

CGA-GDC implements SIZA environmental pillar of sustainability

The CGA-GDC is committed to ensuring that black citrus producers are suitably certified. By Yolanda Ntlakaza



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Having the required certification enables black citrus producers to demonstrate high compliance with labour, ethical and environmental standards, through compliance to the Sustainability Initiative of South Africa (SIZA).

Currently SIZA has the ethical and environmental standards that require producers' compliance. SIZA's ethical

principles and environmental commitment form the framework of a comprehensive social and ecological sustainability programme for the fresh fruit industry of SA. Early in 2022 the CGA-GDC, in

partnership with Skyvines cc, selected a few farms to undergo SIZA environmental training and implementation. Initially, a small sample was selected, in order to learn lessons from selected participants, before scaling up. Two groups were identified for further training and implementation – one in the Kat River Valley and the other in the Sunday's River Valley. The target area was selected because they represent the largest portion of citrus production from black growers. Trade Forward Southern Africa funded the project.

Prior to the implementation of the SIZA environmental documentation, a training session was held to work through the standard requirements, explaining how the documents work, and what the requirements are for the SIZA Environmental Standard.

The implementation was conducted by environmental specialists from the area, and the process was aimed at driving continuous improvement to prepare the producers for third-party audits. The implementation entailed site tours at offices where the relevant environmental documentation will be implemented, such as policies, management plans and risk assessments.

The key component to the approach of the standard is a detailed assessment of the health, safety and environment of the farms. This is a thorough assessment on these areas, where each identified area is assessed for compliance or non-compliance and its impact, and corrective actions are then recommended. The farms undertake risk assessments and analysis of the farm's energy and material uses and waste/pollution. A look into the impact, using a credible approach and methods, is done to give management the depth of information and understanding needed to ensure the effective management and sustainable use and impact of the farm's energy and material inputs and waste/pollution. Such information includes waste, emissions and pollution outputs and impacts. Risks associated with the location and relevant details of the waste storage facility (such as storage capacity), infrastructure to deal with spills, security of storage, and separation of hazardous and non-hazardous waste, is also taken into consideration. Other risks include terrestrial biodiversity and ecosystems related to the materials stored and used, risks, and options related to the farm's dependence on non-

renewable sources of energy and materials. This information, insights and understanding are derived from various assessment and review processes that are undertaken periodically.

Key issues learnt

Environmental compliance remains a major issue, in particular on smaller farms with limited resources. However, farmers appreciated the insight that was shared with them, especially during the site inspections. In some instances, farmers were not aware of the ecological species on their farms that are having a detrimental effect on their water sources. In other cases it was identified that the windbreaks used are from tree species that require permits for them to be planted on the farm. The introduction of the various systems and procedures does not only address compliance matters, but also have economic benefits.

Partnership with the Trade Forward Southern Africa (TFSA)

This partnership emanated from the CGA-GDC response to an open call that was made to business support organisations, for proposals for technical assistance and capacity building. The call was made in support of the growth of export trade in the fruit, nuts and vegetables sector in the Southern Africa Customs Union and Mozambique (SACUM) region. TFSA identified the need for assistance for developing and delivering Global Good Agricultural Practises (GLOBALG.A.P) training and capacity support to enhance the ability of SMMEs to comply with standards and regulations.

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Sundays River Valley delegates. From left: Chulumanco Muteka (SSE Intern), Liezl Janse van Rensburg (Luthando), Lumka Ncaphayi (SRCC), Cindy Charles (Luthando), Nokwanele Mzamo (Luthando), Nomonde Ntloko (CGA-GDC), Alheit du Toit (trainer, Skyvines), Steri Ndyenga (SSE), Damian Hans (Skyvines), Aubrey Maloni (Mbuyiselo Farm), Sandile Gxoyiya (SSE, Siyaphambile Farm), Edward Noketshe (SSE, Sophumelela), Thamsanqa Ndyenga (SSE, Willowtree Farm Manager), and Thando Mto (SSE, Siyathemba Farm)



Fort Beaufort delegates. From left: Logan Minnar (trainer, Skyvines), Lonwabo Dyonase (Leta's Farming), Siphokazi Nogatshi (EASSE), Susan Herman- Torties, Siggine Manyonta (Oakdene Farming), Alheit du Toit (Skyvines), Aviwe Ndzoyi (Gatyena Farming), Akhona Bosman (Letas Farming, Lukhanyo Mfecane, Zanentlutha Farming), and Athi Bekizulu (EASSE)