

'A good cage is an empty cage' — Zimbabwe Animal Advocates

by Louise van der Merwe
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Sanele Ndlovu is determined that factory farming will not be part of Zimbabwe's future. A graduate of the Esigodini Agriculture College in Esigodini, she has put the abolition of battery cages for laying hens as one of her top priorities.

"Battery cages never belonged in Zimbabwe and still do not belong," she says. "At best, they are part of a cruel farming system that needs to become just a part of history."

Sanele's interest in the well-being of animals started as a young girl in rural Zimbabwe.

"My interest in animal welfare has become part of who I am precisely because of the happy memories I have, learning about and caring for all the domesticated animals that shared the lives of my grandparents in Gwanda. I got to know them – cows, goats, donkeys, chickens, you name it, and it was absolutely clear to me that all beings – human or non-human – thrive on care and respect."

After completing her Diploma in Agriculture, Sanele studied Animal Wildlife Sciences at the Midlands State University in Gweru. During this time she did an internship at the Sibanye Animal Welfare and Conservancy Trust in Lupane, an organization founded and directed by Alfred Sihwa. Sanele readily adopted Alfred's belief that animals have feelings, intelligence and deserve humane treatment.



Animal Advocate Sanele Ndlovu is the founding director of the Nurture Imvelo Trust. She is determined to bring an end to battery cages for laying hens in Zimbabwe.



Says Sanele: *“It was during my internship that I realized my respect for all animals was something that had been part of me since my earliest existence with my grandparents. Yet the welfare of laying hens, and so many other animals, is non-existent. While they’re not human beings, they are nevertheless also ‘beings’, and are deserving of our respect and good care.”*

Following her internship with Sibanye Animal Welfare and Conservancy Trust Sanele founded the animal welfare organization Nurture Imvelo Trust.

“My aim and purpose is to improve the welfare of all animals – aquatic or terrestrial – so that both humans and animals can live together in a fair and just environment.”

Sanele’s programme to spread this message includes presentations to Universities and Colleges that offer egg production as a specific module, and she makes full use of social media platforms.

“These students are the farmers of the future and when they go into farming we want to be sure they are already aware that battery cages for laying hens are a violation of some of the Animal Freedoms (endorsed by the World Organisation for Animal Health WOAHA). Very specifically, caged hens are denied the Freedom to Express Normal Behaviour and the Freedom from Discomfort. They are prevented from being who they are.

“We engage farmers who are still using cages and make them aware that battery cages are one of the cruellest inventions of factory farming.



Sanele and her team make farm visits and express their appreciation to cage-free farmers by advertising their eggs on the Nurture Imvelo Trust’s online platform.



Sanele and her mentors Dr Moyo & Mr Ndlovu at Gwanda State University. *“The policy of any country must be rooted in respect and care for all inhabitants, human and non human,” she says.*

“We ask them to go cage-free. We are looking forward to engaging consumers in future so that they can make an informed decision when choosing eggs to buy.”

So far the Nurture Imvelo Trust employs three permanent staff members and four permanent volunteers.

“We were all friends together at school so when I pitched the idea of the Nurture Imvelo Trust, they were all eager to be part of the movement towards a much kinder world. Every Friday, we visit a farmer who is farming cage-free and express our appreciation through advertising their cage-free products on our networking platforms.”

To find out more and to support the Nurture Imvelo Trust, please click [HERE](#)

“Animals are being abused at a degree that matches the growth in the human population. These animals are abused in an attempt to make sure people are being fed. So, the more people, the worse the abuse and inhumanity. The solution begins with policymakers. The policy of any country must be rooted in respect and care of all inhabitants, human and non-human alike. We have a very long way to go in making our people understand that animals depend on all of us for their protection but with continuous engagements, education and raising awareness, we will get there.”



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Compassion in World Farming (South Africa) has put Mike Bosch of Boschveld Chickens in touch with Sanele.

Read more about Mike and his impressive support of cage-free chickens as part of poverty alleviation.

HERE'S HOW: At R35 000.00 all told... Boschveld's easy-to-construct MOBILE CHICKEN RUN comes with 100 chickens, a solar panel and battery pack, vegetable seeds, young nut and fruit trees, training and skills transfer.

The mobile system provides:

- ❖ Fresh soil every 30 days
- ❖ The best protein for good health (*eggs*)
- ❖ Farming skills, entrepreneurship, employment, and food security
- ❖ Green energy (the solar panel and battery pack provide enough power to charge 13 cell phones, 5 lap-tops and 4 LED lights)
- ❖ *Vegetables (grown with the chickens' natural compost instead of costly synthetic fertilizer and pesticides)*
- ❖ Animal welfare that includes all Five Freedoms for Animals

Entrepreneurial rural citizens are showing that with the Boschveld system, they can make around R4000.00 a month.



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