

Japie Smit (DALRRD) addressing growers in North West Province



North West study draws support for BLACK CITRUS GROWERS

The CGA-GDC is committed to helping citrus growers across the country succeed in their agribusinesses.
By Princess Moloka Mogale

As part of its grower development efforts, the Citrus Growers' Association Grower Development Company (CGA-GDC) hosts quarterly study groups with growers in all the citrus production regions. These study groups provide an important opportunity for black citrus growers in the same geographic area to come together and discuss their

challenges, as well as to identify potential growth opportunities for their businesses.

On 18 May the first study group of the financial year was held in the North West Province. The theme was the "Fertiliser and spray programme do's and don'ts in a citrus enterprise". The topic was of great relevance to growers in this area, who produce in Mooiooi, Brits, and Mahikeng. As the North West Province has fewer farms than the rest of the provinces, it only hosts one quarterly study group. **Table 1** shows the outlook of the production under black citrus growers.

In preparation for the study groups,



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growers come prepared with a range of topics to discuss with their industry peers, ranging from pest and disease management to business development, financial support, government support, and the involvement of other external stakeholders.

Present in the study group was the

Table 1. North West Province outlook: December 2022

Age category	Age category per fruit type								Totals
	Oranges	Hectares	Soft citrus	Hectares	Grapefruit	Hectares	Lemon and limes	Hectares	
0-3	Non-bearing	4,00	Non-bearing	0,00	Non-Bearing	0,00	Non-bearing	7,63	11,63
4-7	Bearing	0,00	Bearing	0,00	Bearing	0,00	Bearing	0,00	0,00
8-15	Full-bearing	5,29	Full-bearing	0,00	Full Bearing	0,00	Full-bearing	0,00	5,29
16-30	Full-bearing	33,55	Full-bearing	22,78	Full Bearing	0,00	Full-bearing	6,35	62,68
31-40	Full-bearing	23,06	Full-bearing	0,39	Full Bearing	0,00	Full-bearing	0,00	23,45
>41	Replace	1,98	Replace	0,00	Replace	0,00	Replace	0,00	1,98
Totals		67,88		23,17		0,00		13,98	105,03

Provincial Department of Agriculture, the Small Business Directorate (D: SBD) of the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD), and the CGA-GDC sister company, Citrus Academy.

The CGA-GDC is heartened by government support to help drive sustainable economic growth amongst black growers. The DALRRD mandate – aligned with the strategic goals of the GDC – is to identify development opportunities for previously disadvantaged farms. The D: SBD is a key player in promoting the growth and development of small, medium, and micro-enterprises (SMMEs) and cooperatives operating in the Agriculture, Land Reform, and Rural Development sectors in SA. And the country has embarked on a sectoral-based inclusive growth programme in partnership with business and labour to identify, investigate, and implement innovative and practical interventions to mitigate key challenges facing the local economy. The sectoral-based master plans were identified as an intervention mechanism for local development. To ensure the effectiveness of this approach, evidence-led research was conducted into the value chains of each sector. This research included multi-sectoral socio-economic analyses as well as a review of spatial development practices, to identify economic opportunities in local development areas and in broader regions and provinces. Hence, master plans

are being developed for key industrial sectors to address various challenges in the agriculture sector. This will help facilitate economic transformation and drive industrial development, ultimately granting growers much needed support in an environment conducive to sustainable growth.

The Citrus Academy did a presentation on skills planning and training needs for a farm. As with any other organisation, staffing remains a vital part of the success of a farming enterprise, and growers often need guidance in terms of following the right processes. This will certainly impact critical areas like compliance and productivity. The Citrus Academy is an invaluable part of the local ecosystem.

Mr Melton Mulaudzi of the CGA-GDC facilitated a session on fertilisation in the citrus industry. The timing of the study group could not have been better, as it served to remind growers of the proper protocols to follow during the fertilisation process. It has a significant impact on the quality of the fruit produced by growers, which dictates growers' access to and participation in global markets. One of the strategic goals of the GDC is to help growers gain access to the right markets for their fruit, so they can maximize their profitability.



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