation, including soil management and irrigation scheduling.

“We want to empower the community by creating new and valuable opportunities through our business. We engaged with local traders to ensure the production of Nature’s Farms products creates a thriving and lucrative local economy. Additional job opportunities created by the new factory include support services required for day-to-day operations such as garden and refuse removal services, laundry services for workers’ clothing, a fully staffed and externally-run canteen as well as transport facilities for the workers to get to the site and back home at the end of the day.”

Local businesses have already experienced a boost in revenue as a result of the significant number of temporary and permanent employees working and living in the area during the construction phase of the GWK Farm Foods factory, with many of them doubling turnover and profits in that time.

**ENDS.**

#### **About GWK**

*GWK is a public, farmer-owned company, operating from its head office in Douglas in the Northern Cape, with offices also in the Western Cape, Eastern Cape, Northwest, Free State and KwaZulu-Natal. GWK is involved in grain products, specialist crops and meat and auction services amongst others, providing farmers with the inputs they need, supporting them with the best solutions on the farm and ensuring the best channels to market for their products, locally and abroad. GWK’s premium branded foods are manufactured with a plough-to-plate philosophy, linking consumers with farmers through sustainably manufactured products from the farm.*

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