

South Africa: Citrus up in alms after Summit

Consciousness is a quality that is fast reaching mandatory status in business, setting apart those who are serious about demonstrating their awareness of the world in which they do business.

These businesses go beyond fixating on their bottom line by understanding the importance of balancing this priority with applying themselves to investing in the environment and the people around them – for all round betterment.

But, who's to say the playing fields can't be levelled, allowing eligible associations into the fold? Why can't they also be counted amongst these entities who display commitment to operating in a conscious manner?

The Citrus Growers' Association (CGA) of southern Africa has meandered through a long and challenging journey – one long enough to have learnt the importance of consciously integrating people into its modus operandi. This starts with the association's employees, and extends to those in need of support, or benevolence.

The association continues to pull its weight when it comes to social responsibility, within the boundaries that come with being a non-profit entity. Leveraging proceeds from the biennial citrus Summit, the CGA actively shows benevolence by supporting eligible charities in the area where the event is hosted. In the Sundays River area, for example, we initiated a colouring-in competition in conjunction with the recent Citrus Summit. A total of 1000 entries were received from Kirkwood in the Patensie area. And the prize of R1000 went to Audrey Stock from Malmaison Primary, for Best Junior Primary student, and Maxine Jonker from Sundays River Primary, for Best Senior Primary student. Plus, the two schools received R1000 respectively.

Rita's Care Home also received a sizeable donation from the proceeds of the event. The home was established by Rita Terblanche in Despatch in 2010, and provides quality care for the elderly. Having started with only two elderly residents, they've grown to fifteen residents who rely on 24-hour care. And being privately owned the home relies heavily on donations.

The informal settlement of Langbos in Addo also benefited from the Citrus Summit's presence in their province. From meagre beginnings the project has, over twelve years, grown to incorporate a crèche, a community centre, a playground, a permaculture garden, solar panels and a wind turbine to power the centre on renewable energy.

They are a registered conservation based eco-school, and won the silver award at the Addo Elephant National Park in 2014. This struggling 500-member community has created eight jobs, and currently cares for more than 40 children who attend the crèche daily. Langbos Crèche and Care Centre is a registered NPO that falls under the auspices of the Mayibuye Ndlovu Development.

Integrating consciousness into the way one conducts business also includes talking about those areas where progress has been made on the topic – and celebrating them. The CGA prides itself on being able to alleviate the plight of less fortunate NPOs, and looks forward to expanding its output – one charity at a time.

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