

Citrus Business Management Programme Now online

Since the inception of the Citrus Academy in 2006, the objective has been to never implement training just for the sake of training. Neither the citrus industry nor the participants would derive any significant benefit from such an approach. By Desiree Schonken



In terms of development of learning tools, the Citrus Academy philosophy has always been to address identified learning needs, and to tailor content, delivery mode and methodology to the demands of the citrus industry.

In 2013 a survey was conducted by the Citrus Grower Development Company (CGDC) in collaboration with the Citrus Academy among citrus enterprises in SA, to ascertain any specific issues faced by growers. The results of the survey indicated that the main areas of concern (apart from managing to produce good crops) for citrus growers were business planning, financial and administrative skills.

After extensive research, the academy identified the New Venture Creation NQF 4 qualification (US66249) as the ideal tool by which to address these skills gaps. This qualification was developed essentially to enable and promote entrepreneurial behaviour, but it lends itself very well to developing sound business management skills for managers and owners of existing businesses. It is an accredited programme and learners who successfully complete the competence assessment earn 153 credits on the National Learners' Results Database and are awarded

the Services SETA Further Education and Training Certificate: New Venture Creation.

To make the programme more relevant to the South African citrus industry, the content was adapted to citrus production and renamed the Citrus Business Management (CBM) Programme. Business owners, employees and new entrants to the citrus industry attempting this

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qualification are equipped with a variety of technical business management and personal skills as well as strategies to help them succeed in establishing and managing their citrus enterprises.

In the past, the CBM Programme was presented by means of a combination of classroom and workplace learning over a nine month period. However, this excluded potential learners in rural areas who were unable to travel for long distances and take time off to attend classes without significantly disrupting the citrus production cycle. Therefore, the conversion of the CBM Programme to the Citrus Academy online platform was a crucial step forward in terms of accessibility. Participants will now be able to study the material and complete the assessments at their convenience.

Learners will be able to register for the Citrus Business Management Programme from January 2022. To qualify for participation in the programme, learners must have a matric certificate with their home language and one additional language. They will also need access to a computer, reliable internet connectivity and an email address.

For more information about the Citrus Business Management Programme or to register for the course, please contact Desiree Schonken, 031-765 3410 or desiree@citrusacademy.org.za.

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