

Dear Students

Did you ever thought about working for a commercial greenhouse or botanical garden? Or planning and maintaining the landscape of famous lodges or companies? If you like plants and enjoy the challenge of arranging them on a commercial or residential property in an artistically and functional way, then **Horticulture** could be the career for you! Let's learn more about this exciting career.

- *Martina*

## HORTICULTURE

Plants are incredibly important. Not only do they provide us with oxygen and a source of food, but their beauty, smell and aesthetic vigour can provide the public with a welcoming multi-sensory experience! Technically, horticulture is the study of fruits, vegetables and landscape plants used for human consumption, garden decoration and environmental management.

## WHY IS HORTICULTURE SO IMPORTANT?

The primary objective of Horticulture is to increase local production of fruit and vegetables and to reduce our dependence on imported horticulture fresh produce. (NAB)

In an interview in one of the local newspapers dated November 2018, Namibia Agronomic Board Horticulture Manager, said that Namibia has huge potential to export more horticulture products rather than grapes and fruits, "*The opportunities are there, they just need to be explored. The country produced about 25 599 tons of horticulture produce in the 2017/2018 financial year and imported 52 853 tons during the same period. The country exported horticulture produce-grapes and dates – amounting to 55 358 tons during the 2017/2018 finance year.*"

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Horticultural careers are all about using your scientific knowledge of plants and soil to cultivate flowers, shrubs, fruits, vegetables, grass and other flora. This kind of plant husbandry is usually carried out in controlled environments for functional or commercial purposes.



## DIFFERENT SPHERES IN HORTICULTURE :

**Commerce:** plants are propagated and seeds produced for marketing by nurseries and in greenhouses or hothouses.

**Parks and decorative areas:** a park administrator concerned with layouts and cultivation of plants in landscapes, parks and public gardens and also with the beautifying of areas such as pavements and entrances of towns and cities, areas adjacent to freeways and railway stations.

**Conservation:** Horticulturists / Specialist Horticulturists / Curators of Botanical Gardens work in association with scientists and develop plant collections from all over Namibia to get to know how to conserve them, grow them and develop an appreciation for indigenous plants.

**Supplementary products:** as researchers, advisers, or salespeople of chemicals, fertilisers and horticultural

**Research:** involved with the development of improved varieties of plants. Horticulturist scientists, those with university degrees in horticulture, are the most likely to work for various agricultural research institutes conducting research on vegetables, fruit and flowers as well as on grape and wine preparation.

They also work on environmental and pest control and some work on improving and cultivating plant varieties, hybrids.

## WHAT MAKES A 'GOOD' HORTICULTURIST?

Horticulture is a broad field and can suit outdoor-loving people that like physical work, extending all the way to those that prefer laboratory environments. Various niches accommodate different personalities. Very motivated production and marketing orientated personalities suit commercial wholesale nurseries; people, sales and marketing orientated types suit retail horticulture; design orientated and creative types suit landscape orientated horticulture; design, creative, horticultural research and botanically orientated people suit botanical garden horticulture; service, design and maintenance types suit horticulture practiced in Parks departments; people, policy, reporting and staff orientated in horticultural management. Regardless of where you find yourself, you must be practical, have a love for nature, a passion for plants and be people orientated.

## EXPERIENCE VERSUS FORMAL TRAINING?

No academic training can provide an understanding of key elements within horticulture like practical experience can. Because of the variety of positions available, experience helps you find your niche.

## TYPICAL DAY OF A HORTICULTURIST

Most of a horticulturist time revolves around people management. As a horticulturist you spend your time guiding and directing the actions of the staff you supervise. They in turn care for the majority of plants and gardens. More specialist aspects of the daily routines are left for the expertise of the horticulturist, such as drawing up maintenance plans, special propagation and care of rare plants, garden design and landscaping. Some days you give presentations to the public or garden clubs.

## REQUIREMENTS

### Secondary Education

The normal basic requirement for entrance to Diploma programmes shall be a Namibian Senior Secondary Certificate Ordinary Level (NSSC O-Level) or a recognized equivalent, provided that a candidate has passed five subjects with a minimum of 22 points on the UNAM Evaluation Point Scale.

### Recommended subjects

Agriculture, Biology & Physical Science



### Tertiary Education

**INTEC** offers a Gardening and Horticulture Certificate approved by the INTEC Academic Board. Entrance Requirement is Grade 10 (Std. 8) or equivalent, or relevant work experience. You should be able to complete this course within 18 months. **Cape Peninsula University of Technology** offer a National Diploma: Horticulture; Bachelor of Technology: Horticulture - [www.cput.ac.za](http://www.cput.ac.za). **Tshwane University of Technology** offers a National Diploma: Horticulture—[www.tut.ac.za](http://www.tut.ac.za). The **University of Namibia** at the Department of Agriculture (Neudam and Onkongo Campus) offers diploma and degree courses in Crop Science. Subject to the provisions of Faculty Special Regulations the minimum duration of full-time study for a Bachelor's degree shall normally be four years, and that of the Diploma normally three years.

### Personality

- inborn love of nature ,
- enjoy working outdoors
- responsible and interested in conservation
- technical abilities
- patient and persevering
- able to make decisions independently
- able to foresee horticultural activities over a whole year and to plan accordingly.

### Work Opportunities

Production and Sales. Operating a business or managing an orchard, vegetable farm, greenhouse, flower or plant shop, nursery, landscaping service, garden center, or food processing firm. Public Gardens, Marketing, Research, Teaching, Industry Support, Inspection, Landscape Construction and Management



## [The National Botanic Garden of Namibia](#)

Is a 12 hectare nature reserve in the heart of the City of Windhoek, where you can see and learn about Namibia's fascinating plants.

### **History of the Garden**

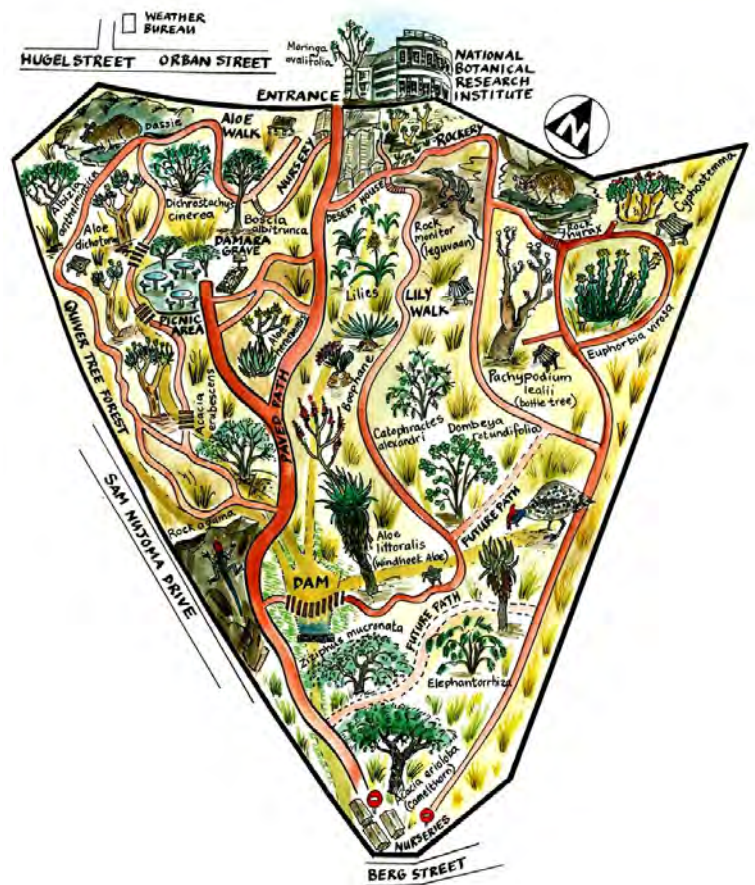
The land was donated to the Government by the City Council of Windhoek in October 1969, and was originally earmarked as a nature reserve. Initial development started in the early 1970s with the construction of walking trails, a storm water system and a dam. Unfortunately, due to a lack of funds, the then Department of Nature Conservation had to terminate all development activities and the garden was abandoned.

When the National Botanical Research Institute (NBRI) moved to the buildings adjacent to the reserve in 1990, the idea was born to develop the area as a Botanic Garden. Negotiations were initiated between the Ministry of Environment and Tourism and the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry (MAWF), and in February 1993 the NBRI obtained the right to develop the land into a Botanic Garden.

The garden depends on funds from the MAWF for its maintenance and development. However, in recent years it has additionally been supported by the Botanical Society of Namibia.

The National Botanic Garden of Namibia strives to protect and promote the Namibian flora and to function as an educational and recreational facility for Namibians and visitors alike. It is the only one of its kind in the country and focuses exclusively on Namibian plants. Unlike many other botanical gardens, the larger part of the garden has not been landscaped. The reason for this is 1) to conserve water and 2) to emphasise plants in their natural environment, thus allowing students and visitors to learn more about the vegetation around Windhoek, known as highland savanna.

However, several special displays ensure that visitors also get to see plants from other parts of the country, such as the Desert House display on the Namib Desert or the Kunene Region.



References : [www.unam.na](http://www.unam.na); <https://www.allaboutcareers.com> ; [www.nab.com.na](http://www.nab.com.na)  
<http://www.postmatric.co.za/garden-horticulturist/> ; *Namibia observer* ; *gostudy.net* ,  
<http://www.nbri.org.na/sections/botanic-garden>

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[www.tucsin.org](http://www.tucsin.org) as well as on  
 Facebook  
 Tel #: 061 224840  
[Williams@tucsin.org](mailto:Williams@tucsin.org)

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